



THE STREET OF TOMBS. POMPEII.

# THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

## POMPEII AS YOU SEE IT TO-DAY.

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THE STREET OF ABUNDANCE.

IT is not with the ordinary feelings of curiosity that the tourist approaches Pompeii, but with a solemn awe at the thought of a catastrophe unparalleled in the history of the world, except by the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah or the earthquakes that destroyed Lisbon or Aleppo. Amid all that is curious and interesting, you never can get out of your mind the men and women who were caught and overwhelmed by the calamity; like the toys of a dead child, or the chair of a dead father, everything reminds you of the life that was so suddenly extinguished, and seems to repeat the wise man's sermon—"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

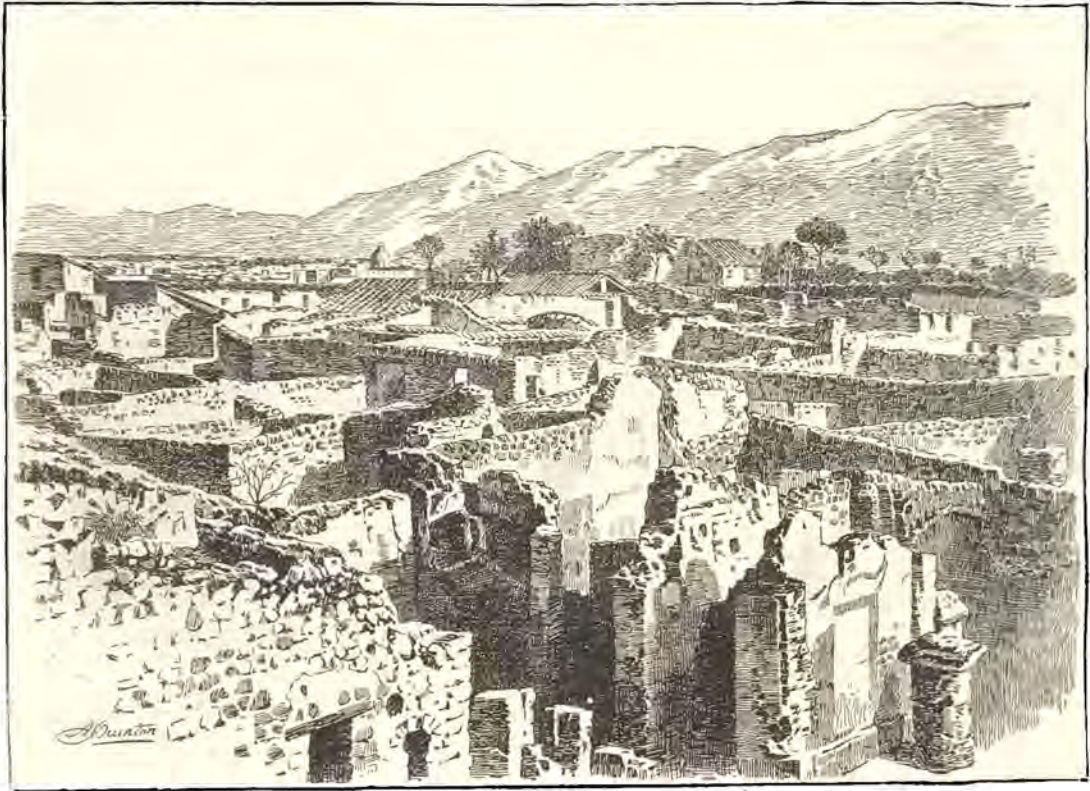
You may reach Pompeii either by rail from Naples, or by road from Castellammare, the watering-place that reposes so beautifully on the opposite shore of the Bay of Naples. We greatly prefer the route from Castellammare, which is itself a charming place, and the natural starting-point for a series of excursions of unrivalled

beauty on the Neapolitan seaboard, embracing Sorrento, Amalfi, Salerno, Pæstum, to say nothing of the adjacent island of Capri.

If your party be small, and you prefer driving to walking, you should get into one of the little open carriages of the country, and as you traverse the two or three miles between Castellammare and Pompeii, keep your eyes open, and learn what you can of the surrounding neighbourhood. Take a careful look, for example, at the little square houses you see dotted over the fields, the ugliest and most unattractive perhaps you ever saw, but in all likelihood the very fac-similes of what Cicero and Sallust beheld, while driving from Rome to their houses in Pompeii. Four bare walls, without chimney, without window, without any visible roof, seem to contradict every principle whether of comfort or of beauty. As Ruskin says, the comfortable look of a house depends on the roof more than anything, because you associate with it protection, dryness and

snugness. With the window you associate brightness and cheerfulness, and if, in a warm country, a chimney does not give the idea of comfort, it breaks the skyline and looks picturesque. The roof in these cottages either slopes inwards, or is in the form of a little dome, below the level of the walls; and as for light, all that is admitted usually comes from the open door. If there be anything like a window, it is a mere grating or lattice without glass. Thousands of years ago, the want of glass determined the form both of the cottages outside, and of the stylish houses inside the city; and in the cottages the same plan prevails to the present day. I asked an

sisted on Colman's mustard and Pears' soap. But three months later, another crop would have been seen, in fact a fresh crop every quarter. As for the peasantry, they seem to work hard and earn little. Their land is not their own, and when they have paid half the produce to the proprietors and their share of the very heavy taxation of the country, there is not much left for them and their families. On they plod, as their forefathers plodded, century after century, or as they were plodding on the memorable 24th August, A.D. 79. It is a strange feature of the life of the people that after their houses have been swept away, they go on, as far as they can, rebuilding them on



RECENT EXCAVATIONS.

intelligent Italian gentleman whether the idea of improving the houses had ever entered into the mind of any social reformer. Nothing of the kind, he said, has ever been thought of; they are the very same as they were three thousand years ago.

It is evident from the number of cottages that the holdings are small. But the soil is wonderfully fertile, for volcanic products, when decomposed, are very favourable to vegetation. The little fields or patches into which the farms or market gardens are divided, when assiduously cultivated, yield four crops a year. From the extraordinary prevalence of Jerusalem artichokes, I should have inferred that they formed the whole food of the people, pretty much as a stranger might infer from the advertisements of a railway station that the English people sub-

their former sites, as if no fresh eruption was to be thought of; and so no doubt did the peasantry about Pompeii, as soon as the eruption had finally closed. After all, it is not so rare a folly: we all see, written in lurid letters, the fate of gamblers, speculators, cheats, dissemblers, and rogues of every hue; but no sooner are one set down than others step into their shoes, only to experience a repetition of their fate. As for Pompeii itself, it was too completely submerged, and under too soft material, ever to be built over; and the peasantry in the neighbourhood have fared better than might have been expected, for they have never been disturbed since that time by a similar catastrophe.

But we are now close to Pompeii itself. Our first impression on reaching it is, that it is much farther from the base of Vesuvius than we had

imagined. We had thought of it as close to the foot of the mountain, and lo! a plain three or four miles lies between them. All the more tremendous must have been the force of the eruption which sent forth such showers of ashes, mud and pumice-stone, as to bury the city to the depth of twenty feet. We see how it happened that Pompeii fared differently from Herculaneum. Herculaneum was nearer, and it lay right under the stream of liquid lava that came rushing down, and was buried under material that made excavation as difficult as tunnelling the Alps. Pompeii was buried under avalanches of softer material, shot into the air, part of which falling red hot burnt up all the inflammable parts of the city, but left its more solid remains. It is these solid remains we now see, and our next impression is, that as a whole, they are not externally imposing. They show nothing like the Colosseum at Rome, or the baths of Diocletian, or the arch of Vespasian, or the aqueduct of Claudius. At the distance of a mile or two, there is nothing in Pompeii to make a great impression. All the interest arises from a minute inspection of the objects. And the minuter the inspection the greater the interest.

Many of the houses were no doubt of considerable height, but the upper stories, where the slaves usually had their apartments, were of wood, and of course burnt down. And Pompeii was but a little city, of from twenty to thirty thousand inhabitants, and sixteen years before the eruption, it had been shattered by an earthquake. This gives to its remains a peculiar interest, because nearly everything found in it must represent the definite period between A.D. 63 and 79. The earthquake occurred about the time of St. Paul's second imprisonment at Rome, and he must have heard of it shortly before his martyrdom. But hardly any Christian remains have been found in Pompeii. It was in the main a gay, festive, licentious city, devoted to pleasure and free indulgence. Its remains enable us to reconstruct the life of that period in many of its details, and to understand better what manner of men these Romans were that breathed the atmosphere of paganism in its most cultured form.

We pay our two francs and enter the city, accompanied by an official guide, at the Porta Marina, and after passing through the museum, with its ghastly skeletons so wonderfully preserved, and conveying to us the very features and expression of some of the people (and even animals) as death overtook them, we look round us on the street. We mark the peculiar structure of the stone with which they are paved. Is it a fancy or a fact that there is a resemblance between this stone, and that which we find not as part of, but close to the Forth Bridge? In point of fact, both are volcanic products, and therefore alike. How odd the association of things old and new! What makes the Forth Bridge possible is, that the volcanic rock that juts out into the frith at its north end is so hard, that the action of the water has never washed it away. But for this the frith would have been too wide for any bridge to span. The pavement of the Pompeian streets in polygonal blocks is volcanic,

so are the stepping-stones for the foot passengers to step over, and in some instances the pillars of the great buildings.

The streets are narrow and not imposing, their principal feature having been the shops, the structure of which was similar to many that are seen in Naples at this day. The dwelling-houses of the better kind opened inwards into an enclosed court, while the part facing the street was devoted to shops, the only opening to which served as door and window combined. These shop-openings are gaunt and desolate enough now, but in olden times were all gay and radiant with gaudy frescoes (partly remaining) and attractive wares; while fountains sparkled in the vistas, and crowds of people in brilliant costumes, with flower-girls offering their wares at the corners, made them as rich and bright as they are desolate and dreary now. We may yet see notices in red, mostly referring to some election that was going



ONE OF THE GATES.

on, trade signs, and occasionally a talisman to avert the evil eye, and a snake or two to represent the household gods. The evil eye, the *mal-occhio* of to-day, seems to have been a terrible bugbear. The same superstition that makes the waggoner of Naples place a waving object on the harness of his horse, to prevent the evil eye from fixing on it, was in full play then. We may congratulate ourselves on this mark of progress—that among us it is rarely indeed that such charms are resorted to even by the most ignorant.

Let us look into the forum, the centre of the life of the town, with its temple of Jupiter at one end, its tribunal at the other, its long Doric colonnades on either side, and spacious area within. All are represented now by mere ruins, yet ruins that vividly recall the olden time, and enable you without effort to fancy the proud senator strutting towards the temple where the senate met; the busy lawyer or the anxious litigant hastening to the courts of justice; the money-changers sitting with their golden and silver heaps in front of them; the merchants making their bargains, while groups of citizens were everywhere pacing the marble slabs of the

pavement, and accompanying their discussions with those energetic movements of the body which are at this day such a contrast to the staid

the street, but all opened into the court, which supplied them with light and air. It was rare for the windows to be glazed, but glass was not unknown. In large houses there was a second court, with apartments more devoted to the life of the family. In the centre of this court was a fish-pond, and often a garden around. Sometimes the garden was outside altogether. Usually the apartments were small, for much of the life of the family was spent in the courts in the open air. Often in the vestibule we see a shelf, on slender marble pillars, for the household gods.

But the chief interest of the houses lies in the style of decoration. The profuseness of colouring and ornament is most striking; no pains were spared in this department. But it is not very solid decoration. Marble columns

and walls are rare; usually the material is brick, covered with plaster, but this it is that affords such unlimited scope for pictorial decoration.



FORUM AND TEMPLE OF JUPITER.

manner of our people at home. It would seem that before the catastrophe, workmen were engaged in substituting travertine columns for the softer material of which the older columns were composed, and it is quite touching to find at this hour rough unfinished blocks of stone waiting for the finishing process which they were never to receive.

The temples are, of course, very conspicuous among the ruins. We note the grandeur and extent of the surrounding colonnade, compared with the small dimensions of the temple proper, usually standing on a raised platform, and approached by a flight of steps, and we fancy the crowd of worshippers standing around, while the priests performed the rites within. In the basilica, or hall of justice, we see the germ of the Christian church; the pillars on either side, the bema corresponding to the chancel, and the apse, all suggesting the modern adaptations. The transept was a subsequent addition. No Christian church has been found, but it is quite likely, as Bulwer represents, that there were Christians in the city, who were objects of scorn and hatred, and of whom the calumny was still in circulation that they devoured a child at their sacred feasts.

But the dwelling-houses are the most interesting of Pompeian relics. Many readers are familiar with their structure, for they give us our best idea of Roman habitations; therefore a brief description will suffice. The house was usually entered from the street by a narrow passage which opened into a court, surrounded by a covered passage, with a reservoir in the centre for rain water. The apartments in this part of the house were commonly used for business and the intercourse of the family with the outer world. The rooms had no openings to



ARCH OF CALIGULA.

The colours of columns and walls are sometimes glaring, but for the most part everything is in excellent taste. Friezes, garlands, festoons, sprays meet your eye everywhere, that are simply exquisite; while from a dark ground, light airy

figures, winged or otherwise, seem to move in airy pathways in every variety of graceful form. But when you have praised the form and the colour you find little else to admire. The spirit of paganism is rampant throughout. That pagan mythology should furnish most of the themes of the artist was natural enough: the story of Narcissus, the loves of Aphrodite, the story of Leda, the revels of Bacchus, or the dances of nymphs and satyrs. We do not wonder that the decorations of a pagan city should not represent a single Biblical theme, nor exemplify our Christian idea. But we are surprised at the frivolous, fantastical and utterly careless spirit in which the whole system of decoration seems to have been conceived. Were there no noble deeds of history, no touching incidents of family life, no pathetic occasions drawing out the deeper feelings of the heart, worthy of being represented? It would seem not. Pompeii was a city of pleasure, devoted to wine and song and dance; and all that met the eye in its dwellings must help the more free, thoughtless and careless moods of man's spirit. It looks as if men were playing at life instead of living in earnest. The air of abandon that meets us everywhere is that of a community that knew little or nothing of girding up the loins of the mind, or bracing itself for the duties of life. The human body is constantly represented as the masterpiece of nature, worthy of an admiration which is almost worship, and demanding an unimpeded freedom in its every movement and exercise. Of course it must be represented nude, to bring out all the varieties of striking and graceful attitude of which it is capable. In these representations it is impossible to prevent the beauty of art from ministering to the spirit of sensuality. There comes to be an entire break with the modesty of nature, and when modesty departs there can be little doubt what will come in. We cannot even hint in these pages at the grossness, not now visible however, which came to be represented in the decorations of Pompeii.

Perhaps it is certain of the shops that are most suggestive of the mode of life of these distant days. All that was made of wood is of course destroyed, but stone, brick and plaster objects remain. Here is a baker's shop, where you see the grinders for pulverizing the flour, the oven where the bread was baked, and in a protected place loaves of bread have been found exactly as the baker left them. Yonder is a barber's, with the high stool on which his customer was shaved, and benches for others to sit on till their turn came. On the marble counter in another shop you see large tanks, in which were stored the wine or oil, the beer or milk which the owner

dealt in. Many of the earthen vessels which contained these are still preserved. Sometimes there are drinking-enclosures, like those of our public-houses, but for the most part the drinking was done in the open air. Tavern walls were commonly decorated with drinking pictures. A fuller's establishment gives us a vivid idea of his business. Four basins show where the cloths were washed, and the small stands beside them where they were pressed by the men's feet. The kitchen with its oven, and the rooms and bed-chambers show that the fuller lived here with his family, and probably his workmen, who were slaves. A gallery for drying the clothes was supported by square pillars adorned with frescoes illustrative of the fuller's art, now in the Naples Museum. But the interest of these things evaporates in description; it is the actual sight of them that gives the extraordinary sensation.

Baths and theatres were commanding features of



BOYS CARRYING SOIL FROM THE EXCAVATIONS.

Pompeian life. The *Thermæ* of Pompeii give an excellent idea of the elaborate manner in which this department of life was carried on. First you enter the large room for undressing, with benches round it. Other chambers are for the tepid bath, the hot air bath, and the cold bath, and there are various other rooms and baths for women. On these bath-rooms the Pompeians (and the Romans generally) expended much elaborate ornamentation. To see them gives a new interest to the passage in the "Last Days of Pompeii," where a party is described as betaking themselves to the baths. First they enter the dressing-room, where the vaulted ceiling is raised from a cornice, glowingly coloured with motley and grotesque paintings, the ceiling panelled in white compartments bordered with rich crimson, and the floor paved with white mosaics. Hanging their clothes on hooks fastened in the wall,<sup>1</sup> and receiving from their own slaves or those of the *Thermæ* loose robes in return, those who took

<sup>1</sup> So says Bulwer; but what I saw was recesses in the wall for the clothes of bathers.

only the cold bath withdrew into the graceful circular building which still exists. The more luxurious departed to the *tepidarium*, to enjoy a bath heated to a voluptuous warmth, by means of a suspended pavement heated from the *laconicum*. This apartment was fitted up with great splendour, and lighted from the arched roof, which was beautifully carved and painted. Habitual bathers, who bathed seven times a day, would remain here in a state of luxurious lassitude, hardly able for the slightest exertion. Others more active would proceed to the *sudatorium*, or vapour bath, where another form of luxury would be found. The vapour was seasoned with spicy perfumes, and when the bath was over, the bather was laid hold of by his slaves, who, with a kind of scraper, removed from him the dews of heat. If he then passed to the water bath, fresh perfumes would regale him, and a cooling shower play over his head and body. Returning to the *tepidarium*, where from vials of gold or alabaster, slaves would anoint him with the rarest unguents, and soft music delight him from an adjacent chamber, he would rejoin his friends and spend some time in easy and pleasant conversation. We can almost see the process going on at Pompeii; and when we examine at Rome the stupendous remains of the baths of Diocletian, we may imagine the boundless profusion of luxury and gratification of the flesh that day by day was associated with these establishments.

We must pass by the theatre and the amphitheatre, the street of tombs, the garden of Cicero, the house of Sallust, and the many houses and temples that, to those who have ample time, furnish the most interesting material for study. A superficial survey of Pompeii, though profoundly interesting, is a long way from being so instructive or interesting as that deliberate examination of detail which enables one to compare one object with another. Just let us

glance into the wine-cellar of the villa of Diomedes, outside the gate. It is a large vaulted chamber, with small openings above. When the catastrophe occurred, it was thought that this would afford protection. Women and children flocked into it, but the ashes and suffocating vapour penetrated through the openings. Here were found eighteen dead bodies, and beside them the bread and fruit which they had brought with them. The probable owner of the house was found near the garden door, and near him a slave with money and valuables. What a vivid picture we get of the awful tragedy!

It is well known that little more than half Pompeii has yet been excavated, although that part is believed to contain the most important portions. The process of excavation, however, still goes vigorously on. A railway has been constructed to remove the excavated matter, which is carried to the trucks in baskets on the heads of women or boys, in Neapolitan fashion—making a picturesque spectacle, but creating in a British mind much wonder at the prejudice against wheelbarrows. We watched the excavators with attention as they shovelled away the material that the burning mountain had poured out—chiefly ashes, bits of pumice-stone and mud. It was quite loose and easily dealt with. A workman had just excavated a little bronze lamp, which we would fain have purchased, but he dared not sell. Another, as we looked, came on a bunch of house-keys, somewhat rusty, as they had lain there 1812 years. Another was excavating a washing-house, and had just come on a mass of soap, with a fragment of which he presented us. How strange to think that the last owners had been in eternity eighteen centuries! And how much more solemnizing to think what may be going on here eighteen centuries hence! A mightier convulsion may have taken place ere then, and the new heaven and new earth appeared “wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

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## THE ANDERSONS: BROTHER AND SISTER.

### CHAPTER XIX.—RETRIBUTION.

THE next few hours were to Lettice one prolonged whirl. She did what had to be done, with some measure of outward quietness; but her mind was in a dizzy tumult of feeling. After all that had passed, it seemed such a fearful reverse for Theodosia! Lettice forgot injuries to herself, and her whole heart went out in passionate pity to that unhappy woman, who in losing Keith might almost be said to lose her all.

Felix said little during the journey, but he saw to everything, looked well after Lettice, and made her lie down on the seat, while nobody except themselves occupied the compartment. She found herself involuntarily tracing and retracing the course of late events. Things had turned out utterly unlike all previous expecta-

tions. But for Theodosia's determined antagonism, she might not have come to London at this time, and she might never have lived again with Felix! This new phase of affairs had sprung from a chain of circumstances over which she had small control; not one of which, separately viewed, could have been deemed likely to produce any such result.

“I suppose things often are so,” she meditated, reposing in the lamplight, with the rush of the train in her ears. “And after all, it has been worth going through the trouble, to bring about my home with Felix. Yes; worth the whole. I would not undo a single step, if it must mean undoing that too. . . . I never fancied Felix could be what he is now to me. Three months

ago, if I could have looked ahead, how little I should have cared about Mrs. Bryant's unkindness. . . . At least it would have been a different feeling altogether—not desolate! I do care now; but I shall be cleared some day, quite cleared. I am sure of it. And meantime life is so happy! How can I help being contented? . . . That poor little Keith? Ought I to be glad about anything, when he is dying?"

So the hours passed, in alternations of feeling; and after midnight the journey ended, in a dark drive to Quarrington Cottage. Lettice sprang out, to be met at the door by Dr. Bryant. He looked grave and tried; but at the first glimpse of Lettice, something of the old light came into his eyes. "My child, I have missed you!" he said.

"Have you? I did wonder if, perhaps, you might!"

"Hardly possible that I should not!"

"And Keith?"

"You are in time. Not much more than in time, I fear. Your brother was right to come too," as he held out a hand to Felix.

"I could not let Lettice travel alone at night."

"No: you are perfectly right."

"Uncle, what is the illness?"

"A chill first. Bronchitis, with complications. He cannot last many hours now. At this moment he is not conscious."

"Will he know me?"

"I hope so. He has asked for you incessantly, poor little lad. Theodosia would not consent, until yesterday afternoon, to have you sent for. I feared then that it might be too late. The boy was so distressed that she had to give way."

Lettice shivered at the thought of Theodosia; not with reference to herself. "It is terrible for Mrs. Bryant!" she murmured.

"Yes; and the boy has seemed to turn from her in this illness. It has been most painful. My dear, will you take off your wraps; and then you must have supper. After that you shall see him."

"O let me go to him first. We had supper at home."

"You must take something more now."

She had no choice as to submission, and obedience was the quicker mode. Fatigue could not be thought of; and she had no desire for sleep. Felix at least was glad to avail himself of the food provided; and Lettice did her best to satisfy Dr. Bryant.

"You are looking well in health. Not the worse for London!" he said, after an earnest scrutiny.

"Felix takes such care of me."

Felix grunted slightly, as if in token that he desired no compliments.

"Anderson will be no loser in the end."

Then came a summons. "Master Keith was sensible, and he wanted Miss Lettice. He had asked if she were not in the house."

"Come, both of you," the doctor said unexpectedly. He could hardly have explained why he extended his invitation to Felix. The words sprang from a momentary impulse; but Felix followed without hesitation.

Keith was sitting up in his little bed, supported by pillows. Beside him stood Theodosia; haggard, wretched beyond description. After one glance, as Lettice entered, her eyes were averted; while the boy extended eager hands, and gasped, "Dear old Lettice! Come!"

She bent over him, and he held her with his thin arms, until they dropped through weakness. The breathing was sorely oppressed. He seemed striving to say something, and unable to bring it out. Theodosia drew nearer; but with one hand he tried to push her away—a hasty childish motion.

"No, no, Keith!" the doctor said in a gentle voice.

"I can't! Lettice! Not mamsie! It was she—did it!" The boy could with difficulty speak, and he looked towards Dr. Bryant, panting. "I want—want—to tell you! . . . Mamsie did it! . . . I saw her! . . . Lettice knows! . . . Ask Lettice!"

"What does he mean?" asked Dr. Bryant, in a low voice. Lettice shook her head. How could she reply?

"Lettice knows!" repeated the boy brokenly. "Hold me, Lettice! Don't go! . . . She put the bank-note . . . her own self . . . into Lettice's box! . . . I saw her . . . Mamsie knows . . . quite well . . . And Lettice knows!"

Theodosia's face grew stony; and Dr. Bryant's changed to a grey whiteness.

"Who put the bank-note into Lettice's box, Keith?"

"Mamsie! her own self! I saw her! . . . I can't think—how—she could!"

An oppressive silence followed, broken only by the boy's gasps. Lettice was the first to speak.

"Keith, darling, don't think of all that now. Try to forget about the money. You have not to do with it, you know. Think of the stories I used to tell you, up in the playroom on Sunday afternoon. About Jesus, dying on the Cross, and how He loved the children always."

"Yes, I know! Will He take me—right away—up there?"

"I am sure He will. He loves you so; and He died for you, Keith. Ask Him now to forgive you all that you have done wrong; and to take care of you."

"I can't speak—it hurts! You ask?"

There was an instant's shy reluctance, but at such a moment she could not think of self. Others simply stood around, waiting. Lettice looked at none of them. She knew that Theodosia, Dr. Bryant, Felix, Susanna, were present; yet as she knelt, with bowed head, clasping the boy's hand, she had a sense of being alone with Keith before the Heavenly Throne. In soft tones she uttered the words of her own old evening prayer, learnt long ago from Cecilia, and taught later to Keith, only changing the pronouns to suit the needs of the present occasion, and bringing in Keith's name. He joined brokenly in the familiar sentences; and then a fit of choking came on. Theodosia interfered to give help: her own face ghastly. When the attack passed off, it left the boy unconscious.

"Is this true?" the doctor asked, in a voice of suppressed pain.

He had no immediate answer. Theodosia's gaze was riveted on her boy's face, over which a marked change was creeping. It had come without warning: and it deepened fast. Again he struggled for breath: and once more, with returning sense, his eyes sought Lettice's face. A smile glimmered: and one word passed his lips, that word of "hope for the dying." He said distinctly—"Jesus!"

"Keith, darling, look at mamsie! Give poor mamsie one smile."

He made an effort to obey: but in the act his eyes closed.

There was another slight struggle: and the child was gone.

Silence again fell upon them all; and Lettice trembled, holding the small lifeless hand. Theodosia stood up white and stern.

"Yes: it is true," she said, "I did it! I wanted to get rid of Lettice,—for Keith's sake! I could not have done such a thing for anybody else's sake,—only for Keith! . . . Only for Keith! . . . I know what I am saying! Don't stare at me—all of you! I tell you—Lettice stole my boy's heart from me! And she would have robbed him—robbed him of his rights! I saw it all—and so—for his sake—my boy's sake——"

"Come out of the room, Theodosia!" Dr. Bryant spoke with infinite pity.

"Why should I go? Nothing is left to me now. Oh, I know—it was wrong, of course—but this is an awful punishment!"—and she sank over the child's body, uttering a wail of such misery, that Lettice burst into weeping at the sound. Who could comfort the unhappy woman? She had sacrificed her truth, her sense of right, deliberately wronging an innocent girl, as a gratification of her own jealousy, and for the supposed advantage of the single being whom she loved: and now, not only was he taken from her, but before he went, she had the additional anguish of knowing that she had forfeited his esteem, if not also his love. There was a bitter irony in the fact that her own idolised boy should have been the one, of all others, to make known her wrong-doing. Either, his resolution not to speak of it had broken down under the weakness of suffering, or his childish conscience had refused to let him pass away without clearing Lettice from unjust accusation. Whichever way it might be, Theodosia's cup was thereby filled to the brim.

"Go away! Go and leave me!" she cried. "I want Keith! nobody but Keith! Lettice may have all your money now. Now Keith is gone."

To Lettice the scene was heartrending: to Felix it was a revelation. If the love of money could lead to this—love of money, not for self even, but for another—who might count himself free from peril! He said nothing: but that which he saw sank deeply, and was not forgotten. Theodosia's jealousy of her boy's affection for Lettice was an additional motive which he could not so well see or appreciate. One side of the matter was clear enough: and it carried its own lesson.

"Take Lettice into another room," Dr. Bryant said quietly, and Felix obeyed. Half-an-hour later Dr. Bryant appeared alone, entering the study where the brother and sister had taken refuge. Lettice, not a little shaken by the past scene, was sobbing still: but at the sound of his step she stood up.

"Is Mrs. Bryant——?" she tried to say.

Dr. Bryant was still ashen-pale, with the look of a man who has received a severe blow. He came in front of Lettice, and said,—“My child, forgive me!”

Lettice clung to him, without a word.

"Forgive me!" he repeated. "You have been cruelly wronged."

"You couldn't know! You couldn't tell. It was not your fault. I have nothing to forgive."

"You have much! I ought to have been sure! The marvel to me now is—how I could ever have thought it possible. My own credulity amazes me."

His grieved look wandered to the brother, and Felix said promptly—"The other would have seemed much more impossible."

"True!" Dr. Bryant sighed heavily. "The least of the pain is that our little lad is safe at Home!"

"Don't mind about me! Don't think of that again" entreated Lettice. "You have been so good, so dear and good to me always. And if I had spoken out at first——"

"That was always a mystery! I never could understand your silence. Why not have denied it from the beginning?"

Lettice was dumb, and Felix spoke for her. "She thought she might divert suspicion upon me. I was in the room, also, with the bank-note."

"I see!"—with a flash of understanding. "But, no!—how could that affect you? You were not in the room alone?"

"Yes,—alone!"

"Ah!" the sound was almost a groan.

"It is all right now—I mean, you will never doubt me again—and I shall always be your child!" murmured Lettice, longing to comfort him.

His lips touched her brow, as he echoed,—

"Always my child!"

"Is she any better, uncle?"

A negative mournful movement came in answer. "She has insisted on being alone for a time. After all—what can one do? What can anyone say to comfort her? . . . Now you must both go to bed; and do not hurry up in the morning, either of you. Breakfast can be made ready at any time."

"And you, uncle?"

"I must have a little time to myself. Good-night, dear child. Try to sleep. . . . There is need to sorrow more for the living than the dead; and that touches me more closely than you."

"I think—what touches you touches me!" she tried to say.

"Thanks, my comfort!" and with a stirred face he was gone, able to bear no more.

"I am glad I know him," Felix observed abruptly. "There's something noble about that man—something unlike other men!"

Four days later Keith was laid to rest in the

little village churchyard: and some who knew Theodosia well, said plainly that it was a merciful stroke which had taken the boy thus early away from her influence. Dr. Bryant, whatever he might have felt, passed no such judgment. He uttered no reproaches, and showed to his wife only a steadfast compassion. She bore up sullenly till after the funeral, only keeping to her own room, and refusing to see Lettice. Then she broke down, and for many weeks she was laid low with brain fever. Out of this illness she emerged a permanent invalid, shattered in body and mind, childishly sorry for her past conduct, so far as she was capable of recalling it, yet apt to be amused with the veriest trifles.

Lettice could be no help to Dr. Bryant, so far as Theodosia was concerned: since her presence proved always in a measure harmful, by exciting more vivid recollections. A good nurse was in constant attendance: and Dr. Bryant devoted himself, with patient and forgiving assiduity, to lightening, so far as was in his power, the burden of his wife's existence. Hers truly was a spoilt life. In less than a year she was laid beside her boy.

Dr. Bryant had been thoroughly shaken out of his love for Quarrington Cottage by these painful events. Without consulting anybody, he put the place into the hands of agents, to be let or sold: and six weeks after his wife's death, he betook himself to a London hotel, within five minutes' walk of the Andersons' lodgings.

Nobody expected him. Lettice had been greatly exercised of late, wondering whether her first duty lay with Felix or with Dr. Bryant, now that the latter was left alone in the world. "If only I could live with them both!" she said often to herself: but Felix was tied to the neighbourhood of London: and that Dr. Bryant should be willing to quit his old home was a notion which never so much as occurred to her imagination. Everybody looked upon him as a permanent fixture.

The day on which he arrived happened to be the day of Prue Valentine's wedding: a quiet affair, with only Bertha and Nan, Lettice and one other girl, for bride's-maids. The ceremony took place in Mr. Kelly's own church. Prue looked calmly happy, in her neat white dress: not only happier but younger than for years past. The bride's-maids wore mauve and white, in consideration of Lettice's mourning, which was of course slight in degree. It was a morning of much excitement for Lettice, who had never been a bride's-maid before: and for about the first time during six weeks past, her mind did not dwell continuously on the thought of Dr. Bryant in his solitude. Coming out of church, after the happy pair, a vague sense took possession of Lettice that somebody familiar and unexpected was present. She could not at once give shape to the notion, and she did not exactly see the "somebody." It was rather a dim consciousness that such an one might be seen—and her eyes roved about anxiously. Had she caught a glimpse, or had she not—almost without knowing? An answer came in the porch, when a kind finely-outlined face, framed in grey hair, was suddenly close at

hand; and then she was aware that she had before detected him in church, though her brain had not fully translated what her eyes had seen.

"Uncle Maurice!" burst from her lips.

"Presently!" he said, as his hand clasped hers. "Go and enjoy yourself, my child. I shall see you by-and-by."

The next two hours were passed in pleasurable suspense. When at length bride and bridegroom had taken their departure, Lettice was free to go home,—and there, according to hope, she found Dr. Bryant comfortably established.

"So this is where you live!" he said.

"It isn't a palace, uncle. But big rooms don't make happiness."

"That's an aphorism worthy of a copybook. Wedding gone off all right?"

"O yes. But how did you know?"

"I called here, and learnt where you were gone."

"Didn't you think Prue looked sweet?"

"I thought somebody else did. . . . Lettice, are you and Felix wedded to this neighbourhood?"

"To London? Felix has his work."

"Business men often live outside London: within easy distance."

"But the expense of going in and out every day! Of course I should like it, and so would Felix: only it can't be thought of. You see, Felix ought to lay by, if only a little, every year, and I cost him a great deal. But I do try to be economical, and to save in every possible way. And Felix is so glad now to have me with him."

"My dear, I want you also."

"If only Quarrington Cottage were not all that great distance——!" Lettice spoke distressfully.

"I am not going back to Quarrington Cottage. It holds too many sad memories. The place is to be sold. I think of finding a new home outside London,—perhaps in the direction of Reigate or Dorking. And I must have you to live with me."

"But—Felix!"

"Felix too! I would not on any account separate you. I want you both to make my home your home. Why should you not? All that I have will belong to you by-and-by: and my will is already made, to that effect. No,—I shall leave something to Felix——" as she uttered her brother's name—"but the bulk will be your's. Felix can make his own way: and he will make it the faster, if by this plan he is able to lay by present earnings. I should undertake all his current expenses, as with a son of my own. Will Felix object?—and would you mind?"

"Mind! If Felix consents I should be only too glad!! To be with you always:—and to have Felix:—and to live in the country! I didn't know life could be so lovely!" cried Lettice, enraptured.

No difficulties arose in the path of the plan. Felix was both touched and grateful. "Nonsense!" he said to Lettice, when she expressed privately her regrets as to Dr. Bryant's intentions for the future, which he had plainly stated to the young man: "of course he is free to leave his money where he likes. Neither of us has the smallest

claim upon him, but you deserve it, if anybody does. He is uncommonly good to me, I can tell you; and this will be a capital lift. To have a home provided, and expenses paid, just when I am making my way! Don't you see what a lot I shall be able to save?"

"I hope we shall not both get to care too much for money," Lettice said seriously.

"Not much danger for you. That isn't your sort. And mind—if you think I'm getting into an avaricious groove—just speak and warn me, Lettice."

Quarrington Cottage was sold, and a pretty

home was chosen within forty minutes of the City by rail. There the brother and sister lived with Dr. Bryant, finding in him a true father. Neither of the two had after cause to regret the arrangement, and Dr. Bryant's old age was the happiest period of his life.

Although the desire to "get on" was no longer the ruling passion of Felix Anderson's mind, to the exclusion of all higher aims, he did get on, and gave promise in time of becoming a thoroughly prosperous man. But in after years he never lost sight of one main fact, that what he possessed was literally not his own, but only "held in trust."



## Sermonettes for Young People.

BY THE REV. HUGH MACMILLAN, D.D., LL.D.

### BLOOD RELATIONS.

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth."—*Acts xvii. 26.*

**M**OST people think that the blood of every creature is the same; that there is only one kind of blood. The blood of one of the lower animals, and the blood of a man look exactly alike. It seems to be the same crimson fluid in the veins of every creature. And yet in reality blood is one of the most varied substances in nature. In no two kinds of animals is it alike. Its appearance to the eye is indeed similar; but under the microscope it is quite different. You can distinguish the blood of a sheep from the blood of a bird, and the blood of a bird from that of a serpent. The size and the shape of the little red particles of which the blood is composed, are different in different kinds of creatures. They are largest in the reptiles, and smallest in dogs and cats; and strange to say, the harvest mouse, which is the smallest of all our animals, has blood-particles larger than those of the horse, or the ox. The red blood-particles may be made to take the form of beautiful crystals; and these crystals are not always of the same shape in animals that are very like each other. For instance, the rat and the guinea-pig belong to the

same class of animals, and yet the crystals got from the blood of the rat are six-sided, while those of the guinea-pig are four-sided. The red blood-corpuscles of the pike are pointed at both ends; and in that respect this fish plainly differs from the fishes that are most like it.

In man the blood-particles are different from those of all other creatures. You know that at once when you see them under the microscope. They are like little rolls of coins in the fluid. A friend of mine, a distinguished professor, was asked on one occasion to give a line for a bed in an infirmary to a poor woman, who said that she was far gone in consumption, and was putting up blood. In proof of this, she showed him her handkerchief red with what she said was her blood. The professor quietly put a bit of the handkerchief under his microscope, and said to the woman, to her extreme astonishment and terror, "This is not human blood; it is hen's blood." It turned out that the woman, who wanted to be kept in idleness and comfort in the infirmary, had that morning killed a fowl, and dipped her handkerchief in its blood, in order to

deceive the professor, imagining that all blood was the same. You know how in criminal trials medical men can tell from a blood-stain on clothes, whether it belonged to a human being or to one of the lower animals. This seems wonderful to ignorant people, and yet it is the easiest thing in the world. For it is in the blood that all the characteristic differences of creatures begin. Creatures are distinct from each other not only in the great points which the eye can at once see and distinguish, but also in the smallest parts, which the microscope alone can detect. The difference commences with the peculiar form of the blood-discs, which is the first effort of life, and ends with the peculiar form and structure of the teeth, which is the last; and it runs throughout the whole nature.

Now the remarkable thing is, that while the blood of man differs from that of all other animals, the blood of all kinds of men is precisely the same. There is not the slightest difference under the microscope between the blood of a negro, and the blood of a white man; between the blood of an Englishman and that of a Chinese, a Hindoo, or Australian savage. God hath made of *one* blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth. Great as are the differences between the various races of men, the sameness of their blood proves beyond doubt that they all sprang from one common stock, and came from one common centre or cradle. They differ in the nature of their hair, some having woolly hair covering the whole head like a fleece, and others woolly hair growing in tufts, and others straight or curly hair. They differ also in the colour of their skin, some having white, others yellow, others red, and others black skins. They differ moreover in the formation of their skulls, having long or broad heads, and in the size of their jaws, having straight or projecting teeth. But while on all these points the various races of mankind differ, they all agree in having their blood-particles precisely the same.

And this is a matter of extreme interest and importance. But how did St. Paul know it; for the microscope was not invented in his day? How did he know that the blood of man was different from that of all other animals; for he implies that in his remarkable words? He says indeed that "all flesh is not the same flesh; there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, another of birds." But how did he know that all the kinds of men, whom he must have seen in his travels in various countries, had one kind of blood? It was the Spirit of God that inspired him, and gave him this wonderful knowledge, deeper and truer than he himself knew. For in all likelihood all that St. Paul meant in his own mind by his saying was, that all the races of mankind had the same human nature. But God's words have a meaning deeper than the surface one, and the more you study them in the light of His works, the truer you find them to be.

What St. Paul said was far in advance of the belief of the time. In the apostle's day it was not acknowledged that God had made of one blood all the nations of the earth. It was held that

there were superior and inferior races that did not belong to the same original stock. The Greeks looked down upon all other races as barbarians, and the Athenians, to whom Paul addressed his words, held the doctrine of a separate creation for their own state of Attica. They called themselves *Autochthones*, that is a people who sprang out of the same soil which they inhabited, without contact with any other race. The Jews looked down upon Greeks and Romans as Gentiles with whom they would have no dealings; and the nations beyond these were supposed by them both, to have different natures altogether from themselves. They therefore had no interest in them, they treated them with hate, or scorn, or indifference. It is not long since we, in this country, regarded all foreigners as entirely different from ourselves; as our natural enemies, whom it was right to hate, and fight with, and despoil as best we could. Nor has this feeling altogether disappeared even yet, when steamers and railways have brought all the ends of the earth together, and have enabled men to judge of each other on familiar grounds.

Now, it is a very important thing to understand this great truth, that all the people, who live in different parts of the world, are the same as ourselves; that all mankind are connected by blood relationship. You know what that big word *consanguinity* means—sharing the same blood; and it is always confined to members of the same family, or who are related by birth. But if you realise that God hath made of one blood all nations, that gives a wider meaning to the word, and enables you to extend the application of the fact to all the families of mankind. What a grand thought it is that all the races of men are God's offspring, formed in God's image, and, being thus mutually like God, are all like each other; that they are all not aliens, but brethren, members of a vast family, of whom God is the Father! What a still grander thought it is that God's Son took upon Him our common human nature, and united Himself to us by blood-relationship; became the Saviour of our common nature, that He might be the Saviour of each who wears that nature; had our blood flowing in His veins, that He might be the brother of each human being, and make each son of man to become the son of God! The blood that He shed on the Cross for your sins, is the same blood of which God has made all the nations of men. Should not that wonderful thought make you interested in all the far-off heathen nations who have never heard of this Elder Brother of the human race, of this blood-relation of their own, who left them the legacy of His redemption? Should the cause of foreign missions not gain vastly by a thought like this? Blood is thicker than water, they say, and we should do for those related to us by blood, what we might not do for aliens and strangers.

Usually persons do not care much for things that happen at a distance, and to people whom they do not know and have never seen. I remember, on one occasion, seeing a newspaper account of a terrible accident advertised on a big board in the street, and a crowd standing round

it. A mechanic came past and read the advertisement with deep interest, till he came to the end; when he cried out with mingled scorn and rage, as if he had been cheated of his sympathy, "Oh! it is only in China." Such is the feeling that people usually have regarding troubles which happen to other countries and distant races. What takes place at their own door, and among their own neighbours, deeply impresses them, however small the trouble may be; but the greatest calamities excite but a passing thought when they befall a people on the other side of the world. It was in order to take away this feeling of strangeness and indifference regarding distant people and novel scenes, that "a man of Macedonia," you remember, appeared in vision to the Apostle Paul, and besought him to come over and help his countrymen by preaching the Gospel in Europe. It was not a spirit or an angel that acted the part of messenger, but a man from the very place where Paul's services were wanted; a native specimen of the people living in it. It was a man with the same blood in his veins as in Paul's own, with the same longings and needs and sympathies in it. He had a strange dress, a strange look, a strange language; but his flesh and blood, his heart and soul, were the same as those of Paul. And so the heathen who have strange looks, strange ways, strange customs, but the same heart's blood as yourselves, beseech you to come over and help them. They are brought by your steamers to your doors that you may know them. Their very idolatry shows that they are blindly seeking after the same living God as yourselves, and are miserable without Him.

There was an article in one of our leading magazines not long ago, in which the writer made good his point, that the people of this country were more closely related to each other than they supposed. By going back only a few generations, families now wide apart in rank and wealth, and ignorant of each other's existence, could trace their origin to the same parents. The author proved that we are all Highland relations; and if we went still farther back, though not very far after all, we should find that many foreign nations were nearer than ninety-second cousins to us. It is a very remarkable thing that the babes of all races approach far nearer to one uniform type than do the grown-up people. The infant of the Ethiopian or the Australian is much lighter in tint than its parents. In the negro the black colour does not exist in the skin at first. For the first few days of its life the negro child has a reddish brown skin; and then the characteristic black pigment belonging to its race makes its appearance. A new-born Red Indian or Polynesian babe could scarcely be told from one that had white parents. Thus the infant favours not so much its own immediate relations as the original type of the race; and every new child that appears is a perpetual assertion of the universal brotherhood of man.

As young people, therefore, you are nearer to all the young people of the world, whatever race they belong to. You have many privileges and blessings of which they, in God's wise providence, have been deprived; deprived,

it may be, in order that you might impart these to them, and thus you and they might be bound by still closer ties than those of blood. You know about Jesus; you are living in a land where the Gospel shines, and where all the families have the advantages of Christian civilisation. Be not selfish in looking only at your own good things, regardless of their wants. Remember that the child, whom the Indian mother is about to throw into the Ganges as an offering to her false God; that the little African slave, fainting under the blows of a cruel master, have the same blood as yourselves, with all that it means of the sense of pain and suffering, and the sense of kindness, and longing for love and freedom. They are all children of the same Father, and are loved by the same Saviour as your own. Jesus, the elder brother of you all, was lifted up upon the Cross, bearing the sins of all, dying for all, loving all, that He might draw all men to Himself, and to one another in Him. And He says from the Throne, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else."

Whole races of human beings have become extinct in our world in bygone ages. The world has marched onward over the graves of nations. But even the youngest of you, if you think at all, cannot view this progress of the human race, carried on at such a cost, without concern. Your modern training makes the old bones of the cavemen live in a manner unknown to your forefathers; and your modern historical imagination makes the ancient world of Egypt and Greece and Rome rise up before you in all its vividness; and you feel how all these were your brethren, children of the same Father! How great a debt you feel you owe to them; how much heathen Greece and Rome have contributed, along with the chosen people, of the materials which make you what you are! And can you think of these hoary races as having no share or interest in the salvation of Him whom you are expressly told was slain from the foundation of the world? At the present day large portions of the human family are disappearing off the face of the earth, in order that its continents and islands may be inhabited by nobler races. But should you not be deeply interested in their fate, as you are blood-relations? If they are destined to vanish before more favoured races, should you not do all you can to insure that, before they disappear, they should be brought into living and loving relations with you; into a nearer and truer unity than that of race, the unity of the new birth in Him, in whom there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, savage nor civilised, but all are one for evermore.

May this thought, my dear young friends, of your own very blood flowing in the veins of your heathen outcast brothers and sisters, make these far-off persons very near and very real to you; creatures with the same thoughts and longings and affections, with the same sense of sin, and the same need of the salvation of Christ as yourselves. May it excite your sympathy, and quicken your interest in them. May you seek earnestly to make yourselves one with them, by

making yourselves familiar with their condition ; so that you may do all you can to gather them into the fold of Christ. It is not missionaries and grown-up persons alone who can do this. Every loving and faithful boy and girl, who know the truth as it is in Jesus, who have been made free from selfishness by that truth, free to be concerned about the deepest things of others, who, when nothing else can be given, can give a little prayer or a little word for the dark lands full of cruelty and superstition, can help in this

good cause. And I would like you to begin young. It is out of the heart and into the heart that the blood flows. I would like that the great thought of my text might get into your heart, and come out of it in works of faith and love, so that with your whole heart you may seek to do good to those who are no longer to you strangers and foreigners, but your blood-relations, and whom, by God's grace, you can help to make with you fellow-citizens of the saints and of the household of God.

## THE OLD SABOT-MAKER.

AT Nantes, in the time of the first Napoleon, there was a Protestant pastor who kept a small depôt of Bibles and New Testaments, which he distributed as he had opportunity. It was necessary to do this with prudence, for although there was nominally toleration under the Empire, the circulation of the Scriptures was not free, as it has been in France under the Second Empire and under the Republic of to-day.

One of these New Testaments was given by the good pastor to a poor vagrant, who gained a living by singing and by reciting stories in the towns and villages where he went. On getting this Testament, he formed the idea of taking from it some select portions, and either reading them, or repeating some of the ancient stories there recorded. He knew that very few of his countrymen, save perhaps in some of the larger towns, had any acquaintance with the contents of a book long interdicted and long neglected, as the New Testament had been.

One day he found himself before the open door of an old sabot-maker, or maker of wooden shoes, in one of the villages in the Department of the Seine and Loire, and asked an alms.

"You ask an alms from me," said the old man, "why, I am myself obliged to beg as well as you."

"Well," he replied, "if you do not choose to give me anything, I will try to earn a little. Give me a sou, and I will read to you a chapter of the Bible."

"Of what?"

"The Bible."

"What is that?" he said. So ignorant was the old man that he had not even heard of the Bible.

"Why, it is a book in which we can read all about the *bon Dieu*."

"Ah," said the old man, with a softened tone, "you may read about *le bon Dieu* ;" for the most ignorant and the most unbelieving at times are touched with the natural piety which instinctively recognises a Heavenly Father. Nor need we be surprised at such people not knowing about the Testament, in a district of popish and infidel France, for in our own England, nearly a century later, it is certain that to many, in this

land of churches and Bibles, the very name of Jesus Christ the Saviour was utterly strange and unknown.

Well, the old man gave the wanderer his sou, and he, sitting down on the stone settle beside the door, read to the old man the third chapter of St. John's Gospel. He read well, with intelligence, and the sabotier listened with astonishment. He was deeply moved when he heard the sixteenth verse, which says how "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The poor beggar man continued to read till he came to the end of the chapter, which thus closes: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Here the reader stopped.

"Go on, go on!" cried the old man.

"No," said the mendicant; "for one sou I said I would read one chapter."

"Oh, well then, here is another sou; now go on, I pray you."

The fourth chapter was read, the old man still listening with deep attention; and when they came to the end, he actually said, "Don't finish so soon, read a little bit more, I beg you."

The mendicant said his agreement was at the rate of a sou a chapter, but the old man gave yet another sou—the last copper he had with him—and then he said, "Where did you get that book, my friend?" He told him that he got it from a Protestant pastor at Nantes, telling of his interview; and soon after he rose, and went on his way.

It was a memorable day for the old sabot-maker. As he worked at his shoes the astonishing words he had heard remained ever in his mind and his heart. Especially that verse which spoke of the love of God towards the world was fixed in his memory, and occupied his thoughts. After four or five days the old man rose earlier than was his wont, and said to his son, "You must work by yourself for some days, because I am going to Nantes."

"To Nantes, father? Do you know how far it is? It is forty miles from here to Nantes."

"I know that well," replied the old man in a calm, firm tone; "but I must go there."

So that morning he took his staff in his hand, and after a long and fatiguing journey he reached the house of the pastor who had the Bibles.

"Well, my friend, what do you want?" said the pastor, as he saw the old man enter his house.

"Sir, I am told that you have a book which contains all sorts of good things about God."

"Do you mean the Bible?" said the pastor.

"Yes, that is indeed how they name it, and I want to have one of those books."

"Well, and how much have you got to purchase it?"

"Purchase?" replied the old man, with an air of surprise.

"Yes, my friend, we do not give Bibles away for nothing."

"Ah, sir," said the old man, in a disconcerted tone, "I can pay nothing. You have given the book to a poor wandering mendicant, and I am as poor as he is."

"Where do you come from, my friend?" said the pastor. And then he was told all the history of the book being read to him, and how he had travelled on foot, all the way to Nantes, old as he was; and he was going home in the same manner.

The pastor was deeply touched by the old man's tale, and he resolved to give him what was indeed the only book at present left of his little store. "You read, of course," said the good pastor.

"No, sir, I never learned to read."

"Why, then, do you want a Bible?"

"Oh, sir, let me have it, I beg you. I have a daughter who can read well, and there are three or four persons in the village who know how to read."

Touched by the earnestness and the evident sincerity of the old man, the pastor gave him the book, and he went towards his home rejoicing. On his arrival he showed the treasure to his family, and told them all that had passed. Very soon all the neighbours were invited, and those who were able to read were asked to read in turn with his own daughter. Many an evening this took place, in the presence of the old man, and of all who were willing to be present at these cottage readings.

About six months after this the old sabot-maker again appeared at the house of the pastor at Nantes. He was kindly received, and asked the purpose of his visit.

"Oh, sir," he said to the minister, "I find that I have been all wrong, and am told so very plainly."

"What do you mean? Who has told you that you are all wrong?"

"Sir, it was the Bible that you gave to me."

"Indeed! And what has it told you?"

"Sir, I find that I have been deceiving myself. All my life I trusted to the Holy Virgin to save me, but I find in the Bible that she needed salvation as well as myself. It is written in the book that her spirit 'rejoiced in God her Saviour.' So she also had need of a Saviour. Other things I could describe to you; but I am

told that you Protestants have a religion agreeing with what is in the Bible."

"That is true, my friend," said the pastor; "Our faith is in accord with the word of God."

"Then," rejoined the old man, with earnestness, "I wish to be of your religion."

"Wait, my friend, this is not so easy as you think. Before admitting any one to be a member of the Protestant Church we must have some examination and proof."

"Proof!" said the old man. "Sir, I am now more than seventy years of age, and I do not know what time remains for me. If you are willing to receive me, pray do not delay."

The result of the conversation was that the pastor got some of the elders of his congregation to come to his house, that they might hear the reasons which caused this aged man to wish to join himself to their church. Some questions were put to him, in order that they might judge whether he knew the Divine truth, such being the usage among Protestants.

"What do you know concerning Jesus Christ?" was the first question asked by the minister.

He replied, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, full of grace and truth, and we saw His glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of the Father."

"Well?" continued the pastor, "and what have you to say of the death of Christ?"

"That 'The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanses us from all sin.'"

"Can you tell us what are the privileges of those who faithfully follow Jesus Christ?"

"There is now no condemnation to those who are in Jesus Christ—who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." (Rom. viii. 1.)

"Perfectly right; but what is the duty of those who believe on Christ?"

"You are not your own," was the prompt reply; "for ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. vi. 19-20.)

The elders, hearing this good confession, evidently derived from the Holy Scriptures, were deeply moved. "If these are your convictions," said the minister, "it seems that God has Himself been your teacher, and we cannot delay receiving you, and giving you welcome, as a brother in Jesus Christ."

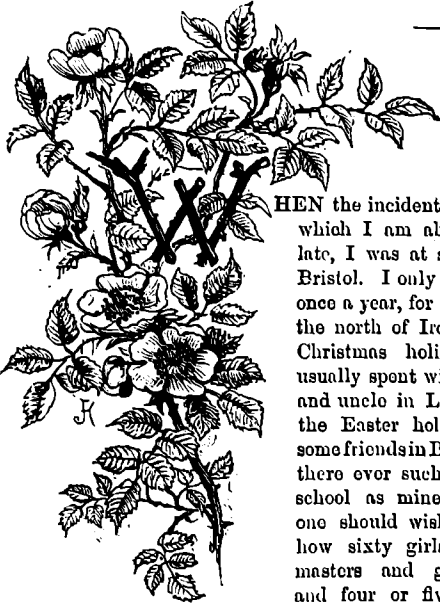
In due time the aged man was received as a member of the French Reformed Church (*L'Eglise Réformée de France*). The certificate of his reception was sent to his home, and there treasured; being also shown to his friends. A month afterwards he once more presented himself at the pastor's house. He said he had come to attend the annual meeting of the church, of which he had seen a notice in the papers which accompanied his certificate of membership.

It was an old notice, and the good man had not observed that, though the date was right as to the day and the month, it was that of a year long past. For fourteen years the Reformed Church had not held any public meetings. It was a sad disappointment to the old man, who had looked forward to enjoying the "communion

of saints," with the beloved brethren of Nantes. The good pastor sympathised with him; and after some consultation it was arranged with the pastors of the town and the neighbourhood that they might now resume their annual assemblies. No hindrance was placed by the authorities, and from that time the ancient assemblies of the Reformed Church were held annually, as they had been in ancient days.

The aged sabot-maker appeared at two of those meetings, his heart full of joy and peace. His zeal and his love became known to many,

and the earnest piety of this humble saint helped to reawaken the spiritual life of others. The fourth time that the assembly was held there was seen no more among the audience the white hair of the old sabot-maker. He had been removed to the general assembly of the redeemed, and the church of the first-born in heaven. There he would meet the blessed Lord and Saviour, of whom he had first learned in the book read to him in his old age. The Spirit had, indeed, revealed to him Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour.



## THE GIFT.

WHEN the incident took place, which I am about to relate, I was at school near Bristol. I only went home once a year, for we lived in the north of Ireland. My Christmas holidays were usually spent with an aunt and uncle in London, and the Easter holidays with some friends in Bristol. Was there ever such a pleasant school as mine? If any one should wish to know how sixty girls, a dozen masters and governesses, and four or five servants were kept punctual, cheer-

fully industrious, and with the rarest exceptions, on excellent terms with each other, without the principal being jaded to death, I can give but a slight clue. Miss Anstruther never appeared greatly anxious that things should be done right, or at a particular time, but they always were done just so; neither was she one of those invincible persons who are "determined to be obeyed," yet no one dreamed of disobeying her; though she rarely praised, and never flattered, she still gave you the pleasant feeling that she did not underrate your abilities, and while neither hilarious nor merry, contrived to put everyone about her in a good humour, and infected them with an easy cheerfulness.

Five or six weeks before we broke up for Christmas, one year, I slipped down two or three stone steps, and sprained my ankle. When it was getting better, and the girls were all out walking, I thought I would go down to the kitchen for a change. I was very friendly with the servants, and they with me. Esther, the under housemaid, was my favourite, I quite loved that girl. She had a fresh, fair face, and a modest, but very pleasant manner; and when you wanted any little thing of her, she appeared to think you were conferring the favour in asking it. I sat in cook's large chair, by the fire, and rested my sprained foot on the fender. The great kettle was boiling ready for tea, and somehow or another in raising it from the fire to put some coal on, Esther failed to keep it quite steady, and a stream of boiling water came pouring over my foot. It was a pure accident, and no one was so sorry as Esther; I would not

have had her blamed for the world—but my foot *was* bad. The skin came off, and the fiery, leaping pain was almost past enduring. I was quite ill, and was moved from the room where I slept with three other girls, to a separate one, and there I had to keep in bed for some days. If everyone had not been so kind, it would have been a dreary time. As it was, I was seldom alone for more than an hour during the day. One and another would come in, and help me to forget my pain; and as I grew better, my room became the scene of various pleasant little contrivances and diversions. But the nights were long and lonely: my days were not sufficiently busy to earn a night's repose. I was often restless and wakeful, my stiff, sore foot obliged me to lie still, my heart seemed to sink within me, and I sighed for mother and home.

While I was still confined to my room, but able to sit up for part of the day, my birthday came—my twelfth birthday. I had loving letters and gifts from home, several remembrances from my school-fellows, and a beautiful birthday cake, made by cook, forming the servants' joint present. It was covered with icing and very gay sweetmeats, and my name—Grace Winter—was written in pink letters, only cook put "*Miss Grace Winter*," and underneath—"many happy returns of the day." I had my three special friends to tea with me in my room as a great favour, and all came to me, in turn, for a piece of birthday cake. There were some very little girls at our school, one—a little niece of Miss Anstruther's—was only five, and four others were only seven. Loved and petted as they were by the older girls, they were not the least pampered or humoursome; and seeing that they could not be kept in their nurseries at home, I don't think they could have been in a happier place than Whiteladies' School. They went to bed at seven; and as they trotted past my room, they called out in their pretty voices—"Good-night, Grace, dear; many happy returns." Sweet pots! with pinafores and dolls! one, at least, of their number, has gone to another school, where she meets no frowns, and no rebukes, and where "Christ Himself doth rule." At half-past seven, those a little older came up to bed, and a chorus of "good-nights" was heard as they passed my door, and at eight, all of my age or thereabouts, and more "good-nights" were said. Only the older girls were left now. Two of them—Edith Murphy, and Emmie Chapman—with Mademoiselle, came into my room between eight and nine, and sat round the small fire. Edith Murphy was a girl I never could get on with. She was fast and vain, and rather heartless too. But she could

sing, and sing like no one else in that school. I often felt cross with Edith; her silly extravagant sayings irritated me, but as soon as ever she began to sing, I forgave her everything. She was particularly giddy that night, and she and Mademoiselle ran on in the most ridiculous style, while Emmie weakly tittered and remonstrated by turns. Perhaps I looked a little wearied, for Edith broke up the conversation suddenly, and prepared to go.

"Is there anything I can do for you, poppet?" she asked, as she was leaving.

"I wish you'd sing something, Edith," I said. "I could hear as well as possible, if you opened this door, and the door of the music-room as well."

"What shall it be?" she inquired amiably. Edith was always willing to accede to my requests in this direction, for I was one of her most ardent admirers, and she loved to be admired and praised.

"The Gift," I said. "You sing that best of all."

"Best of all singers, or best of all songs?" she asked, looking out for a compliment as usual.

"Both," I said.

The girl tripped away, the doors were thrown open, the song began. I had never heard a lovelier song, or a sweeter singer. Music was the only thing into which Edith Murphy threw her soul. When she touched it, she entered, as it were, another world, and she carried me with her. As her voice rose and fell, now stealing plaintively from her lips to my ear, now filling the intervening air with melody, now soaring far above us, it seemed impossible she could be the same girl whose tongue, a few minutes ago, had rattled out such giddy nonsense.

The music ceased. Emmie and Mademoiselle hurried off, Edith called out "good-night" in a very earthly voice, and I was left with my usual prospect of loneliness. Miss Anstruther came in soon after nine, to give me my medicine, and place the biscuits and barley-water near me, and light the night-light. At ten, the servants went up to bed. Esther just looked inside, and said in a loud whisper—"Are you all right, miss? Good-night." Now I was alone until Esther's face should appear at six to-morrow morning, and again ask me if I were all right. My birthday had been a happy one, brightened by the kindness of those who had nevertheless been compelled to leave me alone. The words of Edith's song kept repeating themselves in my mind. I think they must have formed my last conscious thoughts, for I glided into a dream that I was a tiny infant lying on my mother's lap at home. I was just such an infant as I must have been the first Christmas of my life. My mother sat on a low chair before the fire; I felt the firelight play upon my face, its warmth on my head of scanty down. The wind howled mercilessly outside, the windows were crusted with frost, darkness was falling upon the world. In the midst of storm, and darkness, and cold, how safe was I in the arms of my mother! I half woke, and dimly realised that I had fancied myself the baby of Edith's song. Many a long, long mile lay between me now, and those sheltering arms. My heart was waking up to a painful longing, when the words stole back again—

"Be not afraid, though life be sore,  
I shall be with her for evermore—"

and I fell asleep. Presently, as I thought, I awoke. I knew by the bright clear circle on the ceiling above the night-light, that it was nowhere near morning. I heard a clock in the distance strike three. Oh! that it would strike three more, and end this long, lonely night. No one was looking at me, so I made no effort to keep the tears from filling my eyes, and obliterating the sombre room. I looked now through a golden liquid light: I might be anywhere; how strange was the effect of tears! I was about

to raise my hand to my eyes, and rub them out, when I became aware that it was not lying on the knotted counterpane, but within another hand larger than mine. I was not alarmed at all, but simply wondered whose it could be. Some one's arm was around me, but I did not like to turn and see who it was, with my eyes full of tears. Lying perfectly still, I closed them, and the tears oozed out.

"What are those tears for, my child?" said a voice. It was a very beautiful voice. If those we usually hear, were anything like that, there would be no need to set words to music.

"Because I was alone," I answered.

"When were you alone, my lamb?"

I waited before I answered, until the sound of the voice had died away, just as I always lingered at the church door, until the organ ceased.

"I'm alone every night, now I am ill," I said, tremulously.

"You have made a mistake, my little girl. I have been with you."

The words suggested something—they were connected with something—what was it?

"How long—" I asked, wonderingly, "have you been with me?"

"Twelve years."

"That is the whole of my life!" I exclaimed. "I am just twelve years old."

"I promised to be with you all your life, my loved child," was the answer.

No longer wondering who it was, I raised my head eagerly from the pillow, I stretched out my arms. But the dream had vanished. I was awake to the chilly grey dawn of another day, the flickering light, the empty room, and the servant's stealthy footsteps on the stairs. But the words I had no need to remember in my dream, spoke in my heart again—

"Be not afraid, though life be sore,  
I shall be with her for evermore."

\* \* \* \* \*

Amid the storms of life, its fiery trials, its chilling solitudes, how safe am I, in the keeping of my Saviour! And when the night comes on, and my companions must all leave me, what can I wish more and better than that my dream may come true?

LILIAN DORLING.

#### A SCRIPTURE VERSE.

##### NO. III.

This verse contains the account of the deed of a "good man and a just," who was "honourable," and who "waited for the Kingdom of God." He resembled, in one particular, a disciple of Jesus who is only mentioned in one gospel. He has many namesakes in the Bible, one a very famous man, whose name is mentioned by David, Stephen, and John. The name of his home is given, but never mentioned in any other connection. His deed is related by all the Evangelists, and he seems to have overcome a very common failing in a remarkable manner. He was a Jew, but asked and obtained a favour of a Roman. An expression occurs in the verse which may be found in John xx. 19 and vii. 13. Another one found in John xx. 12. Three persons are mentioned, two of them twice; one bears two names in four other books of the New Testament, and he is mentioned in Luke in connection with a very tragic scene of slaughter; we also find that he received a timely warning which he neglected, yielding basely to the very same influence that the "just man" boldly resisted, and thus becoming guilty of a terrible crime. The verse contains forty-three words.

L. T.