

THE SUNDAY AT HOME

O DAY MOST CALM, MOST BRIGHT! . . .
THE WEEK WERE DARK BUT FOR THY LIGHT.—*Herbert.*

TOM HERON OF SAX.

A STORY OF REVIVAL TIMES.

BY EVELYN EVERETT-GREEN.



A METHODIST AT HEART.

CHAPTER XIV.—THE TUG OF WAR.

"NO," shouted Fulk Fortescue, bursting into a loud laugh. "That's just a little too great a strain on our credulity, old fellow! Tom Heron a Methodist—why, Saul among the
No. 1871.—FEBRUARY 9, 1892.

prophets was nothing to it! What mean you, George, by such a wild tale?"

"Wild or not, it is true enough," answered Captain Fortescue, who was leaning negligently upon the balustrade of the terrace and regaling his sister and cousins with various items of home

PRICE ONE PENNY.

news strange to them from their long absence in Bath. The travellers had reached Rookwood at noon that day, and had found George there before them, ready to escort his sister home when she should be recovered from the fatigues of the journey. The pair had, however, easily been persuaded to remain for a few days, the guests of the Squire. George was home on leave for a time, and both Fulk and Hugh were pleased to have his company. Athol, too, had grown to be looked upon by Madam almost as a daughter, and she felt that it would be a very dull thing to be left with only Irene as her companion. It had been hard enough to leave behind all the gaieties and pleasures of Bath; to lose her vivacious niece at the same time would make matters much worse. Both Athol and George were ready enough to accept this invitation. They were fond of Rookwood, and very much at home there. The April weather was lovely, hot and balmy, and full of scents and sweet sounds. To two amongst the little group upon the terrace, the change from town to country life was very agreeable.

But for the moment George's words had arrested universal attention. The Captain nodded his head and shrugged his shoulders contemptuously.

"Poor beggar; I do not know how they got hold of him. People say he was hurt in the burning of the old inn in Pound Lane just after the execution of the rebels last November. I know he was in York then, for I saw him at the spectacle, apparently enjoying it as much as anybody. A few weeks later, I came across him acting champion to some dirty little ranter, and knocking down with his sledge-hammer fists any person who attempted to interfere with him. The first time I thought it must be just a mad freak; but when it happened again before my very eyes, I made my way to him and tried to chaff him in the old style, whereupon he turned round and rebuked me publicly, using all the canting phrases which are the catch-words of the Methodists, so far as I can make out. After that I gave him up. I suppose if the truth were known, the poor fellow went a little off his head, and they took advantage of him and got him to think himself converted, or whatever is their cant word for it. Of course, it won't last. He's too good a fellow to be permanently spoiled, but the attack seems to be a severe one."

"What has become of him now?" asked Fulk with interest. "We can't spare Tom Heron. He's much too valuable. Why, I have some splendid young cocks just coming to their prime. I was going to see Tom about them at once. There's nobody can train birds as he can, or make and fit on their spurs. We must put an end to this new nonsense as fast as may be."

"Oh, I don't think there will be much trouble there," answered the Captain, laughing; "Tom came back to Sax last month, and has had a pretty stiff time of it, to judge by his looks. Why, one would hardly know him now—he has fallen away in flesh—fasting, I suppose, and is hollow-eyed and cadaverous. He hardly speaks a word, bad or good, to a soul in the place,

shutting himself up, so his uncle tells me, from bad and good alike. Don't quite know what he thinks about the folks that are reckoned here to be good, for he keeps as much aloof from Mr. Latham or honest old Samson as he does from the Crowders and his old boon companions. The fellow is just a little mad; that is the long and short of it; but there will be a turn of the tide one of these days, and he will come back to us, the same cheery fellow as he once was. It is the way with fanatics; they drive everything too hard. They find out it is all a great mistake, and then they come back with new relish to old amusements and sports. I'm not a bit afraid of losing Tom, permanently."

Athol stole a look at Irene. She was listening intently, her breath coming and going. Athol was well aware that her cousin was, to all intents and purposes, a Methodist, though in secret, and that she had no intention of telling her parents anything about her changed views. The thing was not pleasant to the frank and outspoken nature of the elder girl; but Irene considered that she was justified in her own course of action, and had many quotations from Scripture to use in argument, and Athol had long ceased to urge her upon the matter. She fancied that Hugh knew, and possibly he might help his timid sister to greater frankness. At least it was no business of hers, and Athol had plenty to think about without this.

It was towards Hugh that Irene's eyes were now turned, as if asking him to speak. Hugh was a quiet fellow at home, but he and Fulk were great friends, despite the dissimilarity of their ways and their characters. Irene was sometimes vexed and disappointed at seeing the warm regard they had for each other, and was disposed to condemn Hugh as one of those careless youths who, taking up the clerical profession for a living, have no intention of leading anything that could be reasonably called a consecrated life.

"I'd have a care what I was about with Tom Heron," said Hugh, who was listening to the talk with interest; "I remember the fellow very well; there was always something volcanic about him—something not altogether to be depended upon in his composition. A man like that often astonishes his friends by developments in unexpected directions. From what George says, he appears to have taken up his Methodism in a very peculiar fashion; he is evidently running his head against a wall of some sort, and will almost certainly meet with a recoil backwards; but all the same, I'd have a care, if I were you, how you tempt him back deliberately into his old wild ways. One knows how it is with men of that calibre; they must be always in one extreme or the other—at least that is their nature. Possibly in time they may learn moderation and temperance in its highest sense, but the growth must be slow and will not easily be attained. Vehemence and violent alternations between one extreme and another is the thing that is natural to them. If Tom Heron is overdoing his attempt to break away from his old ways, the natural recoil will come of itself later

on, and the poor fellow will have a hard enough time of it then without any assistance from you, Fulk."

"Oh, come, Hugh, don't you take the airs of a half-fledged parson yet, and one of these new-fangled parsons, too," cried Fulk, laughing. "You don't seriously suppose that I should do Tom any harm?"

Hugh looked steadily at his brother with an expression of gravity and affection, which made his face older than his years.

"I should be afraid to say," he answered; "I know you would not mean to do him harm; but what do you yourself seriously think of all this Sunday cock-fighting, and the dissipation and gambling to which it leads?"

"Oh, don't listen to him," cried George, laughing and pulling Fulk by the arm. "Hugh has shut himself up with his books at Oxford till he does not know what life is like. My good fellow, one can only be young once, and gentlemen can be trusted to amuse themselves without turning blackguards or throwing away their souls. Come on, Fulk; I want you to look at the new horse I bought in your absence. Leave Hugh to finish his lecture to the ladies. We will deal with Tom Heron after our own fashion. If Hugh knows more of books than we do, at least we know more of men than he."

Fulk was easily led away, and George had great influence with him at the moment, though when he was absent from him Hugh might possibly acquire the ascendancy. The younger brother did not attempt to interfere, but after standing for a few minutes in a brown study he said:

"I think I will stroll down to the village and have a look round the old place. It is a long time since I saw it."

Years made little change in Sax, and Hugh found that he recognised every landmark and every face as distinctly as though he had only left the place yesterday. Turning to the right as he quitted the park for the main street of the village, he glanced with affectionate interest at the old church, which he one day thought might be his especial charge, and wandered slowly along till he reached the bridge and heard the sounds of voices, some loud and almost angry others laughing and jeering, others again friendly and cajoling, but all as it seemed, raised more or less in argument, and addressed to the same person, who, it appeared, had little to say in reply.

These sounds proceeded from the direction of the forge, and the open shed at the side. Hugh's interest was at once aroused, and he stepped forward till he found himself just without the knot of more or less excited speakers. It was as he supposed. Tom's old friends and associates were gathered about him trying to persuade him to some course of action against which he appeared to have set himself. The bone of contention appeared to be a large jug of foaming ale which Luke Crowder was holding up before him.

"Thee mother sent it thee, Tom," he kept vociferating in eager accents, "thee mother sent it with her love. She can't abear to see thee

going about looking as thee does. She bid us beg thee to drink it, if thee loved her and called thyself her son. It be a strange religion as won't let a man please his old mother and do his own health good. Beside, Glegg here says, as St. Paul said, as men were to drink a drop of something stronger than water for their stomick's sake. We shan't think much o' thy religion, if thee won't obey neither thee own mother nor yet the Bible neither."

"Thee be bringing the Methodists into greater contempt than ever, Tom Heron," said old Glegg standing forward and swelling himself out as he always did when making a speech, "not as I be one that wishes it otherwise, for I hate 'em all—nasty low vermin—but I know that thee means well, and I'd like to put some sense in thy head, if I could. The Lord gave us the grape and all other good things, and says that He gives wine to make glad the heart of man, and surely thee doesn't set up for being wiser nor He? Didn't He turn water into wine His own self, and drink wine with His disciples before He went to be crucified? Bless you all, what fools yon Methodies must be if they know their Bibles so little as that!—and what poor mean souls they must have if they can be so easy damned as that a drink of good malt ale will damn them! I tell thee, Tom Heron, if this heaven of thine is such a queer place as thee makes it out to be, if folks can be kept out for making use of the creatures the good God gives them to use, why (with an oath), I should never care to get to it! It can't be a place worth going to at all."

A murmur of applause went round the ring; but Tom's eyes flashed beneath their cavernous brows. He was looking very ill and worn, though the muscles on his arms still stood out like knotted cords, and his movements had lost none of their old force. He lifted himself suddenly up and faced Glegg fiercely; for in him he felt he had an adversary worthy of his steel.

"Take heed how thou blasphemest, thou blind-eyed old man, thou who lovest to cast the stumbling-block of iniquity before the feet of others, and to spread cords and traps for the unwary. Because that the Lord's mercies are great, and even the dying thief who had committed murder and theft found mercy at the last and was admitted within the gates of Paradise, will you urge men to commit like crimes because they may even yet find mercy? These creatures which you say God has given, but which men have used for the devil's work, are accursed—accursed, I say, for the evil they have done. Their use, their lawful use is perverted; men sell their souls for drink; they make themselves lower than the very beasts that perish, they follow strong drink in the morning, and in the evening wine inflames them, and they lie grovelling like brutes in the mire of their iniquity. Do I not know? have I not tasted the bitterness of that degradation? Have I not repented in dust and ashes and vowed myself from henceforth a Nazarite unto the Lord? Shall I break this vow to please such men as these? men that know not their right hand from their left: that would

sell themselves to the devil himself did he but give them the wherewithal to gratify their bestial appetites? Go, I say, tempt me no more. I will none of it. God has wiped out my sins; they are blotted from His book; shall I in gratitude to Him for His great mercy, plunge once again into sin to please the likes of you?" The wild gleam of Tom's eyes caused many in the ring around him to fall back discomfited and dismayed. Seeing this, Tom made a step forward and took from Luke's hand the jug of ale, crying aloud as he did so: "See here, this is how I accept my mother's gift," and as he spoke he hurled the tankard across the road, spattering its contents freely upon the clothes of the group around him, whilst the vessel itself was shattered into a hundred fragments as it reached the ground. The little crowd melted instantly away in profound disgust; and, to his surprise, Tom found himself confronted by a young gentleman, whose face seemed familiar to him, although for a moment he failed to identify it, who approached with a smile, wiping from his coat cuff a few drops of the spilled ale.

"Well, Tom," he said kindly, "it is some time since we met. I am glad to hear that you have turned over a new leaf since then. We were all rather wild together once, I fear. I remember many pranks of which I do not feel proud now. I have learned to see things differently as I have grown older, and I am glad to hear that you have done the same."

The light of excitement had died out of Tom's eyes; his face had taken a look of aloofness that suggested sullenness.

"I ask your pardon, Mr. Hugh, I did not see that you were near. I am sorry to have stained your cloth. I thank you for your friendly words, but I will have no kindness under false pretences. I am a Methodist now, and they tell me that when Madam hears it, I shall be turned neck and crop out of the old home I have lived in all my life. It is scarce fitting that any son of hers should speak with the likes of me."

"Pooh, Tom, my man: we were all lads together. I do not deny that my mother will be displeased to hear of this new profession: but if you would, out of deference to her, moderate your language slightly, whilst retaining all your improved principles, and we were to speak to her in your favour, I doubt not——"

"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," interrupted Tom harshly, "nor yet two masters. Madam has chosen to set herself up to judge the children of light and to condemn godly men. I dare not hold my peace from rebuking evil when I see it at any command of hers."

"Our conscience must always be our guard and guide," answered Hugh with great forbearance, considering the tone adopted by the young smith, "but it is wise to avoid giving needless offence, and bringing our cause into disfavour with others through a lack of Christian sympathy with our less enlightened brothers."

Tom turned almost rudely away.

"I do not think we shall ever understand each other, Mr. Hugh. You are being bred up for the church, the family living. I am a poor soldier

and servant, unversed in your strange arguments which make evil good and good evil. I only know what my Bible bids me—to be instant in season and out of season. Alas! it is always out of season in this unhappy place, whose rulers rise up and take counsel together against the Lord and His Anointed! But I must do my duty in spite of all. If they persecute you in one place, shake off the dust of your feet for a testimony against them and fly to another. That may be my fate soon: but I know not and I care not. I am in the Lord's hands. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Without another word, bad or good, Tom swung himself away and shut himself up in his own room, after his manner: whilst Hugh looked after him with a compassionate expression upon his face.

"Poor fellow," he said, "he is terribly in earnest: but he is cutting himself off from everything and everybody. Human nature cannot stand that strain. There will be a fearful reaction one of these days, if I am not mistaken in the man."

The family at Rookwood having returned, Tom expected every day to receive notice to quit his cottage: but that notice did not come. As a matter of fact, the election impending in the autumn made land-owners very chary of offending public opinion in any way. The Herons were an old family in the place; Tom had been an immense favourite, and the Squire only laughed aloud when he heard of his having turned Methodist, and warned his sons and daughter and even the servants not to trouble Madam with the news. Madam had guests at the house, and was not likely to trouble her head over village gossip, unless it was prominently forced upon her. The Squire declared his confidence in "Tom's pulling through all right," and coming out a sober fellow after the fit had expended itself. There was no such farrier within ten miles as Tom Heron, and he was the best horse and dog-doctor in the whole neighbourhood. For a man who loved sport as the Squire did this was no small recommendation. Having lost one hunting season by reason of his gout and his wife's desire to winter in Bath, he had no intention of foregoing another, and he did not wish Tom driven from Sax before the season came on. His Methodism did not prevent his plying his trade with his old skill, and that was all the Squire cared about.

And now Tom found a very different sort of trial awaiting him. He had looked to encounter opposition, ridicule, abuse, and hatred. He had met all unflinchingly. He had gone his own way, rebuking, exhorting, condemning, an outcast of men, as he phrased it to himself, a scorn and reproach of all that were round about. He had expected this and had nerved himself for it: and had set himself in an attitude of such hostility towards his former comrades that neither their blandishments nor their gibes really touched him, and he was not seriously tempted by any act of theirs to forsake the course he had adopted.

He looked for the same sort of thing from the

gentlemen on their return, railing and abuse, though perhaps of a different calibre, and a great deal of ridicule, which he felt it would be hard enough to bear: but, to his surprise, and it must be owned, his relief also, for he was growing to feel desperately lonely, and at times weary even to the verge of exhaustion, there was nothing of this kind to be encountered. The young men, riding to and fro past the forge, would rein in their horses as of old for a bit of a chat, and though they took it for granted that his views had changed, and no longer invited him to share their sports, they never made him feel cut off from them by any line of demarcation: the first horse at Rookwood which fell lame, was immediately put under his care, and daily visits there became necessary for some time to come.

In a large stable there is generally some animal or another in need of attendance; this summer there was a good deal of influenza amongst the Squire's horses, and Tom was in constant requisition. The young gentlemen would constantly come to consult with him over a sick animal, the grooms and stable helps were always glad to see him. They did not resent it when he rebuked them for swearing. The gentlemen even began to curb their tongues in his presence, and Tom often felt as though he had some mission before him—to convert the godless in this great house, and bring them to a knowledge of their sins. Gradually the gloom vanished from his face, his manner became less aloof and more friendly. Often he remembered afterwards that he had heard loose language without remembering to check it, and though he upbraided himself for oversight, he did not realise that he was growing more callous to the sound of oaths and expletives. More than once he had been tempted in a moment of forgetfulness or absorption to drink a glass of ale which somebody had given him, and finding that no clouding of the faculties or desire for more was engendered, he began to wonder if he had not been a little over-strict with himself. His common-sense told him that there could be no deadly sin in the act; with him it was not even any particular self-indulgence, as a natural love for strong drink of any kind was very little developed. He did not think his own guides and counsellors would blame him. He was as zealous as ever at attendance at all Methodist gatherings, and spent every Sunday of his life at Hownston to be present at all he could. He denied himself all but the bare necessities of life in order to contribute to the fund for building a chapel in that place: and he did not for a moment suspect himself of any lapse in faith or conviction. He was a converted Methodist, who knew himself as saved. Had it not been told him again and again that for such as him the life of "sinless perfection" was no idle form of words, but was a thing absolutely enjoyed by them?

One day a strange thing happened to him at Rookwood. He was there very early one morning, for the delicate Arab barb generally ridden by Mrs. Irene had fallen ill, and he had spent the best part of the night watching and tending it. He was quite alone with the pretty creature in

the large loose box, when the door opened softly, and the owner of the horse herself appeared. The young lady looked timidly round her, and then glided softly up to the farrier. She held in her hand a case which she opened before his astonished eyes, and he saw that it contained a pearl necklace of considerable value.

"Tom Heron," whispered the lady, "I have brought these to you. I want you to sell them, and give the money to the Methodist chapel at Hownston. I am a Methodist at heart, as you are: but I dare not do this thing openly. Will you do it for me, for the cause?"

"I will," answered Tom, his eyes lighting with surprise and pleasure. The next moment Irene had glided away, and he was left with only the necklace in his hand to show that it was not all a dream.

Things New and Old.

A TERRIBLE ACCOUNT.—A sad list of losses may be put down to strong drink: Loss of money; loss of time; loss of health; loss of business; loss of character; loss of friends; loss of good conscience; loss of feeling and self-respect; loss of mind; loss of life; loss of the immortal soul! Add to this all the loss and injury done to family, to relatives, to friends, besides the above sad list of losses to the person enslaved by love of drink.

AN INCIDENT AT KIMBERLEY.—One can in time of peace travel from tribe to tribe for a thousand miles, with no other weapon than a walking stick, and never be molested. Wherever the traveller goes he meets with hospitality, and shares in meals at the villages. It is after the slave raider and land grabber have worked their will that travelling becomes dangerous. That the natives are brave has been demonstrated on a thousand hard-fought fields, and that they can meet death with resignation and courage, when all the excitement of the field of battle is wanting, is shown by their behaviour in cases of shipwreck and other calamities. A few years ago an explosion took place in one of the Kimberley diamond mines. The woodwork of the main shaft caught fire. The workings were filled with smoke, and all egress was apparently cut off, while nothing could be done from above ground. At the time of the accident, a large number of men, European and native, were underground. Of the former, several who were overpowered by the first rush of smoke, were carried to a place of temporary safety by the natives, who did all in their power to save their companions, though face to face with death themselves. One European, while trying to make his way into some old workings, came across a group of natives, calmly filling their pipes, as if preparing to have a social smoke together, a common custom among them. He remonstrated and urged them to seek a place of safety. Their reply was, "We have tried every opening; we know the mine well; there is no hope for any one who is here, and we are going to smoke together before we die." No persuasion would induce them to move. He left them there, and with difficulty reached a place of safety. A week later he conducted a search party to a group of bodies which lay in a circle, their pipes still in their hands or lying on the ground beside them.—*From Light in Africa. By J. Macdonald.*

SHEAVES FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

THE BUDDHIST PRIEST.

A CHINESE street, especially if it be a poor one, is not by any means a pleasant or a picturesque sight. It gives one the impression that life is a dreary thing, far removed from poetry and romance, and that the only real things in the world are dust and dirt and poverty. The roadway is badly cared for. The slabs of stone have been laid unevenly, and as they were badly-dressed to begin with, they require to be trodden over with great caution, lest a fall might rudely awake one from a pleasant dream. Deep ruts in the road, that the rains, and the tread of human feet have worn in it, add to the discomfort. Heaps of garbage that have been slowly accumulating, luxuriating in the absence of any local board in China, are met with here and there.

It is a very different place from the thriving street a little farther on. There the shops are well-stocked, and the owners have a placid, comfortable air about them, as though they were conscious that they would never fail for want of customers, and that even if they did, they had such a balance to their credit that they could look such a contingency calmly in the face. In this poor street the shops seem empty. Here is one that has absolutely nothing to sell, except a few miserable articles displayed on a black, dirty board in the open shop front. They are worth a few pence at the most, and the mystery is how the family live, how they can be fed and clothed out of that wretched display, that could only tempt the very poorest.

This street gives one the blues, it has such a desperately hopeless look, and appears as though it could never be changed for the better. The sun, indeed, is doing his very best to make things look nice. In the house before us his rays play upon the dingy walls, and upon the black beams in the open roof that are festooned with spiders' webs, and then they glance upon the shopkeeper's face, as if they would take the place of the smile that never comes, and they seem to say, "let us make the most of life, and if we can't be rich, at least let us be cheerful;" but there is no response to the sunny appeals. Then, too, at another part of the road, the light comes down upon the Banyan tree that is growing in a neighbour's yard, and the forest of leaves sparkle and shimmer in the sun's beams, and from them they fall upon the uneven stones, and like elves on the green-sward, they dance away along the street, and into the ruts, and over the unsavoury heaps as if they would beautify every unlovely thing by their touch, and give the human life around a brief holiday from their misery.

But would it be believed that there are romances even in places such as this? There has been one in this very street, and in the shop before us. The owner of it is a very common-

looking man. His face, indeed, is not as good-looking as the generality of those around him, for it is angular and ill-formed. There is something the matter, too, about his eyes, for he appears to be looking down the road whilst he is in reality staring straight before him. You say, "This man has never dreamt of anything beyond his present lot; he has not sufficient mind for that," but wait a little, and take a better look at him. As we gaze at him, his face does indeed improve. There is mind behind those eyes, for they are bright and restless, as though hidden forces were continually galvanizing them into action. His features are not regular, it is true, but there is a strength about them, and the lines around the mouth show firmness and determination that indicate great strength of will. The fact is, the man has thought a great deal. He could never get satisfied with his condition in life, as his neighbours seemed to be; but, think as he pleased, he felt himself surrounded by a kind of iron fate that held him fast bound. As he looked upon the bare walls of his shop, and the haggard face of his wife, who bore her poverty with the uncomplaining heroism of a true woman, he felt that life, after all, was a very commonplace thing, and scarcely worth the living.

He used to think over these problems, as he was waiting for customers, but no solution ever dawned upon his mind that would satisfy him. How could he hope for any? Heathenism has no personal God, and no future. Men's faces in China have to turn to the past for comfort. There are their sages, and their statesmen, and their great writers, around whom the history of their country clusters. When they turn to the future there is a blank. There is nothing for them there, and there is no rift in the veil that separates the unknown land from this, and no light of promise to flash into men's lives. There is only the grave, but that is the abode of death, where the hopes of the heathen lie buried.

One day, whilst he was pondering over these momentous questions, and the sunbeams played upon the articles laid out for sale, and made them seem still poorer than they were, a sudden thought came over him like a flash of inspiration. He was startled, and his whole frame quivered, as he said to himself, "I'll become a god, and one day men shall worship me, and thus shall I get out of the laws that govern me, and from beneath the iron wheels of fate that grind men as they relentlessly pass along."

He at once communicated his thought to his wife, who, after a little persuasion, consented to his plan. The transference from a shop-keeper to a priest, the first step to his being a god, is easy in China. His hair must all be shaved off, a Buddhist robe of slate colour donned, a knowledge of a few prayers and chants obtained, and,

lo! you have a full-blown priest before you. The question with him now was where was the sphere in which he was to work out his godship? His first business must be to find out that. He accordingly ascended a high hill that overlooked a great city of at least one hundred thousand inhabitants, and there he looked for a place where his new life was to begin.

All at once he came upon the ruins of an old temple. The walls were partly standing, but the idol was gone, and its altar overturned, and grass was growing in the place where ages ago the feet of worshippers used to tread. "Here is the very place," he thought, "where my life-task is to be carried out. I'll rebuild this temple, I'll put the idol in its ancient shrine, and I shall bring it about that worshippers shall again flock to its service. I shall then have earned so much merit that the gods will combine to elevate me to a place amongst their number." He was satisfied with this reasoning, and never deemed there could be any difficulty in its being carried out, without the previous consent of the gods.

Near the ruins, was a small hole in the hill-side, that he could comfortably get into. Here he took up his abode. The position was a good one. Before him stretched the great city, with its lines of streets, and city gates, and tall pagodas, and mandarins' houses, and endless streams of people that moved along from the time that the morning gun threw open the gates, until they were lost in view amidst the shadows of evening.

Two years were spent in this cave. He well gauged the heart of his countrymen. There is nothing that appeals to their religious instincts more strongly than an ascetic life. It cannot be thorough, however, for any compromise will be a failure. If a man is prepared to endure real suffering as a religious devotee, his fortune is made, for his fame spreads, and men are ready almost to fall down and worship him. He spent his time mainly in meditation, and in chanting prayers in a monotonous voice to the god whose shrine he was going to rebuild. His thoughts were now less sombre than they used to be. He felt that the scope of his vision was widening. The sorrows and toils of the working classes in the great city that stretched before him, and which he used to share, were in some way vanishing out of his life, and a new destiny was coming to him through this narrow cave, and his devotion to the god.

After a time, this life of self-sacrifice began to tell. The people everywhere talked of the strange man on the mountain-side, that lived all alone by himself. He did not seem afraid of the mountain spirits that are supposed to roam the hills, or of spectres, and ghosts that wander in such lonely places on dark nights, when the storm is raging, and the wind, catching projecting rocks and branches of trees, howls with a sad and agonising shriek. Whispers passed from village to village about the man devoted to the gods, and even in the great city his fame began to be known. Countrymen flocked around him in great numbers, in the hope that the gods might have imparted to him the secret by which

life might be made more happy, and the aching unrest of the heart removed.

There is one feature of heathenism that is in striking contrast to Christianity. I have never known it absolutely to satisfy a man's heart. When a man becomes a Christian, for example, Christ meets every desire and passion of the soul. He never dreams of going in search of another God who perchance may turn out to be greater or better than his own. Such a thought would be treason to Him, which he would instantly reject. With a Chinaman it is otherwise. No matter how much faith he may have in any particular idol, no sooner does he learn of the fame of another, than he will make a visit to it, in hopes that it will bless him in some higher way than his own has been able to do. In consequence of this feeling, the crowds gathered round the would-be god, and offerings poured in, and veneration, deep and profound, was shown him.

He told the people that flocked to him the purpose of his life. He pointed to the ruined temple, and the grass-covered courtyard, and the moss and lichen that had grown over the altar. He told them that to rebuild the temple would be a work of merit which would benefit the region around. The god, whose honour had been lying in the dust all these generations, would be so grateful, that he would shower down blessings on all those that took a share in this most meritorious work. His story, but especially his life, soon began to take effect in a very practical way. Ere long a singular sight was seen on the mountain-side. Men with huge beams on their shoulders toiled slowly and painfully up the devious winding road. A long procession of labourers with loads of bricks next went panting and perspiring up the lonely way, and through the precipitous ravines. By-and-by another set of men would follow carrying baskets of lime. This went on for weeks, for the hills were steep, and it was weary work reaching their destination away up near the top. At last one morning the sound of pickaxe and hammer, and the cheery voices of men, sounded pleasantly in those great solitudes. The man from his narrow cell looked out with stern devotion on his face, but with a background of gladness in it. His dream was about to be realized, and with every ring of the hammer, and every fresh stone and brick laid down, the vision of future bliss became more distinct.

In the course of time the temple was finished: the god, beautiful as new paint could make it, was once more placed in its ancient shrine; and men from the villages at the foot of the hill climbed its steep sides to make their offerings to it. The cave was now given up for a pleasant room attached to the temple, which was to be his future home. No happier man was there in China that day when he removed from his comfortless hole in the rocks, and felt that for life he would be the master of a temple that had been built by his own piety and self-devotion.

One day he was walking through the streets of the great city, when he saw through an open door a large number of men crowded together, interested in something going on inside the

building. He pushed his way through the crowd, and took a seat that was shown him. He little thought as he sat down there, that the fortunes of his life were now to undergo a momentous change. It was a Christian church he was in; and the audience was gathered, some standing, some lounging against the wall, and some sitting to listen to the story of God's love for the world by the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. The priest's heart was deeply moved from the very beginning. Why, this God that the preacher described touched his own ideal. He had wanted to find one that stood outside of the terrible laws that crushed men, and who, without ancestry or beginning of days needed not the countless incarnations by which, he believed, eternal rest and absence from pain could alone be reached. He was breathless in his attention, especially when Christ was described, for He was the very impersonation of the thing he had longed for in the dreary shop, where the sunbeams used to play.

After the service was over, he remained to talk with the preacher. He told him what he had done, and how he had built a temple. To his astonishment, the preacher replied, that by doing so he had only become, unintentionally, a greater sinner. He a sinner! he repudiated such an idea with scorn. He was a holy man, he said, as all the country round could testify. The preacher then showed him how he had been the means of leading the ignorant people farther away from God. Had he not been the means of adding another god to the countless number already in existence? Was not that a sin against God? A chill went through his heart, but still he was indignant; and when he left, it was more in anger than in pleasure. He could not get the words of the preacher, however, out of his heart. A strange feeling of desolation came over him. As he ascended the hill, everything, in some mysterious way, seemed changed. When he came to the temple, the pleasure that the sight always gave him did not now fill his heart. The old tree still stood in the courtyard, and the mountain breeze sighed through it, but it had lost its charm. The idol, too, was there in its gaudy colours, looking down upon the smoking incense, but there seemed a frown upon its face. It did not look the same to-day, and so he hastily passed by it, and went to his own room.

Days went by, but his unrest of soul grew, and to get peace he had to travel down the mountain-side, and away to the church in the busy street. The temple had lost its power to comfort him; only God could do that now. After weeks of anxious thought he became a decided Christian. This to him was more than a mere act of faith. It meant a tremendous sacrifice. He would have to give up his home in the temple, and its ease and luxury, and the annual income that was secure as long as life lasted. The picture of the dirty street, and the mean shop, and the poverty-stricken home that had receded from his sight, came back as though summoned by an enchanter's wand, and faced him, but still he shrank not from the sacrifice.

One day he came down the narrow path that wound down the hills and across the ravines. It

was his last journey. He would never go back again, for he had bidden an eternal farewell to the temple. He was going to resume his place amongst the busy ranks of the world's workers. There was no sorrow in his heart, and no misgiving. The only force that day that brought him down was God, and He filled his heart. He came back to the shop, but he did not remain long there, and so he became a common labourer. He went abroad and got employment in the tin mines. Then he returned to China, and on a rocky islet off the mainland, he carried stones and mortar for the building of a lighthouse, that was being erected for the benefit of foreign steamers passing along the coast.

He never regretted the step he had taken, or even had a lingering wish to return to the ease of the temple. He had got Christ, and in getting Him, he had obtained the very desire and ambition of his soul.

JOHN M'GOWAN, AMOY.

David's Harp.

"GO—find the shepherd-lad, that he
His tuneful harp may hither bring,
And soothe with ready minstrelsy
The troubled spirit of the king."
So ran the summons; then awoke
Soft sounds an angel might inspire,
And sweet as though that angel spoke
Through the swift trembling of the lyre.

The listener lay in silent state
While tender rapture stirred the air;
With such a key to Heaven's gate
Methinks he must have entered there.
And as the youth, divinely taught,
Won from the strings a nobler strain,
Haply the brooding monarch caught
Dim visions of Messiah's reign.

That wondrous Saviour yet to be;
Though David's son, yet David's Lord;
A man to set His people free,
A God to vanquish fire and sword!
The great Anointed in Whose praise
Yon boy prophetic songs should sing,
While Israel wreathed his crown with bays,
And hailed him as her poet king.

For David's harp is with us still,
It daily, hourly sounds again,
When thunders from the organ fill
The minster or the village fane;
And chanted by the white-robed choir,
Or gravely read, or murmured low,
We hear his words of sacred fire,
Who sang so sweetly long ago.

Yes! in cathedrals vast and dim
The harp of David still is set;
And often round some simple hymn
It wakens hallowed echoes yet,
As when he came that far-off day,
A stripling to the palace hall,
With finger swift to chase away
The gloom which conquered mighty Saul.

SYDNEY GREY.



After the picture by Johannes Jaeger]

DAVID BEFORE SAUL.

[in the National Museum, Stockholm.

MODERN DISCOVERIES AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

BY THE REV. GEORGE T. STOKES, D.D.

IV.—THE APOLOGY OF ARISTIDES AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WE have now set forth at very considerable length the description given of Christianity in or only just after the Apostolic Age by one who knew the Church from inside. He wrote it for one outside the fold, and yet we have found it identical both as to doctrine and practice with the testimony which the literature, Christian and Pagan alike, of that age has handed down to us. We would specially call attention to one point, and that is the total omission of any appeals to miracles or miraculous evidence in this Apology of Aristides. We have given at full length all the passages bearing upon Christianity, that our readers may be able to judge for themselves concerning the tone and teaching of this primitive work; and no matter how diligently we may search these extracts we shall fail to observe any reference to miracles as evidence of the truths taught by the apostles. The one great evidence brought forward and urged upon the Emperor by Aristides, is the life, the practice, the habits and customs of the primitive Christians. Their lives were, to use St. Paul's words, epistles known and read of all men. Not that I think Aristides cherished for one moment the modern rationalistic notion that a miracle was impossible, and that the Master, Jesus Christ, and His disciples were only practising clever tricks upon simple people when they pretended to work miracles. I am sure he believed all the Gospel miracles, as his fellow-townsmen and contemporary Quadratus reported them in the account he put forward just at the same time. Aristides indeed expressly states his belief in the greatest miracle of all, the Incarnation of Christ, when he lays down as a fundamental article of Christian doctrine that "God came down from heaven, and from a Hebrew virgin took and clad Himself with flesh."

But Aristides took a different view of the evidences of Christianity, and his contemporaries took a still more different view from that which we cherish. We regard material evidence; they regarded moral evidence as the most striking and convincing.

The Age of the Incarnation, the period of the Roman Empire, was a time of vast material power; some of its constructions cause even the present age to stand aghast with wonder. But the same period knew nothing of moral or spiritual power. Hence we can get a glimpse of the solution of a difficult problem. Men sometimes wonder why miracles were so abundant in the earlier days of the Church, in the earlier history of the apostles. As time went on, however, they became more infrequent. The early chapters of the Acts, covering a few years, seven or ten at most, mention numerous miracles; in the later chapters, covering twenty years, we still find a few; while, in

the time of Aristides, miracles are never appealed to at all when the Apologist is dealing with a Pagan Emperor. Now is not this only what we should expect, considering the nature of the times? Aristides naturally appeals to evidence that is most forcible, which carries most weight. At the beginning of the Gospel, when there was no established Christian Society, whose life and practice could be appealed to as evidence of the truth, miracles were absolutely necessary to gain a hearing for the revelation made in Christ and taught by the apostles. If they had not had that evidence, no one would have listened to them for a moment: there would have been no chance of founding the Church. But once the Church was founded, it was quite different. The Church's life and practice, its purity, truth, earnestness, readiness to die, became to the men of that time an evidence far more powerful and far more convincing than any amount of wonders which only excited their astonishment but never touched even the outer fringe of their consciences. A bad man might be able to work clever tricks or perform wonders of which no explanation could be given: but to see a bad man made good; to see a notorious evil-liver made a model of purity, chastity, honesty, and gentleness; to see a thoroughly selfish man turned into a fount of love and charity, willing to surrender goods, and comfort, and life itself, for the sake of his brethren; to see masters rendered kind, and slaves diligent and faithful; to see, in fact, the exhortations and rules of the latter half of the Epistle to the Ephesians translated into practice—these things constituted a problem of which Pagan philosophy could render no account, and made the lives of the early Christians "epistles known and read of all men."

This was a kind of evidence that increased in power as the Christians increased in number, so long as primitive love and fervour remained. And so we find that the Church increased even more rapidly during the second century, when we hear practically nothing concerning miracles, than during the first century when the apostles laboured and miraculous powers were still granted.

The spiritual vigour, the intense moral power of Christian life, was a self-evidencing witness to the truth, was the motive force of the world's conversion, because, amid the blackness and darkness of Paganism, the torch of truth shone with a superhuman light, till at last the Roman world was conquered, and the light was dimmed if not extinguished by the very glare of the brilliancy which it had itself created.

But why, it may be asked, in reply, does not the Christian Church now advance just as rapidly, moved by the same agency? Why is not the

spiritual and moral life of the Church as powerful still in heathen lands? Several answers to this at once occur. The divisions of Christendom have now broken down and destroyed, even within the bounds of heathendom, that strict unity of discipline which preserved the purity of the early Church. A brief and well-known story will illustrate this point.

About the year 150, there arrived at Rome from the city of Sinope, on the Black Sea, a clever young man, destined to head an important theological movement. His name was Marcion. His father was Bishop of Sinope, but, like many another case, a good father had a bad son, even in the Primitive Church, and was obliged to excommunicate him for most serious moral offences. The son fled to Rome and there sought to join the Church. But the Roman Church jealously guarded its virgin purity. Marcion was refused admission till he should produce letters testimonial from Sinope certifying his worthiness.

Such an international comity, such a stern watchfulness over the moral purity of her members, was a powerful weapon in the Church's hands when waging war against Paganism in the second century. It is a weapon which now lies almost useless, broken, shivered well-nigh to atoms, owing to the divisions and rents in the visible Church of Christ.

There is, however, another explanation of the difficulty to which I refer. The moral self-evidencing power of the Church does not appear so effective now, because the darkness is not so great as it once was. Even the sky of Paganism has been illuminated with reflections from the sun of Christianity. We know what the public life of Rome and Athens was when Aristides taught. Suetonius and Tacitus will tell us, as in the case of Nero, what the highest law-giver and his life were like when as yet not the faintest glow from the Cross had touched public opinion.

But if we take India at the present day, Christianity does not shine, in its moral aspects, so brightly as it did at Rome or Athens in the year A.D. 125, because English law, Christianised as it has been to the very core, has been for two centuries illuminating the dark places of that vast continent, and teaching the natives thereof the sinfulness of sins of which cultured and polished Greece and Rome thought nothing whatsoever. Gladiatorial shows and child-murder, or the suttee and horrible cruelty to the poor and weak, these things cannot flourish or raise their heads in India; and therefore Christianity has not in India the foil for its teaching, it does not shine with the same power of complete moral contrast as in ancient times, simply owing to its own success. We have, however, wandered enough afar, and must return to the study of Aristides' own words.

The Acts of the Apostles receives illustrations from the Apology. The community of goods, for instance, as practised at Jerusalem after the day of Pentecost, has raised some difficult questions, and some have taught that it was a mere temporary expedient, unpractical and unwise, which soon passed away for ever. The

particular shape which the community of goods took at Jerusalem was most certainly very unwise, and soon passed away, but the idea itself took a deep root in the Christian mind, and became the source of one feature in the Christian practice specially noted by the Pagans. The abiding shape which the idea took was this. Christians were not to cast their goods into one common purse, but each one retaining his own, they were to hold their private property as if it were common, and to recognise the right of all their suffering and needy brethren to a share therein. We have a plain proof that such was their conception of this duty from various sources. Lucian, for instance, was a scoffing Pagan satirist of the second century. He wrote a satire upon Christianity called the "History of Peregrinus Proteus,"¹ where he tells of the doctrines of Christianity; how its votaries worshipped a crucified Jew; concerning their gullibility, showing, as in the case of this Proteus, how easily a clever impostor can deceive them and make a nice livelihood out of them, because they are ever-ready to impart their best to those who suffer in their Master's cause. "In compliance with the laws of their own sophist (Christ) they look with contempt on all worldly treasures, and hold everything in common—a maxim which they have adopted without any reason or foundation. If any cunning impostor, therefore, who knows how to manage matters, comes amongst them, he soon grows rich by imposing on the credulity of these weak and foolish men." The idea of the community of goods, the recollections of Pentecost, had not been forgotten all over the Church as Lucian found it about the year A.D. 165. It was just the same twenty years earlier, when Justin Martyr wrote his first "Apology" for the Christians, which he addressed, as did Aristides, to the reigning emperor of the day. He was telling how Christian doctrine was misrepresented, and Christian practice spoken evil of, and so among other points when contrasting their past wicked with their present pure and holy lives, he writes: "we who valued above all things the acquisition of wealth and possessions, now bring what we have into a common stock, and communicate to every one in need."

Then in the next chapter, the fifteenth of his first "Apology," Justin proceeds to quote the well-known passages where our Lord lays down the principles of Christian liberality, such as: "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow turn not away;" and, again, "Be ye kind and merciful, as your Father also is kind and merciful;" proving that Justin believed that the primitive community of goods still existed in the almsgiving of Christians. The same essential idea underlies the account of the Athenian Christians furnished by Aristides twenty years earlier than Justin Martyr. They

¹ Peregrinus Proteus was a strange, notorious character of the second century. He joined, from time to time, several sects, including, as Lucian asserts, the Christians. He seems to have terminated with professing some form of theosophy or Buddhism, for he publicly burned himself to death in Greece, at the Olympic games, 165 A.D.

regarded their goods not as their own, but as the common property of the whole body of believers, as is clear from the following extract out of the fifteenth chapter of Aristides: "When one of their poor passes away from the world, and any of them see him, then he provides for his burial according to his ability; and if they hear that any of their number is imprisoned or oppressed for the name of their Messiah, all of them provide for his needs, and if it is possible that he may be

delivered, they deliver him. And if there be among them a man that is poor and needy, and have not an abundance of necessities, they fast two or three days, that they may supply the needy with their necessary food." The Christian idea is the same at Athens in the year A.D. 125 as in Rome in A.D. 145; the Christians had given up an unpractical and mischievous form of the community of goods, but had at the same time adopted a wiser and more abiding shape.¹

BLYTHSWOOD.

IN these days, when the problem of Foreign Missions—their methods of working, their cost, and their success or failure in attaining their end, is keenly discussed both by friendly and hostile critics, light cannot but be thrown upon the question by the record of the actual experiences of men who have themselves been engaged in missionary work, and who can, without excess of sentiment or rhetoric, make known the "plain, unvarnished tale" of their successes and their disappointments in trying to carry civilisation and Christianity to unenlightened races. The huge continent of Africa occupies, and has for some time occupied, an especial place in the minds of all Englishmen, and of Europeans generally; and missionary enterprise there, from the great names of those who have done and suffered in Africa, possesses interest of a kind which perhaps no other part of the world can boast. The institution whose name stands at the head of this paper is a centre of education and training for the native tribes in the district of South-East Africa, known as the Transkei—that is, the country separated from Cape Colony by the great Kei River, which since 1846 has formed its northern boundary.

In the work recently published by the Rev. James Macdonald, entitled "Light in Africa," the foundation and growth of this institution of Blythswood is described, and the work generally which is done by the missionaries in connection with the Scotch Free Church, to which the writer belongs, among the various native peoples of the district, is depicted with much vigour and graphic power. A great tract of country lying between Cape Colony and Natal has been gradually attached to the Cape Government in the form of dependencies, and the British authority is represented in these by Government-appointed magistrates. The peoples who are found here are of very mixed origin, and are not aborigines, but most of them have similar manners and customs, and speak a common language, which, however, is not a written one. The civilisation of these wild African tribes is, it is easy to see, a matter not only of abstract human interest, but of deep importance for the welfare of the British colony to which they have been annexed; and the experience of the past has

shown what trouble and difficulty the disquiet may cause in the political affairs of South Africa.

Missions in this important field are of no recent date; more than half a century ago Scotch missionaries formed a station in Kaffraria, and notwithstanding wars with the Kaffirs and other native tribes, which have, unfortunately, again and again interrupted and broken up their work, they have persevered, and their efforts have been crowned with growing success, to the great benefit of the natives, and to the honour of those who have fought the battle in the face of such formidable obstacles and discouragements.

Before 1840, a beginning had been made towards the establishment of the important educational college of Lovedale, which has since done, and is still doing, a great work in the training of young natives, both for industrial and missionary life. This institution is on a large scale, including several different branches, and the results of its work have been of a most satisfactory kind. Among those who have been through the school are numbered ministers, evangelists, teachers, lawyers, and men engaged in various other employments. This seems to prove pretty conclusively that there is material among these heathen tribes out of which may be made good citizens and men well fitted to do a worthy work in life.

And here it may be noted that the educational problem, which forms no small difficulty in mission work, has been taken up boldly and in no half-hearted spirit by the Scotch missionaries in South-East Africa. From one class of missionary critics we hear that education is

¹ The very same idea about the community of goods, as practised in the early Church, will be found in the Epistle of Barnabas, ch. xix., where we read: "Thou shalt communicate in all things with thy neighbour; thou shalt not call things thine own; for if ye are partakers in common of things which are incorruptible, how much more should you be of those things that are corruptible?" A passage which again we find word for word in the Teaching of the Apostles, ch. iv., with which may be compared a passage in the Epistle to Diognetus, ch. v. The Epistle of Barnabas belonged to the Alexandrian Church, and is probably a few years older than the Apology of Aristides written at Athens. They prove what marvellous unity of faith and practice prevailed over the whole primitive Church, of which we have given another instance from Rome in a note to the last paper.

altogether a mistake and a failure in dealing with native races—far better, it is said, leave the African to his native state of heathen simplicity, than ruin him by introducing European ideas and customs which will only make his last state worse than the first. Others fear that if a scheme of education is carried out in missionary work, the more distinctly religious part may be neglected.

The missionaries of South-East Africa have all along made education an integral part of their work, believing this to be the true way of awakening the dormant faculties of the natives, and of opening their minds to better things than "their cattle, and the spirits which haunt them," these being almost the only thoughts, according to the author of "Light in Africa," which occupy the mind of the raw Kaffir. Such was the spirit in which the colleges of Lovedale and Blythswood were established. The latter is situated in the Transkei, about one hundred and twenty miles from the older institution, in the district occupied by the Fingo people, a mixed race, of uncertain origin, who were induced by the Government to emigrate in large numbers from the colony some twenty-five years ago. The history of their settlement in the Transkei is of considerable interest. Before leaving the colony, education and Christianity had already been introduced among them, and had made some way, so that the more conservative party in the tribe, who disliked the new faith and customs, felt that the innovating section were becoming too strong for them, and seized the opportunity of emigrating to a new district, where, as they hoped, they could retain their old beliefs and practices intact. This, however, proved not to be the case; but education and civilisation made such strides among the Fingos in their new settlement in the Transkei, that all sections were affected by the change, and the tribe, as a whole, soon stood far in advance of the other native tribes around them. So much was this so, that when the project of a large college, on the same lines as that of Lovedale, was mooted for the natives of the Transkei, by several missionaries and other prominent British subjects (among whom was Captain Blyth, the resident magistrate, from whom the institution takes its name), the Fingos voluntarily taxed themselves to the amount of fifteen shillings per man for the building fund. No less a sum than £4000 was raised in this way, the remaining amount of over £3000 being raised by the Free Church of Scotland.

In the early part of 1876, Mr. Macdonald, the present head-master of the school, first visited the Transkei, and at that time the walls of Blythswood had only just begun to be raised. Many and trying were the difficulties which had to be met in the course of the building; stonemasons had been imported from Scotland for the work, and these frequently fell to quarrelling with the native workmen, or with each other, all which gave the missionaries plenty of occupation during the eighteen months of building. At the end of this time, however, the building was completed, and opened with due ceremony in July, 1877.

Great were the rejoicings on this occasion,

signalised for the native guests by a great holocaust of oxen—for the Fingos have a truly capacious appetite, and did full justice to the feast provided. The British Resident presided at the meeting, when the objects of the institution were set before the people, who had contributed so nobly to its erection. The main purpose of the school was defined as being "to give a sound education and industrial training to the native youth of the country." A secondary object was to educate a small number of Europeans also in the same institution, thus bringing natives and Europeans together, and leading, as it was hoped, to a better understanding between the two races. The school at that time contained a hall, classrooms, a house for the missionary, and dormitories to accommodate one hundred and twenty native and thirty foreign boarders. Blythswood was then opened, and an excellent beginning made; all seemed prosperous; but, alas! in less than two months the whole school was broken up, and the building had to be turned into a centre of military operations, and a refuge for the European residents from the country round.

For some time past there had been quarrels and ill-feeling between the Fingos and the Galekas, a neighbouring tribe, and very shortly after the opening of Blythswood, at a feast which was being held on the Fingo border, the match was laid to the train of discontent, which then blazed out into open war.

The British authorities did all they could to stop hostilities; careful investigation was made, trials were held. But all in-vain; fighting had begun, and not even the attempts of the Governor of the Colony, Sir Bartle Frere, who visited the district in person, were of avail to arrange a peace between the tribes. Sir Bartle Frere stayed at Blythswood while the negotiations were pending, and expressed his approval of and satisfaction with the infant establishment. Soon the indiscreet conduct of a band of police from the Colony brought matters to a head, and, in the consternation which then ensued, the European residents fled from their homes in terror of the violence of the insurgents. In all haste it was decided that the boy inmates of Blythswood must be sent off to their homes, and the place put into a state of defence; refugees were then ordered thither. The families were all packed in, not without considerable difficulty and grumbling on the part of many of them: and when most of the able men had been sent off to the border as volunteers, one hundred and seventy-three men, women, and children remained in the place of refuge.

All through this time the anxieties and difficulties of those in charge of the school may be imagined—the crowded quarters, the difficulty of getting provisions, which were at famine prices, the necessity of keeping constant guard, and the frequent alarms of the enemy—all these were sorry substitutes for the teaching and training-work which Mr. Macdonald and his colleagues had hoped to carry on in Blythswood. But war-like interruptions of this sort have been the constant lot of the missions in this part of South Africa, and there has been nothing for it but to

make a fresh start after each war is over, and organise the work anew.

For many months the war dragged itself along, and not until the beginning of the year 1879 was it found possible to commence the ordinary work of Blythswood. In February of that year a formal reopening was held, at which the Fingos, who had already supported the institution so liberally, readily undertook to clear off the debt still remaining. By this time the disastrous war in Zululand had begun; but this, fortunately, seems not to have affected the progress of Blythswood. On the contrary, a new branch was added to the school, namely, a department for special industrial training, which, like the similar branch at the older college of Lovedale, proved a marked success. The first trade taught was carpentering, and a large amount of good work was turned out by the pupils. This branch of the training received special commendation from the Government Inspector, and an annual grant of £120 was made by the Government towards its support.

But the war troubles of the previous year necessitated no small amount of labour, outside the proper school-work, in removing the marks of the refugee occupation, in replanting, and improving the water-supply. This last matter has been rather a difficulty, owing to the streams in the neighbourhood of Blythswood being scanty, and the drying-up of the springs in the hot season. Mr. Macdonald, the head-master, however, who seems to have been able to turn his hand to almost any kind of work which circumstances required, was equal to the emergency, and did the necessary surveying for the making of fresh channels for the supply of water to the building.

At the end of 1879 the Government Inspector gave an excellent report to the school, both as to girls and boys; of boarders there were already fifty-six, including thirteen trade apprentices; results certainly promising, when the entire suspension of the work for the greater part of the year following its opening was taken into account.

But this state of peace was not to last, and, before many months had passed, the Fingo country was again ablaze with tribal war. Through an unfortunate act of policy by which the Cape Government ordered the disarming of all the native tribes, including those who were well affected, a general feeling of discontent spread among the Fingos and Basutos, and other tribes less advanced in civilisation, and at a time when the British troops were engaged in the Zulu War, and in enforcing the measure just referred to in Basutoland, the sudden murder of a British Resident by a treacherous chief was the beginning of a state of panic and disturbance, which was not calmed down for some time. Several magistrates were besieged in their stations, and others had to fly for their lives.

Fortunately, this rising did not seriously affect the safety of Blythswood, though the inmates were kept in a constant state of alarm, owing to the raids which the enemy made more than once into Fingoland, burning and pillaging as they went; and the whole work seemed likely at any

moment to be again roughly broken up. More than once every preparation was made for the flight of the inmates; but the danger passed off, and, with the exception of offering shelter for a time to a few families who had been driven from their homes, nothing happened to seriously interfere with the regular work of the school, and the term closed in the usual way at the end of the year 1880.

This brief sketch of the early history of Blythswood will give some idea of the kind of work which it is attempted to carry out there, and of the difficulties which the managers of the institution have to meet. Those who have worked in this part of the Dark Continent are convinced that the African, sunk in degrading superstition, and fast bound by the chain of barbarous custom as he is, is a man capable of higher things; they find, too, that the only way of raising him from the mire of barbarism is by seeking to awaken in him the faculties and energies which have always lain dormant, and by example and precept to show him a "more excellent way" than the aimless animal existence which he leads in his native state.

The surest way of affecting a community is by getting hold of the young; hence the importance of such institutions as that founded at Blythswood, in which the budding faculties and powers of the native boys and girls may be developed and directed. The specific training of the school, besides the teaching of trades which has been referred to, and which has been found so important, includes also ordinary school teaching, and sewing for the girl pupils, and above and through all, that Christian teaching and influence which alone can make the raising of the African real and permanent. Of the good qualities which exist in these people there can be no doubt; our British wars in South Africa have amply shown their bravery; like many uncivilised people, they have a strong sense of the bond of hospitality; their fidelity to their chiefs is another virtue, not so well known, to which the author of "Light in Africa" bears witness. At the same time the native will tell any number of lies, without the least hesitation, for their chief's sake, and in most circumstances deception is not considered at all disgraceful, but rather a species of cleverness. The natives fully realise the subversion of all native customs and modes of life which is involved when their people come under the missionaries' influence and teaching. "The girls," said an old chief to Mr. Macdonald one day, when he had been urging him to allow his people to be baptised—"will want money to buy dress; they will next learn to read; then they will despise our ignorance, and refuse to work for us; they will not grind corn or make beer. When we want them to marry, they will say that they must not marry one they do not love, and all our ways will be changed by them."

Another head-man of a tribe complained to the missionary that the young men who received education were no longer much good for tracking out animals; the powers of keen observation, so developed in the savage life, seem to be blunted when the faculties are brought into play, and,

as the old chief put it, "whatever you may teach these young men to see in books, when they come back to us they can see nothing of what is around them." Amidst all the opposition which the missionaries naturally meet with from the natives, who look with dislike and suspicion on the innovators whose influence undermines and destroys their heathen life with its customs, it is interesting to read of the adherents who are won by acts of humanity and self-denial on the part of the missionaries. On one occasion Mr. Macdonald was able to perform a successful surgical operation on a friend of a head-man, who, two months before, had roughly refused to have anything to do with the missionary. By this action the opposition was turned into attachment, and that head-man became a warm friend of the mission.

More pathetic is the story told by Mr. Macdonald of a boy of nine years old, whom he found in a forest in East Griqualand, deserted by his friends, and left to die, because the child had caught the small-pox, and they feared the infection. The missionary took the child, and, at great personal risk to himself, lodged him in a cave—for he could not bring him to the encampment—fed and nursed him, until he was well. Such is the dread of infection among the natives, that even the professed Christians

urged the abandonment of the boy, and all the heathen neighbours boycotted the missionary, and even tried to kill the child. Fortunately, the missionary triumphed, and, when well, the boy was placed at school at Lovedale, and control over him was given to Mr. Macdonald till he came of age. The work of the missionaries at Blythswood involves very much more than the administration of the school, important though that is; there are many journeys to be made, new mission stations to be founded, infant missions to be fostered and developed, influential native chiefs to be interviewed and conciliated, besides general supervision and a multitude of miscellaneous business which falls upon them.

It may be thought that the progress of Christianity is slow in these countries, and that there should be more "results" to show from the amount of work which is carried on. But the old heathenism dies very hard; the power of ancestral customs is very great over these ignorant people, and difficult to overcome. It is very largely to such quiet, unobtrusive work as is being done at centres like Blythswood and Lovedale, in influencing and training the young natives, that we must look for the hope of the future for these deeply-sunken and ignorant races of Africa.



HONEST WILL.

CHAPTER I.

ANY years ago there lived in a village of one of the midland counties, a widow, with two children. Her husband, Dick Thorpe, had been a farm labourer, and was especially noted as an expert hedger, for he came out of Lincolnshire, where there are many who are skilled in all that belongs to hedges and ditches. He had regular work at all seasons of the year, the old Squire liking Dick, and having many a chat with him about the work of the farm. His cottage, at the end of the village, he had for a long period at a very small rent. When he died, he left a nice bit of money out of his savings to his wife, who was a good deal younger than himself; and he quite expected she would do very well for herself and two children, with the bit of garden ground, and a cow, which had plenty of unenclosed ground to pasture on in the summer, and a snug byre, or cow-house, in the winter.

Kate Thorpe had been a servant at the Hall, as under-launder maid, and after her marriage she still went, when she was able, to work in the laundry, so as to bring her a bit of money regularly for the expenses when left a widow. She had also odd jobs, as at haymaking, and the like; and altogether there was little immediate cause of anxiety, while the children were young, after their father was taken. He was a good man, as well as a good workman; and he used often to say to Kate in his long last illness: "Trust in the

Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Psa. xxxvii. 3).

Kate Thorpe's children were two; a boy, William, about six, and a girl, Mary, about two years old, when their father died. Mary was a bright merry child, and she was soon able to toddle after her brother Bill, when he minded the cow, as it fed by the roadside. As he grew bigger he could mount little Mary on his shoulders, and give her a ride and a rest when she was tired. The only anxiety of the mother was on the days when she went to the Hall for washing, or was at work in the fields, too far away to take the children. Then she had to give very strong charge to Bill about minding his sister, and sheltering her from every harm. Bill needed all the charges he got, for though a very careful steady boy, he was certainly not bright, compared with other village boys of his age, some of whom nicknamed him "Silly Billy." Not that he mixed much with them, except at play sometimes, for he had generally home duties to attend to, and his mother could not send him to school. All he knew he learned at his mother's knee, chiefly on Sundays, and short reading of the Bible on other days. There was no "free education" in these days, and no "compulsory attendance," the latter of which would have been a hardship for Kate Thorpe, who needed the help of the boy, to attend to the house, and to mind his sister when she was away.

So Bill grew up, a strong, healthy lad, with a good

appetite, but rather stupid for his age, and knowing very little compared with others with greater advantages. His mother felt sorry for him as he grew older, but said to herself, "Who but Bill is to mind Mary, and the cow? and if I stayed at home, money would not come in, and we should come to want." If her husband had been spared a few years longer it would have been very different, for already Bill had begun to know his letters, and gave promises of getting on with his learning. These thoughts would end with natural tears which flowed; and the poor widow went on year by year as before.

It was all very dull and hopeless for poor Bill Thorpe. His intellect became more and more slow and heavy, from the continuance in daily drudgery, without the stimulus which reading and mingling with other lads must have given. He did what his mother told him, in a mechanical way, without much reflection, and as he never sought information on matters of which he was ignorant, he really justified the name given him by the villagers, and was commonly known as Silly Billy. His heart was, however, not dulled as his intellect seemed to be, for he was not only a truly affectionate lad, but also thoroughly honest and truthful, and in this he excelled many lads who might be far more knowing and clever.

At length dark days came. The old Squire died, and for a time the big house was left only in charge of the steward and his wife, and there was no more work there for Mrs. Thorpe. A little later poor Kate was herself crippled with rheumatism, and could do little outdoor work, and that only with much suffering. She had gradually to cease going out, and had to stay at home. Bill strove hard to get employment, but it was only occasionally he could earn a few pence by work, or by little commissions, which country folk in a village do for each other without payment. Bill worked all he could in the bit of garden, and every thrift was exercised in the home. But by degrees all felt the effects of gradual starvation coming on them. What was to be done?

CHAPTER II.

To be "thrown on the parish," as the saying was, never entered the thoughts of Kate Thorpe. It was before the Poor Law Act time; there were "Guardians of the Poor," but in many parts of England nothing was done by them, while in others such abuses were tolerated, as to compel the change of the whole system of poor relief, which soon followed. Even now, after fifty years' experience, there is much to be done for the right management of the poor. Why should not the Guardians of the Poor, and the Governors of Union Workhouses, have the power to discriminate more than they do, between the various classes of poverty, all to be assisted out of the rates? Why should there not be refuges, like those they have in some countries, or places like the almshouses of old times, where decent poverty could find shelter, without associating with vice? Why should not Widow Thorpe, who had fallen into poverty through no fault of her own, have received outdoor relief, until better days, or until her children could work to support her?

Where, some may ask, was the parson, who is expected to be the watchful overseer of his flock? When Kate Thorpe was for some time absent from church, inquiry was made, and in her sickness and feebleness she was visited, and helped also, to the good Rector's ability. But the truth must be told that he was himself too poor to help others, having a shamefully small income, and also a large family, as too many of the rural clergy often had in those days, and some have now. No hope seemed to lighten Kate Thorpe's lot. They must struggle on as best they could, and they

had now come to the point of selling the cow, which had long been their companion as well as helper.

Yes, poor "Crummie" must be sold, so Kate had named her from hearing a Scotch fellow-servant in other days singing an old song "My Crummie was a useful cow." A former friend of her husband used to advise her all about Crummie, but he was dead now, and though of little use to them now for milk and butter, the sale of Crummie might bring something to relieve their present need, and prolong their struggle for life.

QUESTIONS ON THE LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

ST. PAUL.—III.

1. Barnabas fetched Paul from Tarsus; for what purpose?
2. What was their object in going again to Jerusalem?
3. Whom did they bring with them on their return?
4. How came they to be sent away from Antioch?
5. What was done by way of setting them apart for work as missionaries?
6. Mention the places they passed through on their way to Cyprus, and in the island itself?
7. How did Elymas resist them, and what was his punishment?
8. Where is Perga, and what happened there?
9. How did they find an opportunity for preaching to the Jews in Antioch?
10. What is the most important part of Paul's discourse at Antioch, and who had previously spoken in the same strain?
11. How did the Gentiles show their satisfaction at hearing the Gospel?
12. When the Jews spoke against Paul and Barnabas, how did they answer them out of the Scriptures?
13. By what means did the Jews succeed in driving them from the city?
14. From what other city did they succeed in expelling them?
15. What miracle did Paul work at Lystra?
16. What did the multitude take them to be, and what names did they give them?
17. Show that Paul preached about different things to Gentiles and Jews?
18. How did the Jews show their spite against him?
19. Trace their course back to Antioch.

ANSWERS TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMAS.

NO. VII.—p. 156.—PROPHET.

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| 1. P ray | S. Luke xviii. 1. |
| 2. R u n | 1 Cor. ix. 24. |
| 3. O i l | S. Luke x. 34. |
| 4. P e a c e | S. John xiv. 27. |
| 5. H o p e | Heb. vi. 19. |
| 6. E n v y | Prov. xxvii. 4. |
| 7. T e m p l e | S. John ii. 16. |

NO. VIII.—p. 144.—SENT.—John ix. 7.

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| S ix | S i x t e e n | S i x t y |
| Isa. vi. 1, 2. | 2 Chron. xxviii. | Num. vii. 2, 88. |
| E i g h t | E i g h t e e n | E i g h t h u n d r e d |
| Acts ix. 33. | Luke xiii. 4. | 2 Chron. xiii. 3. |
| N i n e | N i n e t e e n | N i n e t y - n i n e |
| Luke xvii. 15-17. | 2 Sam. ii. 30. | Gen. xvii. 1, 8. |
| T e n | T w e l v e | T w e n t y |
| Matt. xxv. 1. | Rev. xxi. 21. | Jud. xv. 20; xvi. |