

THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

THE WOOL-CARDER OF MEAUX.



"BLESSED BE CHRIST!" CRIED HIS MOTHER, "AND WELCOME BE HIS PRINTS AND MARKS!"

SOON after the Reformation broke out in Germany, the doctrines by which it was sustained entered sunny France to find many adherents. The Lutheran opinions—which
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meant in the main a revival of the evangelical faith which had been the life of the Primitive Church—were mightily stimulated by the publication of the French translation of the New Testament in

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the year 1523. Jacobus Lefèvre, is with some justice regarded as the Tyndale of France; and he gave to the people that bread of life which had sustained his own soul. In the preface he openly accepted the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, as the sinner's only hope. Though he was at that time a very aged man, Lefèvre was able to complete the translation of the entire Bible in 1530; and a high authority tells us, that the work "at once took a high place, has often been reprinted, and has, indeed, been the basis of all subsequent French versions." The effect of the circulation of the book was immediate. Stealthily, as it were, the copies found their way through the land, carried in this direction and in that by faithful men who understood the power of the Word. People read with the wonder of those who make a new discovery; the Scriptures went to their hearts with all the force and freshness of a new revelation.

One of the centres in which the doctrines were most gladly received was Meaux, a small manufacturing town, and the district became the seat of an evangelical church. For a time Bricconnet, the bishop and the friend of the pious Queen Margaret, sister of King Francis I., was himself an earnest preacher of the Word. So great was the revival in all directions, that one might have supposed that the winter of superstition and formality was over, and that the springtide of a new era was opening. The people of Meaux were for the most part of the artisan class, the majority being employed in the wool trade. A chronicler of the sixteenth century says that, "In many was engendered so ardent a desire to know the way of salvation, that artisans, carders, spinners, and combers, employed themselves, while engaged in manual labour, in conversing on the Word of God, and deriving comfort from it. In particular, Sundays and festivals were employed in reading the Scriptures, and enquiring after the goodwill of the Lord."

According to the historian, "Meaux had become a focus of light;" and a knowledge of the Gospel became diffused among the labouring population of neighbouring places. At one time the bishop himself was so zealous for the truth, that he charged the people not to change with him should he ever prove unfaithful. The day of the bishop's fall was nearer than he suspected, however, and the furious opposition, denunciation, and threatenings of the monks became too much for him. Bricconnet believed the Gospel; but the world had a stronger hold on him than the truth, and he recanted.

Before the revival broke out in Meaux the wool-carder John Leclerc had been one of the most servile followers of the priests; but the evangelical light entered his household, his wife and two sons were converted, and John began to ask himself whether there was not something more in what might look like new doctrines than he had at first suspected. He was soon numbered among the band of believers. The reformers grew more bold and sanguine day by day. What did they care for priests and monks when their hearts were fixed on the true rock of Salvation?

The grace of God which he had received into

his heart filled Leclerc with that zeal and courage which fitted him to become a leader of his humble associates; and thus he was soon recognised as the leader of the evangelical church in Meaux. The wool-carder's zeal in the new service carried him quite away; he knew nothing of the prudence which many friends of the evangelical faith would fain have seen him exercise. It was not enough to teach and exhort the disciples of Christ in the assembly; Leclerc visited the members of the church in their households, to confirm them in the faith and to urge them to remain steadfast. Even beyond that, it is said of him that "he wished to see the edifice of the papacy crumbling to pieces, and France, from amid its ruins, turning with a shout of joy towards the Gospel." While musing on such things designs were formed in the mind of Leclerc which proved that his boldness exceeded even that of Luther. If Rome and the pope were anti-Christ whom the Lord was about to consume with the breath of his mouth, why not proclaim the fact to the world? He knew nothing of nervous shrinking; he wrote out what he had to say and posted the paper on the gate of Meaux Cathedral. No such scene as that which followed had been witnessed in the city since it had become the seat of a bishop. The crowd which assembled at the gate was overcome with astonishment; the monks and priests were correspondingly enraged. It was bad enough when the arch-heretic of Wittenberg had attacked the pope in a similar way; but for a mere working man to assail the church was past all bearing. The clamour of the Franciscans for Leclerc to be made a fitting example of was too great to be resisted. The offender was arrested and cast into prison.

A trial followed. The sentence on the wool-carder was, that he should be beaten through the streets of Meaux for three days successively—beaten with rods. "Leclerc, with his hands tied and his back bare, was led through the streets, and the executioners let fall upon his body those blows which he had brought upon himself by attacking the bishop of Rome," says the historian. "An immense crowd followed the procession, the course of which might have been traced by the blood of the martyr." In the main, those who looked on and followed were probably in sympathy with the monks and priests who seemed capable of any cruelty in support of their cause. Some cried out in rage against him; others, more compassionate looked on in silence, or gave expression to their abhorrence of the scene. But there was one, however, who with unfaltering "eye and tongue" encouraged the confessor to bear and brave all for Christ's sake. The woman who showed this heroism and dependence upon God was the mother of Leclerc. Her gentle voice mingled with the savage cries of the bloodthirsty throng—"Blessed be Christ! and welcome be His prints and marks!" This she said when her son was branded as a heretic in the face with hot irons. Thus did this Frenchwoman of the sixteenth century, as Merle d'Aubigné remarks, fulfil the commandment of the Son of God: "He that loveth his son more than Me is not worthy of Me."

Such boldness, and at such a moment, merited signal punishment; but this Christian mother had appalled the hearts both of priests and soldiers. All their fury was controlled by a stronger arm than theirs. The crowd, respectfully making way, allowed the martyr's mother slowly to regain her dwelling. The monks, and even the town-sergeants, gazed on her without moving. "Not one of her enemies dared lay hands upon her," said Theodore Beza.

As experience has always proved, the evangelical doctrines could not be suppressed by angry priests and the hangman. Leclerc went to Rosay and then to Metz. Meanwhile, the poor working people, who had received the evangelical doctrines, still held their secret meetings. They would assemble in the house of one of their number, in the depths of a forest, or in the unsuspected seclusion of a cave. In any case they met together, read the Scriptures, prayed and encouraged one another in holding the faith. Some fell away; but not such as had really received the Gospel in their hearts.

In Metz and about Lorraine, Leclerc still continued to instruct the ignorant, and to build up those who had accepted the faith. He appears to have been no more discouraged by the savage punishment he had received than the Apostle Paul himself was disconcerted by similar treatment in the primitive age. On the contrary, he is thought to have been even imprudent in his zeal. As he read the terrific denunciations of idolatry in Scripture, the burning words seemed to be spoken directly from heaven to himself, and he would not have been true to himself if he had failed to act according to his light.

In a Romish sense, Metz was a superstitious city, and the common people were almost wholly given up to idolatry. A short distance away in the suburbs there was a noted chapel, furnished with an image of the Virgin and certain "saints," and to which the priests with a great following periodically resorted. One of these festivals was about to take place, and the soul of the pious wool-carder was stirred within him when he thought of the poor people being thus led astray when they should be instructed in the things of Christ. What had the Lord Himself spoken? "Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works; but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images." Again the words seemed to be spoken to himself. Had Leclerc advised with some of his more prudent comrades in the faith, they would have advised him not to act rashly at such a time; but this man, overcome by zeal for what he conceived to be the cause of the Lord, knew nothing of worldly prudence.

In the stillness of evening Leclerc went to the chapel, or to what was to him the house of idols, in and around which the already expectant people would crowd on the morrow. He was there alone, and for some time he remained looking upon the images, his heart becoming filled with indignation when he thought of the revival of paganism in the name of Christianity which these images represented. Then he arose, and

seizing one of the "saints," hurled it down with all his force to the floor, and the fragments were scattered in front of the altar. Then he took hold of another and did likewise, until every one of the images resembled Dagon when the Philistines found him broken in pieces. The wool-carder returned to Metz; but there were those who saw the image-breaker enter the town.

On the following morning the old Lorraine city was all astir betimes; the bells rang merrily, and the people in their holiday clothes turned out into the streets to keep the festival of the "saints." A great crowd, preceded by the principal churchmen of the place, was seen moving towards the chapel in the suburbs. The old sixteenth century chronicler quaintly tells us what next happened. When the throng came "to the place of idolatry, to worship as was their wont, they found all their blocks and stocks almighty lie broken upon the ground; at the sight whereof they, being mightily offended in their minds, set all the city agog, to search out the author thereof, who was not hard to be found." Everybody knew that the wool-carder was no friend of images and the superstitious celebrations to which they gave rise, so that he was at once suspected and arrested.

Leclerc had no desire to conceal anything; he confessed all, at the same time taking the opportunity to confess Christ before his enemies as the one Saviour to be preferred before all saints and images. The outspoken boldness of the Christian mechanic only increased the rage of his enemies; and being taken before the judges he was at once condemned to be burned alive, all such frightful tortures being added as the inventive genius of inquisitors could think of. His arms were broken in several places; he was mutilated with red-hot pinchers, and otherwise treated in a manner such as the deadly hatred of the powers of darkness alone could have inspired. What was the Divine support given to a martyr in such an hour of fiery trial? One thing appears to be certain, that it was greater than we are able to realise: for otherwise, how are we to account for a man's apparent peace of mind, and settled determination still to confess his Lord even in the fire? In a loud clear voice, Leclerc said in the words of the Psalmist: "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not. They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not. They have hands, but they handle not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them: so is everyone that trusteth in them. O, Israel, trust thou in the Lord; He is their help and their shield."

The martyr was burned at a slow fire in order to increase his torments, but all that the cruelty of his murderers could devise seemed only to have the effect of increasing his triumph in his Lord and the everlasting gospel.

Thus lived and died the first martyr of the Reformation in France. The memory of Leclerc, the humble wool-carder, is still green in Metz and Lorraine.

G. H. P.

THE ANDERSONS: BROTHER AND SISTER.

CHAPTER XII.—FOUND! AND WHERE?

AS days went on, however, Theodosia was not satisfied. She had had her will: but results did not shape themselves according to her expectations. The money was still lost—so far as Dr. Bryant was concerned—and suspicion pointed its finger direct at Lettice. Moreover Lettice still declined to refute that suspicion by denial. Yet the separation between her husband and Lettice for which Theodosia craved, had not come about. Though the Doctor called himself “displeased” with Lettice, it was a calm and affectionate displeasure, devoid of heat; rather indeed an acknowledgment of what he ought to feel, than a showing of what he did feel. He did not believe that Lettice had helped herself to the money: he only thought she had not treated him with becoming openness: and he said so to his wife, plainly. No arguments shook his opinion.

Unpaid bills had to be paid, and the doctor supplied his wife with a 20*l.* cheque uncomplainingly. He would not even tell her how careless she had been—perhaps because it was useless, perhaps because he disliked to rouse her self-assertive annoyance. To suggest that Theodosia had done anything not perfectly wise and right, meant always a wordy outburst on her part. In hopes of finding the lost note, he instituted various inquiries, but with no result. Vain, too, was his effort to shield Lettice from general suspicion. Theodosia took that matter into her own hands, and the Doctor had very limited power over his wife’s tongue. If he had but known it, the one real power which he did possess was through Keith’s interests, and the future disposition of his money. The one thing which would have restrained Theodosia, would have been the knowledge that aught she said or did might harm her boy’s prospects. The crooked path upon which she had entered was for Keith’s sake—at least so she counted it to be. Jealousy and ill-temper had also no small hand in the matter. Theodosia knew, and could not forgive her boy’s love for Lettice.

True, the two did not indulge before her in affectionate demonstrations. Keith had sense enough to see that such demonstrations would bring trouble: and as a rule he abstained, reserving bear-like hugs for Theodosia’s absence. But love is not easily hidden for any length of time. Keith might put on spoilt-child airs, and speak with a certain imperiousness to Lettice; yet the look in his eyes when he turned to her was unmistakable; and even if Theodosia had doubted, the servants and villagers were not loath to supply her with the unwelcome information. “Master Keith do care for Miss Lettice and no wonder!” “He’s that devoted to her!” “Well, I says he just worships the ground she treads on!” These and other like remarks could

not be ignored, and they were as gall and worm-wood to the heart of Theodosia. She never quoted them, and she persistently treated Lettice as a person of no account in the household; but deep down in her own mind she knew that Keith loved Lettice with a love which he did not give to herself. For the one was the affection of relationship only; the other was the love which grows and is sustained by what the loved one intrinsically is. Where both co-exist, the tie becomes very strong indeed; but the first without the second is apt to prove more of a trial than a joy in life, if not to snap altogether. Theodosia knew, and smarted under the knowledge, that this higher love of her boy’s heart was given to Lettice, not to herself; yet she made no effort to become different, that so she might win it. She only scorned and hated Lettice for having what she had not.

In fear of what her husband might do, Theodosia had effectually silenced Keith’s prattle as to the lost bank-note. The boy had his own thoughts, doubtless; thoughts which caused no diminution of his love for Lettice; but before her and Dr. Bryant he did not again allude to the subject, during many weeks.

To lie under suspicion could not but mean sharp suffering to Lettice’s sensitive nature; and the suffering did not lessen with time. True, Keith was silent; and the servants in the house scouted as utterly false Mrs. Bryant’s accusation; so in this quarter Lettice had no needless pain to bear. But among acquaintances, and even in the village, she could not but be aware that the thing was known. Askance glances and unpleasant whispers were only too patent. Everybody had heard the tale.

Yet these things, disagreeable as they were, she could better endure than Theodosia’s sneers. To have it perpetually thrown in her teeth, that she had done what her whole being loathed, and to be unable to deny the same, for fear of diverting suspicion upon Felix, was hard—especially hard, because the agony of shame was real for the possibility that he might be guilty. There lay the sting. Had she been sure of his innocence, she could have held up her head, and gone forward cheerily. That which made her droop and grow thin, through succeeding weeks, was not the perpetual pricking of Theodosia’s gibes alone, though they did prick sharply. It was rather the dread, ever-present, that Felix might actually have done the deed of which she was accused.

Only she did not know. There was no certainty. Had there been, the question must have arisen, whether she was right to hide the truth from Dr. Bryant. So long as uncertainty existed, her main care was to avert from Felix a suspicion which might be totally undeserved.

Writing to Felix, she spoke of what had occurred, mentioning that the bank-note had been left loose on the desk that afternoon, and asking whether he had observed it. A reply was long in coming; and when it came it contained no allusion to what she had said. The silence might arise either from guilt, or from indifference. Felix seldom answered piecemeal her items of news; still, in this case it perhaps had a serious signification.

She could not at all times feel confident that Dr. Bryant believed in her innocence. There was a slight change in his manner—too slight to be apparent to Theodosia's superficial observation: decided enough to mean sorrow to Lettice,—a slight loss of the old confiding affection. It seemed to Lettice that he watched her soberly, and waited anxiously, holding the expression of his love in leash, till matters should become more clear. The rift was a small one: and as weeks went by it narrowed rather than widened; but it brought unhappiness to Lettice, even while to Theodosia it meant disappointment.

"I thought you meant to take Lettice for a day's excursion somewhere," said Theodosia.

The remark excited considerable surprise. Theodosia to wish Lettice a pleasure!

"I did speak of such a plan," the Doctor responded moderately.

"I wish you would fix the day. I shall be glad to have you both out of the way for a few hours. For house-cleaning purposes."

Another shock of surprise! Theodosia had always declared on such occasions that Lettice could not be spared.

"Would you like to go, Lettice?" The girl's face glowed. "Well, I am willing enough. Where shall it be? To the top of West Hill? I don't mind if we name to-morrow. The sooner the better this fine weather."

Lunch was over, and Dr. Bryant arose, to find Lettice at his elbow.

"Ought I—?" she whispered.

"Ought you—what?"

"Have such a treat, just now—when you are not pleased with me?"

The Doctor looked steadily into her eyes.

"If I believed that you really had done that, child, I should demur. But—I do not. Breakfast at 8.30, sharp!"

"I shall have your room thoroughly turned out, Lettice. It is a good opportunity," said Theodosia, in an unwontedly agreeable manner.

Lettice was perplexed again: since she saw no need for such an opportunity. The room could have been "turned out" any day, without the slightest difficulty. She supposed, however, that in some manner Theodosia meant kindness.

A faultless morning dawned, and the Doctor was early astir, eager as a boy for his treat. He and Lettice were seldom permitted a whole day together, unchecked: and whether he were or were not still judicially "displeased" with the girl, her companionship gave him satisfying pleasure. By nine o'clock breakfast was over, and the Doctor stood upon the front doorstep,

basket in hand, with the day's provisions. Lettice ran downstairs, and Theodosia emerged from the breakfast-room.

"I suppose I am not to expect you back until dinner-time," she said.

"Hardly! Such a day as this! Come, Lettice. Ready?"

"One moment, Lettice. I want to have all your boxes moved, and one or two are too heavy. Are your keys upstairs?—in case we should have to lift out a few things to lighten them?"

"Pish, my dear!" remonstrated Dr. Bryant, and a flood of colour rushed into Lettice's face. The Doctor looked at her curiously.

"Are the keys upstairs?" repeated Theodosia.

"I don't think the boxes are so very heavy," faltered Lettice.

"Much too heavy for the maids to drag about," said Theodosia decisively. "Quick—where are the keys?"

"Come, child," said the Doctor.

"The keys, Lettice!"

"Just inside my desk—and the desk is not locked," murmured Lettice. "But"—with an effort which brought another rush of colour—"please, please, don't move any of the things that belonged to Sissie."

"Why not?"

Lettice could not have told why. Tears filled her eyes.

"Which box are they in?"

"The big one—underneath another. Please may that wait till I am at home?"

"I'll see—if it is not too heavy."

Which of course it would be, seeing that it was the heaviest. Lettice followed Dr. Bryant slowly, her pleasure marred for at least an hour. The idea of Theodosia turning over and handling with cold critical fingers all those sacred relics of the loved past, was painfully repugnant to Lettice. She almost felt at first as if she must give up the excursion, and stay at home to protect her treasures. The thought of Theodosia's sneering laugh, and careless toss to one side of dresses worn by Sissie, knick-knacks valued by Sissie, books treasured by Sissie, sent a positive shudder through the girl. Many of these things she would naturally have had out in her room for use, but she had always been restrained by the dread of Theodosia's chilling remarks and questions. Theodosia now had stolen a march upon her.

Another recollection had helped to hinder her ready acquiescence. A half-written letter to Felix lay in her desk, speaking of Theodosia in terms which, however true and moderately expressed, and by no means unkind, were not intended for Theodosia's eyes. In searching for the keys Theodosia could hardly fail to come upon the letter. This would have been a matter of indifference, if Lettice could have felt sure that Theodosia was honourably incapable of reading another person's letter: but no such confidence was possible. She knew too well that Theodosia was not honourable. The small wrong of the letter, however, went down and sank into nothing before the real pain of having her cherished treasures at Theodosia's mercy.

"Eh, Lettice! What is the matter?" asked the Doctor.

Lettice looked up silently. She had not heard the question, till it was twice repeated.

"Something is disturbing you, child."

"Oh, nothing—I mean nothing really of consequence," said Lettice cheerfully. "It was only—about my room."

"What about it?"

"Mrs. Bryant wanted to be able to open my boxes. She said they would be too heavy to move. I don't know why—they never have been." Lettice usually made it her rule never to complain to the Doctor of his wife; but resentment was for once too strong to be mastered. "I shouldn't care with any of them—except one."

"Do you keep your boxes in your bed-room?"

"Yes. I don't mind. Mrs. Bryant said there was not room anywhere else in the house. And I shouldn't like that one to go—the biggest."

"Why?"

"Sissie's things are all in it——" very low.

"Theodosia will not hurt them, child." He could not enter into the girl's feelings.

Lettice shivered, and said—"No."

"Then what are you afraid of?"

"I am not—afraid."

"Not of anything? I don't understand." Dr. Bryant was regarding her attentively.

"It isn't being afraid. She will not hurt anything—of course. It is only—I don't think I can explain. I don't like the things I love so much—to be—to be handled—by——"

"By one whom you do not love! Is that it?"

"Oh, I did not mean—I do want to love Mrs. Bryant."

"I would not give way to that feeling, Lettice."

"I do try not," she murmured.

"And to-day you will be wise to banish all recollection of the box. It cannot be helped now, —and we cannot go back, to tell my wife that you do not wish her to touch those things. It would be—rather an invidious thing to do. . . . After all, the feeling is mere sentiment, and not a very healthy kind of sentiment. . . . Could you not make a better use of your sister's possessions, than to keep them locked up—useless to yourself and to everybody?"

"I don't know. I didn't think of that before." Tears came fast.

"Well, give a little thought to the question when you get home. Now you have to forget it, and to make the most of this perfect day. See what a blaze of sunshine!"

Lettice made a resolute effort to obey, smiled, chatted, and seemed to forget her trouble. But the Doctor did not forget. A transient wonder more than once crossed his mind—had Lettice told him all? Was it possible that some other cause existed for this odd reluctance to let Theodosia open her box? The reluctance seemed "odd" to the Doctor, since such a feeling would not have been natural to himself in her place. He could not now feel absolutely certain of her truth and transparency, as once he could; and if he continued to trust her in the main, it was

resolute trusting in the face of doubts. Such doubts assailed him to-day, once and again. Lettice looked up wonderingly, at the sound of a sigh, in the midst of their cheerful talk. She would have liked to ask the reason, but did not: and the Doctor vouchsafed none.

"You are late!" declared Theodosia, as the two came in, close upon seven o'clock. "I expected you an hour ago. Dinner has had to be put off, and of course everything will be spoilt."

"I suppose we are both rather tired. It took us longer coming home than I reckoned."

"People always manage to knock themselves up in these ridiculous excursions." Theodosia forgot for the moment that she was herself the originator of the excursion in question; and nobody reminded her of the fact. She stood looking at them, a restless exultant gleam in her eyes.

"I suppose you know that it is past dinner-time. The gong will sound directly."

"Five minutes to seven. And you said just now you had put off dinner."

"I told them to wait if you were not back. Of course they have seen you come in."

"Well, we have a little superfluous mud and dust to get rid of, before we can sit down. Get ready, child, as fast as you can."

Lettice went to her room, in sudden dread of what she might find there. She had managed pretty well, during the day, to banish recollections of Theodosia and the keys; but the pent-up wave of foreboding broke bounds now, and rushed through her mind, to the exclusion of all else.

Two boxes, the heavier ones, stood open: and that which contained her chief treasures was more than half emptied. Cecilia's dresses lay about on bed and chairs: Cecilia's little treasures were tossed together on the floor. What Theodosia's object could have been in leaving things thus, Lettice was unable to conjecture. A torrent of recollections took possession of her, at the sight of an old brown merino, which Sissie had worn incessantly the last autumn, going to and from her lessons. . . . Those dear old days! gone for ever! Sissie's face came back with an extraordinary vividness: and Lettice knelt by the bed, kissing passionately the old merino which Sissie's hand had touched. She forgot dinner: forgot the need for haste: forgot her own muddled condition. There was no room in her mind for such thoughts.

"But oh, dear, dear Sissie, I would not have you back, if I could," she murmured. "So much happier there! It would be selfish! And it isn't so very long to wait. I shall see you again—by-and-by. O dear Sissie!"

She kissed again the brown dress: then folded and re-packed it reverently, putting in the other dresses and all the little knick-knacks, with loving tender fingers. "Dear Sissie!" she whispered again and again, and she strove to forget Theodosia.

Then the gong sounded: and Lettice knew herself to be inevitably late; blamed herself for it too, since Theodosia would be offended. Make haste as she might, muddy boots could not be in

one moment unlaced, or disordered hair made straight, or evening dress put on.

"Have they begun?" she asked, meeting Susanna in the hall as she descended. Susanna was the parlour-maid, a middle-aged and most reliable person, of long standing in the household. It was she who had from the first taken a resolute lead in declaring "Miss Lettice" innocent of Mrs. Bryant's charge: and she had always shown a marked affection for her master's adopted niece. This evening she looked strange and pale, and she scarcely answered when Lettice spoke, keeping her eyes averted. Lettice noted the unusual manner, and was perplexed; but no time could be spared for questions.

"You certainly are not remarkable for speed in dressing," Theodosia remarked. "The soup is gone. I suppose you do not wish for any."

"No, thank you. . . . I ought to have been in time, but——"

"If you would like some soup it is not too late," the Doctor said.

"Oh, I would rather not, uncle. I ought to have been down,——only I waited to put away some of my things."

The restless gleam appeared again in Theodosia's eyes. Some absorbing thought seemed to hold her in possession: and she talked in an odd broken way, forgetting to finish her own sentences, and plunging into the remarks of others. Dr. Bryant scanned her steadily once or twice: and Lettice was conscious of an unusual atmosphere.

"Where is Keith?" asked Dr. Bryant, when dessert appeared.

"I told him to go to bed, and not to come in to-night. I thought we might be late."

"Ten minutes past the usual time. I do not think Keith would have been the worse."

"It doesn't matter. I gave him some fruit——instead. And I wanted—I had something to say——"

Nobody asked her what it was. The other two simply waited. Susanna was gone: and Dr. Bryant peeled an orange for Lettice. Theodosia's colour deepened, and she played with a bunch of raisins, pulled it slowly to pieces.

"I have something to tell you," she said again, breaking silence.

"Well?" responded the Doctor.

"I have found the lost bank-note." Theodosia tossed a crumpled bit of paper across the length of the table, towards her husband.

With a visible sharp movement of surprise, Dr. Bryant leant forward to pick it up. Lettice sprang to her feet.

"The bank-note! Found!" she cried. "Oh, I am so glad! Oh, I am glad!"

Theodosia sneered—a wordless but distinct sneer. Dr. Bryant glanced from the one to the other.

"You have stumbled upon it at last! Not in your desk surely?"

Theodosia's eyes glittered. "No! No not in my desk."

She took another bunch of raisins, and broke them from the stalk, with nervous haste, as if unable to keep still. Lettice sat down, glowing with pure heartfelt delight: for this discovery entirely exonerated her brother. "Poor Felix! how could I ever have thought such a thing?" she asked herself: and then she came to a rapid resolve not to let anyone know what she had imagined—not even Dr. Bryant. This, at least, was in her power, by way of repayment for the wrong she had done to him. "I must have been crazy! Of course he never did, never would, never could! Of course not! Nobody must ever even guess that I had such a fancy. It might make people think that he really could do that sort of thing, if they knew I had suspected it——I, his own sister! I ought to have understood him better! Poor Felix! what a shame it has been!" Then she woke up to hear Theodosia speaking, with a repetition of former words—

"No: not in my desk. Do you wish to know where it was?"

"What does that matter, so long as the money is found?" cried Lettice joyously. "So long as the wrong person cannot be blamed."

"Not much fear of that—now!" declared Theodosia hardily, gazing past Lettice. "I should say that it mattered a good deal——to the person in whose box it was hidden."

FAR FROM COURT, FAR FROM CARE.

NO one who goes to Versailles fails to visit little Trianon, that one-time refuge from the irksome monotony and restraint of court life, where the brilliant and pleasure-loving young queen lived in *villeggiatura*, and threw off for a little the burden of state ceremonials.

When one remembers how artificial, how pedantic, how wearisome, how inane was the daily routine of royal personages when Marie Antoinette became Dauphiness of France, how bewilderingly elaborate were the rules, how inflexible were the demands of etiquette, one can

scarcely wonder that the brilliant young lady longed to forget her exalted rank, with all its attendant restrictions, and take up instead the rôle of Madame la Fermière. Who, indeed, would not have felt as she did? If you were a Royal Highness in the reign of Louis xv. you could not so much as pass from one room to another without a crowd of obsequious courtiers following you. Each hour of the day had its ceremonial, binding as the law of Mede or Persia, which altereth not; every salutation had its meaning, its measure. You were not so much as

permitted to make your toilet in peace, you could not break your morning fast save under the eyes of a subservient throng—princes of the blood, great officers of state, ladies-in-waiting, physicians, readers, secretaries; if you desired a fan, or a handkerchief, or so much as a glass of water, patience had to be exercised, thirst had to remain unquenched, till the salver was passed from hand to hand, and reached the person of highest rank to whom fell the honour of presenting it. The monarch was approached almost as if he were a god. Servility became a duty. If his majesty took a meal in public, he ate alone as a sultan might—his womenkind not held worthy to sit at the same table. One pities the poor man, whose every mouthful was taken note of by his watchful household, and by the eager, curious general public, to whom was granted the honour of looking on from the gallery while the king dined. The privilege of privacy and seclusion which the meanest of his subjects possessed was denied him; of that home-life which we prize as our dearest treasure he knew nothing; uneasy, indeed, must have lain the royal head, under so heavy a crown.

It was in revolt and rebellion, in very weariness of spirit, that the Dauphiness, when she became queen, established her little farm at Trianon. To us the child's sport seems scarcely less artificial—almost as conventional as the life that ran parallel with it. Simplicity for the moment was in fashion, so the little company of mock peasants dwelt in thatched cottages in the mimic village, and the king was the miller for the nonce, while his royal consort distributed refreshments from the dairy, and superintended the milking of the cows. It was a pretty play this, in which the great lords were gamekeepers and stablemen and shepherds, with golden shears to clip the fleece; and fine ladies masqueraded as washerwomen, and dabbled with their dainty fingers in the lake; and his majesty himself joined in the game of "blind man's buff." Half of it was affectionation, put off and on with the charming peasant costumes; but some of it, in the queen's case, at least, was the outcome of a real craving for a life more satisfying, less exacting, less empty and frivolous, more true to the needs and wants of a nature which had fine latent possibilities, than the vain round of pomp and show and splendour. Here she and the husband of her youth could forget the claims of state, and live like any of their citizen subjects. He, poor king (he had said when they put the crown on his brow "*elle me gêne*"), was made, indeed, for a bourgeois life of simple pursuits, and simple pleasures, and the quiet domestic happiness which fate denied him. As for Marie Antoinette, no one who remembers her brilliant youth, her terrible reverses, her tragic fate, borne with queenly fortitude, will grudge her this one brief hour of care-free pleasure.

In thinking of her one remembers another French lady, a queen of hearts too, who found a like refuge from the claims of a society where she shone the most brilliant of a brilliant circle, and of which she learnt to grow weary, finding nothing in it to satisfy her higher aspirations.

"Men in great places are thrice servants," wrote Bacon; "they have no freedom, neither in their persons, nor in their actions, nor in their times"—indeed, the most learned writers, the profoundest thinkers, the greatest poets, are all at one upon this point, and have lifted up their voices in warning against the discontent that envies place or power, the ambition that thinks happiness is alone to be found among the great ones of the earth. Listen to the poets:—

Who pants for glory finds but short repose.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty—all that wealth e'er gave—
Await alike the inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave!

I charge thee fling away ambition—
By that sin, angels fell.

And if we accept the homely teaching of proverbial philosophy (and how much instruction, shrewdness, wit, keen insight is to be found in this national treasury!) we shall discover that for one saying in praise of what the world calls success, there are twelve that serve as sign-posts to guide the unwary.

Far from court, far from care,

we find paralleled in the Latin—

Dormit secure, cui non est functio curae.

And what a rich kernel of truth lies in this nutshell: "Bear wealth, poverty will bear itself;" or in this: "Everything may be borne except good fortune."

One recalls instinctively the impressive utterance of our Lord, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God."

In face of all these warnings, with the weight of ethics and morality on the side of frugality and content; with the recorded experience of kings and queens, princes, statesmen, millionaires, who have found in the fulfilment of their desires but vanity and vexation of spirit, how strange that the old, yet ever new, cravings and unsatisfied longings for more, and yet more, the old, fierce haste for wealth should spring up afresh with every generation. How poor a prize ambition strives for may be learned when it is within our grasp; but O, how far too late is it then to be wise! how happy those who discern at the outset that poor and content is rich enough, who say with the wise man, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," but the daily bread made sure, which is all Christ sanctions us to ask. And if one thinks of it, it is not the things one can purchase that make for happiness; the best things in this world, the good gifts that poor and rich may share, are without price. Even royalty, as we have seen, can find no better way of forgetting sceptre, crown and kingdom, when these become too burdensome, than by turning to pursuits and tasks which the humblest might perform.

Bacon, in enumerating the relaxations of the Roman emperors, reminds us how Nero craved to excel on the harp, and Domitian to become an



FAR FROM COURT. FAR FROM CARE.

expert archer, Commodus to play at fence, and Caracalla to drive the chariot: then he adds—"This seemeth incredible unto those that know not the principle, that the mind of man is more cheered and refreshed by profiting in small things, than by standing at stay in great."

Wordsworth, who wrote—

Riches are akin

To fear, to change, to cowardice, to death,

elsewhere mourns that plain living and high thinking are no more. That was written ninety years ago; had he lived in this our generation with what added force might he have used the words! The little white cottage where these lines were penned (it afterwards sheltered the genius of De Quincey) would scarce satisfy the fastidious taste of to-day, which prizes high-living rather than high thought. What a number of needless desires we have called into being since the century was young, with how many superfluities have we burdened life and hindered the march! Each year it grows more difficult to keep up with the race, to hold one's own in the rush for supremacy. We have mended our manners and possibly our morals since Wordsworth wrote, and George iv. was king, but ambition has grown with refinement. Every man must now live as well as his neighbour—if possible, better. Simple pleasures please no more; fine dinners demand finer in return, and so we ransack the globe for luxuries, and blossom out in new splendours which shall fill a brother's heart with envy, and think ourselves well paid if we are the talk of the town if but for a single day. But there is a price to be paid, for with every new need we create, every new whim we gratify, we give house-room to a new care. We seek power and lose liberty; we set ourselves to be kings and queens, and find that we are but slaves after all.

"The world is too much with us," and all the while the treasures Wordsworth offers us in his beautiful sonnet are ours for the taking, freely, and for nothing, if we could but "love the highest when we see it."

There is a very suggestive passage in the writings of Dean Trench, in which he points out the correct interpretation of the familiar words of the Psalmist: He giveth His beloved—not sleep, as we render it, but *in* sleep. God's benedictions coming to us silently, unsought, unseen by us, to glad our eyes when we wake. No toil of ours can buy them, those best blessings—the love of kindred, the wonders of nature, its colour, its music, all of goodness, of purity, of brotherly kindness we meet by the way—it is these that crown us. Could place or power do more for us than do these sweet foretastes of Heaven?

"Casting all your care on Him"—that does not and cannot mean the cares we make for ourselves. He did not come to help the rich man to guard his millions, to smooth the way for ambition, to make the slippery upward path sure. He chose the carpenter's shop, the fisherman's hut; He was much alone with nature on the lake, among the silent hills, in the olive gardens. He asked not to rule, but to serve. If He were to

come again to-day—to-morrow, would He knock, us a guest at your door or mine? Should we welcome Him if He did, or would His presence shame us? This thought might sometimes give us pause in the hurry to increase our gains, to improve our worldly position, to heap to ourselves goods and chattels, gold and gear. Surely the simple life which Wordsworth mourned, far from "the fretful stir unprofitable, and fever of the world," at leisure from the getting and the spending, which leave mind and brain too weary for quiet thought and contemplation, is more in harmony with the life He chose when He came to dwell among men—He who, had He willed, might have reigned on earth as He reigned in Heaven.

The Dove Orchid.

(*Il Flor del Espiritu Santo.*)

LET who would fain call miracle
A superstitious dream,
But look into the heart of things,
And see how bright they gleam
With tokens of the Power he saw
Who marked the flaming bush with awe.

To-day who treads the marshy plains
Of rock-ribbed Panama
Finds, angel-like, a white form rise
To loose its fragrance far,
A balm-like fragrance treasured up
In a deep alabaster cup.

Yet not enough for him to note
Such beauty 'mid the wild,
To muse upon the perfect shape,
The whiteness undefiled;
The flower-cup hides a sweet surprise,
Sacred from all but curious eyes.

Tread reverently—the bush that burned
Burned with the fires of love;
Nor as their symbol holier than
The emblem of the Dove;
See where, snow-white, he lieth low,
Unstirred by winds that come and go.

See, too, the token of the Blood,
The crimson on the beak;
Then turn from nature, if you will,
Some better sign to seek
Than the Almighty Artist's power
Has hid within the desert-flower.

Go where the sculpture chips the block,
Within the church tower's gloom;
Search well the work on frosted spire,
In shrine or catacomb;
But ne'er shall type from marble wrought
More clearly phrase the Eternal thought.

Not only to the pious mind
The Holy Spirit's flower
Speaks of an inward peace and calm—
The Bride's mysterious dower;
The Indian owns its silent spell
Of purity unutterable.

O matchless flower! O God that gave
 This angel to the wild,
 Is there no meaning in Thy gift
 For saint or reverent child?
 Do we, who think we see so clear,
 Hold but a freak of nature dear?

Ah, no! Thy object lessons, Lord,
 They cannot misconceive
 Who search Thee out in vast and small,
 And reverently believe:
 Thy name is Wonderful; Thy love
 Works miracles all thought above.

So like this flower the child who grows
 All lily-like and fair
 'Mid some dark waste that hardly knows
 One breath of heavenly air;
 There steals, 'mid want, and sin, and strife,
 The influence of a gracious life.

This miracle the ruler learned,
 That by a second birth
 The highest beauty may be called
 Out of the meanest earth:
 Who looks within discerns the Dove,
 Low breathing joy, and peace, and love.

SARSON C. J. INGHAM.

Praise.

(Psalm cl.)

NO songs has Infidelity;
 No praise for God—no God to praise;
 To earth it clings, ne'er cleaves the sky:
 No motive stirs it, thanks to raise.

No songs has Infidelity;
 No joy within that needs must sing—
 Breaking still forth instinctively—
 As birds in greenwood or on wing.

No songs has Infidelity;
 No Faith—no Hope in it hath part;
 No tenderness, moist'ning the eye;
 No life more than life, in the heart.

No songs has Infidelity;
 No music aching for words fit;
 Nothing uplifting—nothing high;
 All sacred, butt of its poor wit.

No songs has Infidelity;
 No thought of prayer—no touch of awe
 No aspiration and no "cry";
 Man held mere thing in grip of Law.

No songs has Infidelity;
 Earth iron and the heavens brass;
 Speech vain, of Fate and Destiny;
 Life vanishing as fading grass.

No songs has Infidelity;
 No praise for God—no God to praise;
 To earth it clings, ne'er cleaves the sky:
 Motive is lacking thanks to raise.

ALEXANDER D. GROSART, D.D., LL.D.

Author of "Songs of Day and Night."

orge's, Blackburn.

Things New and Old.

THE VOX HUMANA STOP.

I went into a German church in one of the old quaint cities of the Middle Ages, as twilight-time was falling over the old buildings, to hear an organ. The building was dark as I entered it, for only a single candle struggled with the gloom that possessed the aisles and nave, the columns and arches, and old monuments, and made all things weird and spectral. Some hundred people sat there; and the strange thing began its wonderful work of sound, calling up all the faculties from their chambers—the watchmen of the soul—from their citadels and cells. How it groaned through the old building! How those wonderful sounds throbbed against the pillars and shook them, and rumbled along beneath our feet, and travelled thrillingly and palpitatingly overhead among the arches. You know what an organ can do, how it can sigh, and shout, and storm and rage; and how it can madden, and how it can soothe. And then, when the wonderful creature I was listening to had poured out these preludes of its power, it began to utter some marvellous delirium of music, I think Mendelssohn's "Walpurgis Night;" it imposed on the imagination the whole scenery of a wild tempest—a storm of nature among heaths and mountains! The thunder rolled near and far among the crags: the rain hissed in the wind: the flash of the lightning went by you: the storm possessed—it overwhelmed you! The blasts of the tempests, and the bolts of the thunder, were like giant spirits striving together in night and solitude, while fear and terror, and awe and horror, held revelry and carnival. And then I will tell you what came—I had never heard it before—I thought it was a human voice. Amidst the hurricane on the organ it rose so clear, so calm, so ineffably restful and light, so high over the surges and the wailing of the rain, the thunder and the wind. It was the Vox Humana stop—that wondrous simulation—the human voice stop, the mightiest marvel of all the artifices of music; the storm continued, but still it sung on, and rose on the wings of light and of sound, over all the hurricanes that hurried from the pipes and the keys. Then I thought of the One Human Voice ruling in time, and said, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" "The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered His voice, the earth melted." Amidst the crash of thrones, peoples, and opinions; amidst panics, and horrors, and fears, and travails, one voice, and only one, has been heard—One Human Voice, able to sway all storms, to pierce to, and sing in the heavens, high above those lower regions where the tempests have their home. It is "He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth," who hath spoken unto us by His Son—the voice including every human chord: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in Me ye shall have peace." "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."—*Paxton Hood's "Dark Sayings."*

DATE ET DADITUR.—"Blessed are they who expect nothing, for they shall not be disappointed," is one of the world's maxims. Like false coin, it has sufficient resemblance to the real to pass current with the superficial observer. But it is false—as the mint whence it issued. Life, *i.e.*, our intercourse with our fellow-men, will give back to us just what we put into it. It is a safe investment; yielding good interest. Give love, and sympathy, and general kindness, and trust—and you will get them all back again. "Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."—*M. T.*

THE RELIGIONS OF INDIA

AS ILLUSTRATED BY THEIR TEMPLES

THE CAVE OF ELEPHANTA.—THE WORSHIP OF SHIVA (*continued*).

IT is a well-known truth that religious worship is bound up with all, even the lowest of human inclinations, that the foulest deeds of blood and lust have been done under the auspices of a patron-saint, or deity. We have heard of the bravo, who attended Mass and kissed the leaden image of the Virgin on his cap ere he started on his business which ended in the point of his stiletto; and of the thug who gagged, stripped and buried his victim, with a most scrupulous regard to the rites of his caste.

But the service of Shiva exhibits one peculiar feature of religious perversion; it is not criminal; it is merely disgusting. There existed a sect of mendicants who closely imitated their patron and lord. They went naked, smeared with funereal ashes, a trident in their hand, a string of skulls around their neck. A member of this brotherhood was seen "carrying a death-head in his left hand, intoxicated with the spirits he had quaffed from this disgusting cup."¹

Having finished our survey of the body of the cave, we turn to the entrance, and there we find to the right and the left of the portico two compartments like broad niches, filled with groups of sculptures. They show Shiva in two entirely different characters. To the right we see the body of a man, carved in the rock; it is bending on one side, his head is tossed up, his eight arms are flung about wildly; he steps out vigorously to the rhythm of music. At least we suppose that he is doing so, for his arms and legs are partly broken off; we guess from the stumps that the god is engaged in lively exercise. The Brahmins say that Shiva invented, to amuse his wife, a kind of frantic dance which bears the name of Tandava. In this stone picture accordingly, Parvati appears to his right looking on. Around him are seen again the troops of imps, pigmies, and buffoons, who follow him as attendants and soldiers, and are like him, fond of the cup of strong wine. In this scene of wild merriment there steps—this is a characteristic feature—a male servant bearing a crescent and a skull, from the right hollow eye of which a serpent is crawling.

Turning round we are confronted, to the left of the entrance, by an unexpected sight. Badly as the surface of the stone is defaced, we can see what the artist wanted to depict, rocky scenery, above it, floating, the shapes of heavenly minstrels, on either side kneeling attendants with rosaries in their hands. In their midst, high on his lotus-throne, sits cross-legged a religious devotee; he is crowned with a lofty tiara, and adorned with a necklace and a girdle, beautifully executed. His hands (now lopped off) were placed, with the palms turned up, on his lap. His face wears a look of perfect serenity. If we were not in a

sanctuary of the Hindoo religion, we should think we were gazing on a likeness of Buddha, or of a Jain Saint. But Shiva, we are told, is not merely the husband of Parvati, the father of all men, the destroyer of all men, the demon, the wine-bibber, the dancer, he is also the ascetic, who obtains perfection by meditation, prayer and fasting. When Sati, his first wife, died—she expired with grief because she and her husband were not invited to her father Daksha's sacrifice—the god entered upon a course of penance. The artist has portrayed him,

Absorbed in holiest thought, erect and still,
Calm as a full cloud resting on a hill,
A waveless lake when every breeze is still,
Like a torch burning in a sheltered spot.
At all the body's ninefold gates of sense
He had barred in the pure Intelligence,
To ponder on the Soul which sages call
Eternal Spirit, highest over all.

In making Shiva appear in a character so very different from that he usually bears, the Hindoo priests acted no doubt under the influence of the Buddhist movement. They wished to have in their religion a person whom they could endow with those virtues and graces which had made Buddha so lovable to multitudes, and towards whom they could direct the affection of the crowd. Their motive is perhaps apparent in the sculpture itself.

In passing through the Cave, we have seen the same deity appearing in several shapes; the number of these different apparitions in Hindoo mythology is only indicated, not exhausted, in these compartments. The "god of birth" must, like his creatures, appear in all manner of organisms. Hindoos have let their fancy run riot in endowing him with powers and qualities; they call him a thousand different names, and each name denotes an attribute. He is a killer, terrible and fierce. He is a saviour, gentle and healing. He is tall and dwarfish, blue-necked and thousand-eyed. He has a hundred bows and a thousand quivers. He is lord over a thousand demons, a general of vast armies; the god of ghosts, beasts, and trees, he is present in clouds, storms, rivers and woods; the guardian of towns, he presides impartially over the castes of thieves and robbers, and over the honourable crafts of smiths and wood-carvers. As night and day, so the powers of death and birth are connected within him. Naturally, the dark and terrible side is kept in the background; the bright, the life-giving side is brought into the light; the "blessed one," the father, is worshipped.

We turn to the west of the Cave, to the place which corresponds, say, to the chancel in the east end of the church. It is a sacred chamber, perfectly plain, within four walls. In the middle

¹ J. Burgess, *al.* p. 19.

is an altar three feet high; it bears the far-famed symbol of Shiva. This stone is the idol, the object of worship, for the sake of which the whole temple has been carved out of the hill. The usual worship which is paid to it is very simple. It consists in the ringing of a bell that evil spirits may depart, and that the god may attend. Sometimes fruit, such as raisins, almonds and plantains are offered on this altar; and a lighted lamp is swung before his presence. But on the great festival, which Sir Monier Williams describes,¹ the god was washed and dressed; his teeth were brushed; he was served with a first and second breakfast, with lunch and dinner; he was composed to his afternoon-sleep; he received another meal, then a bath, then supper. Finally, amidst a flare of light and a burst of discordant music, a regular bedstead was carried in, and Mahadeva, the great god, went to sleep. Crowds of pilgrims, both men and women, attended these various ceremonies.

Intelligent Hindoos themselves smile at, or denounce indignantly, such gross practices of idolatry; they say that the carved images and the upright stone are the visible signs of the invisible processes of nature, which are at work around us. We may readily admit this; we may admire the subtlety of the Hindoo system of thought, with its infinite divisions and subdivisions, its endless deductions and conclusions, which are bewildering even to a mind trained in the Greek schools of philosophy. But it does not require a great exercise of imagination to see what kind of influence this worship must have on the promiscuous crowd of people who—even in India—do not meditate. The great Cave of Elephanta, with its sculptures profoundly suggestive as they are, serves to bring out clearly the difference that exists between Hindoo Temple and Christian Church, between Hindoo Triad and Christian Trinity, between the Hindoo and the Christian conception of life.

THE FOUR R'S:

READING, 'RITING, 'RITHMETIC AND RATIONS.

THIS, gentle reader, is no plea for free meals; that, because the government have made education free, they should forthwith proceed to provide dinners for the scholars on the same terms. But it is our purpose to point out a vital connection between education and food, and to show by way of illustration, coming within our own immediate knowledge, that a sound meal is the best preparation for a sound lesson.

Physiologists and doctors have told us over and over again, that our bodies are a complete organism; and before they enlightened us, Scripture taught us concerning the body, that if one member suffered another member became sympathetically affected.

Socialists of one school have not been slow to urge that it is useless to provide an elaborate school course, unless the children come to it well-fed, and they have not hesitated to urge that free dinners are a corollary of free lessons.

But though we may not be prepared to go so far, and to insist that government should feed all whom it educates, it is well for teachers, school managers and those interested in the children of the poorer classes to realise how intimate and vital is the connection between body and mind. To do so will tend to make teachers wise and considerate in their adaptation of rules and lessons to the underfed, and to enlist the sympathetic help of visitors, Sunday-school teachers and others towards those children who they know go to school but poorly equipped by reason of being insufficiently fed.

But better than all physiological reasons for

assurance of the close relation of the stomach and brain, is an illustration from actual life that came under our own notice.

George — was naturally a dull boy; so you would say to look at him; and amid the six or seven hundred boys that attended the same day school as he did, you might select him as one of the dullest-looking. He was pale, and listless, there was no fire about him. How can you get fire without fuel, and the fuel for kindling warm, quick flowing blood was scarce in George's household.

He gave no trouble on the ground of order, for he had no strength to be unruly, but then he made no return for all the teaching he received, for if he took it in, he never was able to give it out.

George was an unsatisfactory scholar, and he gave his teacher much concern. He was never punished for his dulness: his teacher was too tender-hearted for that, but then kindness did not have the effect of making him learn. He exercised his brains, after a fashion, and he would have learned his lessons if he could.

Once his teacher asked him if he knew what a holy place was, he replied, "A place what lets the wind in."

Poor child! he was probably thinking of his own nether garments which answered his description, and which were made of such an unsuitable and flimsy material, that they would not have kept the wind out, even had they been sound.

At last the master had a bright idea; he correctly diagnosed the case, as he said one day in triumph. "I know what's the matter with

¹ "Religious Thought and Life in India," p. 80, *et seq.*

George; he isn't half fed." George himself was not told the nature of this discovery, though he was made the subject of it, but the friends who managed the free breakfasts and the penny dinners at the neighbouring mission were, and they readily assented to co-operate.

It now wanted about six weeks to the Christmas holidays, and it was determined that for that period George should be supported with a bread and milk breakfast and a penny dinner as often as these were served, and that was four days a week, beginning with Tuesday. Nothing loath, George was in his place; at first the basin of bread and milk seemed rather much for him, but gradually his system accommodated itself to the new régime, and soon the allotted portion seemed too little for him. But if he left off breakfast with an appetite there was the dinner to look forward to, and good and substantial was this meal. It generally consisted of two courses, one of which was soup; and George never stopped short at the first course.

George had no idea of the interesting experiment that was being performed on him, though he would have had no objection had he been enlightened, but he highly approved of the treatment, and submitted thereto to the satisfaction of his teacher no less than of himself.

And very soon the result of the treatment became manifest: George was certainly getting livelier. In the playground it was noticed that he began to move more briskly; he even joined in games that involved a freer use of his legs than he had been wont to display. He took part with others; and at times he was even seen to start off at a run, with no particular object in view, and with no companion to start it. It must be confessed that the "holy places" became more so, and that the flimsy material proved unequal to the strain of the increased exercise. But there was more than a compensation elsewhere.

George's mind began to expand as well as his body; his teacher described it as like a gradual waking up. And George's class-mates found it out too: he was no longer the dead weight of the class, no longer the dumb oracle when he was questioned.

And with increasing intelligence came increasing interest in his work; and his progress was marked both by teacher and scholars.

The improvement George was making was too great not to be reported; the result of the experiment was too complete not to be made known, and the teacher wrote a letter to the managers of the meals, in a tone of complaint, though the humour and pleasantry were ill disguised. He said these breakfasts and dinners were giving him a lot of trouble; they had completely altered the conduct of his quiet scholar. He used always to be so dull and so quiet that he never was a source of any trouble; he needed not to watch him, for he never talked nor played in school-time with other boys. But now all that was changed, he was ~~so~~ frisky that he needed watching, and his exuberant playfulness was contagious. Once his master had to complain of his being "cheeky," and he feared if these stimulating meals were continued much longer, that

his pupil would get beyond all control. He was obliged to confess, however, that the boy's mental powers were as greatly aroused as his physical, and that if he were a little more troublesome to manage, he was much easier to teach.

And this the teacher admitted was of immense gain, and that the accompanying friskiness was, after all, a favourable sign.

George now found his lessons much more pleasant, and instead of remaining the ignoramus he promised to be, he made rapid strides in learning until, when the Christmas holidays came, he ridiculed the idea of words of three letters puzzling him, and confidently tackled words of four.

But, oh! those fatal holidays! Not that they were excessive in length, they only lasted a fortnight, for the school inspection was in January.

But with the schooling ceased the breakfasts and the dinners, for there were no masters and mistresses to judiciously distribute the tickets; and besides, the good people at the mission, were otherwise engaged at Christmas time.

Poor George, and others, missed the comforting meals, and many a boy and girl in that district longed for the time when the holidays should cease, and the meals begin again.

For if a good breakfast and dinner were needed for school-work, they were necessary also for out of school play; and wanting the nourishment poor George and others were not equal to much active amusement.

We have reason to know that George participated in a good Christmas dinner supplied to his family, but before and after that noteworthy feast George's rations were rather microscopic.

It must have been a dreary time for our little hero: the wind found out the "holy places" in his garments, but he had no inclination or no strength to run about, he lost his friskiness, and he sadly deteriorated.

That was evident to his teacher at a glance, when the school opened; the little limbs moved listlessly, the pale little face was thin and pinched; and this seemed quite natural when his teacher made enquiries and found how badly his little scholar had fared. But what surprised him greatly was to find how far the deterioration had gone in a mental direction. The friskiness had departed—that could be seen at once, but it was not until repeated efforts to instruct him that his teacher found out how far he had gone back mentally. Before the holidays he made short work with c-a-t, d-o-g, and even made happy shots at c-r-o-w, and r-o-o-k, but now, thanks to semi-starvation for but two short weeks, poor George did not even know his letters, and his friends the animals of three and four letters enjoyed perfect immunity at his hands.

Physiologists may tell us as plainly and as earnestly as they like of the vital connection between mind and body, but a simple fact like this we have recorded, brings the scientific truth home to us, and evokes our sympathy towards the many thousand little students who are thus pursuing knowledge under difficulties.

BENJAMIN CLARKE.

"KITTY TOPSELL'S FOUR-POST BED."

CHAPTER IV.



FROM the date of this memorable visit to the secret recesses of Mrs. Roots' house, the one thought in Kitty Topsell's mind was, how some day to procure for her mother a bed, and a strip of carpet. To raise her off the floor after her hard day's work, and perhaps with her own hands tuck her in; or it may be have such a bed as the angels would condescend to visit at night, and tuck in the occupiers thereof; this formed her one chief, and indeed absorbing thought.

And herein was the advent of the furniture-broker some good to the neighbourhood. For Mr. Hardwood had amongst his goods the very things which Kitty wanted; he had a strip of carpet two yards long, price only eightpence, owing to a large part of the nap being absent, but it was carpet, and not bare board; and he had a four-post bed, very lean and thin no doubt in the posts, and the price of it was only ten shillings, therefore, though time would undoubtedly be required to give her possession of such treasures, still the thing was compassable; and she would begin at once. But what if some one more able to pay than herself should step in before her, and so the treasures should be lost! Any effort was worth making to secure such good things, so Kitty determined to face the furniture-broker at once.

The worthy man, as you may suppose, was a good deal astonished at the appearance of such a customer; and after putting many questions to her, and hearing all about their home, and about her situation, such as it was, he promised to put by the piece of carpet for her, and moreover that he would not sell the bedstead for a whole year.

"I'll put the carpet, my dear, in the loft, lest anyone should be tempted by it; and I'll put the bedstead in the shed in the back yard, and I'll keep them for you, and you shall bring me your pennies according as you can spare them, and I'll enter them all in a book."

Week after week Kitty Topsell saved a trifle, until at last she had enough to secure the bit of carpet; and great was the joy and triumph with which she took it home. It was eventually to be laid alongside of the four-post bed; but until then, it was a material addition to the warmth of the rag-heap on the floor.

Now, little Kitty had not put in these regular weekly appearances at the old broker's, without their raising some thoughts in his mind. The child was always so cheery, so determined to carry out her purpose, so punctual; and paid in her pennies with such evident self-satisfaction that, the old man kept frequently thinking of her during the week; and looked for her on Saturday as regularly as the day came. And he thought of Kitty not only in connection with the bit of carpet, but also with the bed.

"Why, 'twill be a couple of years," said the old man to himself, "before the child can get that bed, to say nothing of the bedding. I must give her a lift. I'll give her a job or two about the place; she can clean and dust, and the money can go towards the bed."

And the worthy old man was confirmed in his good intentions by a little incident which speedily happened.

"Mr. Hardwood," said Kitty, one Saturday, as she came to pay in her penny, "there's something I want you to do for me, if you will."

"Humph," said the broker, a thought flashing across his mind that his visitor wanted to get possession of the bedstead before her time. "That depends; perhaps I can do it, and perhaps I can't. What is it?"

"Well now, Mr. Hardwood, 'tis, if you please, that I may go into the shed every Saturday when I come to pay my penny, and look at the bedstead."

"What!" said the old man, sharply, "to see if I've sold it, or perhaps to see whether it has run away."

"No, Mr. Hardwood, you said you wouldn't sell it, and I don't believe you would; but only just to look at it, to think how nice 'twill be when mother can have it to sleep on."

"Yes, you can go in; and if ever you find the bedstead gone, depend upon it, it will have run away in the night, and I'll send the police after it."

So the child visited the old bedstead from time to time, and the broker kept pondering all about it in his mind.

At last he fixed upon what he would do. His little trade was flourishing nicely; when Christmas came, he would make the Topsell family, or rather Kitty Topsell, a present of the bedstead; he would add an old bed too, and some blankets. The patience and perseverance of the child—her entire forgetfulness of herself—her one thought about her mother had quite won his heart.

Sometimes, after he had made up his mind to give the bedstead and its belongings, the worthy broker used to hear a voice within him, saying, "You might as well give them to her now; 'tis the end of October, and the weather is chill and damp, and every night between this and Christmas will be a night of comfort gained;" and often he thought this, as he lay snug and warm himself in bed, but no, he had settled on Christmas; and he would do nothing until then. But events did not proceed at all in the order which the worthy broker had marked out.

One week the child did not come to dust and sweep, but the broker said to himself, "She'll be sure to be here with her money on Saturday," which money he still continued to take, otherwise his plan of giving the bedstead would be found out before its time; but it was all safe for the child, in a little bag of its own, and he intended at Christmas to return it all.

But Saturday did not bring Kitty with it; and at last the old broker began to fear that something must have happened to her. He felt uneasy about the child, so he determined to go after her, and wended his way to the poor tenement where she lived.

The worthy man was accustomed to wretched furniture of all sorts, but he was not accustomed to no furniture at all; and great was his distress at finding Kitty's mother on the rag-heap in the corner. The little that the child had earned had gone to improve the food, especially the orange-peel diet, and to pay the rent; so there was nothing left for any extras in the way of furniture.

Poor Kitty's mother was in a high state of fever; and the child's whole time had been taken up with attending on her; the baby, too, had caught the fever, and both were now in a critical state.

On the appearance of the good broker, the child ran up to him and said, "Oh, Mr. Hardwood, perhaps she'll die before we can get her the bed. She had a bed once, Mr. Hardwood, and she's often talking about it now, and saying, 'She wished she could die in her bed.'"

"And if she does die, it shall be in her bed—her own bed—or your bed; and not on the floor;" and the broker hurried out of the room.

In an hour after the worthy man arrived with a truck, on which was the four-poster and all he intended to go with it; and in another hour Mrs. Topsell was safely in it. But it was only to do as she wished—to die in her bed. It was indeed her own bed, for the broker had formally made it a present to Kitty, and Kitty had given it to her mother.

And Kitty's bag of pence was there too, and it provided what was needed in the way of food. That was not much now, for, shortly after this, poor Mrs. Topsell sank; and the baby with her. She died, as she had often longingly but hopelessly wished to do, in her bed, and with her the baby died too.

"And what will you do now?" asked the broker.

"Oh, work hard, of course," said Kitty, "and keep Bess; and perhaps mother will look in at the window and won't know the place when I've put, oh, such a lot of furniture in it; but I'll explain, and perhaps she'll come and tuck us in of nights."

"Poor child! poor child! the fever's coming on you too, and you're beginning to wander."

And so it was; but the good greengrocer and Rebecca found Kitty out, and nursed her through it; and the worthy broker came every day, and even did part of the nursing too. And when the fever left Kitty, Mrs. Roots and he, with Rebecca, put their heads (of the latter and her mother it might be said their curls) together, and the broker took Kitty home with him to be half daughter, half little maid and help; and Mrs. Roots took Bess to fill Kitty's place; and to be generally useful about the house and shop; having first exacted from her a solemn promise that she would give up eating orange-peel for ever, and as far as in her lay would promise either to grow within reason like other folk, or else to grow no more at all.

A CHAPTER OF SCRIPTURE.

NO. V.

This chapter contains the account of two miracles of healing besides the healing of "great multitudes"; also two incidents in our Lord's life and much of His teaching. One of the miracles is recorded in two other gospels; in two particulars, as regards place and time, this miracle resembles one wrought at Jerusalem, described in Luke xiii., which also stirred up the indignation of those in authority. It is the only one of the kind recorded in the gospels, but very similar to that wrought by a prophet on an evil king shortly after Solomon's death. Solomon's name occurs in the chapter; also that of his father and of two famous prophets; the law of Moses is referred to, and a passage quoted from Hosea. Reference is made to the Virgin Mary; to a queen; to an ancient city; and to an incident connected with the tabernacle, which is here called "the house of God"; one of the sacred things in the tabernacle is named. A familiar grain is also mentioned, which a king once saw in a dream.

The other miracle is recorded in one other gospel. It called forth amazement and blasphemy, rather than gratitude; and roused hatred rather than devotion. An expression occurs, regarding Christ's omniscience, to be found in

Matt. ix. 4, and a sharp rebuke follows, containing teaching very like that found in the latter part of the sermon on the mount, and also an expression used by John the Baptist. A brief parable is given, foretelling the fate of "this wicked generation." At the end of the chapter we are told of a message being brought to Christ "while He yet talked to the people," which draws from His lips a declaration of the close and tender relationship existing between Himself and those who do His will.

L. T.

SCRIPTURE CHARACTER.

NO. I.

1. He was "a mighty man of valour."
2. A promise was made to him, through a prophet, very similar to that given to Joshua in Josh. i. 5, and to David in 2 Sam. vii. 11.
3. A good king tried to kill him.
4. He asked a petition of that king's son; it was denied.
5. He built a city which had been beaten down and "sowed with salt"; also another destroyed by Gideon.
6. He fell into gross sin and was severely punished; but the punishment was removed at the prayer of one who was killed a few hours later.
7. God said to him, through a prophet, "Thou hast cast Me behind thy back."
8. When his child died all Israel mourned.
9. Iddo the prophet wrote of him.
10. He "rebelled against his lord," and "vain men" were "gathered unto him."
11. "The Lord struck him and he died."

L. T.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMAS.

NO. XXVII.

My first a prisoner in bonds was sent
To a fair city; here in faith and love
He preached the Gospel, and bid men repent
And place their confidence in One above.

1. This is the utterance of a heart
Which doth to God its need impart.
2. One of three, by whom the king's decree
Was set at nought;
In danger great, deliverance for them
By God was wrought.
3. An ornament of wondrous grace,
Used by high priests in special case.
4. A suffering man for alms did pray—
A better gift he had that day.

J. E. H.

NO. XXVIII.

To weary souls how welcome is this word,
My second sees them waiting on their Lord.

1. A promise this, but with condition fixed.
This world is not all happiness unmixed.
2. My second was a queen of wondrous grace,
Who met her base accuser face to face.
3. Here did the Thirsty ask relief
And to the giver gave belief.
4. One who delighted in the sacred page,
E'en from his youth and in his riper age.

J. E. H.