

THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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



BLIND MEN FORMING PART OF A FUNERAL PROCESSION IN CAIRO.

CAIRO.

BY MRS. BREWER, AUTHOR OF THE "HOSPITAL SKETCHES."

THE frequent exhibitions since 1851 which have taken place in the various capitals of Europe have taught us so much of other lands and peoples that one began to suspect there would be no new thing to learn, no new impressions to receive, should we ever have the opportunity of visiting them.

We were wrong in our suspicion, however. It was with the one view of gaining health that we obeyed the command, "go to Cairo," little dreaming of the utterly new life and interests which would surround us, and fill our hearts, eyes, and intellects with pictures and impressions never to be blotted out.

The voyage between Brindisi and Alexandria was almost over, and at four o'clock on a morning early in January we found ourselves on deck watching the superb sunrise on the African Coast.

We passed the Island of Pharos in the Alexandria Harbour where the first lighthouse ever built once stood, and where, it is said, the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament into Greek was made.

The story is that one of the Ptolemics who reigned in Egypt was anxious to have a copy of the Old Testament in Greek, the language spoken in his capital of Alexandria. Seventy scholars were sent from Jerusalem to Alexandria provided with materials necessary for the work, and were immured in seventy separate cells on the Island of Pharos, under the shadow of the famous old-world lighthouse. When they had finished their task they were liberated, and it was found that, although each had worked independently and alone, the translations were identical.

While we were regarding this place with interest, a pilot in a red fez came on board to take us into harbour, and as we approached the low flat shore, with date palms and mud huts and one storied houses along it, a curious and novel scene awaited us.

A crowd of men, black, brown, and copper colour, clad in red, blue, white, or green robes, with girdles round their waists and red fez or white turbans on their heads. There they stood, legs and feet bare, watching the incoming vessel, and at the first possible moment springing on deck, speaking a language quite new to us, but which was not at all unmusical.

It seemed all confusion, till we found ourselves quietly driving to our hotel, with a black coachman in a white robe and a dragoman conductor taking care of us; the latter was dressed in cloth and gold braid—a contrast to our driver.

We had a few hours before going on to Cairo, which we made use of by visiting the bazaars, which to us were like a scene out of the Arabian Nights; then by taking a carriage and driving

through avenues of date palms and over sand heaps up to Ramleh, discussing in the meanwhile sugar cane and mandarins; then on to a Bedouin encampment with camels and tiny brown babies, to an enchanted garden full of poinsettias growing wild, and where we saw strange flowers of brilliant violet and crimson, and next along the Nile to Pompey's pillar and a Mahomedan burial-place.

Then a night's rest, and on to Cairo, one of the strangest and most interesting railway journeys of three hours and a half we had ever travelled.

On this journey we caught our first view of the Pyramids. We saw many processions of natives going to and fro from the markets; we passed caravans of camels and donkeys, and mud villages, crossed the Damietta and Rosetta branches of the Nile on which were several Diahbeahs with their picturesque sails, and on either side of the line we spied many Bedouin encampments, and saw the primitive method employed for irrigating the land. At length we arrived at Cairo and drove to Shepheard's Hotel, which deserves a chapter to itself, but we have not space to give it here.

There is a large sunny terrace in front of the hotel where one sits and looks on the ever-varying panorama—it may be the dignified pedestrians in their eastern robes, the women with their nose ornaments, and black or white veils, mothers carrying their babes on the shoulder and not in the arms, girls with waterpots poised gracefully on the head, the water-sellers clinking their brass cups or carrying the goat skins filled with water, the flower sellers in their long white dress and turban selling immense bunches of roses for five piastres, one shilling, all talking Arabic—one could sit here from morn till night, and never weary of the sight: it is like a marvellous kaleidoscope, variegated in colour as an eastern carpet, and as full of life and noise as any fair, and yet we seem to have been acquainted with the people all our lives, that is, ever since we delighted in fairy tales.

It was while standing here on our arrival that we saw for the first time an open carriage in which were seated two ladies preceded by two black runners, called Syoe, armed with long wands, who cleared the way by shouting. They run barefooted very gracefully with a springy step, and no matter how fast the carriage is driven, they always keep the same distance from the horses. We have seen them many a time since and always with delight.

It was on the first evening of our taking up our residence in Shepheard's that we saw the guests collecting into groups after dinner and noticed them speaking earnestly with each other. Some of the words reached us. "Have you heard the news?" "No?" "The Khedive

is dead." Then came a remark from a pretty girl, "Oh, papa, of course I am very sorry, but if he had to die I am glad that we should be here for we shall see an eastern funeral." Another from a politician: "I see breakers ahead." But the general feeling was that of deep sorrow; for the Khedive was loved and respected by everyone, foreigners and natives, and his death was evidently unexpected and found people unprepared.

This was on a Thursday night, and, according to eastern custom, the funeral was to take place on the next afternoon.

Our dragoman, Agamemnon Paulievich, secured us a window in the principal street, called the Mousky, through which the procession would pass on its way from the Abdeen Palace to the tombs of the Khedives in the desert.

if all Africa was sending in its thousands to do honour to the good man just departed. All were bound for the Abdeen Palace, where the procession was being formed. Only the Europeans were in mourning, therefore the sight was less funereal than it would have been at home, although the streets presented a lugubrious appearance, with the shops and banks closed, and the gas lamps draped in black. All this time our ears were listening to the hundred and one minute guns fired from the citadel. It was very strange and solemn.

By two o'clock we were in the Mousky, where every window and roof was occupied, and the pavements densely packed with natives and foreigners. It was calculated that the number collected on the way through which the funeral



WOMEN AND CHILDREN VIEWING THE FUNERAL PROCESSION FROM THE HOUSETOPS.

It appears that the customs have scarcely changed at all; as they were thousands of years ago so they remain, and as a Pharaoh was conveyed to his last resting-place so the Khedive was on this day in like manner conveyed to his. But for the sight of our British soldiers lining the way we might have thought ourselves for that one afternoon living in the time of Moses or of Joseph.

But to go back a few hours—

On the Friday morning the first sign of the Eastern method of showing grief reached our ears in the most awful sound of wailing; and going on to the terrace we saw a number of native women entirely in black, with faces covered, all but the eyes; as they drove along from street to street they wrung their hands and wailed till it made us shiver. Then, as we stood there, still watching natives from all parts of the country came pouring in, some on foot, some on camels, some on asses, till you began to wonder

procession passed must have been at least two hundred thousand.

Following a body of police came ten buffaloes, which were afterwards to be killed and distributed for food among the poor; then men on camels throwing bread, oranges and dates to the crowd, causing, as it seemed to us, great confusion, and giving our soldiers a good deal to do; then three large casks of water also for distribution; next the Egyptian cavalry on superb horses, and the artillery with six horses to each gun carriage. The camel corps which followed was to us a very imposing sight, the creatures looked so disdainful, stately, and proud! Then the most curious part of all, a motley assemblage of blind men, "some in rags, some in tags, and some in velvet gowns," chanting loudly in a weird unearthly sing-song melody, verses of the Koran, or improvised lamentations. Following these, and joining in the song, were representatives of learned bodies in purple, cream,

pink, green, and blue satin robes, richly embroidered in gold and silver; dervishes in high square felt caps and flowing garments, accompanied by poor men in blue gowns, and old men with costly Cashmere shawls by way of turbans.

Each set or section carried banners inscribed with Arabic characters, richly embroidered, though some were dropping to pieces with age.

A few had books in their hands, but most of them seemed to know the Koran by heart; next came the various colleges with their tutors, followed by all the native and European high officials in wonderful uniforms, all glittering with orders and gold and silver. The Hungarian ambassador was most picturesque in red velvet mantle, cap trimmed with fur, and high boots. The Greek servant of the French ambassador looked odd in short full white petticoat, long white gaiters, embroidered jacket, and smoking cap; then came various brilliant cavalcades of soldiers in white uniforms, on white horses.

The unfeigned grief displayed by the members of the late Khedive's household was very touching; they preceded the coffin, each bearing in his hand the sign of his peculiar office in their master's service, such as richly-chased gold and silver trays, cups, lamps, ewers, and perfumes. The coffin was a plain Arab box, with a pillow at one end on which rested his fez, the whole covered by a costly embroidered shawl a thousand years old, and worth a thousand pounds. The coffin was borne by his body servants, and surrounded by native women, weeping, wailing, wringing their hands and tearing their clothes.

Next came a number of rigidly-closed carriages, containing his widow the Khediva and her ladies; then several empty vehicles in readiness to take up the mourners on their return, for the way was long between the palace and the tomb; the day, though only the eighth of January, was intensely hot, while many who took part in the procession were very old, and etiquette demanded their walking. After this it was impossible to keep order, the crowd surged backward and forward, and the street became one mass of human beings, black, brown, yellow, and white.

The whole thing, from beginning to end, was the weirdest, strangest sight our eyes had ever seen. It lasted till sundown, and what a sunset! It was simply superb: flaming orange and crimson, then tender rose colour, French grey, sea green, lemon and lavender, and then a deep dark blue sky, filled with huge glittering stars! This was my first experience in Cairo.

A few words concerning the late Khedive will give us an insight into his character and influence. He had been a pattern to eastern and western potentates in his devotion to his wife, and in the beauty of his family life. He was unlike Orientals, in that he was fond of talking of his wife and family; when his sons were travelling on the continent he used to read their letters, written in many languages, to any visitor who expressed interest in them.

His private life was singularly pure—astonish-

ingly so—when it is remembered in what an atmosphere of profane corruption he was brought up.

Dean Butcher, of Cairo, said in his sermon: "Here was a professor of a non-Christian creed, whose life was an example to Christians. Little good was to have been expected of him, and in fact hardly anything but good was found in him."

His difficulties were immense; he ruled a mixed population, consisting of men of various tongues and hostile creeds and sharply contrasted characters, and he was loved by all who loved right.

"He was a firm ally of England, and received in a loyal and intelligent spirit the trained experience and skill which England was able to place at his disposal."¹ The result has been the recovery of the land of Egypt from financial and social suffering to an extent almost miraculous.

He commenced his rule under Lord Dufferin's guidance in 1879, and continued it under that of Sir Evelyn Baring, now Baron Cromer.

The Khedive had spoken to one of our English clergy in Alexandria about three months previous to his death, and remarked that the one thing which caused him infinite sorrow, when he thought of the English occupation, was the drunkenness seen among our troops.

He was delighted with our sailors' and soldiers' Institute in Alexandria, and agreed that the temperance element was one of its chief essentials. He has many a time stopped a soldier or sailor on the shore and asked if he knew of the Institute, and has often given a soldier a ten piastre piece (2s.) to pay the fare there, telling him it was a good place to go to.

He had an English servant whom he had to dismiss on account of drunkenness, and after grieving over his necessary dismissal, still followed up his career in North America. Many a one has said to us that the influence of the English in Egypt would have been an untold blessing but for the intemperance of the Europeans.

The late Khedive was just and merciful, sympathetic and courageous; he has lightened the burdens of thousands, he has compassionated their sorrows, and taught their children, and elevated their standard of conduct. When one of our English bishops was presented to him in Cairo he said, "I am always glad to welcome the ministers of religion, for if a man is a faithful servant of his heavenly King he is likely to be a loyal subject of his earthly king." He often visited the wards of the various hospitals and comforted the sick and the dying by his sympathy with their sufferings. It is easy to see that such a man would grow steadily in the esteem of his people, and that the grief for his death would be real indeed.

One of the greatest comforts in a strange land is to be able to go to an English church and worship the loving Father as we have been accustomed to do at home, and so on our first Sunday we went to the sweet little English church in its garden of bananas and poinsettias. The service was just what we wanted: earnest,

¹ Lord Salisbury.

loving, and cheerful. The choir was composed of a few boys, ladies and gentlemen, and one or two soldiers, and the singing was the best we had had since leaving home. There were many English officers there with their families, the church was quite full of visitors, of whom there are so many in Cairo, seeking health or amusement; these were shown to seats by one of our English soldiers.

Coming home from church on the second Sunday we saw several people, native and European, occupying the pavement and found the attraction was a native fortune-teller telling the fortune of a young Arab woman. The former, crouched on the ground, had a cloth full of white sand before him on which, having first smoothed the surface, he traced with his finger certain characters, then wiped them out and began again until he had completed the task to his satisfaction and the girl's also.

At the corners of the streets sit the money-changers and the letter-writers; wherever you turn, wherever you go, you find something of deep interest, and often things which remind you of scenes and incidents in the Bible, giving them, as it were, present actual existence.

One reason of the failure of exhibitions to make us acquainted with the real country and people they try to present to our notice, is the impossibility of bringing over at the same time the climate, the sky, the soil, and the ever-changing population. It is each and all of these that strike us with such extraordinary force in Cairo. Those of us who see for the first time the dark blue heavens at night studded with large and brilliant stars, the moon which casts a shadow as deep as that of the sun, with only groups of date palms between us and the horizon, feel that nothing in life we have ever experienced is equal to it. Again, the suddenness with which we step out of a crowded thoroughfare into the solitary desert; out of busy life into absolute and solemn loneliness is not to be taught by any picture or exhibition. These and a hundred like scenes are ever breaking in upon us with irresistible fascination, and we say many times a day, "Oh, I never thought Cairo would be like this!"

We have often read of our Saviour's feeding the five thousand in a desert place, but we never thought to see anything resembling it when we went to Cairo, nor should we have done so had not the Khedive died while we were there.

It has been a custom from time immemorial in Egypt that when its ruler dies the poor may come to the tomb a little before sunset, and be fed every day for forty days immediately following the death.

Having had a very busy day in the Military Hospital and in the Jews' quarter, finishing up with a cup of tea with the Syrian teachers among the Jews, we called a carriage and bade our host tell the native coachman to drive us to the tomb of the Khedive. We did not know how far it was, nor had we time to seek our dragoman, for it was past four o'clock, therefore we started alone.

We drove through the Mousky, one of the most

thickly populated streets in Cairo, where most of the shops and bazaars are, and where it is difficult to drive for the crowds. Suddenly, without the least notice, the street came to an end; there was no suburb, no straggling shops, and we found ourselves in the desert, nothing before us or around us but everlasting sand; the carriage made no sound, and in a moment we were utterly solitary. We continued our way for about three quarters of an hour when the carriage stopped at a spot where stood a few other empty carriages, much to our relief. We were shown by an Egyptian



BRINGING PROVISIONS INTO CAIRO.

policeman, who came suddenly upon us through a doorway, to the tomb of the Khedive, where within were mourners bewailing, in monotonous tones, their loss. We were signed to enter, but we shook our heads; they then brought us coffee, but to this we said "No," and made them understand that we wanted to see the people fed, though where the people were hidden away we could not imagine—there was no sign of them or of life anywhere; a sense of awe crept over us. We followed the man, who led us behind a wall of sand, when we suddenly beheld between four and five thousand people; men, women, and children and babes in arms seated, or rather doubled up as is their custom, and resting on their heels, their feet hidden under them, in circles of ten, closely packed in a space about as large as St. Paul's churchyard—there was no noise, all were silently waiting.

You should have seen their faces: every degree of beauty, of daring, and of submission were to be found there, and every form of colour and

grace in their costumes. They had been gathering here from early morning from the mud villages and Arab tents across the desert as well as from Cairo and surrounding suburbs. One of the police spoke French a little, and, seeing that we were interested, invited us into the midst of the mass, and permitted us to take part in this wonderful meal. We had learned a few Arab phrases, and with these and a kind look we made friends with some of them.

At a given moment in came a number of Arabs one after the other all bearing on their heads large pans of hot rice with small pieces of bread mixed with it, and placed one in the midst of each circle. Then each person dipped his thumb and two fingers into the dish and conveyed the food to the mouth. It was not at all so disgusting as you would think, it was done in a cleanly way and not at all greedily.

As the circles began to be all supplied, in came men with goat skins of water on their backs and brass cups in their hands, giving to all who needed. There was no noise, no disorder, no cross looks from those who were served last. After the pans were all emptied and removed, and the thirst assuaged, large cauldrons of pieces of meat were brought in and each person received one; all were about the weight of half-a-pound.

At this point we left, and, passing by the tomb and getting into the carriage, we faced the solitary desert once again. We might have been the only creatures on the earth for aught that we could see and hear, until we came suddenly again into the crowded street of the Mousky when we drew breath and thought the scene in which we had taken part must have been a dream or a remembrance only of our Saviour's miracle of feeding the five thousand in a desert place.

THE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE OF ST. PAUL.

TRUSTED AND COMMISSIONED.

"The Gospel of the glory of the blessed God . . . was committed to my trust."—1 *Tim.* i. 11 (R.V.).

"Christ Jesus our Lord . . . counted me faithful, appointing me to His service."—1 *Tim.* i. 12 (A.V.).

"I was appointed a herald."—1 *Tim.* ii. 7 (R.V. marg.).

IN many aspects St. Paul's life was one of renunciation—a casting off of old prejudices, privileges and associations, an abandoning of earlier, fascinating hopes; "what things were gain to me, these I counted loss for Christ."¹ But there had been an abandonment not merely of the outward and circumstantial, but of that which was inmost and personal; the man himself, his days, his bodily and mental powers, his emotions, his will—yea, his eternal interests, had been committed to Christ against that day. But the life which he had surrendered, he had received again with higher responsibility. By that act of self-renunciation he had not found merely safety and rest, he had also found honour and labour. Christ had not only accepted at his hands the greatest surrender he could make, but He had placed in his hands a most solemn trust, fraught with stupendous issues—"the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God was committed to my trust."

St. Paul had been put in trust. He had known before what it was to bear a commission. The priestly council at Jerusalem had placed in his hands inquisitorial powers. But now a more solemn, holy, joyous vocation is given him. That was of man's devising; this came by immediate Divine appointment. That was limited to such a city as circumstances might permit; this commission concerned the world. That had been literally a ministration of death, a source of enmity and grief, desolating homes and rending

hearts; this was a ministry of Divine beneficence—a "Gospel" coming from the "blessed God." He, who had been an illustration of the deadly bitterness of religious hatred, becomes to all men the ensample through which God shows forth "all His long-suffering." New and weighty responsibility had been committed to his trust.

His own illustrations of the trust committed are most suggestive. As St. Chrysostom hints, Christ had strengthened St. Paul (ver. 12) to be a standard-bearer carrying the banner of his Lord, the symbol of the faith He preached, before the militant host of His Church. He was the herald, as at the Grecian games, calling men to run the heavenly race, to enter upon the spiritual contest whose prize, obtainable by all, was no withering wreath, but the incorruptible crown of eternal life. He was, as he suggests also in another place (2 *Cor.* v. 20), the herald of peace, the ambassador of God, bearing from the Eternal King a message of reconciliation to His rebellious subjects. It was such high commission that had been entrusted to a man who once was "a blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurious person."

It was with the indelible conviction of this solemn trust that St. Paul lived and toiled. The glorious Gospel for which the ages had yearned and waited, and which a Divine hand had forged and perfected, had been entrusted to him. Upon his fidelity, to speak after the manner of men, much of its success was dependent. With his faithfulness to that great commission the weightiest issues were involved. To his proclamation there had been committed the universal

¹ *Phil.* iii. 7.

purpose and efficacy of Christ's atoning death. He was the Apostle of the Gentiles—to them he was God's chosen herald of "glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." It was this sense of responsibility for the Gospel committed to him which had enabled him at Antioch to withstand Peter to the face, on the memorable occasion of his cowardice and inconsistency. It was this conviction that a trust had been laid upon him that enabled him gladly to spend and to be spent. All through his apostolic career this had been the goad and the support of his ceaseless toil. In his early missionary work, ere persecution and hardship and controversy had broken down his strength, he reminds the Thessalonians that he was "approved of God to be entrusted with the Gospel."¹ In the great storm of controversy which later broke upon him, he writes to the Corinthians that "a dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto him."² And now as the end seems to draw near, though the vivacity and strength of manhood may be passed, the conviction abides, not only not weakened, but even strengthened, by a clearer vision of how true and honourable and Divine a matter had been entrusted to him—"the glorious Gospel of the blessed God." In the power of this unchangeable sense of responsibility he, as the standard-bearer of Christ, would carry His banner into the regions beyond, or dare the fiercest fight to which his Captain might command him. Thus, with a bold and unwavering voice, alike in wanton Corinth and commercial Ephesus, on Mars Hill, the seat of aimless culture, or in Rome, the seat of world-wide empire, he, as herald, proclaims the contest and invites men to win the glorious prize. Since God had made him minister and ambassador of His grace he would go out into a world sunk in sin, polluted by all the abominations of heathendom, and beseech men to be reconciled to God. Thus would he fulfil his commission as pioneer, herald, and ambassador of the great Salvation; and that which impelled and cheered and upheld was the conviction "the glorious Gospel was committed to my trust."

To any man the receiving so high and glorious commission would have been a cause of grateful wonderment. But as he contemplated this act of grace St. Paul's emotions were stirred to no common depth. He was impressed not merely by the high honour of the commission, but perhaps still more by his own unworthiness to receive it. He had not merely to accuse himself of sins of indifference and neglect, common to the mass of men: he must write himself down the chief of sinners. For he had taken a position of avowed and bitter opposition, and was branded with an indelible shame: "I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious." Yet Christ had accepted him, had received from him that soul, so defiled and diseased, for cleansing and healing, and far from spurning him had "counted him faithful, appointing him to His service." The Lord Jesus had truly known Saul of Tarsus; He had accused him, "Why persecutest thou

Me?" Christ did not appoint an unknown man to this work; He chose a man whose record was against him. But in His great compassion He forgave the past, and laid upon him a high honour and granted him a glorious trust. He sent him forth as pioneer into new and unsubdued regions, and appointed him to lead what men regarded as forlorn hopes. He commissioned him, who had been reconciled after such transgressions, to be the ambassador and witness of God's reconciling grace. He appointed him to be a herald to the nations, calling them to that high and glorious contest in which all might win the crown of life eternal; and, in wondering gratitude for mercy that could forgive so much and for grace that could entrust so honourable a vocation to one so unworthy, Paul has toiled, and is willing even to die entrusted with the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.

Yet, save in the uniqueness of St. Paul's position and his personal relation to the Lord Jesus, this was not a singular grace. To-day men are put in charge of the Gospel. Men still are pioneers and standard-bearers, ambassadors of Divine grace, or heralds who proclaim the contest whose prize is the unfading crown. In a sense there is no Christian man to whom the commission has not come, or who is free from the responsibility that the "glorious Gospel was committed to his trust." By one this solemn trust must be guarded as he guides a senate; by another as he speeds a plough. One must fulfil his commission by defending the Gospel with high and cultured mental powers; another must exemplify it in the simplest manual toil. Some in lives of incessant activity, others in lives of painful infirmity, fulfil this duty. Some in doing, others in suffering; those in great things, these in small; yet all may by life and character fulfil a high commission and guard a most precious trust—"the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God, committed to their trust."

J. T. L. MAGGS, B.A.

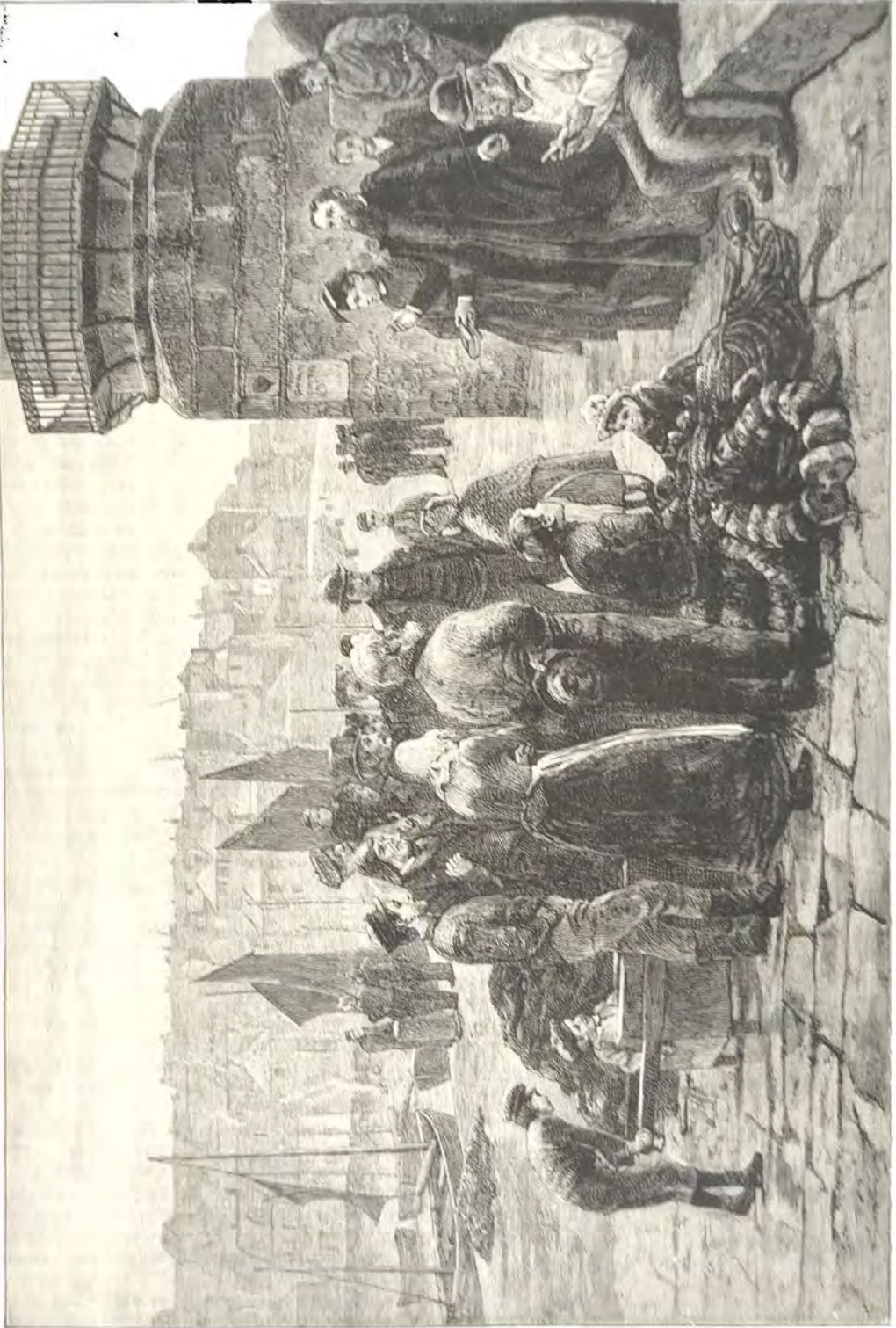
LODGE AT THE SIGN OF THE DOVE.

"Once in my wanderings through a village," says an old Dutch Puritan, "I came to an inn bearing the sign of the Dove; then, said I, truly it must be sweet to lodge there. Then, said I, oh my soul, here take up thine abode, if thou wilt know sweet rest, at the sign of the Dove."

And truly the old Puritan was right—the sign of the Dove. It is a sweet inn for resting—the Dove. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona," that is, say some, thou son of the Dove. The Dove gives the sleep—what simple can give so sweet a sleep? what poppy, or what compound, or essence of violet, or rose, or lettuce, or henbane, or nightshade, or saffron, or hempseed? How shall we aoint the temples or the lips? what frontlets for the eyes, what pillows of wormwood or mandrake? still, with all, sleep flies the couch, and will not be wooed. So various are the medicines invention has sought to yield the sweet grace of sleep—vain, how vain—and then if it should come, how poor compared with the rest beneath the wings of the Dove. Do you understand me? Lodge at the sign of the Dove.—*Paxton Hood's "Dark Sayings."*

¹ 1 Thess. ii. 4.

² 1 Cor. ix. 17.



Alfred T. Bury

PREACHING AT THE SEASIDE

PREACHING AT THE SEASIDE.

OPEN-AIR preaching, which found such favour in the apostolic age, and which did much in advancing the cause of the Reformation, has been so greatly blessed in our own day, that a separate Mission has been founded to extend the practice in town and country. The Association has over eleven hundred members, many of whom are really enthusiastic missionaries to the common people. The leader of this devoted band, or rather the founder of the Mission, was Mr. John Macgregor, the adventurous *Rob Roy*, who, in the days of his prime, set an example by preaching in the streets of London. The good results which have come of such efforts are the best plea that can be urged for their continuance.

In the season, when outdoor services may generally be conveniently held, there seems to be something peculiarly appropriate in preaching at the seaside. The time when people are in search of health and have time on their hands seems also to be peculiarly appropriate for such services. All things seem to conspire to make them attractive. The shade of the cliffs, the cool sea breeze, the music of the waves, are all inviting, so that one may well halt for a few minutes to hear what the preacher has to say.

Here it may be remembered, that our Lord Himself left an example to His followers to preach the Gospel by the seaside. As Dean Chadwick remarks in his commentary on St. Mark: "Jesus loved the open air. His custom when teaching was to point to the sower, the lily, and the bird. He is no pale recluse emerging from a library to instruct, in the dim religious light of cloisters, a world unknown except by books. Accordingly, we find Him 'again by the seaside.' And however the scribes and Pharisees may have continued to murmur, the multitudes resorted to Him, confiding in the evidence of their experience, which never saw it on this fashion."

The Gospels contain many interesting references to the Saviour's custom of teaching the throngs of people who followed Him on the shore. "The same day went Jesus out of the house and sat by the seaside," we read (Matt. xiii. 1). Because the multitudes followed, the Lord gave what was a second address on that day, on which one divine says: "An afternoon sermon well heard will be so far from driving out the morning sermon, that it will rather clench it, and fasten the nail in a sure place." Christ's auditors were the multitudes, the common people who heard him gladly, and to whom it usually appears most worth while to preach. If we ask why the scribes and Pharisees were not present, Matthew Henry replies: "They were willing to hear Him when He preached in the synagogue, but they thought it below them to hear a sermon by the seaside, though Christ Himself was the preacher; and truly He had better have their room than their company, for now they were absent, He went on quietly and without contra-

diction." The Lord went out of the house because only in the open air could sufficient space be found to accommodate His auditory. None of the great Roman public buildings were available for the Lord of Life and Glory to give His message in: "As He had not a house of His own to live in, so He had not a chapel of His own to preach in." Nevertheless, the preacher and the divine message He had to give, made any place consecrated ground; and after all, if the grandest of Roman theatres had been available, the largest of them could never have accommodated the crowds which Christ drew together. In connection with this let us ever bear in mind that "never man spake like this Man." There was not only room for all who came, none of the auditors needed to go away without taking with them the very things which were most necessary for them to know. It would seem, moreover, that no crowd was too great for Christ's voice to reach, while no one can doubt that His method of putting things was quite different from that of merely human speakers however talented.

The fourth chapter of St. Mark begins: "And He began again to teach by the seaside; and there was gathered unto Him a great multitude, so that He entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land." Christ's thus speaking from a ship while the multitude were on the shore has been understood to mean that the Gospel would be carried to the isles of the Gentiles. What should be understood, however, is that Christ preached in such places, at such times, and in such a manner as promised to effect most good. If the common people could not on account of their numbers, get into the buildings, he would address them in the open air; but if others refused to stand out of doors, he would speak to them in the synagogue.

Preaching at the seaside around the British Isles is carried on by the agents of the Open Air Mission and others, the late Mr. Gawin Kirkham, as secretary, being in his time a practised speaker, who had much encouragement in his labours. Accounts of good received frequently come to light, though one can well believe that the majority of hearers who go away with the arrow of conviction in their hearts do not return to tell the story.

One story is told of a worldly-minded young lady who resided at a certain watering-place, and who, on one occasion, heard a seaside sermon which Captain K—— happened to preach on the sands near her house. The lady was prejudiced against the Gospel, thinking no doubt that its acceptance on her part would interfere with her worldly pleasure. Still, she became interested in what she saw and heard. The preacher on the sands described the doom of the impenitent; and while he was speaking some men on the cliffs were letting down on the audience below

pieces of newspaper set on fire. There was some commotion and annoyance; but while he was naturally discouraged at the interruption, the preacher did not leave the ground until he had delivered his message, and had exhorted all to repent and be saved. The young lady had opened her window slightly and crouched down, so that she could hear and see without herself being seen. The preacher went away without knowing aught of what had happened; but some years afterwards the open air evangelist, and the lady who had benefited by his sermon, happened to meet at a continental hotel. The story was then told; and while there was gratitude on the one side, there was joy on the other.

On another occasion a most remarkable conversion happened at Folkestone, the subject being a young Frenchman, who, when found by the open air preacher on the sands, was starving and friendless, being altogether in as miserable a plight as the Prodigal Son when he found himself in a far country. He had got through his resources, and thinking himself too far gone ever to return to God, the young fellow had given up all idea of giving any attention to religion. He had left Paris not very long before with a companion, and the two had led a riotous life together, until the younger found himself deserted and robbed of all he possessed save a few francs. This was in London; after wandering about for some time the young Frenchman walked to Folkestone, where he arrived on a Saturday quite destitute. After remaining out all night he walked down to the sea on Sunday morning in hope of finding some kind of shellfish for breakfast, but finding none, he had to continue to fast. Overcome by a sense of this, the young prodigal shed tears; he also thought of his past folly and wept again.

A friend in the town who sometimes preached on the sands felt that he ought to go down to the sea. His first thought was that he would speak to others who met at a certain place for gambling and drinking; but he seemed to be impelled towards the beach, although it was a long way off. In an out-of-the-way place he encountered the young Frenchman in his wretched condition, but did not at first notice him. The preacher then returned, and when the Frenchman found himself noticed, his eyes filled with tears, and having told his history in broken English, he added that he was asking help of God, and the appearance of a friend seemed to be an answer to the prayer.

To the preacher himself, the adventure was altogether providential. He took the man home, supplied him with such things as were necessary, the sequel being that the Prodigal yielded his heart to the Saviour. The first prayer the young man offered after his conversion was quite in the spirit of that of the publican—"God be merciful to me a sinner." In his imperfect English he said: "I thank You, good God, for ever bringing me to London, and for losing my all, or I should never have found the good Jesus. I thank You for dying for me. I will serve You for ever. Do keep me."

The convert stayed for a time at Folkestone,

and then crossed the Channel to Boulogne; but before they parted, the two prayed together on the beach and sought the guidance of God. In a little over a month the young Frenchman wrote to his friend saying that he had found employment, and he still thanked God for the change which had come over him. The case was one of more than ordinary interest; and one which is abundantly encouraging to such as evangelise in the open air.

One of the most successful open air preachers in London is Mr. Charles Cook; in summer his chief practising ground is Hyde Park, and in winter he is able to attract a full congregation into the spacious music hall in Edgware-road. Mr. Cook has a trained choir—no one who has not been changed in heart being eligible for admission—and occasionally some of these are also found taking part in seaside services.

For many years Mr. Cook has been in the habit of conducting services at the seaside, more especially at Ramsgate, Margate, and Yarmouth; and his general testimony is, that he has seen some of the most striking cases of conversion occur as the result of such preaching: "On one occasion at Yarmouth a young lady was converted, and the following year her brother was brought to Christ at Ramsgate." He adds that "on another occasion a man was awakened at Yarmouth who spent the whole night in prayer, went home the following day (Saturday), and refused to open his shop on the Sunday as he was wont to do. He is now a very successful tradesman."

Preachers who conduct services at the seaside sometimes find that subjects which seem to have something of the sea in them are the most profitable. All grades seem to be drawn together at such times, and that this is so appears to be one of the advantages of preaching at the seaside. In one instance we even hear of a college professor coming up at the close of a service to ask, "What can I do to get peace with God?" and having had his answer he found what he really earnestly sought. Some of the converts thus made become very earnest volunteers in Christian work.

As an esteemed veteran, who has been in the habit of conducting seaside services for a quarter of a century, Mr. Cook says that there is no grander theatre for Christian work; and as regards himself after that term of practice, his voice is better than when he commenced.

In the early part of this century, when the late Dr. Campbell was a young man, he set himself the task of gathering a congregation of poor people at Kilmarnock. There was no desire to draw persons from other places, and as the people did not seem to be inclined to go to the church, the preacher decided that he would go to them. "But in the meantime he determined to make a preaching tour on the sea coast, that he might ascertain the state and spirit of the country." Accordingly, "he proceeded to Kilwinning, Saltcoats, and other large towns, and in all, by means of the bellman, he collected considerable congregations in the market-places, who

listened with respectful attention. Thus encouraged, he returned to Kilmarnock on Saturday, and standing up in the chief place he began to speak, and soon collected a crowd. At the close of his address, he intimated that he would preach on the morrow at the music hall, where he would be happy to see those who were not in the habit of attending any regular place of worship." By such means the congregation was gathered for which the enterprising pastor had been longing; so that, it is said, in after years Mr. Campbell had "often chid young preachers who solicited his good offices in the way of obtaining a settlement, for their want of zeal and courage. He was accustomed to quote to them the motto of Lord Bacon: 'I will either find or make a way.' So, he would say, you ought either to find a charge, or to make one. The man who opens a well of salvation is a benefactor, not only to the present age, but to the generations to come." The "well of salvation" has often been opened in the open air, and even at the seaside.

Speaking of the sea one once remarked: "The shadows of evening fell upon those waters, and the quiet stars peeped from their hiding-place. The breakers, lighted up with phosphorescent flashes, rolled in fire-waves upon the rocks.

High above those troubled waters shone the bright light of that faithful sentinel, which, amid storms and darkness, stands to keep watch for the sailor. I looked and I thought: So shines the lamp of God's Word over the troubled sea of life, and he who fixes his eye upon it, shall be safely conducted to the haven of peace. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel."

Preaching at the seaside is thus a department of Christian service which is well worthy of being cultivated and developed. In such an opening any talent will find scope for its exercise. One who has a gift for speaking to sailors and fishermen will often find an opportunity; and so likewise will it be the case with others who have something attractive to say to children, for whom services are regularly conducted on the beach in many watering-places during the summer. Different towns have different characteristics, and the preacher who has tact and a love for his work, will endeavour to adapt his ways to them as circumstances will allow. In any case it is true the seaside presents a fine opportunity for open air preaching, which ardent volunteers in a most useful service will not fail to improve.

G. H. P.

THE ANDERSONS: BROTHER AND SISTER.

CHAPTER XV.—A CRASH!

LETTICE could not control her start. Every pulse in her body seemed to leap with the shock. For some seconds no words passed her lips. At first she dared not let herself speak. She could only sit motionless, holding back the burning words which crowded to her lips; while the boy stared at her with half-frightened eyes. Then she said in a muffled voice—

"What makes you think so?"

"I know she did."

"How do you know?"

"I saw her."

"And you never said a word! Never a word!—to clear me!"

"Lettice—I couldn't! How could I?"

She felt the force of the remark. How could he, indeed? The marvel was, not that he had not spoken earlier, but that he had spoken now. "Yet, have I not a right to be cleared?" Lettice asked of herself, in a tumult of agitation. "Am I to bear this always—because Keith must shield her?" It seemed too hard—too much to expect. "I have promised; but I could make Keith give way. I could make him!" came next in the rush of thought. She saw suddenly a scene in the study—herself confronting Theodosia, accusing Theodosia to Dr. Bryant, and calling upon Keith as a witness. It would be no more than Theodosia deserved. Lettice did not shrink

from the pictured scene. Her gentle nature was for once aroused to a glowing energy of anger. What had she done to bring this on her? Nothing could be too bad—no punishment could be too severe—for Theodosia!

And yet she had to forgive! Her pledged word had to be kept—and she might not betray the boy.

"But to go away from home, leaving them all to think this of me, when one word might set it right!" she cried passionately in her heart, while outwardly a dumb still figure, only trembling with the shock. "Must I? Must I? May I not do something?—say something? O it is hard to bear!"

"You don't mind so very much, do you, Lettice? What makes your hand shake? Are you cold?"

"Keith, I want you to tell me all about it—exactly what you saw . . . I am not vexed with you . . . Only I must hear the whole."

He nestled close to her, and spoke in a subdued undertone.

"It was the day Mr. Anderson came, you know. Father and you had gone off to the station with him; and I was hiding in your room for fun. I meant to jump out on you when you got back, and to give you a fright. It was dark, and I slipped under the sofa, and lay down there. And presently mamsie came in. She

had a candle, and she looked so queer and pale. And she had a scrap of paper, or something, in one hand—at least, I think she had. Lettice, what does make you shake so, all over?"

"Never mind. I can't help it. Go on."

"Well, she tried to open your boxes, one after another; and they were locked. So she hunted about in your table drawer; and presently she found a bunch of keys somewhere. I couldn't see, but I heard them rattle. And she lifted off the topmost one of the two big boxes—she always says she can't lift things generally, you know, so I wondered she was able! And she found the right key for the bottom box, after a lot of trouble; and she unlocked it, and put her hand in. I saw her arm go in, more than halfway up to the elbow. And I was so afraid she would see me, I hardly breathed. Then she locked the box again, and lifted back the other one, and put the keys away, and went off. And I got out of the room as soon as ever I could; because I knew she would be so angry if she found I had been there. And I never told anybody. Ought I?"

Lettice could not speak. A strong nervous tremor had possession of her still; and her teeth chattered as if with cold. She put her arms round the boy for support; and rested her cheek against his curly head.

"Ought I? Lettice, you're not ill? What is it?"

"No, nothing. Never mind. I'm only—Hold me tight, Keith; and go on."

"You're speaking in such a queer voice."

"It doesn't matter. Go on. Tell me the rest."

"There's nothing more. That was all. I didn't think about it again—not even when the bank-note was lost. Because, of course, I didn't see a bank-note in her hand; only I'm sure there was something. And then when they said it had been found in your box, I couldn't help remembering."

Lettice shivered silently.

"You've promised you won't tell. But I say, —what could make her do such a thing? It wasn't like mamsie! It has made me feel horrid since—I mean, since I guessed what she did. . . . Only you must keep my secret, Lettice. I couldn't have her know that I knew. I shouldn't dare."

"A boy—not dare!"

"O, but this sort of thing. I'd fight a boy any day, and not care; but I can't tell about this! Lettice, I couldn't! It would be so—O, you know! You'll keep my secret?"

"I must. I have promised."

"And you don't mind?"

"Yes, I do mind. Of course I mind—very much. I want to be cleared, more than you can imagine. It is dreadful to have people thinking that one is a thief. But I do not mean to break my word."

"If it were any one else; any one except mamsie, I shouldn't mind then. I couldn't possibly tell now. I do wonder, though, what made her do such a thing. What could make her?"

"She doesn't like me, and she doesn't like you

to love me. That is no real reason, of course; and I don't know any other . . . I think we had better not talk any more of this just now. I shall be saying something I ought not."

"And then you would be sorry, wouldn't you? Lettice, are you cold still? It's getting near tea-time. Why don't you come downstairs?"

"No hurry. What did you want me to do for you?" She could not yet face Theodosia.

"Oh, only to paste in some of my scraps. I've got a nice lot of paste. Will you do it now?"

He rushed away for the scrap-book, his mind at once diverted from the subject under discussion. Lettice longed for a quiet half-hour; yet perhaps employment was better for her than solitary cogitation, and Keith's chatter left no loophole for steady thought. Trembling lessened under the need for careful work, but severe headache came on instead; and at length she was obliged to lay down the paste-brush. "Keith, I don't think I can do any more till I have had some tea. I wonder if you could get me a cup?"

"I'll ask mamsie. And some cake?"

"No, only tea. And then I needn't leave this to go downstairs."

Keith ran willingly enough, but he returned with a crestfallen air. "She says it's nonsense, and I shall smash the china; and if you want any tea you are to get it yourself."

"Very well. You can finish sorting these pictures while I am away." Lettice made her way slowly, not to the drawing-room direct, but to her own room first. She hardly knew how to meet Theodosia; to meet her injurer, and make no sign. Beneath an outer strained calm lay a seething turmoil of indignation. If that should break bounds, what might she not say or do, in this hour of bitter resentment? Lettice dropped on her knees by the bedside, with face hidden, crying out voicelessly for the help needed; and ten minutes of wrestling went by before she dared to venture downstairs.

"You seem particularly fond of cold tea," Theodosia observed, carelessly handing her a cup.

Lettice made no answer in words. Their eyes met: Theodosia's handsome and repellent, albeit capable of pleasant regards when their owner chose; Lettice's constrained and inwardly dark with some new meaning, which Theodosia could not read. The same was inscribed also, though no more legibly, in the firm set of the white lips. Theodosia tossed her head; and Lettice went to a chair, again trembling, so that she could not hold her cup.

"What have you been doing upstairs?" demanded Theodosia.

"Helping Keith."

"Is that all?"

"And—talking." The recollection of what had passed swept over Lettice afresh. Theodosia to have deliberately done such a deed, and to go about for weeks after with no sign of guilty consciousness: it seemed incredible! She had a sense of shuddering repulsion; and she remained with downcast eyes, almost forgetting where she was, only conscious of Theodosia's vicinity.

"What is the matter?" asked Dr. Bryant's voice.
 "Nothing," Lettice began to say, and checked herself, for it would not be true.

"Something, surely."

"I have a headache."

"Since when? You had no headache at lunch."

"It came on—since."

"Upstairs?"

"Yes."

"Why do you not take your tea? Have you had some already?"

"No." Lettice put out her hands towards the cup, and then found it held to her lips.

"Stay; this is too cold to do you any good. Have you none hotter, Theodosia?"

"If Lettice chooses to dawdle upstairs, she must take the consequences!"

"There may be reasonable excuse for delay. Has anything happened to upset her?"

"How should I know! She has had a letter from the Valentines."

Dr. Bryant rang the bell and ordered fresh tea. Then he returned to Lettice.

"From the Valentines? About your visit? Any disappointment?"

"O no. I am to go—"

"When?"

"Friday, I think. If you do not mind."

"I do not mind what is for your good. I should like to know the cause of your state at this moment."

Lettice could not meet his gaze of grave solicitude. It went to her heart to know how dear she was to him still, even though he could believe her guilty of so despicable an act, and even though the old tenderness of manner was absent. To let him go on thinking this thing of her, when by a word she might clear her name, was hard indeed, yet that she might not do, because of her promise. The strain and distress were almost more than she knew how to bear. She hid her face in her hands.

"Really, it is too ridiculous," declared Theodosia.

Lettice heard no answer, and was not at first aware that Theodosia had left the room. After awhile she felt the firm touch of Dr. Bryant's hand.

"Now drink this."

Lettice obeyed silently. When she had finished he took from her the empty cup, and she leant back with closed eyes, anxious to escape questioning; but presently he said:

"Look at me."

She obeyed again; and the steadfast gaze, which now could meet his unhesitatingly, led to an inward remark on the part of Dr. Bryant, "I never saw guilt more like innocence." Aloud he said, "The tea has done your head good."

"Yes, thank you."

"What has happened this afternoon?"

She demurred painfully what to say. "I was—worried," came at length.

"About leaving home? . . . Is that it? . . . The prospect of going with this cloud upon you?"

She could truly answer, "Yes;" though after the "Yes" was a qualifying "Partly."

"One course lies open to you still—the course

of frank confession. Nothing can undo what has been done; but next to the undoing of evil comes the confession of it. . . . Have you no wish for my forgiveness, Lettice?"

There was a pause of some seconds before she answered, "If I had done what you think, uncle, I should wish to be forgiven."

"Still obstinate!" and the Doctor sighed.

Lettice lifted one of his hands, and pressed it to her lips. He drew it away.

"No. I would give anything to have back the old state of matters between us, and to some extent it is not impossible even now. But only one road lies open. Until you take that road—"

She moved her head slightly,—a quick involuntary negation.

"Some day I shall be cleared," she whispered, with unsteady lips. "Some day it will be made plain. I can't say what is not true."

"Hush! We will not discuss the question any further. Let me know what time you go on Friday, and I will take care that you have enough money."

Dr. Bryant quitted her abruptly, and Lettice's tears fell fast. The next moment two warm arms were flung round her.

"Lettice, you're crying. What are you crying about? Has mamsie been scolding? My pictures are all arranged. Don't you mean to come and help me paste them in?"

She tried to say, "Yes, when you like."

"I want to get them done before you go. I do wish you wouldn't go. It'll be so horrid. Lettice, you mustn't cry."

"Keith, if you knew how hard it is—to have uncle think such things of me!"

"I wouldn't if I was him," said Keith.

"He does. And how can he help it—not knowing? But I am going to try to be patient. I will ask God to help me. And some day—some day the truth will come out."

"Does God love you, Lettice?"

Lettice burst into fresh tears.

"I don't know what I should do, if I did not feel sure of that," she whispered.

"Then I'll ask Him to make you happy. Shall I? And I'll say my prayers every day, all the time you are away: and I really will try to be a good boy, Lettice."

"So Lettice comes to-day," said Mr. Valentine, over his breakfast on the following Friday. "She was a nice little girl, once upon a time, but girls do alter so. . . . I wonder if Londoners call this a fresh egg? I don't! Got another? . . . Well, this is a dull house to come to: but young things like London bustle. That's the difference between them and me. I'm too old for uprooting, and getting used to a new soil."

"It takes time," his gentle wife said. "You've always been used to the country, you see."

"And to fresh eggs! And to country ways. One of which is *not* lying late in bed," grunted Mr. Valentine. "Where's Prue gone? And what is Nan after?"

"Prue's only gone to see if Nan has overslept herself."

"Shouldn't do it a second time if I'd the

management of her!"—with a reasonable appreciation of his own power in the household as compared with his wife's.

"What time does Lettice get here? I shall find her come, I suppose, when I get back," said Wallace. He had a distinct recollection of his old boyish worship of Lettice; merely a recollection. The feeling had died out through intervening years, as such boyish feelings do die out. Presumably it might be capable of revival; though Wallace was now a young man, and Lettice a young woman. The young woman is often an unexpected development from what the child has been: nothing remaining of the former individual except her identity.

Wallace felt it to be extremely uncertain whether the present Lettice would excite in him such sensations as had been awakened by the former Lettice, nor was he particularly desirous that she should. He could look upon those sensations with the composed and critical interest which a man feels, surveying his sensations in a past illness. The little episode of his early enthusiasm had sunk into a background corner of his canvas. Some interest was aroused by the thought of seeing her again; but it was not keen enough to affect his appetite.

"Who will meet her at Paddington, mother?"

"O, Prue, of course."

"If Prue has not time, I'll go," Mr. Valentine said, unexpectedly. He was known to detest above all things a huge London terminus. "Hello, Nan!"—taken to fine-lady lie-a-bed ways!"—as his youngest appeared in the rear of Prue, buttoning her cuffs.

"Oh, I'm so sorry, father, but I went off sound after I was called. No, never a fine lady!" cried Nan indignantly. "You ought to know me better."

"Well, well, well, sit down and eat your breakfast, my girl; though it doesn't boast country butter;" and the old farmer, mollified by her protest, rubbed his broad hands together. "Hark to the wind! It's getting up for a storm, and no mistake."

"Glass has gone down fast," put in Wallace. "Taken a regular leap!"

"Well, it may or may not mean the same here. I'm not used to a sky mixed up with chimney-pots. I should know well enough, down at the old home, what to expect. Blowing up for a gale of some sort—that's clear."

"I'll tell you what,—I had better go to the station and meet Lettice," said Wallace. "Just as well." In an undertone he explained to Prue his father's proposal. "Luggage sure to be lost, or something go wrong. I can get away in good time this afternoon, I know, and it will save all bother."

"And I'll meet you at Paddington, just before the train comes in," cried Nan.

So matters were arranged, somewhat to the relief of Prue, who had many little businesses in hand, and foresaw small leisure. But Nan failed to keep her share in the appointment; and she failed through no fault of her own.

Mr. Valentine proved to be a true weather-prophet, so far as that particular gale was con-

cerned. Unknown to him, at the moment when he spoke, a cyclone had been announced in the papers, as on its road across the Atlantic, and the cyclone turned out to be no effete or worn-out specimen of its kind. As the morning passed, ever-increasing howls from warring elements could be heard, and the wind became after midday so violent, that at street-corners women were nearly swept off their feet, while flying tiles rendered walking a matter of danger.

"Do you think you ought to go?" Prue asked, when the younger girl appeared in hat and jacket. Prue was with her mother in the drawing-room, the windows of which overlooked the street in front. "They say a chimney has come down, in the next square."

"Oh, I'm all right. I shall not hurt. It will be fun to see the people."

"You must take care. Father went out to the post-pillar, and a slate fell close to him."

"Like being under fire, isn't it? But everybody can't stay in, and why should I?" asked Nan. "Why! I've got two odd gloves."

"If I went, I would go respectable."

"Of course you could, because you are Prue! As if I cared!" said Nan, flourishing the second right-hand covering. "Not worth another climb. I hate London staircases."

"Wallace will mind."

"Wallace won't see. I'll keep my left hand hidden, so. Good thing my sleeves are so long. I say!—what fun!—look at that lady holding on for dear life to the railings. I don't mean to do anything so ignominious."

"Nan, my dear, you are almost old enough to leave off saying, 'I say!'"

"If I shall ever be old enough, mother!"

Mrs. Valentine shook her head, with a little smile.

"I wonder what we are all going to do to amuse Lettice! I wonder what she has grown into, and what she is like. Well, I ought to be off. There's that book in the back-bedroom, which I promised to leave over the way—I must get it, and leave it now. What's that?"

The question was not so much as heard. A prolonged heavy crash sounded; not a crash only, but a reverberating mixture of sounds; both roar and rattle, with a continuous grinding downpour, as if some semi-solid Niagara had launched itself into the house from above; and the whole room shook with the concussion. Voices could not at first be heard. Prue made one hasty movement, to her mother's side, and Mrs. Valentine grew pale; while Nan stared at them both, aghast.

"What is that?" burst from all three, as soon as words could be distinguished.

Shrieks arose from lower regions; and shouts in Mr. Valentine's hearty voice.

"Something must have fallen—or been blown down," said Prue, not losing her composure. "Father is not hurt. I hear him calling out."

"Thank God," passed Mrs. Valentine's lips.

"Wait, Nan! Don't go out. It must be a chimney, and more of it may fall."

"Then you're not to go either," declared Nan.

"I will only look out." She opened the door of the drawing room, which was on the first-floor, over the dining room—the back of the house

being given up to bed-rooms,—and came face to face with her father, hurrying upstairs.

"All right? Nobody hurt?" he called. "Mother safe? That's a mercy! One of the biggest mercies I ever had to do with! Not a soul in the back of the house! Must have been killed if—just look here!"

A cry escaped from Prue, and Nan shrieked outright, as Mr. Valentine flung open the door of the bedroom, across the passage. On that side, the house was a wreck. Almost the whole stack of chimneys had crashed downward, breaking through floor after floor, till the basement was reached by a mighty mass of bricks and broken beams, flooring, ceiling, furniture, all jumbled together. Above, the sky was visible through the rent roof; below yawned a cavern.

"And nobody hurt?" asked the gentle voice of Mrs. Valentine, who had followed her daughters.

"Not a soul. The servants were in front."

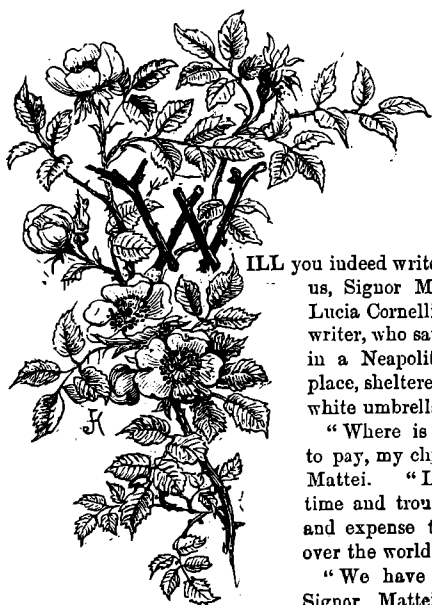
"But I should have been behind in another moment," Nan said, in awe-stricken tones. "I was just going into the downstairs back-bedroom! I should have been underneath all—that!"

"Hush! Don't talk of it now!" whispered Prue, seeing her mother's cheeks whiten.

"Now, look here, you've all got to get out of this as soon as possible," ordered Mr. Valentine. "There's more to come down, yet, may be; and any part of the house may give way, after such a shake. You get hats and shawls, sharp—Eh, what? Everything in the back rooms! Well, pick up what wraps you can."

"Where are we to go, father?" asked Prue.

"Out of this, my girl! That's certain! Somewhere over the street we must get taken in, I suppose."



LUCIA'S LETTER.

BY ANNE BEALE.

I.

ILL you indeed write a letter for us, Signor Mattei, asked Lucia Cornelli of a letter-writer, who sat at his table in a Neapolitan marketplace, sheltered by his big white umbrella.

"Where is the money to pay, my child?" asked Mattei. "Letters cost time and trouble to write, and expense to travel all over the world."

"We have no money, Signor Mattei, but the

mother is ill, and we want to get Paolo and Maria and the good Monnina back to comfort her. The Uncle Giacomo may stay behind, for he brings trouble, and took them all away from us."

"And who are they, I wonder? If you were good children you would be able to write for yourselves. You see what a fine thing it is to be able to write! I live by writing letters for stupid, idle people."

"Then, signor, if we could all write, you would die. That would be a pity, for you are kind to the poor, and give little children *confètturi*."

Signor Mattei put down the pen he held in his hand and began to laugh.

"You come for *confètturi*, then?" he said, laying one hand on the head of Lucia's brother who stood at the table opposite her, and placing the other over her outstretched palm. "What say you, my boy?"

"Speak, Giovanni! Say we want only a letter to Paolo, and care not for sweets," cried Lucia.

"I like sweets, but I want Paolo and Maria and

Monnina most," said Giovanni sturdily, looking up for the first time at the letter-writer.

Giovanni was a typical Neapolitan, with dark, lustrous eyes, and olive complexion: but Lucia was fair, with the dark blue eyes so rare, and so beautiful when seen among her countrywomen. Both were loosely clad, shoeless, and stockingless, but they were clean and neat, and the white handkerchief tied round Lucia's head in the guise of a cap or bonnet was precursor of the tasteful flat headgear of her elders. She was not, in short, in Neapolitan costume, but in the garb of poverty.

"Tell me all about it, and we shall see," said Mattie resuming his pen, when he saw Lucia's eyes fill with tears, and spreading a sheet of letter-paper out before him. "What shall we say?"

"Write, 'Dear Paolo and Maria. You must come back at once. You must bring Monnina, for we die to see you all again. The mother is ill and can do no washing. She knows not of this letter, and would scold if she thought we wrote. Signor Mattei writes for us, and you can write back to him, only come first. We starve without you, and you will bring us all the money you have earned, you and Monnina. She shall have——'"

"Who is Monnina? a monkey or a marmozet?" here interrupted Mattei.

"She is Paolo's monkey, and he says the people of London give her pence and cakes, and laugh when she sits on his head."

"Then Paolo can write? Ah, the sensible Paolo!"

"No, signor. The good missionary wrote for him."

"Have you the letter? What is the address?"

"Ah, signor, our mother keeps it always in her pocket and will not let us touch it, for fear we soil it. The writing is beautiful, and Paolo says he and Maria go to the school of the missionary on Sundays, and to his church often."

"I have heard before of him from your seekers of fortune who have come back to Naples from that England whither discontented people go; and I think I can find his address. What more shall I put in the letter?"

Lucia looked puzzled. She had forgotten where she left off; but Giovanni aided her.

"I earned them by running messages for our neighbour, la Signora Nouna," she said. "And I will bring you more to pay for writing my letter very soon. When will Paolo get it? To-morrow, perhaps—that will be Tuesday. Then he will leave London Wednesday or Thursday, and be home—Friday, or Saturday, and bring Maria and Monnina. Oh, joy!"

Giovanni began to dance, and Lucia's face beamed with smiles.

"One, two, three, four days, and we shall see Paolo and Maria and Monnina again!" they exclaimed.

"Not so fast. What of the uncle?" asked Mattei.

"Perhaps he will bring them in his boat, for he is a sailor. But we only want Paolo and Maria and Monnina.

"Tell me where you live, and I will come and see you. I remember your good father. He, too, was a sailor."

"Si, signor. He was drowned ever so long ago. When you come to see us, you will not tell mother of the letter. And you will send it, now—instantly, so that it reach the good missionary to-morrow?"

"First, I must find his address. Then the letter will take two or three days before it reaches him; after this he must look for Paolo Cornelli, and finally, there must be money found to pay the journey home. But, my children, we will do our best to bring them back to our Belle Napoli."

"Bella Napoli!" shouted Giovanni, and began to dance again.

"I will bring the *confetturi* this evening when I visit the mother," said Mattei, writing down the address which Lucia gave him. "The letter shall go this very day, and I will also write to the good missionary."

"Mille grazie, signor. A thousand thanks; but you will not tell la mamma," said Lucia, taking Giovanni by the hand, and leaving Mattei to compose and write his letters.



From a Sketch made in Italy]

A FRIENDLY SCRIBE.

[by A. W. Bayes.

"You were telling Paolo and Maria what Monnina should have when she came home," he said.

"Never mind Monnina; what more of the mother and yourselves?" said Mattei.

"Say that Pietro cries all day for food, and that he and mamma will die if they do not come back."

"And the stamp to put on the letter? It will not travel all the way to London without money on its back, though we foolish Italians think we can go all over the world with a musical instrument and a monkey. I wish people would stay at home."

"So do I," sighed Lucia. "But, signor, I have the money for the stamp."

She put her hand into the pocket of her jacket, and drew out an old purse, whence she extracted some small coins.

KEY TO THE LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

ST. PAUL.—VII.—p. 560.

(1) Acts xxi. 21; (2) vv. 23, 24; (3) vv. 28, 29; (4) v. 31; (5) v. 38; (6) xxii. 2; (7) vv. 17-21; (8) v. 21; (9) v. 25; (10) Deut. xxv. 2, 3; (11) Acts xxiii. 8; (12) v. 6; (13) v. 11; (14) vv. 12-22.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XXVI.—p. 576.—NICODEMUS.—John iii. 1, 2; ix. 39-42.

N abal	1 Sam. xxv. 3.
I saac	Gal. iv. 28, 29.
C ain	1 John iii. 12.
O badiah	1 Kings xviii. 3.
D orcas	Acts ix. 36.
E noah	I Job. xi. 5.
M elohizedek	Gen. xiv. 18.
U riah	2 Sam. xii. 9.
S aul	1 Sam. ix. 2.