

THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

THE ANDERSONS: BROTHER AND SISTER.

BY AGNES GIBERNE, AUTHOR OF "THE DALRYMPLES," ETC.



"THANK YOU, VERY MUCH," HE SAID, "YOU HAVE GIVEN ME COURAGE!"

CHAPTER XVIII.—A NEEDED TOUCH.

"THREE months since I came! I seem to have been years in London, years and years!" said Lettice aloud.

She had been busy all the morning over some mending for her brother: singing to herself as he darned and patched. To work for him was a pure delight, because she loved him, and because he was so good to her. Lettice had fitted easily

and completely into her new home, finding great happiness there. The dull little room, and uninteresting outlook, signified nothing. Perpetual cheer existed in perpetual freedom from Theodosia's rasping temper, in her constant power to devote herself to Felix. She could often forget for hours together the unjust and cruel suspicion under which she still lay; and only the thought of Dr. Bryant weighed upon her still.

He had written two or three times kindly, but

with brevity; expressing no marked regret at losing Lettice, only trusting that she would be happy. What had passed between him and Felix, Lettice could merely conjecture. That a hot letter had gone off in her defence, she did know, though she had not been allowed to see it; and Dr. Bryant's temperate answer, while it made Felix "Pshaw" angrily, was quoted to her only in parts. Lettice knew thus much, that he still counted her guilty, and that his affection for her was not dead. Sometimes she feared that the cloud never would be lifted from her pathway in this life.

Once a boyish ill-spelt letter arrived from Keith, vehemently lamenting her defection. "It is horrid without you," he said. "There's nobody to talk to now, and not a scrap of fun." Lettice dared not answer the scrawl with any freedom, nor could she honestly say that she wished to be back.

After three months in lodgings the Valentines were at length in their home once more. They and Lettice met frequently, spending many a spare hour in company. Prue was still the prime favourite of Lettice, but she heartily cared for them all; and Nan had dropped into something of her old awkward devotion to Lettice. Old Mr. Valentine once quaintly styled her his "outside daughter," and the name clung to her thenceforward. Wallace seemed to find particular pleasure in using it. Lettice was most willing to be his sister. Had he wished for a closer tie, he might have found the wish denied; since Lettice was too supremely happy in her new sphere, too entirely wrapped up in Felix, to give her heart easily elsewhere. But though Wallace liked to call, liked to chat with Lettice, and liked to show brotherly kindnesses, he failed to develop into a lover.

"I seem to have been years and years here," repeated Lettice, standing to look out of the window upon the quiet street. It was a warm and bright day, with only the ordinary slight murkiness of atmosphere, which a true Londoner does not so much as perceive. Lettice, being not yet a true Londoner, did perceive it, with a transient recollection of the exquisitely clear air about her country home. "But I would not go there again; oh, not if I could," she went on aloud. "I would do anything for uncle—anything; but until he believes in me again, I cannot make him happy. Being together is not real enjoyment. There is always a sort of shadow between us. And Mrs. Bryant—to live with her. Oh, no! And to leave Felix—so good as he is to me now—dear boy. And I am sure it is right for him—the best thing that could have been, even though it does mean not making money so fast. Prue says it will be the making of him, which is much more important. I want Felix to be a really nice man—a man that everybody may look up to. Who is coming now? I know that way of walking. Why, it is Bertha! Bertha herself."

Lettice ran out to open the front door, and Bertha presented a rosy cheek to be kissed. The two had never met since Cecilia's death: and those smiling eyes awakened a rush of memories.

Not altogether sad memories. Lettice could not but feel how Cecilia would have rejoiced in the present arrangement.

"Bertha! how good of you. I knew you were to be at home for just one day, and I meant to leave you all to yourselves so carefully."

"And I meant not to be defrauded of a peep! Let me look at you. Yes, just as they say. The same, only more."

"More what?"

"Any agreeable adjectives that you like to string together. So you really are settled down with your brother—busy, and well, and happy! No need to ask if you are that."

"Sometimes I wonder if any girl is quite so well off as I am. Of course there are some things—I don't mean that I have every single thing in life I could choose. Only I do delight in being with Felix always, and having a little home so near all your dear people."

"I'm sure they are equally delighted to have you near."

"Sit down, please; if you can spare just a few minutes. And you are fond of nursing as ever? Not tired of it?"

"Tired! Never! Yes, I know what you mean by the 'something' that you want. Prue told me, of course. She knew you would not mind."

"About the bank-note?"

"It is a horrid shame, Lettice. That is all I can say. And you are the dearest little angel to bear it as you do. There—now you know what I think."

"Ah, you can't tell how I have often felt. Anything but angelic!"

"I can only tell how you haven't acted. I couldn't have borne it so in your place, that is certain. Never mind. Your brother understands, and so do we. So would anybody that really knows you, as mother and Prue and I do. Those people near Bristol don't signify. If I were you, I would just ignore their existence. A set of—"

"Oh, no; I am so fond of Uncle Maurice, and of Keith."

"So much the more shame for them. To treat you in such a way; you, with that dear little transparent face of yours. How anybody, with a grain of common-sense in his brain, could look at you for half a second, and believe that you could do such a thing—! It's perfectly insane!"

"I don't think your nursing-work has tamed you down yet," Lettice said, smiling. Bertha's eager defence could not but be pleasant.

"It never will—if that means turning me into an automaton. I'm subdued enough in a sick-room; but I hope I always shall have a little indignation to explode on injustice . . . Now I won't talk of that any more, or I shall be saying too much . . . Though I don't see that any blame could be too strong . . . To turn to something else. What do you think of Prue?"

"Of Prue?"

"Yes. Is she well? Is she happy?"

"She is always so good to me," said Lettice slowly. "And I think—one doesn't seem to expect Prue to be anything but well."

"Because she never talks about herself. She never contrives to draw attention to the matter. You don't hear Prue informing other people, unasked, how she has slept, and how she has eaten, and what are her latest sensations."

"No; that is it. Prue always seems to go quietly on just the same, whatever she feels. She does look very pale sometimes—and she is thin—but all this worry about the house—and the shock of the chimney falling——"

"My theory is different. Prue does not look as she should look; but I don't believe the chimneys have had much to do with the matter. I believe it is wholly and entirely Mr. Kelly."

Lettice opened her lips, and shut them again.

"Nothing but Mr. Kelly," repeated Bertha, watching Lettice critically.

"I never thought of such a thing."

"You know Mr. Kelly well."

"He comes to see us sometimes, not often. He has always been so kind to Felix; and now I do just a little work in the parish for him."

"And you find him pleasant?"

"Yes—very. Why not, Bertha?"

"Does he ever speak of Prue?"

"Sometimes."

"But he does not show any especial liking?"

"He likes Prue, of course. Every one does."

"Don't you understand me yet? I am treating you as one of ourselves—and trusting you. Of course this is in strict confidence. But for Prue's sake I thought I would ask you if you had noticed anything. Did you ever hear of the past time, when Prue knew him. Years ago?"

"I know he is an old acquaintance."

"More than a mere acquaintance. For weeks we were thrown together, and he seemed to be definitely seeking Prue. I should have said there could be no mistake about the matter. And Prue gave him her whole heart. Poor dear! how happy she was! Then suddenly he drew back, and went away without a word. We lost sight of him for years. Prue suffered terribly, but she would not talk of him—would not allow any one to blame him. And I was as sure as she was that there must be some mistake—only, what could one do?"

"And you believe that Prue cares for Mr. Kelly still?"

"If Prue gives her love once, she gives it for ever. Don't you know her well enough to know that?"

Lettice sat lost in thought.

"The question is—does he care for her now?"

Bertha went on.

"Bertha, I almost think he does."

"You don't imagine that he has taken to somebody else?"

"No."

Bertha saw that her conjecture had not so much as penetrated into the girl's mind; the idea of Mr. Kelly in connection with herself was non-existent.

"No," she repeated; "certainly nobody that I have come across. I don't know most of Mr. Kelly's friends, of course. But now that I think of it, I have noticed how he talks of Prue. I

thought it was because she is such a friend of mine, only——"

"Men are not commonly so accommodating. They don't understand the force of female friendships."

"But if he does care, why should he not speak?"

"Ah, there it is! He may not be sure of his own mind—he may still less be sure of Prue's mind. That self-restrained manner of hers is not easy to read. At all events, you know now how things stand."

"I wish he would! It would be only too delightful!"

"Well, you and I, of course, can do nothing. He must just please himself. Perhaps I feel a little more hopeful now, after speaking to you—and I know it is safe! You will never breathe a word to anybody—least of all to Prue? . . . Tell me about yourself, and how you opened your class. I must not stay many more minutes."

After Bertha's departure, Lettice stood again, gazing out of the window, busied in consideration. She did not quite see why Bertha had said so much. It seemed that the conversation could lead to no particular result. As Bertha had truly remarked, they could take absolutely no steps in the matter. If Mr. Kelly did not come forward of his own free will, no living person had power to induce him to do so. "And, after all, it may be a mere fancy," decided Lettice. "Mr. Kelly may have forgotten his old liking; and Prue may not really care any longer. Prue always seems quite contented."

Then, to her surprise, she saw Mr. Kelly himself in the street, apparently steering a straight course for the front door—Mr. Kelly, with downward-bent head and intent visage, evidently very much occupied with some interest mentally viewed. Lettice did not open the front door this time. "How odd that he should come now, just after Bertha's call! I have a great mind to make him talk about Prue, just for the sake of watching how he does it . . . Did Bertha think that perhaps I was getting to like him a little too well?" This idea flashed up unbidden, and Lettice burst into a soft fit of laughter. "O, how absurd! Then she really came in Prue's interest. Dear Prue! Why, he is old enough to be my father!"

"All alone, Miss Anderson?" Mr. Kelly surprised the laugh, only half completed; and he was not sure whether to be disconcerted, since it might be that she was laughing at him. "You seem very cheerful," he hazarded.

"O yes: I am as cheerful as possible," Lettice answered, composing her face with all speed. "Please sit down. I have a good part of the day alone, of course. And sometimes my own thoughts amuse me."

"Your mind to you, in fact, a kingdom is."

"Not always, I am afraid."

Mr. Kelly sank into profound silence. This was not his usual mode; and Lettice became speedily aware that he had something on his mind. He had been very friendly and pleasant of late, and she enjoyed a call from him; but the abstraction to-day became somewhat heavy.

Lettice tried to get up a conversation, and there was no response. She spoke of Prue, and he only said, "Yes."

"I don't think Prue is looking at all well?" hazarded Lettice.

"No? Indeed?"

"For a long time past. Ever since I came."

"Ah, yes!"

"And Bertha thinks the same. Bertha has just been to see me."

"Yes, indeed," murmured Mr. Kelly.

Lettice gave up, and imitated his silence. For three minutes, at least, the noisy little clock had things his own way, undisturbed.

"Dear me, I'm afraid this is very unsociable," said Mr. Kelly at length. "I had no intention—I am sure——"

"I am afraid something must have gone wrong in the parish."

"No, thanks; nothing at all. Nothing in connection with the parish."

"Then, is it anything you would like me to do? Any work——?"

Another prolonged pause.

"Miss Anderson, you once came to me years ago, to ask a question—was is not to ask advice?" His memory was slightly at fault, but Lettice made no attempt to set it right. "I am come to-day, on something of the same errand—that is to say—to ask a question, for a particular reason."

"My advice would not be worth much."

"That may depend upon certain circumstances. If, for instance, you had better means of judging——"

Did he mean—Prue? The thought whirled through Lettice, producing an inward turmoil. Could it be? Yet, why should he come to her?

"Better means of judging—" reflectively repeated Mr. Kelly.

"If I have. Please ask me anything you like!" Lettice's cheeks were bright.

"It is, of course, in confidence. I may depend upon you, should there be no result."

"Quite!"

"Then, could you tell me this? Is there the slightest hope, that—say, under any circumstances—Miss Valentine might marry?"

"I don't see why not!"

"I imagined—that perhaps—she seems so entirely the home-daughter——"

"If it were for her happiness, how could they not be glad?" asked Lettice. "And they all love Prue so much! Everybody does, who knows her."

"As you know her!"

"Yes. I have never seen any one else like her."

A smile stole over Mr. Kelly's serious face, and vanished.

"She was once, I believe, engaged."

"Was she?"

"It was years ago, long before I first saw you. I knew her then, well. In fact—though I had not meant to reveal any personal interest in this question—I do not mind saying that she made a very strong impression on me then. But I was told that she was engaged; and I at once left the place."

"Fled! without making sure if the report were true!"

"Perhaps I acted too precipitately. My information seemed reliable."

"It was not!" Lettice spoke decisively. "You were told what was untrue."

Mr. Kelly showed some slight agitation. "And all these years since——"

"All these years since, she has never been engaged." It seemed strange to Lettice that Bertha's visit should have been just in time to prepare her for this interview. She could not but speak out, however, having the requisite knowledge.

"You seem very sure. It was a long while ago."

"I am sure: because I have heard particulars. Prue was not engaged at that time; and she has never been engaged since. I know so much, positively. There cannot be any mistake."

Mr. Kelly kept profound silence, and Lettice's heart beat fast. Would he ask any more? Had she said enough?

"Thanks!" came at length, and he stood up.

"I must not pay a longer visit to-day."

"And this is all you wanted to know?"

"Yes, thanks. Of course you will not repeat this—this little talk of ours?"

"No, indeed. And I suppose I must not ask you one question in return. Would it be wrong? That impression—the impression Prue made upon you, all those years ago. I wonder if it has gone quite off? Do people change?"

"Some do," Mr. Kelly answered.

"I could not, if once I cared for anybody very very much."

"Nor I!" said Mr. Kelly.

She lifted her face full to his, and said markedly—

"Nor Prue!"

The light that broke over his face was very singular. Lettice had never seen anything exactly like it.

"Thank you, very much," he said at length.

"You have given me courage."

Then he was gone; and Lettice saw him striding off, at "double-quick-march" in the direction of the Valentines' house, that house which they had only re-entered two days before. He would find things in some confusion; but what did that matter. "I'm so glad I could say a word. If only he will come to the point!" murmured Lettice.

Three hours later a note was left at the door, and Lettice read:

"DEAR LETTICE,—You must be the first to hear. Mr. Kelly has asked me to be his wife, and I have consented. He says it is your doing. Thanks, dear little 'outside sister.'—Ever your loving,
"PRUE."

"Lettice, I say, here's a telegram for you."

Felix had overtaken the telegraph boy at the door, on arrival at the close of his day's work. Lettice looked up with dreamy eyes.

"A what! Oh, Felix, I have such news! Guess—good news! What do you think is going to happen?"

"Can't tell."

"Mr. Kelly and Prue are engaged to be married."

"Time they should, if they ever mean to do it. I thought they would have dangled on to the end of the chapter. When did he speak?"

"Only to-day. Prue wrote at once to tell me. I am so delighted. Nothing could be nicer. And she will have a home so near to them all. But what do you mean? Did you expect it? How came you to think of such a thing?"

"How could anybody avoid seeing it? Here, what is this?"

"A telegram!" Lettice tore open the envelope and lifted scared eyes to her brother.

"Don't stare! What is it? Anything wrong?"

"Oh, Felix, I must go!"

"Go where?"

"Keith is dying." She sat down trembling and white.

He looked over and read aloud. "Come at once; late train. Keith dying, wants to see you. Bring companion if needful. Will pay all expenses. No delay. Maurice Bryant."

"I must go directly. The very first train. Poor little Keith."

"Now, Lettice, be sensible! Don't upset yourself. It's no manner of use, and you'll only lose time. I will look out trains, while you run upstairs and put your things together. You may have to stay a few days. There's a train, I fancy, about nine or ten. The boy is waiting, and a reply has been pre-paid. I'll say we are both coming. Yes, I shall go too. You can't travel alone at midnight."

"How good you are."

"I don't see much goodness in the question."

There's nothing else to be done. That woman is having her deserts."

Lettice gave him a look, and rushed away. When she came back, he had settled everything, and was seated in the arm-chair.

"Supper will be up directly, but there is plenty of time. I declare it would serve the Bryants right if you did not go."

"I couldn't do such a thing."

"No; I dare say not. Only, it would serve them right."

"Felix, do you think you ought to come?"

"Why 'ought'?"

"If you feel so——"

"What! you think I might give Mrs. Bryant a piece of my mind?"

"Oh, you could not. You couldn't say anything unkind, when she is in trouble. And Felix, dear, you would not. I am sure of that. If you knew how she cares for that boy. It will almost kill her to lose him. Oh, no; I am not afraid."

"I don't think you need be,"—in rather an odd voice.

"But I do wonder what is the matter. I do wonder whether he may not, after all, get well!"

"Telegrams don't give very abundant information. You'll like to leave a message for the Valentines?"

"I had written to Prue, before you came in. I'll just add a word of postscript. . . . What a day this has been. I am so glad for Prue! But oh, that poor little Keith! Felix, if you knew how loving he was to me before I came away: and how he said he would miss me. Oh, I hope we shall be in time!"

"Here comes supper. Now, mind, if you don't eat, you don't go!" Felix spoke with a determined air of authority.

CITIZEN SELF-DENIAL.

SELF-DENIAL was not one of the famous soldiers whom the Prince led to the rescue of Mansoul; indeed he was not by profession or training a soldier at all, but a plain, unpretending citizen whom Prince Emmanuel at his second return to the beleaguered town singled out for his sturdy, honest qualities, "making him a captain over a thousand of The Mansoulans for the good of the Corporation."

This citizen soldier who was young, we are told, and "stout," that is to say of a brave, fearless heart and an unshaken courage, played a great part in the final siege of Mansoul when Diabolus made a last and desperate effort to re-take the gates. So well did he carry himself that he came to great honours and distinctions, and in the final glimpse we get of him he is no longer the obscure and retiring young townsman of whom nobody had taken any notice until the Prince's eye fell upon him, but is quite a cele-

brated and foremost personage, and, "My Lord," to boot.

My Lord Self-Denial—the title has a strange sound; we do not hear that Captain Credence or Captain Good-Hope or Captain Charity were ennobled—is the good fight then so much more difficult for Self-Denial that his rewards must be proportionately larger? Perfect charity, perfect patience, unshaken faith—these are not reached without many a battle, many a defeat; but there are lulls in the conflict, long spells of peace when the warrior may take comfort and be at rest. Faith is not always undermined, love is not always difficult, but self-denial—is there a single instance in war-time or in truce-time when he dare relax his guard, when he dare say "I will lie down and take mine ease for my enemies are all slain." The young citizen whom the Prince enrolled in his army bore, we are told, the signs of his victories in his body and on his face, and

this, at least, is certain; no brush with the enemy, no skirmish even, did he ever engage in but some wound or scar he suffered for it. There is no such thing as a bloodless, painless victory for him, for self-denial—what is it but the plucking out of the offending right eye, the cutting off of the transgressing right hand, the maiming, mutilating, curbing, repressing of the ego which in each of us battles for the mastery, the endless never relaxing watch set upon appetite and desire that clamour for indulgence.

And if you call this easy, if you think it does not hurt, if you suppose that it costs little—why, I would say to you that there is no young champion in your Mansoul, “willing to venture himself for the good of the town” against the common enemy, no kinsman of the hardy, intrepid youth who helped to win the day for the Prince. You and young Captain Self-Denial have never met. More than this, it is surely not too much to affirm that but for his silent unobtrusive services, but for his long discipline at the gates, his dear-bought experience before ever the Prince came by and set his heart on this ally, the great achievements of those five noble captains who led Emmanuel's hosts would not have been possible. Could Charity, could Patience, could Hope have prevailed if Self-Denial had not led the van? can these Christ-like qualities grow and flourish in a heart that has shut its doors upon self-restraint and opened them to self-indulgence?

The young citizen was within the fort, a native of the place, born there, bred there, knowing every street and alley of the town, every weak spot in the defences, and quietly, with no fuss or display, he had been going about his work, organizing, planning, arranging, rebuilding the walls, manning the gates, vigilant at all points against attack. So that when the rightful Lord came to claim His own there was one loyal soul at least prepared to welcome him and to fight under his banner. For though Self-Denial was not brought up to the business of war he proved himself to have many soldierly qualities; courage, quickness of resource, endurance, prompt obedience, and thus he comes—this plain man in his civilian's dress—no silver armour or bright accoutrements here to dazzle the eye—to be placed in command of the two most important entrances to the city, Eye-gate and Ear-gate, and doubtless had it been in the power of mortal man to do more he would have been set over the other gateways also. For is there a single avenue which Self-Denial may safely leave unguarded? Whether we look upon the senses as servants to our bodily or to our intellectual needs, there is not one of them that does not offer an easy entrance to sinful indulgence. Mouth-gate—how much we may send forth from it that is hurtful and deadly, not the slings and stones of uncharitable words alone, but bad advice, sneers at holy things, avowals of un-faith—these and worse. Or looking at it as a portal to the appetite, think of the contraband goods that are daily smuggled into it, the unlawful meats and drinks it is forced to admit, the unwholesome cravings it is compelled to encourage.

Possibly the danger may not take so gross and palpable a shape; temperance may be easy to some of us, even the temperance that places Captain Charity over Mouth-gate; we may find nothing to allure but everything to disgust in the base surrender of others to drunkenness or gluttony, we may despise the gossip and slander that are a snare to our neighbours, our hands may not desire to pluck the forbidden fruit, our eyes to look upon corruption. Mouth-gate, Eye-gate, Ear-gate, Feel-gate thus secure, may we not safely dismiss our captain and his thousand volunteers?

Oh, simpleton, to think that the arch-enemy of mankind has but one method, one line of attack! More subtle than his victims, he takes a thousand shapes and cunning disguises, transforming himself till he seems a friend to be welcomed rather than a foe to be feared.

This beautiful spirit who stands at Ear-gate and beckons us to a feast of melody and harmony—our sturdy citizen will never lift the sword against so fair a messenger? In this inner chamber, where the singers and players are gathered together, where nothing unseemly, nothing coarse, nothing unrefined gains entrance, where all that passes within is fitted to elevate, to stir the most delicate and ethereal emotions, there is surely no task for Captain Self-Denial? Never dart of Malice or Uncharity is sped from this watch-tower; living in a fair dream-world of our own, the outside clamour falls on unheeding ears, we let “the riddle of the painful earth” go unsolved, its warfare, its sighs, its groanings, its wrongs—for us, shut in our palace of delight, they exist not. To live in communion with the great master minds, with the makers of melody, the writers of noble books, the painters of noble pictures, to traverse the world, opening Ear-gate to its music, and Eye-gate to its treasures of beauty, to discern and love the best and highest—can there be sin in this? Ah, but we remember the siren's song that woos to death, the lotus land where duty is forgotten, honour disregarded, affection's claims denied, where—

Surely, surely slumber is more sweet than toil; the shore
Than toil in deep mid ocean—

and conscience, if we let it speak, tells us that where culture sets us “like gods apart, careless of mankind,” where knowledge is not wedded to service, Self-Indulgence, not Self-Denial is the lord who reigns over us. A beautiful life this of contemplation and worship—yes, if to live for self was the end for which we were created, but if we place it side by side with the days spent upon earth by Him who went about doing good, can we entertain a single doubt as to its selfishness?

Never was foe so wily, so rich in devices as he who attacks the throne of self and demands to reign over us. We rout him at one gate and he has crept in at another; he comes cloaked and masked and passes the sentry unchallenged, or appeals openly at the door as one on virtuous errand, and with honourable intention, so affable, so distinguished a guest that ere we know it, we

have made him free to the inner sanctuary and installed him there as ruler.

How are we to escape this slavery, this subjection to the seductions of sense? The fight for freedom was never more difficult than in these days in which we live, never were the gates so poorly defended, so easily surrendered. Ah, it is not hard to discern that sober Captain Self-Denial and his citizen band are little in the fashion. How is it that we hear so many complaints of the difficulty of living and meeting all charges in an age when the perfection of labour-lessening machinery has cheapened so many of life's necessities? Why, but that we have accustomed ourselves to a hundred luxuries and indulgences which we proclaim ourselves unable to do without? Young men grow year by year shyer of marriage, shrinking from the serious burden it imposes; girls lose their youth and bloom, and grow sour and heartsick, waiting till the income is secured that shall enable them to begin the business of housekeeping on the level at which their parents left off. How few of those happy ventures one hears of where two young folk, with more love and courage than money, agree to breast the up-hill road together; how few girls are brave enough to smile at public opinion, to do their own housework, to be their own nursemaids, to wheel the perambulator rather than hire service they cannot and ought not to afford? Yet most of the grandfathers and grandmothers of middle-class England were content to climb slowly, and can we, who remember their honesty, their simple, kindly ways, their sympathy with all degrees and conditions of men and women, insist that the lesson of self-restraint taught them nothing?

The taint affects every social rank; we talk of the thriftless and shiftless ways of the working-classes; we protest because our servant-maids spend upon finery the means that should go to insure them a comfortable old age; but have we done anything to set them a fairer example? A wardrobe that is altered at every whim of fashion, a drawing-room that reflects the latest craze for old china or foreign curios—is Mary-Jane in the kitchen with her youth, her inexperience, her little head so much more poorly furnished, to be less vulnerable to temptation, more severe than her mistress in refusing to gratify her fancies?

And yet one hears so-and-so claiming praise because he has come out of the shop without buying that rare print, that costly edition, or has left the auction room unpossessed of that priceless orchid. For once to say no to the spoilt child within—is that self denial? No, but here surely is an instance of it. Last winter a young fellow who likes quite as well as other young fellows to be well-dressed and in the fashion, and whose birth entitles him to move in good society, denied himself a much-needed new great-coat that he might send the sum it would have cost to a sick and needy Cornish fisherman. It was not safe to go undefended from the bitter storms of that memorable hard season, but he cheerfully and without a grudge, wore an antiquated garment that had ceased even to be shabby-genteel, and was frankly disreputable, meeting in good-

humoured silence the surprised or sneering comments of his social world, and if one of his own household had not, with a voice that had a happy break in it, whispered the secret of this little sacrifice, it would never have been recorded here.

Yes, with most of us the saddest part of the indulgence of self's claims is that it so quickly destroys the capability of sympathy. When everything is needed at home, and there is nothing to spare for a neighbour, the heart must needs, in very self-defence, grow a crust of hardness, wear a coat of mail. It cannot afford to be distressed by appeals it is determined to ignore.

But Self-Denial, the soldier, bore wounds and scars, and something we must suffer too, if we would follow where he leads. At the cost of a pang, or a wrench, an ache, or a smart, if nothing more, we must aid if the help is to be worth anything at all, and this is just what self-indulgence sets its face against. "There isn't enough for two," it says, "the very little you could spare wouldn't do any good, it would only make both uncomfortable and would benefit neither: besides, isn't it a duty to one's friends, to one's family, to one's servants, to have pleasant and harmonious surroundings? But need one pause to reckon the arguments with which conscience is confronted? Their name is legion, for with every disguise the enemy wears he produces a new one. Selfishness likes to go warm and comfortable, to be luxuriously housed, and fed, and clad, and it talks of the impetus given to trade by the free circulation of money; it hates pain and shrinks from the sight of suffering, and it calls this sensibility; it is so much pleasanter to think one has too tender a heart than to acknowledge that one has merely a narrow and circumscribed nature. Of all the vices, it is the last the world cares to call by its right name. People as a rule do not mind being considered hot-tempered; some there are who are proud of their pride, not a few who think it little disgrace to be slack in discharging just debt, but who is there who does not resent the imputation of being selfish?"

And yet is there any virtue that shines so beautifully in another, any grace more Christ-like than that which leads a man to remember the things of another? We talk of a selfless man, and we think our praise can go no further. "He spent himself for others," kings, great conquerors, famous scholars, might envy such an epitaph. How shall we learn to deserve it?

Bunyan meant to show us, I think, when he made Captain Self-Denial a plain citizen, just such an one as you or I might be if we were as faithful as he in holding the gates for the coming of the Prince. He began at home quietly, unostentatiously, keeping watch, gaining inch by inch the territory Diabolus had annexed, mending a breach here, repelling an attack there, not always successful, but always brave and gaining experience, so that when the Prince came he was ready for the soldier's part—a leader of others. He took courage, we are told, and bore himself very valiantly against the common enemy, and for the slaughter of one Self-Love he was raised to be a ruler over Mansoul—my Lord Self-Denial.

The last and greatest of all his deeds, he had

fought many a battle before he closed with Self-Love and did him to death. It is a victory that falls to few, and to none who are not as he was, constantly watchful at each avenue to soul or sense, but it is given to some even here, and these not always the most conspicuous or honourable in the world's eyes.

One of the people—a common man—a faithful citizen, and by-and-by a brave and honourable soldier and a great ruler—my Lord Self-Denial. Such is the history of one of Bunyan's heroes, and surely he wrote it for our example—for our encouragement?

L. K.

THE MYSTERY OF THE TREES.

IT is very apparent to those who can discern the tendency of modern thought, that there is rapidly growing a desire for more knowledge of nature's facts and the laws which govern them; but owing to the close attention and laborious toil that men and women must now give to their avocations, there are many in all ranks who remain in ignorance of them. Science to some minds means a number of dry, hard uninteresting facts expressed in the longest possible words. This conception is largely due to the deadly hard manner in which too many of its teachers present it. But science is just the reverse of this, if rightly taught and learnt. Certain details and facts must be remembered in this, as in all other departments of study and thought; but the learning of these facts and details will suggest a vast unknown world beyond them, where the poetic imagination can have full play and find a deeper satisfaction, because its roots are embedded in a foundation of proved firmness.

The time cannot be far away now when to know something of the laws of the universe—obedience to which means man's advancement and happiness, and disobedience his degradation and misery—must form a compulsory part of the education of our children. These laws are but one expression of the Divine will. To their full understanding we must pass "through nature up to nature's God." They reveal the Divine wisdom and power, but we need also the revelation of the Divine love; otherwise they can but fill us with fear.

In scientific instruction for beginners, care must be taken not to specialise too much. What is necessary is to give a general idea of the large principles and facts running through the different sciences, and how they are mutually dependent one on the other. No true philosophical conception of the universe is possible without this general acquaintance with, and ability to understand how all the different parts of nature fit in and are indispensable one to the other.

In telling our story of the life and growth of a tree, we shall have to make clear a few important facts, so that our readers may have a connected view of the principle of vegetable life and growth. How wonderful and miraculous is the passing of a tree in winter, with its clean-cut stem, branches, twigs, to its mantle of beautiful green, giving rest to eye and brain, and bringing love and hope to hearts tired from a winter's gloom and depression! As we watch day by day in a beautiful

English spring—and what more beautiful?—the buds bursting out, then slowly growing into leaf and flower, surely the dullest must wish to know something of how it is all brought about. Of all this science can tell but a little, but that little is full of interest and suggestion.

THE CELL.

The roots, the stem, the branches, the leaves, the flowers, the fruits of plants, are the necessary steps that Nature in her tree life takes to produce the seed; this seed, when ripe, falls to the ground, where under suitable conditions of earth, moisture and sunlight it repeats the same round again. Now the whole tree, from the seed below ground to the ripened seed that falls, is all made up of cells dead or alive. The cell, generally speaking, is made up of a cell wall, and a contents of protoplasm. This protoplasm, so far as is known at present, is the beginning of the material manifestation of life, and can be seen, under the microscope, moving backwards and forwards in the living cell, and showing no sign of lessening or cessation. So that, could our dull sense of hearing respond to less vibrations than 16 per second, or higher than 48,000 per second, a tropical forest stillness might be turned into a city's roar. It was a great discovery, and went a long way to show the relation of the vegetable to the animal life, when Malder recognised the vegetable protoplasm to be a soft gelatinous matter, closely resembling the white of an egg; and Max Schultze showed that the protoplasm of plants was chemically and microscopically indistinguishable from that of animals. This protoplasm, in obtaining nourishment in the manner we shall describe later, grows to a certain size, when the little nucleus, which is in the protoplasm, divides into two parts; each part of this divided nucleus takes a part of the protoplasm, which two parts revolve round the two new centres. A cell wall then grows between the two fresh masses, and so is brought into existence two cells out of one.

This process repeats itself with great rapidity, and is especially seen in the great puff-balls, whose cells, a ten-thousandth of an inch in diameter, increase by subdivision at the rate of three millions in twenty-four hours. To understand how the food is absorbed by the protoplasm within the cell, we must know that this substance itself, as likewise the cell wall, is made up of very minute little particles. Between



HOW SWEET IT IS, WHEN MOTHER FANCY ROCKS
 THE WAYWARD BRAIN, TO SAUNTER THROUGH A WOOD !
 AN OLD PLACE, FULL OF MANY A LOVELY BROOD,
 TALL TREES, GREEN ARBOURS, AND GROUND FLOWERS IN FLOCKS
 AND WILD ROSE TIPTOE UPON HAWTHORN STOCKS.

WORDSWORTH.

these little particles the water percolates, so that each atom of the cell wall and protoplasm is surrounded by a layer of liquid, and it is in this liquid the food required is dissolved. This liquid food, if we may so call it, passes from cell to cell by certain laws, and gets between the spaces in the cell wall, and inside to the protoplasm itself. So the cell, by the addition of these food atoms, gradually becomes larger or grows. Then when it reaches a certain size the process above described takes place.

By this constant subdivision of cells, the cell walls are pressed closer and closer against each other, and so the cell walls between the different cells become partially or entirely absorbed in each other. When a union of cells in this manner takes a long cylindrical form we get vascular tissue. This tissue forms the veins or passages of plants through which the sap or juice of plants flows to all parts of the tree, and corresponds to the veins of the human body; this hard tissue also forms the woody part of the

tree. So here we have the beginning of tree life in the protoplasm contained inside a cell; by feeding, this life grows to a certain size, and then as a result divides into two cells, which in their turn repeat the process. And these cells, by multiplication, press on each other, and so gradually form into the hard and lifeless veins, bark, wood and pith.

THE ROOT.

If we soak the inside of an acorn in water for a few hours, we shall find that it will divide into two parts, and if we examine it with care, we shall also find that between these two halves is a small peg-shaped body. This tiny peg-shaped structure is so small that great care must be exercised if it is not to be overlooked; and if the hard masses are torn apart, it will be carried away with one of them. This little body contains the germ of the great oak tree. The two halves, or cotyledons, are the stored food which nourishes this tiny life principle, till it can obtain it for itself from the ground and air. Under suitable conditions of earth, moisture, and air, this little germ begins to grow, and no matter in what position the seed is placed, the root end will grow down into the soil, and by a little gentle rocking movement will force its way between the particles of soil, till it attains sufficient firmness to allow the other end to appear above ground in its search for light and air.

After the root or radicle has entered the ground, it throws off side root after side root, with endless ramifications, not only to give the requisite firmness for the growing stem, but, by breaking up the ground, make it the more suitable for retaining and attracting the moisture it requires. Nature is never in a hurry, she works slowly but surely. A small effect continuously going on will in time bring about a huge result. Let the water drip, drip but long enough, and the hard unyielding-looking rock will in due time disappear. And so with these roots; in their desperate and persistent attempts to get sufficient hold and moisture, they will undermine buildings, penetrate and split rocks, cross streams, and will be found in the most unlikely places. When the lower end of this tiny little body has grown a short distance into the ground, the upper end or plumule begins to grow above ground as the stem, and gradually throws out leaves and branches by this process of cell subdivision. To know how this is done our readers can consult the many excellent and interesting botanical works now published—it would be too long to tell in a short article. But briefly, a tree's stem is made up of the outer bark and inner bark, dead cells; then the cambium, living cells which are growing and dividing; then the hard wood and the pith, both of which are also made up of dead cells. The whole is traversed by vascular tissue and medullary rays.

BRANCHES AND LEAVES.

Branches first of all make their appearance as buds, and a branch is a secondary stem, and is an

exact copy in miniature of the stem. These buds are made up of growing cells, and are connected by living tissue with the growing cells of the stem. It is important to remember that a bud is the growing point of a shoot protected by closely-folded leaves. These buds are generally formed by the middle of the summer, and towards the latter end they swell slightly in consequence of the food they are storing up, preparatory to bursting forth the following spring, when the rays of the sun give the necessary chemical impulse. We have now reached the leaf, perhaps the most interesting part of the whole tree, if it can be that one part is more interesting than another, when all is so wonderful. The God of Nature always combines the useful and the beautiful: for Nature is never beautiful without being useful.

Words are empty sound when trying to describe the exquisite colours and tints of the grandly spreading leaves of our English trees. And all this display in leaves is in order that by these very leaves the tree may get food from the air. A tree, by thus spreading its leaves in search of aerial food, purifies the air, attracts moisture, and gives shelter and rest to all things. How great is the thought at the back of the design that planned use and beauty as necessary parts of each other! These leaves by their little stalks are connected with the living part of the branches, and are made up of veins and ribs, and also soft parts between these veins and ribs.

These veins are made up of vascular or dead tissue, which is hollow, and besides supporting the leaf as a whole, act as conduit pipes by carrying water and inorganic substances to and from its cells. The soft parts between these veins are made up of living cells. We might say the veins are the bones of the leaves and the soft part the flesh.

Coating the upper and underneath part of the leaves is a skin called the epidermis. In this skin, principally on the underneath side, are a number of openings, which, under the microscope, can be seen looking strangely like pursed-up human lips. It is impossible for the mind to grasp the idea of their size, when Bentley says that a pink has 38,500 of these little mouths on the upper and underneath surface to the square inch, a lilac leaf 160,000, and a holly 63,600 to the square inch; and Mr. Marshall Ward says 300 to 350 of them to the square millimetre scattered over each leaf of the oak.

The root hairs absorb water from the soil, and in this water is dissolved small quantities of soluble earth salts—chiefly sulphates, nitrates, and phosphates of lime, magnesia, and potash—just as there are in ordinary well water. This dissolved food passes into the root fibres, collecting into larger and larger channels till it reaches the stem; it then passes up the wood to the branches, through the leaf stalk, along its ribs and veins, and finally is absorbed by the growing cells of the leaf. Now these little leaf cells evaporate the greater part of the moisture they receive in this manner (retaining the earth salts), through these stomata or openings into the air. It is calculated that a single oak tree in this

manner having 700,000 leaves passes off from its surface 226 times its own weight of water during the year.

The little growing cells of the leaf are composed of a cell wall lined with colourless protoplasm, which in its turn encloses a large sap cavity. In this protoplasm, again, is embedded a number of bright green corpuscles of chlorophyll. The cell sap contains various salts held in solution.

These chlorophyll corpuscles give the green colour to the leaf, and are living organs, and they require food materials, water, oxygen, for the support of their life, just as the other living parts of the cells—*e.g.* the colourless protoplasm. They obtain these from the cell sap by the agency of the colourless protoplasm in which they reside. In order, however, that they may perform their functions of life properly, they are spread over the leaf in very thin layers, and the flat and spreading blade of a leaf is the best structure to allow these chlorophyll corpuscles to get all the sunlight possible, for they cannot form without sunlight. The different passages that surround them also allow the air to circulate freely amongst them. These same little openings also allow the carbonic acid gas of the atmosphere—carbon dioxide—to enter the leaf. Therefore we have in the leaf, water with salts in solution, oxygen, and carbonic acid gas, all of which reach the green chlorophyll corpuscle.

The next step in the process is quite a late discovery and deeply interesting. Here we have side by side in the chlorophyll trap, as it is now termed, the above compounds, and they would probably remain without alteration did not the sunbeam penetrate the system, and, by its terrific vibration, wreck all the different molecules. Then curious results follow, for the carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen thus set free by the sun's energy recombine and form starch in the form of granules in the chlorophyll corpuscle; the oxygen that is a surplus after this new combination escapes by the little openings into the air, thus purifying it for man and beast.

So we now can clearly understand that the tree, in addition to its beauty, rest, and shade, purifies the air, and adds to the rainfall of a district. Here is the scientific reason why it is of importance to the health of populous districts that trees with wide-spreading branches and wide expanse of green leaf should be planted and kept alive in every available spot. On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that in the country where there is no need of such tree purification, they should not be planted too near any dwelling on account of the moisture they send out through their leaves.

These little granules of starch, formed in this wonderful manner, really represent so much matter obtained from the atmosphere outside the tree, and so much energy obtained from the sun; each granule may therefore be regarded as a packet of stored energy and matter taken from the external world. And this, briefly, is the manner in which vegetation converts the inorganic gas and salts into its own organic substance. This starch is in soluble form, and, combined with nitrogen, phosphorus, and sulphur—obtained from

the earth's salts—forms the perfected food, and passes to the growing cells, at the apex of the root, at the apex of the stem, branches, buds, and the cambium cells in the stem, and wherever there are cells living, dividing, and growing.

The whole of the food that keeps the tree alive is manufactured in these thousands of beautiful green leaves waving in the sunshine. What a wonderful fact to ponder upon, that the little seed begins its life with only a minute store of starch and proteids in its cotyledons, and that all this vast magnificence has been added by this action of the leaves taking it from the atmosphere—the small quantity of salts brought from the ground being very small by comparison! This wonderful chlorophyll, in concert with the sunbeam, converts the inorganic gases of the air into the organic tree structure. When the leaves fall sadly in autumn, they have passed all their living matter to the different parts of the tree, they have finished their work on the branch, and therefore drop to the ground, not, however, to lie useless, but again to be of service to the tree by giving themselves as nourishment to its roots.

Space will not allow us to tell what is known of the flower, and how the seed forms and is made fertile for growth by the pollen; how, in some cases, it is by self-fertilization, in others it is carried along by the wind, in others by the flower's beautiful colour and sweetness attracting the bees for its honey; and how the indefatigable searcher carries, as well as honey, the pollen required by a waiting flower before it can fertilize its ovaries.

The plan discernible in the tree life of nature is a great design, with no useless or despised part. It must surely suggest a wise and orderly Mind that conceived the plan, and is carrying it out with no faltering or turning aside. The more that science knows the clearer grows the insight into a very wise and beautiful whole, and the exquisite adaptability of each part to serve that whole. It adds greatly to the happiness, interest, and hope of life if we try to learn something of nature's ways.

H. B. M. BUCHANAN, B.A. CAMB.

Sonnet.

THE humblest flower that blossoms by the way;
The meanest weed on which we turn our eyes;
The grovelling worm that in our pathway lies;
Insects that flutter in the noontide ray;
Atoms that in the gentle breezes play;
The tiny midge that in the sunshine plies
Its restless wings, and lives and loves and dies
In the brief moments of a summer day;
Took an Almighty Power, a God Supreme,
A Hand Divine to make and bring them forth—
His, the Creator of the heaven and earth,
One of whose greatness mortals cannot dream;
His, in whose sight is nothing great or small
In earth or heaven, Who made and ruleth all.

JOHN ASKHAM.

ABOUT THE AINU :

THE HAIRY ABORIGINES OF JAPAN.

THE white flag of Christian Missions is being carried into the remotest corners of the globe. In all kinds of out-of-the-way places the Christian missionary plants his foot. Thus, there exists in the England of the East, the islands of Japan, some 17,000 of aboriginal inhabitants of that country who rejoice in the name of Ainu. And to these there has been for some time a Church Missionary Society's missionary, namely, the Rev. John Batchelor, and he has just written a book about them, their religion, superstitions, habits, and general history.¹ The book is copiously illustrated, and will be found interesting, both from the ethnological and the missionary point of view.

Ages before the present Japanese obtained a settlement in the islands, the Ainu were there, but gradually they have been driven to the northwards; gradually, too, their numbers have been reduced. This is accounted for by the wars of extermination carried on against them by the Japanese; also by disease and exposure, for the Ainu have no medicines; by intoxicating drink which has played its terrible part, and also by petty wars and quarrels among themselves. Their drinking habits are not alone due to intercourse with Europeans; their Japanese conquerors have encouraged the fell longing for ages, and it has undermined their constitutions and sapped their strength and manliness.

The Ainu are islanders, the remnant of their race. Whence they came can now never be accurately known; their origin is lost in obscurity. They now live in Yezo, an island of North Japan, in the Kurile Islands, also belonging to Japan, and Saghalien, now under the Russian Government. Yezo, however, is their principal habitat, and here they dwell, as do also thousands of Japanese with whom they are amalgamating. Further, they do not appear to have been the only natives of Japan before the Japanese came.

Yezo is mountainous, volcanic, and subject to earthquakes. The summers are short and hot; the winters severe. Rivers and sea afford plenty of fish upon which the Ainu largely live, the lordly salmon, the delicate trout, the serviceable codfish, and the toothsome, if bony, herring; while in addition there are occasionally the sword-fish and the whale, and walrus, if only to show that the Ainu have something different from the English. The patches of ground which are cultivated produce millet and barley, also beans, peas, and potatoes.

As a race the Ainu are supposed to enjoy luxuriant and "moppy" hair. "That they are hairy is a matter of fact," writes Mr. Batchelor, "which is noticed by all writers; yet there are very

many individual members of the race who are not a bit more hairy than ordinary Europeans. This hairiness has been greatly exaggerated. We should naturally expect that conspicuous specimens of hairy men would be found among them; but that is no reason for the conclusion that all are so thickly covered with hair as some would have us believe." Nevertheless it would appear that some at least are pretty well hairy-coated all over, though not so thickly that the skin cannot be seen.

The Ainu are dirty, very dirty; but Mr. Batchelor has good words for them in spite of this unpleasant fact. After more than eight years amongst them, living with them in their huts, mixing with them in their work and play, listening to their trouble, seeing them in sickness and in health, he affirms "that a more kind, gentle, and sympathetic people it would be very difficult to find." They are truly human, and, like other members of the great and varied human family, they need kindness and sympathy to bring out the best of their character.

See them at a bear hunt, or after a bear has been killed, and hear one describe the occurrence; or ask help when you are in trouble, and receive assistance! Open your eyes to their bravery and their kindness! As servants, they can be both honest and faithful. Treat them as men, and they will act as men; as children, and they will act as children, and at the same time think how foolish you are to do so. In short, Mr. Batchelor finds that "Close acquaintance with them adds one more to the many proofs of the truth of those words of Scripture: 'God hath made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation.'"

Women are the Ainu barbers, and each woman looks after the appearance of her husband—a practice not altogether unknown in this western isle! Japanese razors are now used, but once upon a time sharp stones were probably used.

They are a depressed-looking people, the reason for which Mr. Batchelor finds in the oppression of their Japanese conquerors. For ages they have been trodden under foot. Thus, if an Ainu did not prostrate himself before any of the Japanese soldiery and thrust his head in the dust before him, that head would be off in a trice! But a kindlier spirit now prevails. "Thanks," says Mr. Batchelor, "to the growth which the cause of humanity is making in all parts of the world, very much of this kind of oppression has for ever passed away. Would that an earnest, whole-hearted reparation could be made to them!"

Occasionally some of the Ainu take a bath. Otherwise the vast majority appear to wash face and hands but seldom—only at bear feasts and funerals. Some individuals wash more often,

¹ *The Ainu of Japan.* Religious Tract Society.

and when washed, Mr. Batchelor tells us, they are greatly improved in appearance and are not a bad-looking race. But as sometimes men and women walk ten or fifteen miles a day in a hot sun, with a heavy load of unsalted fish on their backs, and that when the unpleasant odour sinks into their clothes it clings there most tenaciously, we can well believe that Mr. Batchelor would like the bear feasts to come often, if only for the sake of cleanliness!

Women do a great part of the work. They are busy in gardens while the men are hunting, fishing, riding or gossiping, or drinking. Sometimes men may be seen in the gardens also, but they are oftener employed with horses. They love horses, and are very good horsemen and drivers. That is why the Japanese engage them as drivers. Once upon a time, the stalking of the deer was much beloved by the Ainu, women also frequently taking part in it. But deer and bear have become scarce of late, and many of the people hardly taste venison or bear's flesh from year's end to year's end. The introduction of the gun, and the indiscriminate and immoderate slaughtering by the Japanese have caused this scarcity. The Ainu regard bear-hunting as the most useful, the most manly and the most exciting way in which an individual can spend his time. And it certainly must have required bravery and yielded excitement to attack a bear with the poor weapons the Ainu were wont to use. Sometimes a bear hunter was killed and then the subsequent feast became a feast of mourning. Mr. Batchelor gives the translation, by Professor Chamberlain, of a bear-hunt, originally written in Kana, which indicates that the writer was not wholly devoid of literary skill or of feeling. One of the hunters was killed, and at the feast—

In the midst of our revels, suddenly there rose up before us the recollection of dead Pinakoro. . . . Then, as there came over us the thought of his widow Karinki's woe, the rice beer and the bear's flesh lost their delicious savour. The absence of that one man from the feast made it taste nasty to all the rest; and we fell a-talking together, and there was not one of us but wept. There is no joy in a feast without noise. Our talk turned to the subject of death—of how the father of such-and-such an one had been eaten at such-and-such a time—of how So-and-so's child had died at such another time. At last the day dawned, and first one left, then another, till at last none remained but we companions of to-day. Such is the way of the world.

The Ainu used to hunt with poisoned arrows. Curiously, the poison with which they made their arrows deadly was aconite—a drug used in Britain and which in popular English is called also monkshood and wolfsbane. The Japanese Government, however now forbid the Ainu to use it.

Traps and spring-bows are also made to catch and kill other animals of the country, others, racoons, foxes, hares, rats and wolves. Salmon fishing is a very favourite occupation.

Contrary to the opinion of Miss Bird, Mr. Batchelor says that the Ainu are exceedingly religious. And he writes, "however true it may be that a mere 'traveller who formulates an Ainu creed must evolve it from his inner consciousness,' yet, as one who has spent more years with them than Miss Bird did weeks," he formulates an Ainu creed "evolved from their highly-prized, carefully-transmitted traditions."



AINU WOMAN AND CHILD.

This creed expresses a belief in "one supreme God, the Creator of all worlds and places, who is the Possessor of Heaven;" but it also expresses belief in "the existence of a multitude of lesser deities, all subject to this one Creator, who are His servants, who receive their life and power from Him, and who govern the world under Him." Evil as well as good gods are further believed in, "ever ready to inflict punishment for wicked deeds." After other articles of belief as to various gods and demons, including the demons who preside over accidents, the creed expresses belief in the immortality of the souls of human beings and of animals; that separated husbands and wives will be rejoined; that all persons will be judged, the good rewarded, and the evil punished; that the souls of departed

animals act as guardians to human beings ; that there are ghosts ; that the departed spirits of old women have a mighty power for harm, and that they appear as very demons in nature ; lastly, that there are three heavens above and six worlds beneath. Almost every Ainu, says Mr. Batchelor, would assent to this "creed" as a summary of his belief. Some points are common to most people. But of all, Mr. Batchelor discerns the "foundation in the heart of a distinctly religious people." They have no temples, no priests, no Sunday, no special times for religious exercises ; but, says he, "they see the hand of God in everything. The world, indeed, is His temple, Nature His book, every man His priest, and every chief His high priest."

How, then, was it that Miss Bird concluded that the Ainu were without religion ? Because, in the first place, these articles of belief are not formulated ready to hand, the Ainu faith is "unpolished" and its items "often disconnected and incoherent," it appears as circumstances of daily life suggest it ; but, secondly, "if there is anything an Ainu is likely to be reticent about when talking with a stranger who is ignorant of his language, it is his religious beliefs and observances."

If Mr. Batchelor then had done nothing else than study the Ainu religion, formulate and crystallise it for a place in the various religions of the world, he would be entitled to praise, especially as he has gathered together legends and incidents so illustrative of these religious beliefs.

Here, for instance, is one. Ainu babies are left alone in their cradles suspended from the roof of the hut for hours. Not because the little creatures are not loved, but because the cry is thought good for their lungs and good for their education. Their mothers are at work in the gardens or bringing firewood from the hills. "Of course," writes Mr. Batchelor, "the little ones cry lustily for their mothers sometimes, but they soon learn the virtue of quiet patience, and to know that, after all, they are not forsaken, but are in a safe and secure place. So, say they, human beings should exercise the like patience, knowing that whatever happens they are not forsaken by God, and are secure in His keeping."

Christian missionary work was commenced among the Ainu by the Rev. W. Dening in 1876. He was then connected with the Church Missionary Society. For some weeks he lived in one of their huts, gaining their confidence, learning their tongue, and endeavouring to give them some idea of Christianity. A second tour was made two years later, and then in 1880 he was accompanied by Mr. Batchelor. During the next year Mr. Batchelor paid a couple of visits to Piratori, their old capital, and spent about two months there each time. While continuing the study of their language he made his first endeavours to preach. Later on he lived for six months at Piratori in the hut of the chief Penri, collected a vocabulary of some 6000 words, compiled a grammar and attempted some translation work. He used to preach in the hut also, and visit and journey a good deal. This he

speaks of as "very encouraging, for whole villages came together to listen, and sometimes very good questions were asked by the congregations." Several chiefs asked him to preach to their people.

But drunkenness is the Ainu's great sin. By a most extraordinary distortion of ideas they imagine that God cannot be acceptably worshipped without wine. This liquor appears to be made from rice and reminds Mr. Batchelor of very bad sherry. The Japanese are largely to blame for this drunkenness, for they were wont to pay the Ainu in household goods, clothes, and this rice-wine whether they traded with them or engaged their labour. The Ainu call this wine "official milk," Mr. Batchelor thinks because "they were expected to thrive upon it, as though it were milk or food."

It is extraordinary how fallacies will flourish, extraordinary how the same fallacies are found among different peoples. Have not we in England suffered much as a nation from the mistaken idea that strong drink is "official milk ?" This fallacy is no doubt to be easily accounted for, owing to the excitement and exhilaration following the potent draught—to be subsequently followed, however, by pernicious effects. The terrible tendency of mankind to the use of stimulants may be due to dulness and love of excitement, and suggests the idea that the evil habit of drunkenness may be efficiently fought by the supply of bright and innocent pleasures.

"Fully ninety-five per cent. of the men get drunk," says Mr. Batchelor, "when they can get enough rice-wine, and to be drunk is their ideal of supreme happiness. Women drink to excess whenever they have the opportunity."

Here at the outset is a terrible difficulty for the missionary to encounter. The Japanese traders love to pay for the skins they buy in wine. "But," says Mr. Batchelor, "they begin to see what effects Christian teaching will have upon the Ainu, therefore they bring all their forces to bear upon Christianity and the missionary." Christianity they say is rotten ; Mr. Batchelor is a "rascal of a hairy Chinaman," he has come to deceive the people and finally to seize the country. Owing to such misrepresentations, he could not obtain a passport in 1884 and was unable to visit the Ainu Settlements, but he invited Penri to his dwelling, and continued to study the language. Later he procured a passport and, with his wife, spent some time in the Ainu villages, lodging however at a Japanese inn.

On Christmas Day, 1885, the first Ainu convert connected with the mission was baptized. It is worthy of note that he was a young man of some education, for "he was a good Japanese scholar, and held a schoolmaster's certificate." Bishop Bickersteth baptized two other converts—husband and wife—on 29th August, 1886, when visiting the Ainu districts, and a few others have followed. By means of a little printing-press purchased with money sent by the Jesus Lane Sunday School, Cambridge, the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, and the hymn "Jesus loves me,"

were printed in Ainu, the first things ever "typed" in that strange and probably primitive tongue. Since then the Gospels have been rendered into Ainu, and during his furlough at home Mr. Batchelor has seen through the press the Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John. Further, a school has been started with Kanari Taro, the first convert, as schoolmaster.

So missionary work appears to have taken root and begun to grow. By those with whom the

missionary has been most in contact the view of drunkenness is said to be steadily undergoing a change and their idea of happiness becoming purer. But the race is dying out, and, in spite of the efforts now being made by the Japanese government to preserve the former possessors of the soil, the Ainu appear doomed to extinction or amalgamation. It seems to be the fate of primitive races everywhere.

F. M. HOLMES.



ROSE'S BIBLE-CLASS OF ONE.

HERE were two little girls about seven years old. One sat up in an apple tree in a beautifully-kept, flower-gemmed garden, the other little girl stood down in the dusty lane on the other side of the well-trimmed hedge.

It was not much wonder that the little girl in the lane liked to look at the one up in the apple-tree. Rose Vernon, in her comfortable brown-holland blouse, was a pleasant sight to see, from her fair rosy

face, to the neat little boots in which her feet were encased. And then, of course, her place up in the apple tree looked nice enough to tempt the admiring gaze of any young eyes.

It was more surprising perhaps that Rosie cared to look down at the other little girl, whose garments were almost too scanty even for that summer day, and of the dingiest description, while as to shoes and stockings! Well, you know the old proverb, "the least said the soonest mended." But the worst of the matter is, that as you and I don't believe in the truth of fairy tales any longer, we cannot comfort ourselves with the hope that saying the least possible about the holes in Winnie's shoes and stockings will mend them for the poor little girl.

However, perhaps Rose did not see the holes, down there below the thick greenness of the sheltering hedge. At any rate she looked as willingly down at her companion as her companion looked up at her, and at last the two smiled at each other. Then the glossy curled head, and the towseled head nodded at each other, and at length both faces beamed with most friendly smiles. Conversation soon began after that opening.

"That a picture book you got up there?"

"No, the Bible. I'm learning my texts for mamma, for to-morrow."

"Oh-h-h!"

A short pause filled up with twiddling a leaf or two off the hedge and the apple tree by the restless fingers. Then rather suddenly—

"What's it like inside?"

"Oh-h!"

Rose said "Oh!" this time. She added after a few moments wondering, and looking like a beautiful big apple herself, as she leant an inquiring little face down between the boughs;—"Don't you know what a Bible's like? Have you never seen one before?"

"Not as I knows of. Not to be sure it were one, at least. Seen lots in shops, p'raps. Heaps of books of all sorts in shops, you know. Fine to look at when we goes with our caravan through some o' the towns. There they are in big windows, red and blue, and gold, and green. Wouldn't I like to turn 'em over and over. Most as good, they look, as pictures, I think sometimes, don't you?"

Well, of course she did. Rose nodded "yes" readily enough to this question.

"That I do. And my papa has given me ever so many of my very own, with beau—ti—ful covers on them. I do like seeing them on my very own shelves; and I do love reading them too. Do you read a great deal?"

"A touch of crimson came into the thin brown cheeks. "Don't read none. Can't."

"Oh!"

Rose could not help just that one quick exclamation. For quite two years past, of her short life, reading had been one of the chief pleasures of every day. To her present way of thinking a poverty of books was more to be pitied than a poverty of clothes.

Another pause. Rose was speculating how it would be for her nowadays if she "didn't read none." She thought her companion must be very idle, but she was too polite to say so to a stranger.

Presently the little lane girl began again to the little apple-tree girl;—

"The Bibul's a very hard book, ain't it?"

"Some—of—it," with slow thoughtfulness. "But you know," with eager animation, "there are such heaps of beautiful bits. Some of them are even quite easy for you and me to understand. There's the text I learnt for mamma, when I was quite a small little girl. St John said it, you know, and every one can tell what it means. 'Little children . . . love one another.'"

"Humph—yes. That do sound pretty and easy. But, say, what little children were them words said to? Are they alive now, or did they go and die ever so long before you and me was born?"

Rosie stared wonderingly, and gave a soft little laugh too.

"Why, how funny you are! You must know that those words are said to all the little children that have ever lived in the world, or that will be in it. All little children have got to love one another. This is what mamma wrote at the beginning of my Bible: 'Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love.'"

Winnie slowly moved her head. "Does the Bibul say that?"

"Yes."

"But you don't b'lieve it, do you?"

"Oh! yes, of course I do!"

Winnie puckered up her tired little brows with thought again before she said,—"I dunno, but I think p'raps the man who said that, about little children loving one another, meant that such as you were to love the other little lady and gentlemen children, not poor little caravan children like me. I'm most times dirty, and I ain't got but this one old frock, and no little children ain't never loved me, and let me see inside their books. I think as they knowed as that man talked nonsense, when he told 'em to do it."

Tears of indignation sprang into Rosie's eyes. She was not old enough to understand the pitifulness and helplessness of her poor little companion's ignorance. She could only feel angry at the disrespectful tone used toward the beloved disciple.

"St. John could not talk nonsense," she exclaimed. "It is not good to say such things."

"But we are little children, and you don't love me," was the stolid and half-triumphant reply.

Rosie was rather taken aback by this. She knew the text so well, and what it meant too, but it certainly never had occurred to her that the text told her something that she was actually to do always. That the dear Lord actually demanded of her, through the lips of His apostle, that she should feel kindly, lovingly, towards even this little ragged, untidy little child, looking up so wistfully from the hot and dusty lane, at her in her pleasant shady seat.

The pause between the two had lasted longer than any of the others, before Rose said, with a very deep breath:

"I didn't love you before, but I think I can begin now, and then you'll try and know, won't you, that I love you because Jesus Christ says we are to love each other. You know He loved poor people very much. Chose them for His friends to be always with Him, when He came on to this earth to die for us."

What reply to this rather long piece of Bible lesson Winnie might have made cannot be said, for Mrs. Vernon now came across the lawn, and discovered the curious and unexpected state of affairs going on in that farthest corner of the garden.

It did not take long for Rose to tell her tale to the loving and beloved mother. It took almost less time for the kind heart of the lady to warm towards the poor little ignorant creature, whom her own child had thus innocently begun to teach.

Mrs. Vernon fetched a garden chair, and taking her own little girl on her lap, the stranger was invited to that delightful seat in the apple-tree, and told to help herself to its good fruit.

While Winnie thus munched away contentedly, Mrs. Vernon continued the Bible lesson so happily commenced, and when the unexpected scholar had to say good-bye, for that day, Rose gave her first proof of love for her unknown "neighbour" by filling Winnie's eager hands with two of her very brightest-looking picture-books.

Happily for the poor little being, and for her whole family, Winnie's father was in hospital at the time with a broken leg, so the caravan remained on its present pitch for another four weeks, and before it travelled on Rosie's love for her first Bible scholar, given at the beginning of their

acquaintance for conscience sake, had ripened into a most true and friendly affection.

As for Winnie herself, it may truly be said that the little seed the Holy Spirit thus permitted to be planted was sown in good soil. Charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, began from that time gradually to flourish in her soul, and in no very long while after she proved to be indeed, to those around her, a very "Gift of God."

As for her feeling toward the first of the "little children" who ever loved her she used to say that Roses were the sweetest, dearest, and most beautiful of flowers and her Miss Rose was the sweetest, dearest, and most beautiful of young ladies. Certainly from that afternoon in the apple-tree Rose Vernon's character increased in beauty, for those who speak for God are blessed of Him. The Eastern proverb says: "The angels kiss the lips of those that speak for God."

GRACE STEEBING.

QUESTIONS ON THE LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

ST. PAUL.—IX.

1. Who is mentioned as Paul's companion in his voyage to Rome? and in what other places is the same person mentioned?
2. In vv. 2 and 3 what is the meaning of "we" us? Throughout what portion of the Acts does it occur?
3. In the narrative of the voyage and storm select the verses which exhibit the following:
 - (a) That a good man commands respect even from strangers.
 - (b) That God does not forsake His servants in peril.
 - (c) That faith in God gives a man presence of mind and worldly prudence.
 - (d) That those who trust in God will not neglect proper means of safety.
4. What was the cargo of the Alexandrian ship in which Paul sailed?
5. Why was sailing dangerous after the fast?
6. What interpretation did the barbarians put upon the attack made by the viper upon Paul?
7. Quote passages of Scripture showing that other people entertained similar opinions on such matters.
8. Mention two occasions on which Paul was looked upon as a god.
9. In what condition did Paul live at Rome? and how long?
10. Mention some passages in his epistles that refer to this.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XXV.—p. 560.—I AM THE SON OF GOD.—John x. 36.

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| 1. I srael | Gen. xlv. 26-28. |
| 2. A bsalom | 2 Sam. xvii. 14. |
| 3. M ordecai | Esther iv. 1, 2. |
| 4. T yre | Acts xxi. 3, 4, 5. |
| 5. H annah | 1 Sam. i. 9; 2 Sam. ii. 18, 19. |
| 6. E lijah | 1 Kings xvii. 1-6. |
| 7. S aul | 1 Sam. xiv. 38-43. |
| 8. O badiah | 1 Kings xviii. 3, 4. |
| 9. N athanael | John i. 47. |
| 10. O bed | Ruth iv. 14-17. |
| 11. F elix | Acts xxiv. 23. |
| 12. G ideon | Judges viii. 13. |
| 13. O thniel | Judges i. 12-15. |
| 14. D avid | 1 Chron. xxix. 6-16. |