

THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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



"THE WAITING TIME IS PAST, THE SKIES
BREAK GLORIOUSLY ABOVE THY HEAD."

The Waiting Time.

"But stand thou still awhile, that I may show thee the word of God."—1 Sam. ix. 27.

THE forest ways untrodden lie,
The frost has bound the brooklet's flow;
The great oaks, when the day-beams die,
Stand shivering in the twilight snow,
Patient though stripped, while rest and strength
Gird them from God, who wills at length
New buds should blow.

And we, whose hands and hurrying feet
Would move too fast in His employ,
Should fret not when He deems it meet
To stay the toil wherein we joy;
Nor fear the empty moments lost,
Sad lest Inaction's fatal frost
Our powers destroy.

"Stand still awhile!" the low voice saith,
And on us falls the chilling shade
Of trouble, sickness, creeping Death;
Our blossoms of fair purpose fade,
And hope is withered at the heart;
We make us ready to depart,
Since useless made.

"Why cumber we the ground?" our cry
Goes up impatient, vexed, and sore:
"Remove us, and our place supply,
If doomed to bud and bear no more."
But, in the after silence, we
The answer hear, the reason see,
Unknown before.

For, in this winter pause, when pain
Has chilled our forward energy,
God's voice grows clear, His purpose plain,
And while our labours seem to die
Renews He our exhausted powers,
Till poor appear those fruitful hours
We mourned should fly.

And soon the message comes, "Arise!
Put forth new leaves—the snows are fled,
The waiting time is past, the skies
Break gloriously above thy head;
Thy withered trophies strew the ground,
Look up from these, for thou hast found
New powers instead."

HORACE G. GROSER.

THE ANDERSONS: BROTHER AND SISTER.

CHAPTER II.—LETTICE'S DREAD.

THE Rev. Robert Kelly, Vicar of the parish in which the Andersons lived, had called under a strong sense of duty, not at all under the drawings of inclination, to visit a parishioner, who, somehow, always managed to give him a repelled sensation. He admired Cecilia, as almost everybody did: and he could have liked her. But he was too keenly aware that she neither admired nor liked him: that in fact she looked upon him as an unmitigated bore. Such a consciousness goes far to render a gentle and self-distrustful man that which he believes he is reckoned to be.

Before Cecilia's illness Mr. Kelly had called occasionally, seldom finding her at home, and never meeting with a warm reception. A succession of rebuffs had imbued him with a positive dread of Mrs. Crofton's dignified lodger, and he could never be "at his best" in her presence. She was not at all anxious to be "done good to," however much he might wish to "do her good;" and as for practical kindnesses, they were a matter rather for toleration than for gratitude, with one of her independent temper.

Once during her illness he had seen her for a few minutes, and then she had resolutely kept clear of all subjects except that of Felix' future. Since then he had been repeatedly to the house,

and he had been always conscious of a feeling of relief when sent away unsuccessful: a feeling for which he took himself to task. Now at length, he was again admitted; but the words which he overheard, standing outside the door, were not calculated to set him at his ease.

No; certainly he would not stay long, but he had to go in. The very obvious escape of Felix did not add to his confidence: and Cecilia was so lost in thought that she omitted to notice his approach until he was on the rug. Mr. Kelly failed to observe Lettice, half hidden by the curtain, and Lettice did not stir, so he believed the elder sister to be alone.

She presented a less imposing appearance on the couch, under two shabby shawls, than when standing upright: yet even now there was about her a curious environment of dignity; and Mr. Kelly had his usual consciousness of being overshadowed in her presence. He was an easily-abashed man, and she was not at all an easily-abashed woman; and although he was her match mentally, she was his superior in vigour of will.

This day he received a more gracious greeting than usual, in consideration of his efforts on behalf of Felix. The result was not indeed what Cecilia had wished; and she was not in



ALF COOKE-LEEDS

WATER LILIES.
From the Picture by James E. Grace, R.B.A.

heart very grateful, but Mr. Kelly had to be thanked. So she roused herself from the fit of abstraction, held out her hand, and even smiled. If he had not overheard those few words, he would have felt quite cheered, but to get over them was not possible.

"I am glad to hear that you are a little better," he hazarded, by way of an opening speech.

"Thanks. Yes. I am better. As much better as——" She hesitated, looking sharply at the clergyman. Had Dr. Rotherbotham informed him as to her true state? Mr. Kelly's unconscious face seemed to supply a negative. "As much better as I can expect to be," she said.

"In so short a time, you mean. I fear it will be long before you are fit for hard work again."

"Yes." An odd impulse seized her to tell him all; odd, because she did not care for Mr. Kelly; but no doubt there was a natural desire for sympathy: she had nobody else to turn to; and she, like Mr. Kelly, believed that they were alone. The impulse seemed to her foolish, and she resisted it. What good would speaking do? "Yes," she repeated, "I am going to make my home for a time with my uncle in the west of England. Lettice, too, of course. Felix is more or less provided for, thanks to you. I am not likely at present to be strong enough for work: and my uncle has offered to take us in."

"I am glad to hear it. Is his name Anderson?"

"No; Bryant. He is my mother's only brother. A medical man; but I suppose he has not practised for twenty years."

"And you have not seen him lately."

"I have never seen him." She offered no explanation of the fact.

"It will be a trial to you to leave Felix."

"A trial!" She could have laughed, the word was so inadequate. Life, apart from Felix, would be mere existence, not life. "One has to bear what is inevitable."

"And God's will is always best for us in these matters: even when it means sorrow."

"Perhaps. I do not know anything about its being best. I only know that it has to be. . . . If I could stay with him till the end! So short a time!" The words broke from her, under pressure of strong feeling. "If I could; but that is out of the question." She tried to rein herself in, to resume her usual manner, though her hands shook visibly. "I do not know why I should say all this," she went on, after a pause. "Nobody can do anything. It is not my way to appeal to other people. If I had not been upset—shaken—The thought that all must soon be over! To leave Felix, not knowing if I shall ever— But such partings have to be borne, of course. They are a part of life. . . . And I have great comfort in knowing that the boy will do well. No doubt of that. He is so hard-working: so bent on success."

Mr. Kelly had been startled by the unexpected outbreak of distress, and thus far had said nothing. Perhaps his wordless sympathy drew her on further than speech could have done: but this he did not see. He was already reproaching

himself for a lost opportunity, grieving over his own want of readiness: and any number of possible utterances, exactly to the point, rushed into his mind, too late. He found himself saying mechanically: "I will do my best to look after your brother for you."

"Thanks; but I am not at all afraid for Felix. He has good principles." Then, as if suspecting Mr. Kelly's line of thought, she talked steadily about Felix' new work.

The clergyman listened and responded; but he was not to be entirely baffled. At the first opportunity, he said gently, "Pardon me! May I ask a question? Did you mean just now that unhappily there is fear that your health may not be in time re-established?"

A moment's pause.

"Yes, I meant that; but I did not mean to speak about it. This is in strict confidence, if you please. Dr. Rotherbotham tells me plainly that I cannot live long. However, I do not wish to discuss the matter."

"And, in looking forward to that great change——" Mr. Kelly spoke slowly, and he was not allowed to finish.

"I have done my duty in life, and I hope that I shall know how to meet my end when it comes," she said coldly.

"If that were indeed the 'end!'"

Cecilia drew up her head, and a red spot burnt in either cheek.

"We may as well keep to other subjects," she said. "Some people love nothing so well as to talk about themselves; but"—scornfully—"I have always counted that a proof of shallowness. It is not my way. Nor is it Felix' way. You will find him by no means disposed to stand personal questions."

"Pardon me! You must not mistake my meaning. I have no wish to press for an answer—for myself. It is no matter of curiosity. I only suggest the question for your own consideration. As an 'ambassador for Christ,' I am bound to speak of Him; of all that you owe to Him, and of the comfort which may be yours in that hour, if you are willing."

"Thanks; I am much obliged, but a different topic is more to my mind. Besides, it has been an agitating day. I must not press for a long visit."

"Then I will not stay longer now; but perhaps you will let me come again. In any case"—for he felt sure he would not be admitted—"if at any time, in any way, I can help you, do not scruple to let me know."

"Thanks!" once more. "I shall be among friends, but I am very much obliged to you all the same. I am afraid I must ask you to open the door for yourself. If Lettice were here——"

She looked round with startled eyes. Lettice was there! Mr. Kelly, just about to make one last attempt, one parting appeal to her better nature, looked also, following the direction of her glance, and was checked.

All through this dialogue the girl had not stirred. At first she remained thus, only because she felt still stupefied with the blow she had had, because movement was still painful, and

coming forward might draw Cecilia's attention to her look. Afterward she sat on, because she could not move. Literally, could not. Cecilia's words fell with paralysing power. Had clear thought been possible, Lettice would have remembered that she had no business to listen to a conversation which was not meant for her ears; but she could not think: she could only feel. Part that followed was lost; but she distinctly heard Mr. Kelly's later question, and the not-to-be-mistaken answer. Utterance could not be more plain. Beyond these she took in nothing; and she was incapable of speech.

Then a wonder crept through her mind: were those two talking still? She might have been any length of time seated there. At the same moment sounded these words: "If Lettice were here——"

Lettice neither spoke nor stirred. She was leaning back in a low chair, with closed eyes.

"Lettice!"

"Asleep, I think," said Mr. Kelly.

"I had no idea she was here at all. Lettice!"

The absence of response was a matter of positive incapacity to speak. Lettice heard, of course; but voices sounded far away; and the floor seemed to mount with her; and heart and head were beating in thick throbs. She wondered dimly—could she get up, if she tried? A nightmare sensation of helplessness weighed her down; and she craved to be let alone, not to be dragged back into what had become all at once a changed world to her. And yet, she would have to shake off this stupefaction. She would have to wake up and smile and talk. Only another moment's delay, and then——

"How odd of the child to drop asleep so suddenly! I never knew her do it before."

"She seems very sound. I don't think she can have heard us."

Mr. Kelly stepped behind the couch, and laid a hand on Lettice's arm. She had not expected the touch, and it startled her into a sitting posture instantaneously. The start seemed, as indeed it was, perfectly natural.

"Lettice, is anything the matter? Come here," said Cecilia.

Lettice obeyed quietly. With that start, power of movement had returned: though she was still dazed and bewildered in mind. She reached the sofa, and smiled as she stood there, while her lips were white, and the wide-open eyes were sombre, gazing fixedly into the air.

"How strange you look, child! Have you been dreaming? What makes you so pale? Did Mr. Kelly startle you?"

Lettice said "Yes," with a mechanical little laugh, to each question in turn.

"Were you asleep before Mr. Kelly came in?"

"I don't—think so."

"Only too sleepy to move? You queer child. And you dropped off afterwards. Was that it?" Lettice's laugh might have meant anything. "Felix walked you too far perhaps this morning. Run and get some cold water. That will wake you up. And you can open the front door for Mr. Kelly, if——"

"Yes, certainly I must go," said the clergyman,

replying to the half-uttered doubt. Lettice disappeared from the room, and he shook hands with Cecilia, remarking: "Your little sister does not seem quite well."

"Do you call her 'little'?" She will soon be sixteen. I have tried lately to make her feel herself more of a woman; but she does not behave like one yet. She is so childish. Lettice always was rather easily startled in her sleep. I was glad to see that puzzled look, because it showed how very sound she must have been. I would not for worlds have had her overhear what I said."

Mr. Kelly was not so sure that Lettice had not heard, but he refrained from suggesting his doubt. He made his way into the passage, shutting the parlour door, and found Lettice leaning against the wall. The singular paleness and fixity of her face impressed him again; and his conviction grew stronger that she had not really been asleep. He stood looking at her with kind concern.

"Something is the matter, is it not?" he said, anxious to find out more, without suggesting possibilities. "Has any one been troubling you?"

"No." Lettice gazed straight before her, and forced a short laugh. "Why should anyone?"

"Not intentionally; but people sometimes cause pain, not knowing it. Or, perhaps, you are not well. Is that it?"

"O no."

"Tell me: will you not?" urged Mr. Kelly. "Something is wrong, I am sure. I should like to help you, but how can I, if you do not tell me your trouble? Perhaps I could do something. Try to think of me as a friend, and speak freely."

Lettice made an effort. "If—if if you will promise——" she began, and then a tearless sob broke into the words, and she fled along the passage out of sight. Mr. Kelly looked after her compassionately, but she did not return. The echo of that heartbroken sob haunted him for hours after.

* * * * *

"Mind, Lettice, I mean what I say. You can't help going with Sissie, of course. It has to be: and I suppose, as things are, that there is nothing else to be done. She will not be fit for work again for months; and she never ought to slave as she has done. But you are not to count that house your home. Just a 'temporary residence,' as people say—not a real home. After the way Dr. Bryant treated my father—— It's all very well his showing kindness to us now, when my father is dead! Why couldn't he be kind in my father's lifetime, I should like to know? Anyhow, I don't mean you to belong to Dr. Bryant; though, of course, one has to be grateful for what he is doing."

Felix spoke in masterful accents, striding along the Parade, and Lettice kept pace with him. She had lain awake all night, gazing with troubled eyes into the happy childhood of her past, and into the uncertain future; and in one night she seemed to herself to have grown years older. To-day the weight of foreboding was on her heavily, and exertion was a struggle; but the last thing she thought of was to make complaint.

"You understand. It's only for a time. At most, only till I can make a home for you both. Perhaps in a few months Sis will be up to teaching again. And meantime something better might offer itself for me. If a fellow is bent on getting along, he is sure to do it. There's nothing like determination; and I'm not one to be easily beaten. Now, mind—you've got to be brave, and not to give in; and, of course, you'll be happy and all that, wherever you are, and everybody will be kind to you. Only you're not to get too fond of those people. Not so as to be in a spoony state by-and-by, when you have to leave them. You belong to Sis and me; and Dr. Bryant is no relation."

Lettice might have suggested that she could spare abundance of affection in both quarters, without defrauding either; but she was not of an argumentative nature.

"I don't know what sort of man Dr. Bryant is, and I don't much care. He may be nice, or he may not. Anyhow, he means to be kind to you and Sissie; and that's right enough, for the time. Only, mind—you belong to me first. Promise not to forget."

She looked up wonderingly. "Why, Felix—how could I? You don't think I'm like that!"

"I don't know. You girls are so odd—ready to take to anybody. You may be as happy as you like: only you've got to remember that your real home is with me—I mean, with Sis and me!"

With Sis, for how long? A stab shot through the girl: and she turned her face away.

"Here, sit down. I can't see you properly, when you poke the top of your hat towards me like that. You understand?—I don't mean to leave you there long. As soon as I can possibly manage to support you both, I'll have you back in Brighton. Not in lodgings, but in a cosy little house of our own. Sis will be none the worse for two or three years of idleness first. I suppose it might be two or three years, unless she gets strong enough to teach again. . . . I say, are you listening? Let me look at your face. I do believe you are going to sleep."

The brown hat had drooped against his shoulder, and Lettice drew it away with a hasty movement.

"What's the matter? Are you tired?"

"I don't know."

"Nonsense. People always know. I believe you are. There!—put your head on my shoulder again, and go to sleep. You'll be all right presently."

He pulled her with rough kindness, into the position suggested, pushing her hat back as he did so. The breeze, lifting her hair, made him exclaim: "I say, what a bump you got yesterday! Is that the mischief? Does it hurt?"

"It aches."

"Why didn't you tell me? Now shut your eyes, and be quiet. There's nobody near to look on."

Lettice made an attempt to obey, but in ten seconds the brown eyes were open again, gazing at some far-off vision, beyond the ken of Felix. He watched her with unwonted closeness. Perhaps the realisation of parting near at hand

awoke a new warmth of affection. She had always been a good little sister: counted rather ordinary among themselves, a not unpleasing contrast to his clever and good-looking self. Now he was studying her purely for her own sake: and the patient sadness of the small pale face and wistful eyes woke in him an instinct of brotherly pity and protection. Had that look been there before, he wondered?

"What are you looking at, Lettice?"

"I don't know."

"Nonsense."

"I mean nothing particular."

"Nothing in particular on the sea, I dare say, but something very particular in your mind. What are you dreaming about? . . . Now I mean to know. . . . What was it? Dr. Bryant?"

"No."

"Or me?"

"No."

"Or Sissie?"

Lettice half faltered a "No," and stopped. "Not exactly," she said faintly. She had been thinking rather of life without Sissie, at that moment.

"You were dreaming about Sis: something or other. What was it? Now I mean to know, so it's no earthly use your trying to hide it. Has Sis been making you and herself miserable about this Bristol plan?—worrying because she can't teach? If she has, you must just not let her. Things can't be helped, and it's no use to fret."

"Sissie doesn't say much—"

"But she thinks; and you know what she is thinking about. Is that it?"

Lettice's lips formed a "No."

"Then you are bothering your own brains about the journey. That's nothing. It will all go off as well as possible. Nothing to mind!"

"O no—indeed—"

"Then what is wrong? Out with it!"

"I'm only silly. If you wouldn't ask any more—please—" Lettice was debating with herself—should she tell him all? True, Cecilia had not meant her to know: and she had learnt the truth by accident; but now that she did know it, might she not speak freely to her brother? That was one side of the question. On the other side—why should he know so soon? Might he not keep his happy ignorance just a little longer?

"When you have told me what is the matter, I'll stop. So out with it!"

Lettice breathed quickly. Twice she opened her lips, and shut them again. Felix bent to look into her face, and she murmured: "I thought—I thought—if Sissie—"

"Well! If Sissie—"

"Were to die—"

Two great tears splashed upon his wrist, and Felix, after one quick movement, said not a word. He had had for the moment a quietus. It was Lettice, not he, who spoke next: and she had suddenly regained her usual voice.

"I didn't mean to say it, only you made me."

"What can have put such an absurd notion into your head?" demanded Felix, brusquely. "Has anybody been talking nonsense? Dr. Rotherbotham—?"

"Sissie always sends me out when he comes."

"Mrs. Crofton——?"

"O no."

"Or Mr. Kelly?"

"No."

"You are sure?"

Lettice flushed painfully. "He didn't, indeed. Nobody has. It is only—only something I overheard Sissie say. Something I was not meant to hear. Ought I to repeat it to you? She seemed to think she—she—could not—ever be well——"

"Well again! She meant she could not be quite as she used to be. Besides, Sissie is nervous. Sick people always are. That is nothing."

"She said—Dr. Rotherbotham had told her——"

"Dr. Rotherbotham may be mistaken. It is all nonsense, Lettice. Just when she is getting on so well! Going to Bristol will make her stronger than she has been for a year past. Now mind, if you don't put this ridiculous idea out of your head, I'll give you such a scolding that you'll never forget it. Sissie knows nothing whatever about the matter—or Dr. Rotherbotham either. It's absurd. Look up, and give me a smile."

Lettice obeyed. She smiled bravely—even brightly—and Felix was satisfied; not noting how quickly her face was turned away again. For himself the instinct of his vigorous youth was to refuse to look in the front any such possibility. Why should not Cecilia recover? Why should death touch him or his? He refused to believe in any such coming calamity.



JOHN ELIOT'S INDIAN BIBLE.

WE often hear of "new languages," that is to say that the speech of tribes or nations in different parts of the world, is, for the first time, written and printed in visible form, instead of being only heard by the ear. It is an arduous and tedious task, and has almost always been undertaken and carried out by missionaries and evangelists. In Africa, the successful labour of the venerated Dr. Moffat, in regard to the Sechuana tongue, the language of the Bechuana nation, is a familiar instance. Similar efforts have been made by the missionaries in the South Sea Islands, in Central and Northern Africa, at the Great Lakes, and the Congo, and in dialects of the North American Indians of our own time. One of the latest is the Cree language in the far North-West of Canada.

A singular instance of a language once current, but now utterly lost, is connected with the name of John Eliot, called the Apostle of the Indians. He was the first European to study, and to reduce to writing, the language of the Indians of the New England States. It was in the seventeenth century, not long after the first settlement of the Puritan Pilgrims from the old country. The tongue was known as that of the Algonquian tribes. Beginning with short primers, catechisms, and confessions of faith or creeds, Eliot persevered until he had translated and printed the whole Bible, a work of immense labour and enormous cost. The first edition of John Eliot's

Bible was issued in 1661. The British and Foreign Bible Society in Queen Victoria Street has a copy of the second edition complete, and possesses also a copy of the New Testament, first edition, one of the most remarkable and valuable library treasures of The Bible House.

It is a beautifully printed work, the curious-looking and strange tongue, all expressed in Roman type. The type was sent from London, and the printing is very creditable to the Harvard press, nearly two and a half centuries ago. The specimens of minor works, catechisms, primers, and so forth, are more neat and artistic than our own tracts and leaflets of seventy years back. The catechism, like our old Shorter Catechism, has the alphabet to begin with, and at once thereafter plunges into deep divinity.

The title-page of the book at Queen Victoria Street reads thus:—"The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, translated into the Indian language, and ordered to be printed by the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England, at the charge, and with the consent of the Corporation in England, for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England."

"Cambridge: printed by Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson, MDCLXI."

This Corporation was a different body from the later Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in the East. It was founded during the Commonwealth, suppressed at the Restoration, but afterwards re-established by the King in 1661. Its president was the Hon. Robert Boyle, the leader of many good works in those days, and the earnest friend of Christian missions. The book is dedicated to King Charles the Second, who is designated King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, and Defender of the Faith.

The Algonquian natives of the New England States have long ago vanished, terrible wars of the English and French, the increase of white settlements, and dire diseases and evil habits hastening their disappearance. The result is that not a soul can now read a word of the Bible which John Eliot, with so much labour and at such cost, prepared.

It only remains to add that a large and carefully printed bibliographical Treatise, issued by the Smithsonian Institute, contains a complete record of the life and works of John Eliot, together with a list of every copy of his Bible and other works known to exist, the last purchasers, the prices paid, and the present possessor. To book-dealers and book-buyers this volume is invaluable, but it also contains much information of a general kind, throwing light on the history of the Northern Indians and early missionary efforts in the New England States, and friends in the Old Country. Mr. Talbot Baines Reed, an authority on all matters of typography, mentions that in a "History of Printing in America" by Isaiah Thomas, one of the series of volumes issued by the American Antiquarian Society, full information is given as to the printing of this Bible. John Eliot was pastor of the Church in Roxburg in the New England States.

WANDERINGS IN THE HOLY LAND.

BY ADELIA GATES.

XIII.



LOOKING WEST FROM THE HILL ABOVE NAZARETH TO CARMEL AND THE SEA.

AN hour and a half of slow journeying, slow out of regard for Yakúb's weakness, brought me to the wooded slopes of Mount Tabor. There are some undisputed things even in Palestine, and I think no one will forbid us to believe that on this very mountain, "Deborah said to Barak, Up, for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand. So Barak went down from Mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him, and the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword, and there was not a man left." Mount Tabor has a great deal of history. Several centuries before Christ, there was a town on its summit, and in His day it must still have been thickly inhabited.

On this mountain, Jews and Syrians, Jews and Romans, Moslems and Christians, have fiercely struggled for its possession. There are ruins of many periods. Fortifications, churches, monasteries, have here been built and destroyed. On its summit there are now two comparatively modern rival monasteries, Greek, and Latin, each insisting that it stands on the exact place of the Transfiguration; while the wisest and most careful Biblical scholars are agreed that the scene of that event cannot have been Mount Tabor, but a mountain farther north. I would have been glad to make the ascent for the sake of the fine

view, and for the historical associations of the spot, but Yakúb was so ailing that I could not ask it.

The way to Tiberias was pleasant. Fertile valleys, slopes clothed with oak trees, and all along a country so rich that there should be no reason for poor crops here. If stony soil and lack of water are a valid excuse for scanty harvests in the south of Palestine, indolence must bear a part of the blame for it here. Farther north, I passed the village of Kefr-Sabt, which merits a word of notice. About twenty years ago the Turkish government generously gave this spot to some Algerian immigrants, and also allowed them freedom from taxation for eight years. They were small loss to Algeria, for the Arab there, though he will tend flocks and herds, disdains to be a tiller of the soil; he prefers to starve in his rags. It is to be hoped that in Palestine he may acquire the habits of agricultural industry that he never seemed willing to in his African home. The latter part of the route was splendid with flowers of many kinds; especially noticeable was the gigantic blue lupin in immense patches.

"Take me to the Scotch mission," I said to Yakúb, on reaching Tiberias.

"To the minister's house, or to that of the school-mistress?"

"I will go to the school-mistress."

A right Scotchwoman was she, shrewd and sensible, kind and hospitable. She said I had done well to come first to her; she had room for me, and I was welcome to bed and board. I could hardly have expected so cordial a reception as I met. Was it perhaps that the Scotch blood in my veins made itself felt in some mysterious way? She took me to the weekly, semi-religious meeting at the minister's, where interesting conversation of the half-dozen present, and the social simple tea, made a pleasant afternoon. At the Sunday meeting there were present a number of travellers who had pitched their tents near the lake, one of whom, a clergyman, gave us an extempore sermon. One of the audience was the fine-looking wife of

Livingstone was remembered all along his way as the good, helpful white man, and his neighbourly love has made it more possible for those who come after him with the "good tidings" to get a hearing.

One day I met the Polish Jew who had joined us on the way to Nâbulus, and he showed great pleasure in seeing me again, and made me come into his house to shake hands with his mother and sister. A poor abode, but they seemed decent enough persons, and met me in a friendly way, offering me also something to eat. I did not fail to go to the Latin monastery, to give them the messages with which Father Francesco and Father Filippo of the Franciscan Monastery in Jerusalem had charged me. I would have sought accommodation there, only that I was so well lodged with the schoolmistress.

On the way back there rushed out from a dingy habitation the Syrian lad who had come from Jerusalem with us. He was downright glad to see me, for we had been good friends. He knew a little English, and by the aid of our twenty digits, our stock of Arab and English, and my portfolio, we formed quite an extended acquaintance with each other's life and ideas. But there was one dark spot in the blue sky of his memories, and he communicated to me with rueful countenance that the trousers I had mended had given way, and were worse than ever. Alas! it was one more illustration of the folly of putting the new piece upon the old garment, and the two from incompatibility of nature had parted company.

Of Tiberias as a city I am unable to speak in complimentary terms. It is a dirty, ruinous, wretched tumble-

down place. We must find some excuse for its "shiftless" appearance in the dreadful earthquake of 1837, which destroyed half the inhabitants, and shook down a good part of the houses. That same earthquake, among its other evil doings, overthrew Safed, and buried beneath its ruins five thousand of its nine thousand inhabitants. Palestine has suffered a good deal from earthquakes, and in the remote past must have been a region of great volcanic activity. In the part east of the Jordan, towards the north, there are volcanic hills, and farther south, in the Haurân, one can trace a good number of old craters. When, on returning from the Dead Sea, I remarked to an old resident of Jerusalem that I thought the latter part of the route to Jericho must be the very same it was two thousand years ago, as I could see no other possible



STORM PASSING OVER TABOR.

a high official, whose exact title I do not remember, and there were several other natives present. This mission was founded by the lamented McCheyne, whose sweet song we all, perhaps, know:—

How pleasant to me thy deep blue wave,
O sea of Galilee!
For the feet of Him who came to save
Have often walked by thee.

This unostentatious little mission is exerting a wholesome influence. I am sure the natives who come into contact with its members must feel their neighbourly spirit—the neighbourliness of true Christianity—and this is much likelier to gain one a door of entrance than the premature presentation of dogma, however true and valuable that may be in its time and place. Dr.

JAMES GILMOUR OF MONGOLIA.

I.

THE nineteenth century has been remarkable in the history of the Christian Church for the growth and expansion during its successive decades of missionary enterprise. The organizations which at its commencement were in their infancy have become great and powerful societies, counting their adherents and converts by myriads, their consecrated evangelizing agents by hundreds, and their income for the purpose of fulfilling the Saviour's Great Commission by hundreds of thousands of pounds. And one of the most encouraging signs in the present condition of English religious life is the earnest and decided forward movement of several of the leading evangelical missionary agencies.

The roll of Christian heroism has been greatly lengthened during the century, and the Christian Church has been enriched for all time by the faith, devotion, and achievements of a host of faithful men and women who have lived and died to plant the standard of the Cross in those dark places of heathenism and cruelty where Satan has far too long held his seat. To the devout Christian mind and heart, Fiji, New Guinea, Travancore, Tinnively, Hankow, Mongolia are names as stimulating to faith in the presence and working of the Spirit of God in the lives and hearts of men as Joppa, Antioch, Iconium, and Philippi.

And when the Christian hero-roll of the nineteenth century is complete, no name will be more worthy of a place there than that of James Gilmour. Judged by some standards, often and most fallaciously applied to missionary labour, his work might appear wanting. There is as yet no long list of converts. There are no records of whole Mongol encampments casting away their ancient Buddhistic faith and practice, and beginning to follow the doctrines and teachings of what they call "the Jesus book." Nothing could well be less sensational than his work and the methods by which he pursued it. And if the numbers openly gathered into the fold of Christ are the only test by which to settle the disciple's place on the roll of honour, then it is doubtful whether the name of James Gilmour should appear there at all.

But we judge that another and an altogether different standard is the true test to apply to the Christian hero. To some the Saviour gives a rich and abundant harvest; from others He almost withholds even the harbingers of the coming blessing. But from all He expects, in all He blesses, the one great act of self-denial, the complete and perfect surrender of every purpose, desire, possession, and opportunity to His own loving will. "The disciple is not above his Master. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master." "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." In this hard school,

and tried by this severe test, James Gilmour has had no superior.

By the courtesy of the editor of the *SUNDAY AT HOME*, the writer is enabled to adduce evidence in support of what may seem to some a bold contention from the forthcoming life of James Gilmour.¹ Evidence is there set forth of such a character that it can hardly fail to make upon the mind of the reader the impression which James Gilmour made upon all who had the privilege of his friendship, or who were brought into any close and direct contact with him—that he was mind and heart and soul wholly consecrated to Jesus Christ, and willing to spend himself fully and freely for His sake on behalf of all men, but especially for the unresponsive and unyielding Mongols. If the choice of a hard and barren field, if the ready descent to a low level of civilisation, if the voluntary surrender of earthly prospects, if the daily and hourly crucifixion of self on behalf of the thankless and the evil, if the placing upon the altar of service to Christ and through Him of service of man of one's all—health, time, money, strength, affections, life—if these things and all that they involve are true qualifications for the high places in the school of Jesus Christ, then we claim them all for James Gilmour. He would have been the last to have claimed them for himself. But it strengthens our faith, it rekindles the flame of our love to the same Saviour, it deepens our consecration to the service of man, it intensifies our enthusiasm for the spread of the Gospel, it increases our certainty of the final triumph of Christ's kingdom, to enter into the full knowledge of a life and a work like his.

James Gilmour came of a good stock. He was trained in a devout, thrifty, God-fearing Scotch home. His family attended Dr. Wardlaw's Congregational Church in Glasgow, and walked every Sunday five miles each way in order to attend the services. As a child he learned much at his mother's knee, and on the Sunday evenings the old family Bible, Scott and Henry's, was read and explained by his father. At school he soon displayed that remarkable acquisitive ability which enabled him in later years so soon and so perfectly to acquire the Mongolian and the Chinese colloquial languages. After a very successful course at the Glasgow High School, he passed through Glasgow University with considerable distinction, taking many prizes, and laying thus a solid and serviceable educational foundation for the later labour of life. He spent the session of 1865 and 1866 in a course of study at the Theological Hall of the Congregational Church in Edinburgh; and upon offering himself

¹ "James Gilmour of Mongolia. His Diaries, Letters and Reports, edited and arranged by Richard Lovett, M.A. With three portraits and illustrations." Religious Tract Society, 1892.

for service to the London Missionary Society, he was by them transferred to Cheshunt College, where he spent two sessions, from September, 1867, until June, 1869.

It was at Cheshunt College that the writer's friendship with James Gilmour began. He was then in the prime of his early manhood, in the full possession of physical and intellectual vigour, and his soul was aflame with love to the Saviour and to the perishing heathen. He retained, moreover, the love of fun, the high spirits, the keen enjoyment of a good joke, and the constant readiness for an argument upon any subject under the sun which had endeared him to his comrades in Glasgow. Every Cheshunt man of that day readily recalls, and rejoices as he does so, the memory of his good-natured practical joking, of his racy and pointed speeches upon all momentous "house questions," of his power as a reciter, and of his glowing personal piety. To know him even slightly was to respect him; and to enter at all into sympathy with him was to love him as long as life lasted.

One who knew him very intimately at this period thus records his impressions:

"At no time during his residence at Cheshunt could there have been any doubt as to Gilmour's piety or consecration to the great work of his future; but during the second year it must have been manifest to all who knew him intimately that there was a deepening and broadening of his spiritual life. As I look back over the interval of years I can see that it was then he began to reach the high-water mark in Christian life and devotion which was so steadily maintained throughout his career in China and Mongolia. An apostolic passion for the salvation of his fellow-men took hold upon him. He would go out in the evening, mostly alone, and conduct short open-air services at Flamstead End, among the cottagers near Cheshunt railway station, and seize opportunities of speaking to labourers working by the roadside or in the field through which he might be passing. He became very solicitous for the conversion of friends in Scotland, and would come to my study and ask me to kneel and pray with him that God's grace might be manifested to them, and that His blessing might rest upon letters which he had written and was sending to them. The ordinary style of preaching towards which students usually aspire lost its attractions for him, and his sermons assumed more and more the character of earnest exhortations, and addresses to the unconverted. When he knew what was to be his field of labour after his college course was over, how solicitous he was to go out fully prepared and fitted in spiritual equipment! The needs of the perishing heathen were very real and weighed heavily upon his heart, and he was very anxious to win volunteers among his college friends for this all-important work. How he longed and prayed for China's perishing millions only his most intimate friends know."

Any detailed sketch of Gilmour's life is out of the question here. Our object is rather to glance into his very heart, through some of the windows which his correspondence and diaries supply. In this way we get beyond the mere word spoken or the outward deed to what is far more helpful, the temper of spirit and the state of soul of which word and deed were but the outward expression.

Here are the reasons he gives for choosing the post of hardship:

"Having decided as to the capacity in which I should labour in Christ's kingdom, the next thing which occupied my serious attention was the locality where I should labour. Occasionally before I had thought of the relative claims of the home and foreign fields, but during the summer session in Edinburgh (1867) I thought the matter out, and decided for the mission field. Even on the low ground of common sense I seemed to be called a missionary. Is the kingdom a harvest field? Then I thought it reasonable that I should seek to work where the work was most abundant and the workers fewest. Labourers say they are over-taxed at home, what then must be the case abroad, where there are wide stretching plains already white to harvest, with scarcely here and there a solitary reaper. To me the soul of an Indian seemed as precious as the soul of an Englishman, and the Gospel as much for the Chinese as for the European; and as the band of missionaries was few compared with the company of home ministers, it seemed to me clearly to be my duty to go abroad.

"But I go out as a missionary not that I may follow the dictates of common sense, but that I may obey that command of Christ, 'Go into all the world and preach.' He who said '*Preach*,' said also '*Go ye into* and preach,' and what Christ hath joined together let not man put asunder.

"This command seems to me to be strictly a missionary injunction, and, as far as I can see, those to whom it was first delivered regarded it in that light; so that apart altogether from choice and other lower reasons, my going forth is a matter of obedience to a plain command; and in place of seeking to assign a reason for going abroad, I would prefer to say that I have failed to discover any reason why I should stay at home."

On the eve of embarking, this was his Christian experience:

"Companions I can scarcely hope to meet, and the feeling of being alone comes over me till I think of Christ and His blessed promise, 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.' No one who does not go away, leaving all and going alone, can feel the force of this promise; and when I begin to feel my heart threatening to go down, I betake myself to this companionship, and, thank God, I have felt the blessedness of His promise rushing over me repeatedly when I knelt down and spake to Jesus as a present companion, from whom I am sure to find sympathy. I have felt a tingle of delight thrilling over me as I felt His presence, and thought that wherever I may go He is still with me. I have once or twice lately felt a melting sweetness in the name of Jesus as I spake to Him and told Him my trouble. Yes, and the trouble went away, and I arose all right. Is it not blessed of Christ to care so much for us poor feeble men, so sinful and so careless about honouring Him? The moment we come to Him He is ready with His consolations for us!"

China is notoriously one of the hard fields of missionary service. It was characteristic of him that he should rejoice when chosen for this field; it was also natural that he should plant himself in the hardest corner of this sterile vineyard, in Mongolia. Mission work had been carried on by Mr. Swann and Mr. Stallybrass in the neighbourhood of Kiachta from 1817 to 1841. It had been summarily suppressed in the latter year by Russian despotism, although the Russian Church

has in some sense continued mission work among the Buriats in that remote portion of the globe.

With the clear and resolute purpose of re-opening this mission, James Gilmour reached Peking in May, 1870. His constancy was tested even sooner than he, in all probability, expected. He had hardly resided a month in the great Chinese capital when the news of the Tientsin massacre of Roman Catholics arrived. Missionaries of many years' experience were greatly alarmed, and feared that at any moment a similar outbreak might sweep away all foreign Christian workers in Peking. Gilmour knew next to nothing of the country. As it takes a rapid student four years to acquire much control over the Chinese language, even he could have made but little progress in the first four weeks. Yet on the day after the news arrived here is the record in his diary :

"The Roman Catholic missionaries have suffered severely, and the Protestant missionaries are not in a very safe condition. We are living on the slope of a volcano that may put forth its slumbering rage at any moment. For example, people ask why there is no rain, and blame the foreigners for it; and, should a famine ensue, we may fare hard for it. Now is the time for trying what stuff a man's religion is made of. We may be all dead men directly; are we afraid to die? Our death might further the cause of Christ more than our life could do. We must die some time or other; now that we have a near view of its possibility, how can we look forward to it? God! do Thou make my faith firm and bright, so that death may seem small and not to be feared. Help me to trust Thee and Christ implicitly, so that with calm mind I may work while Thou dost let me live, and when Thou dost call me home, let me come gladly."

It was not improbable that all missionaries might have to fly at a moment's notice. Many had their goods packed and ready. Gilmour reasoned that departure would be fatal to the prospects of his work. Hence, after a month's uncertainty, he determined to throw himself boldly upon God's providential care and place himself as speedily as possible on the field of his life-work. He left Peking on August 5, 1870, and returned November 9, 1871. During this interval he had crossed the Plain of Gobi twice; he had explored the site of the earlier mission, and conversed with some of the converts; he had visited Urga, the religious centre of the Mongol worship and one of the most wicked towns on the surface of the globe; he had spent month after month in a Mongol tent, living exactly as the Mongols did, sharing their food, sleeping in their beds, acquiring, in an infinitely better way than any book-learning could give it, their difficult language, so entering into their habits of thought that he soon knew them better and more intimately than any other European living, and so impressing them by his life and conduct that they called him "our Gilmour," thus bestowing upon him the title which the next twenty years of his life were to make more and more manifestly his own. He had thus won perhaps the greatest victory of his life. He had cast himself entirely upon the Lord, and the good

hand of his God had been upon him to keep him in all his ways.

The measure of his endurance may be judged from the following extract. It occurs in his diary about three months after he left Peking. It was written while he was trying to get a teacher in the orthodox way, and before he went to live in the Mongol's tent.

"It is true I am taking notice of all I see, but it always occurs to me that this is not furthering the Mongolian Mission in any direct way. I often think of what Dr. Alexander said in his charge at my ordination: 'You do not go to discover new countries.' Would I had a teacher, that the language might go on full swing! To-day I felt a good deal like Elijah in the wilderness, when the reaction came on after his slaughter of the priests of Baal. He prayed that he might die. I wonder if I am telling the truth when I say that I felt drawn towards suicide. I take this opportunity of declaring strongly that on all occasions two missionaries should go together. I was not of this opinion a few weeks ago, but I had no idea how weak an individual I am. My eyes have filled with tears frequently these last few days in spite of myself, and I do not wonder in the least that Grant's¹ brother shot himself. Oh! the intense loneliness of Christ's life, not a single one understood Him! He bore it. O Jesus, let me follow in Thy steps, and have in me the same Spirit that Thou hadst!"

The method of his working may be seen in this extract:

"I went to visit tents a mile or two to the south. There found, as master of the tent, a black man (a layman) I had seen before, and as visitor a lama (Buddhist priest). From one thing to another we got to speak of God and His book. At last they asked me to read them a portion. I read in English a few verses, and gave them the parable of the Prodigal Son in Mongol colloquial. I also gave them a specimen of a sermon, and explained shortly the nature of God, when they all seemed pleased. The lama finished up the thing by saying, 'Your outward appearance differs from us, but inwardly you agree with us.' Coming home, I felt amply repaid for all the uncomfot and solitude, and leading a Mongol life, by the comparative ease with which I can converse with them, and the manner in which they wonder at my proficiency in the colloquial."

Having thus passed a hard apprenticeship, he set to work with all his energy to preach to such Mongols as he could reach the simple and free Gospel of salvation. The winters he passed in Peking, conversing with many of the Mongols brought there at that season by government duty, and living occasionally at the Yellow Temple, a great place of Mongol resort. He visited the plain every summer except when unavoidably detained in Peking by mission work, which he had to take up in the absence of others on furlough. In 1874 he married, and his wife, with a rare devotion and courage, more than once faced the hardships and privations of a life which, trying indeed to a man, must have been doubly so to a Christian lady. The Mongols have no idea of privacy. The tent is common ground. All have an equal right there, and the passing traveller is always welcome for food and lodging. Mr. and Mrs. Gilmour voluntarily endured this

¹ A Scotch trader resident in Keachta.

life—a daily and hourly crucifixion—rather than allow their work to be hindered by giving the Mongols the notion that they were haughty or exclusive. “O Lord, give me patience!” is a constant prayer in the diary.

Many were the hindrances. Colleagues in the mission-field were inclined to think at times that his rare abilities could be more usefully employed amid the teeming myriads of China. The home authorities very imperfectly appreciated the requirements of the work. The conditions of life on the plain were all against any hope of speedy progress. But he persevered, and we rejoice that he did so. It is needful from time to time in the mission field, as elsewhere, to have men who will persevere even to the death in the hardest of fields, and who will do it whether they can see the fruit of their labours or not, believing that God has placed the burden upon them, and that He can and He will take care of the work, if only the worker be faithful.

In the light of this view of Gilmour's character how impressive are extracts like the following:

“April 19, 1873.—To-day had more provocation from my Mongol, and my earnest prayer is that I may be able to stand it all, and not get soured in temper and feeling against the Mongols. I must have patience. Some

knowledge of camels' flesh also would help me not a little. As it stands, I feel an incompetent ‘duffer.’”

“Sept. 12.—We are now in a diphtheria district. I go into it, and hope to remain some time, trusting myself to the hands of God. I am safe enough in His hands. If He can forward mission work more by my death than by my life, His will be done.”

In his official report for 1873 he writes:

“This leaves me with a deficit of 110 taels, 63 cents,¹ and explains how it is that I ask next year's (1874) grant to be raised to 150 taels at least. I had only two courses open to me, either to use up the grants for 1872 and 1873 and stop without accomplishing all I could, or to make full proof of my ministry and exceed the grants. Considering the cause more important than silver, I chose the latter course, and, despite the most rigid economy, exceeded to the above amount. Present circumstances enable me to make up the deficit from my own private purse, and I don't ask to be refunded, but I don't know that I shall be flush of money next year, and *do* ask that the grant may be not less than 150 taels, which is the lowest estimate I can make. As proof of the reasonableness of my request, and of my anxiety to avoid drawing on the funds of the Society beyond what is absolutely necessary, I may be allowed to state that this year, in addition to making up the lacking 110-63 taels, I walked afoot behind my caravan in the desert for *weeks* to avoid the expense of purchasing another camel.”

R. LOVETT.

THANKFULNESS WITH AN “IF.”

THIS is not an uncommon sort of thankfulness. Many people are thankful with an “if.” At least, their words of thankfulness have an “if,” or a “when,” added.

“How thankful I should be, if the next mail brought better news of my son abroad!” says one.

“I should be thankful,” says another, “if the cloud were lifted, and I could see my way out of this difficulty.”

“I shall be so thankful, when I feel better, and can get about again,” says a third.

Are such “ifs” and “whens” wrong? No, they cannot be wrong, because they show that the speaker looks to God for the happy change he desires; and, should it come, will doubtless thank Him for it. The anxious mother prays that the mail may bring a better account, and will praise God when it comes. The person under the cloud prays in that darkness and perplexity, and will be truly thankful when light appears. The sick man prays on his bed, and will rise from it, and go about, with a thankful heart. As far as it goes, this is quite right, this looking to God, praying to God, and meaning to thank God.

But does this go far enough? Ought not the thankfulness to begin earlier? Should we not be thankful without ifs and whens? Should we not all be thankful now?

Yes, surely. Such words seem to imply (though

it is by no means always the case) that you are not thankful yet, but that you will be some day; or that you would be, if such and such a thing were to happen, but not otherwise. This cannot be right, for we are directed thus: “in every thing give thanks.”

Therefore begin now, if you are to give thanks in everything, give thanks now, under your present circumstances. Mix praise with prayer, after the pattern set by St. Paul: “In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God” (Phil. iv. 6). Do not put off being thankful till something or other happens; wait for nothing.

Is there nothing to be thankful for to-day? The mail is not in yet, and you know not what news it may bring; but, at least, you have heard no bad news. Remember, your son is in God's hands, however far he may be from you. When you pray for him, you put him afresh under His loving care. Leave him there, with a trustful and peaceful and thankful heart. “He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord” (Psalm cxii. 7).

There is a cloud over you, and you cannot see your way at present. But, even under the cloud, there is much to give thanks for. To the children of Israel a cloud was even made the token of

¹ A sum equivalent to about £25.

God's presence. God is above your cloud; nay, in it. For it could not be there without His will. A cloudy time may be a time of great blessing. Has not God helped you hitherto? Has He not brought you forth from under other clouds? Is He not near you now? Have you not His word and His promises? Thank Him for all this, thank Him to-day, thank Him before the cloud lifts and the way is cleared. You will thank Him all the better when light appears, if you have thanked Him in the darkness. And, besides, how can you pray in faith, if you have no thankfulness of heart?

As for a time of illness or weakness, while that is a time for prayer, it is certainly a special time for praise too. What comfort God gives you on your bed! How many thoughts of peace He sends you!

Does He not make all your bed in your sickness? Does He not smooth your pillow, and give you ease from pain, and stop the pain from being too bad? And the very hope which you have of being better, is it not He who gives it you? He is "the God of hope": may He "fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xv. 13). And if you are thus filled with faith and joy and peace, and do thus abound in hope through the Spirit, then certainly you will be full of thankfulness too. You are weak, but every day God supports you; you suffer, but He helps you to bear; you are sometimes low, but He does not fail to cheer you and lift you up. Thank Him for daily mercies; thank Him for the bed you lie on; thank Him before He makes you well.

"Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires," or, in the valleys (Isa. xxiv. 15). And, like the Psalmist, love the Lord, not only when He shall have delivered you from trouble, but also while faith assures you that He hears your voice and your supplications (Psalm cxvi. 1). And let faith assure you of this. Believe always that God does hear you, when you pray in the name of Jesus. Then you will praise God apart from all ifs or whens; and you will feel and say, not only "How thankful I should be," but "How thankful I am!"

"Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth Me" (Psalm l. 23): and never more, than when the praise is offered from under a cloud, or from a sick-bed, or while waiting in prayer and faith.

F. B.

Things New and Old.

THE VALLEY OF ROCKS.

I have read somewhere, I think it was of Bonaventura, that in one of his sermons he described himself as in a dream, beholding a vast valley of rocks covered with workers—or those who are supposed to be workers; some wrought, and as they wrought, they shaped pieces of stone. Every piece of stone was shaped to exactly the same proportions, squared to exactly the same shape. And I saw,

said the dreamer, and behold, while they wrought, invisible, white-winged angels stood by, and they took each piece of stone, and bore it, and built of them a palace in the fair kingdoms, among the mansions of light. And I noticed others who were idle, lying sleeping in the Valley of Rocks; but I noticed that invisible dark living spirits were by them while they slept, not to receive the hewn stones, but themselves excavating, and shaping, and bearing them away, to build homes in the dark vaults of lost being. Then I knew that these stones were hours; and I knew that our hours are building our future eternal homes; that as they passed here, so shall we be for ever."—*Paxton Hood's "Dark Sayings."*

JOHN BUNYAN AND DR. OWEN.—King Charles II. one day asked Dr. Owen "how he, being so learned a man, could go to hear that tinker Bunyan preach?" "Ah, may it please your Majesty," was the immediate reply, "if I could preach like that man, I would gladly give all my learning."

FRIENDS' YEARLY MEETING.—This annual assembly of Friends has been held in London for more than two hundred years. Having previously instituted Quarterly and Monthly meetings in different parts of the kingdom, George Fox, in 1672, established the Yearly Meeting, to exercise a general care and guardianship of the Societies. To this Yearly Meeting all the others regularly bring reports, and receive such counsel or rules for the government of the meetings and members within their respective limits, as may seem necessary or advisable. The president is called the Clerk of the Yearly Meeting.

THE FATHER'S HELP.

BY HENRY THORNE, EVANGELIST.

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day."—*Acts xxvi. 22.*

A MINISTER moving his books
To a room on a higher floor,
Had offers of help from a child
Who came peeping in at his door.

The child was his own little girl,
And, pleading with pitiful looks,
She said, as she stood by the door,
"May I help papa with his books?"

The needed permission obtained,
A volume gigantic she found:
The load was too much for her strength,
And, weeping, she fell to the ground.

Papa heard the noise of the fall,
And run to the little one's aid;
He folded her close to his heart,
And soon the tear-storm was allayed.

Glad laughter succeeded the tears,
And delight soon banished alarms:
For pa took the child on the book,
And carried them both in his arms.

Thus often the children of God
Are helped by our Father above,
Who makes them to know by His grace
The beautiful solace of love.

They fail 'neath some burden of work,
But all needed grace He imparts;
And, bearing both them and their load,
He gladdens and strengthens their hearts.

(From "Footsteps of Truth." Edited by C. Russell Hurditch.)

TWO WAYS OF LOOKING AT IT.

11.



ALL M and peaceful though it was on Sunday mornings around the old farm, it became calmer and more peaceful yet towards the afternoon. The birds grew tired with much singing, and took a mid-day rest, so that they might be all the fresher for the grand chorus of the evening; and there was nothing to be heard of them, save now and then the *cluck, cluck* of a blackbird, or the chirrup of a sparrow, or the lazy *tweet, tweet* of a robin. There was no "ding-dong" of the church-bell. Even the wind seemed to be quieter as it passed onward with a low murmur, kissing the tree-tops and fluttering the elder-bushes in the garden. So still was it that you might hear the barking of the shepherd's dog on the opposite slope of the vale.

Elsie had been to the morning service with her parents, had sat in the square, family pew, had heard the clergyman preach a sermon on the beauty of a cheerful spirit, had listened to the simple, honest, country folk singing with all their heart and might, so satisfied with all around them, so contented with their lot. But all these things had had no good effect upon her. Discontent still showed itself in her face, puckering the brow that might have been so smooth and pleasant, drawing down in pouting fashion the little mouth that otherwise would have been so pretty. She did not like the singing. She did not like the harmonium. She liked nothing at all, and the consequence was that she felt intensely miserable. It is strange that if you give way to evil tempers, the first person whom you make miserable is yourself.

After dinner Elsie went out into the garden. Wafts of perfume passed her as she walked—perfume of lavender, of thyme, of marjoram. But she did not say to herself, as she might have said, "I did not see any garden in London so pleasant as this." She passed on to the trellis-gate, at the end, and entered the orchard. One of her London cousins had exclaimed to her, only two or three days previously, "Oh, how beautiful it must be to have an orchard!" but Elsie never thought of that. She walked with her hands behind her and her eyes downcast. There was another gate at the end of the orchard. Beyond this there was a path leading through a small wood. Elsie strolled on beneath the trees, until she came to a tiny cottage, with two quaintly-trimmed yew-trees standing before it, one on either side of the small green gate. She would have passed on had not a feeble, trembling voice called out from the doorway:—

"Oo, ay, is that the lassie I hear? Is that little Elsie? Ay, ay, that's her footstep, right enough! So my little maid is back again, is she, and is come to pay old Daniel a visit? What a good-hearted little maid it is to

think of old Daniel! Come in, lassie, come in, and let old Daniel feel your hand!"

Sitting on a chair, in the doorway, was an old man, bowed and wrinkled with age. His white, sparse hair fell about his shoulders. His head shook as with palsy, and his hands, as he lifted them to his face, trembled nervously. On his knees lay an open Bible, across the pages of which, when he was reading, his hands would wander in a nervous manner. For old Daniel was blind.

"Come along, then," he said, with a smile, turning his sightless eyes towards Elsie, as she unwillingly lifted the latch of the gate, "come along, and let me feel her little hand once again. There! I stroked it just like this a week ago. Ay, ay, what a long week it has been—so lonely and quiet without my little lassie to talk to. And how did she enjoy great, big London? and isn't she very glad to get home again?"

"No, I am not a bit glad," burst forth Elsie, sulkily, "I want to go to London again, and I don't like this old place at all. And I won't stay here. So there!"

Daniel's face fell. Try as he would he could not hide the disappointment which he felt. "Ay, ay, that's it!" he said to himself. And then he was silent. But he still held her hand, and stroked it gently, and Elsie still pouted and beat her little foot on the sanded floor.

"Ay, ay, that's it," said Daniel, again. And all the time he seemed to be thinking of something. "Ay, ay, that's it," he said, the third time. And then a light came into his face, and he laughed as though a happy thought had occurred to him.

"Well, well!" he gaily exclaimed, as he turned over the page. "If the little lassie goes away again, who will there be to come and talk to old Daniel? Who will there be to laugh at him, and tease him, and bring him his meals? Who will there—? Ah, here it is! Now, shall old Daniel tell the lassie a story?"

There was one thing that Elsie could not have resisted, if she had been ever so cross; and that was a story from Daniel. For a moment her eyes brightened. Then she pouted again. But the temptation was too strong for her.

"Yes," she said slowly. "Yes—you—you may tell me a story."

Daniel, who had been leaning forward, eagerly waiting for her reply, chuckled with delight. He drew her to his side, placed his left arm round her waist, and with his right hand lightly touched the raised letters of his Bible.

"A long, long time ago," he said, "there was—"

"Begin 'Once upon a time,'" put in Elsie, pettishly.

Daniel laughed again.

"What a little maid she is for having her way!" he exclaimed. Then he went on.

"Once upon a time, lassie, many years ago, there was a young lad who did not like his home. It was a very good home, but he was not satisfied with it. Nothing could make him happy. He had a kind father, who loved him tenderly. But he thought nothing of that. All he thought of was how he could get away from home. All he wanted was to go away. He didn't care where. Any place would do as long as he got away from home. And so, one day, he went to his father, and he said: 'I am not going to stay here any longer. I don't like it. I want to go away. Give me the share of money that is to come to me, and let me go.'

"I think as how his father must have been very sad and sorrowful when he heard his son say that. But you see the lad had grown so selfish that he didn't seem to care one bit how he wounded his poor father's heart. I think as how his father must have wept very bitter when he went into his own room. You see, lassie, good parents loves their children so much, and knows so well how cruel the great world is, that it is a great grief to them when their sons and daughters have to go forth from the old home. But he was a very wise father. He knew very well that if he said to his son, 'No, I won't let you go. You must stay at home,' he would only want to go all the more. And so he gave him his share, and allowed him to go away."

Here Daniel paused, and again ran his fingers lightly over the verses of his Bible.

"Go on," said Elsie, breathlessly.

"Well, the lad went away, far, far from home. How far I can't tell you. But it must have been a very long way, for it says in the Bible that he went 'into a far country.' There he met other young lads, and spent the money that his father had given him in wild pleasures. He forgot all the good lessons he had been taught at home. He forgot his good, kind father. All he lived for was pleasure. For a time he thought he was enjoying himself mightily. I expect as how he said to himself, 'This is seeing life, this is. This is better than being at that stupid old home!' But wait a bit. It is always the case with sinful pleasures, lassie, that they leaves deep stings behind them, so that people wishes after they are over that they had had nothing to do with them. I expect as how this young lad thought his friends was very nice young men. So they were while his money lasted. They was what we calls fair-weather friends, lass. There is a good many of them about."

"Well, the days went on, and the young man went on spending his money, and 'enjoying himself' as he would call it, until he hadn't a single penny left. And then, to his surprise, he found he hadn't a single friend left either. That wouldn't have mattered so much—for these here friends had never been any good to him—but something else, worse than that, happened just then. A great famine broke out in this country in which the lad was staying—"

"I have heard this tale before," said Elsie. "Mother has read it to me out of the Bible. But go on. A great famine broke out—"

"Ay, ay. You have no idea, lassie, what a terrible thing a famine is. You have always had a good home and plenty to eat. But I expect as how there are many little lads and lasses just about your age in that great big London who can tell you that they have got some idea of what a famine is like. Try to fancy a whole country full of people short of food—starving—ready to give ten times the price, if they had the money, for a bit of bread. That was what happened in this country. Now you see if he hadn't spent his money, this young man might have been able to buy food, even if he had to give more for it. Or he might have gone away to some other country where food was cheaper. But he hadn't a single penny left, and he began to starve. He tried to get work to do, so that he might earn something. At last he got employment. And what do you think it was? This young lad who had been brought up in a good home, and had always had plenty to eat and to wear—this young lad found himself brought down to feeding pigs; and so hungry was he that he was glad to pick up bits from the very husks that the pigs was eating. I expect as how he began to think, then, of his home, which he had left so proud and scornful, and of his dear, loving father. I expect as how he said, 'Oh that I had never left that happy old place!' I am sure he did; for at last, one day, when he could bear it no longer, he said, 'I will go back again to my father. Home is the best place after all. Even my father's

servants have bread to eat while I am dying of hunger. I will go back, and I will ask him to let me be one of his servants, for I have sinned against him, and have neglected him, and have no more right to be called his son.' And so, back he went, walking all the weary way—back like a beggar, lassie—back to the old home! What a change there was in his feelings. Home seemed the best place in the world to him now. He had learned a lesson, you see—such a lesson as he never forgot. And what do you think his father did when he saw him. He ran to meet him, and gave him a right royal welcome, and had a great feast prepared for him, and gave him new clothes to wear instead of the ragged ones he had on, and took him back again as his son. And you may be sure that lad had never wanted to leave home again. That's just how it is, you see. We never finds out how well off we are until we gets something worse to put up with."

"A discontented heart, lassie, is one o' the saddest things on the face o' the earth. It brings a blight an' a darkness on the whole life. There is no happiness possible where there is a discontented heart. No matter where it be or how many blessin's it may have, it will never, never find rest or happiness. Pray God, lassie, that He may make you satisfied with your lot in life, so that your heart may be full o' peace and joy."

There was a long silence after Daniel had ceased to speak. Elsie stood there looking very hard at the gate, with a colour in her cheeks very much like a blush of shame, while Daniel smoothed her hand tenderly. Suddenly Elsie turned to him, and throwing her arms around his neck, burst into tears. I don't know all she said to him; but I do know that one thing she said, smiling through her tears, after he had talked to her in a low voice for a few moments, was this:

"I don't want to eat pigs' food, and I do love my father and mother, and I would rather stay at home than go anywhere!"

And I know that it was not the same Elsie who went back to the house that afternoon, all brightness and smiles.

HARRY DAVIES.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE EXERCISE.

NO. III.—p. 288.—GAD—ASA—DAN.

G A D		2 Sam. xxiv. 14
A S A		2 Chron. xv. 1-7.
D A N		Gen. xlix. 16, 17.

KEY TO THE LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

ST. PAUL.—IV.—p. 304.

(1) Acts xv. 1; (2) xv. 2; (3) xv. 7, 12, 13; (4) Gal. ii. 9; (5) Acts xx. 19, 20, 28, 29; (6) xx. 36, 38; (7) Col. iv. 10; (8) Acts xv. 40; 1 Thess. i. 1; (9) Acts xvi. 1; (10) xvi. 3; (11) xviii. 18; xxi. 20-26; (12) 1 Cor. ix. 20; (13) Acts xvi. 6, 7, 9; (14) xvi. 11; (15) Ps. cxxxvii. 1; (16) Acts xvi. 16-19; (17) xxi. 20-21; (18) xvi. 27-33.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XVII.—p. 304.—DILIGENT.—Prov. xiii. 4; xii. 24; x. 4, 21.

D eceit		Prov. xii. 5, 20.
I nstruction		Prov. iv. 13.
L oyo		Prov. x. 12; xvii. 9.
I niquity		Prov. xxii. 8.
G race		Prov. iii. 34.
E vil		Prov. i. 10, 16; ii. 14.
N et		Prov. i. 17. [23.
T ruth		Prov. xxii. 21; xxiii.