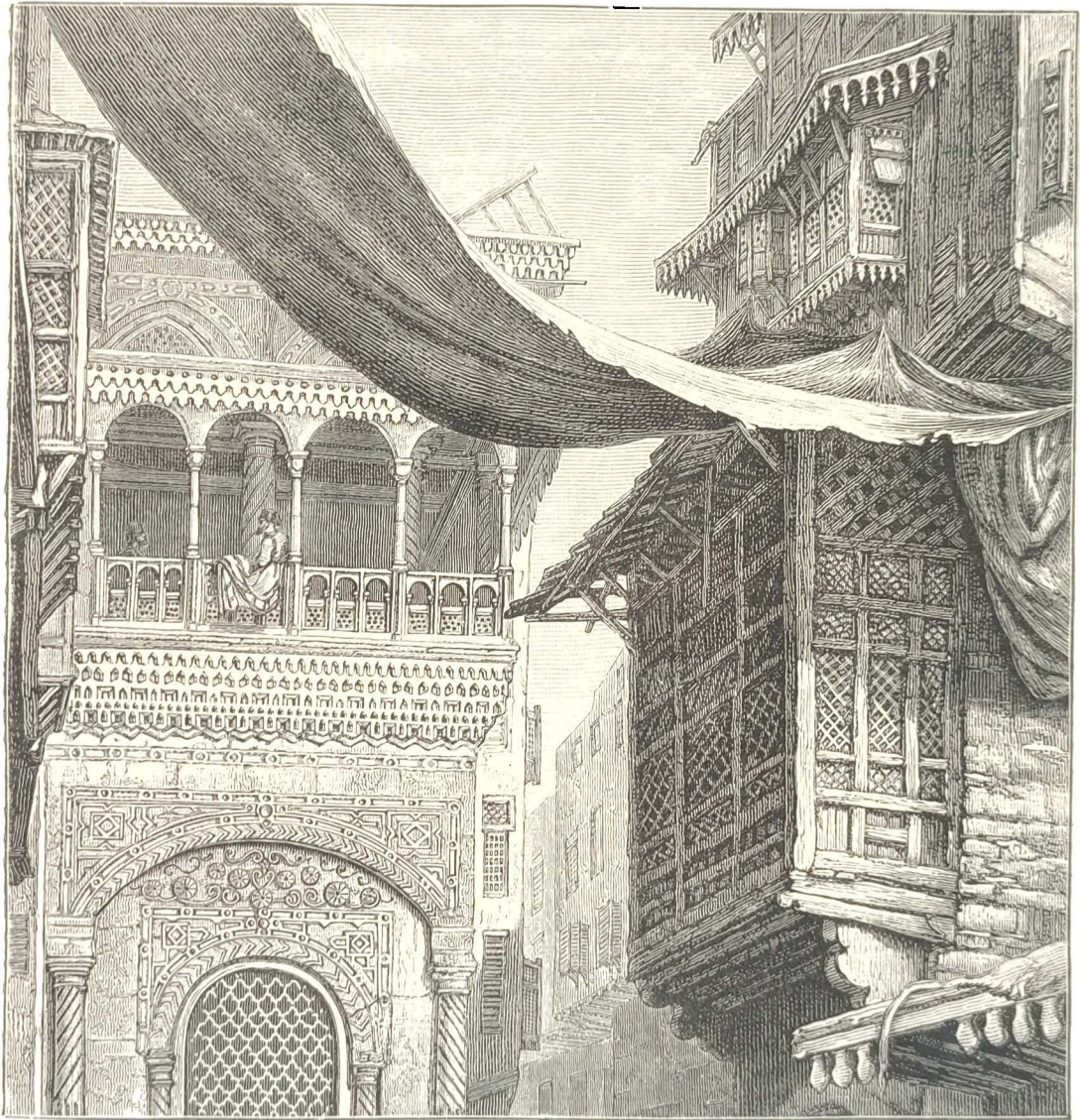


THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

CAIRO.

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



A VIEW FROM A BALCONY.

III.—KASR-EL-AINE.

THE nursing here is done under the supervision of the sisters by Egyptian women of a somewhat high grade. Education being a necessity, a regular school is carried on within the

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hospital walls for their benefit. These native women are in fact what we should call at home staff nurses and probationers, and one of each takes a side of a ward under a sister's supervision.

They look very picturesque, with their dark eyes and intelligent faces. Their uniform is a

PRICE ONE PENNY.

"Galabier," or long straight native dress of blue and white stripes, secured at the waist by a belt, white apron, white handkerchief covering for the head, and white gauze "Yash-mak," with which they cover the lower part of their faces during the doctors' and students' hours. This gives them a very graceful appearance; "indeed their natural grace and dignity is," said our guide, "always refreshing to my eyes." It is seen even among the scrubber class, who carry their pails and indeed everything on their heads, poising them without apparent effort. "One of the prettiest sights in my ward," said the sister, "is when the Ternagiah, or scrubber, walks behind the procession of doctors, students, and nurses, carrying the native burnished tin basin in one hand as high as her shoulder, on which hangs a red towel, and in the other hand the graceful long-spouted jug, from which she pours the water over my hands between cases requiring dressing."

The sisters are indeed doing a good work in training these native girls. In the first year they are instructed in general knowledge and the rudiments of nursing, passing on to higher grades each year, including at length minor surgery and midwifery. One English sister takes the superintendence of this special branch of the work.

At the end of three years they pass a final examination as qualified midwives, a most important profession in a country where to have a male doctor is considered a disgrace. They may also, if disposed, pass into the profession as female doctors, by attending certain lectures at the adjoining medical college.

They are intelligent and quick, both in practical and theoretical work; but their national sin of untruthfulness and deceit, with a long heritage of Eastern sloth, stand greatly in the way of their ultimate success. This is a sister's greatest difficulty, for when under close observation the work is done as well as by any staff of English nurses at home, yet lying and gross neglect is the result of relaxed vigilance. These girls are most interesting and very childish, which, said our guide, "is not to be wondered at, as they commence work at about fourteen, at which age they are considered women, and are indeed often married before this."

The Arab idea of "washing themselves" is quite unlike our notion of tubbing, while their state of dirt would rival the worst patients from Whitechapel. They never immerse themselves, or any of their limbs in water, unless by special medical order. Therefore there is a lavatory specially adapted to this peculiarity, with little stone-floored apartments, provided with a warm water tap and gutters to facilitate throwing the water over them, according to their notions here, after being well soaped. One day a week is assigned to each section for a regular bath for all employes and patients able to walk downstairs. The sanitary arrangements are very good, all refuse being taken daily to the desert and there buried in the sand.

Airing and recreation for the patients is a difficulty, where men and women are not allowed to meet, and it is met by allowing the men patients

to take the quadrangle and enjoy themselves, lounging on the grass and smoking, while the women enjoy the beautiful large flat roof, from one part of which a splendid view of Cairo is obtained, and Moses' Island, where he is supposed to have been found, can also be seen. From another point of view is a long reach of the Nile, with full benefit of the glorious sunsets behind a clump of palms. Below is a pretty garden, where in summer the sisters delight to walk, or to unloose their little boat and row themselves on the Nile in the cool of the evening, when their day's work is over.

The Arabs employ their fingers in the place of knives and forks, and it was some time, said our guide, before she could get accustomed to seeing meat torn from the bone and presented unceremoniously to the patient. The patients have their food served to them in little flat basins according to the diet prescribed: meat and rice, vegetables and gravy, and a queer mash of milk and corn, or plain soup and milk, each patient being given also a loaf or more of the little flat round loaves of native bread.

Those able to move about eat at a table placed in the centre of the ward, and for those in bed a little stand, with a marble top to it, which is at each bedside, serves as dinner-table at one time, and is equally useful for dressing at others. A native drinking bottle, or earthen "Goolah," is always placed on each, and is highly necessary in summer when thirst becomes almost pain.

The patients have three meals a day: the first, at six in the morning, being composed of the most horrible mess of oil and beans, which is the Arab national breakfast, the other two at eleven and half-past three. It seems a very long fast from half-past three to six next morning, but it is their custom in their own homes to sleep at sunset and take nothing before nine next day, although they commence business at dawn. A certain quantity of fruit is allowed each day: this in their own homes is an important part of their food.

Passing on to the mens' part of the hospital we find an utter absence of woman-kind, even the white uniform of an English sister was quite unknown until about two years ago, "when," said our guide, "we gladly took advantage of the Government permission to take up the nursing there, and, I am glad to say, to the great satisfaction of the English doctors." The Eastern idea is that no woman could nurse a man.

The bulk of the work in this section is done by "Termerguys," corresponding to the Orderlies in our Military hospitals. They certainly do their scrubbing and cleaning beautifully, and some of them move and feed the very sick as tenderly as a woman could. The Termerguys are provided with the loose "Galabier" in the usual flowing style of the Arabs, the crescent being embroidered in red on the shoulder.

The dressing, temperature, notes, and washing of backs, etc., are done by the medical students, of whom about fifty are attached to the hospital for their clinical years, and a part of the building is

consigned to them, some of them acting as house surgeons or doctors, and they get a capital training in every way, for the resident medical officer takes the greatest interest in them and infinite pains to thoroughly qualify them.

The visitors' day is very novel; three visitors are permitted each patient, but the crowds of filthy Arab women who besiege the door of the Hareem, and of both sexes on the male side, hours before the time of admission, is astonishing, chattering, pushing, scrambling to such an extent that the poor old Boabs can do nothing with them, and one of the sisters has been obliged lately to stand on the steps to keep order.

Visitors are strictly forbidden to bring in anything with them, and an Arab stands ready to search each one as he or she passes in.

They got all sorts of cases: the accidents of the town, and the numbers of burns caused by the small charcoal brazier so generally used, and which, combined with the extreme lightness of their attire, make their recovery scarcely possible; for though the Arab suffers very little from shock (an Egyptian will often walk about the ward the day that he has had an arm amputated), being less nervously developed than most civilized nations, he has less constitution to hold out against a long strain, and very little power of endurance. They make, however, very good patients, very uncomplaining, happy and grateful.

The patients are of three distinct races, Egyptians, Berbers, and the thorough Black from the Soudan, who is an easy prey in the colder climate to tuberculosis, more especially phthisis.



TOMB AND FOUNTAIN ON THE HIGH ROAD TO GIZEH.

Arrived in the ward they squat on the floor round the bed: no chairs are necessary, for the lower class of Arabs look upon a chair as a veritable penance, and they prefer the floor to their beds.

The blessings they shower upon the heads of the sisters and the demonstrations of gratitude are quite overwhelming.

When the poor patients are very ill it is always the English sisters they want to do the dressings and feed them instead of their own country people.

To our great astonishment we found that a Magdalene ward was as much needed here as in other countries, but an Arab woman has charge of it, the doctor not permitting the sisters to mix with it at all.

The sisters learn Arabic when they come out, they say it is easily and readily picked up on the spot, though it would be difficult to learn otherwise.

The children are charming and not kept in separate wards, but remain with the women in the hareem; this is more convenient, as the mothers are allowed to stay with their very young ones.

In one ward we noticed some little ones clothed in queer coats and pointed hoods, whereat the sister said: "See how poor we are, we have to make little coats of old blankets to keep them warm."

One day a week is observed as a holiday, viz., Friday, which is the Mohammedan Sunday; no more is done on that day than is absolutely necessary. The men, according to the Koran, should attend their mosque on that morning, so there are no visiting surgeons or operations except in emergencies.

The doctors' visits and bedside lectures are much the same as at home. Beside the directing spirit of the whole hospital, Dr. Milton, there is an English doctor at the head of one half of every

department, viz., an Arab and English physician, an Arab and an English surgeon, and an Arab and English oculist, each having his own set of students, who come in turn under the tuition of each one.

When patients die they are handed over to a sheik without any of the sad preparations gone through at home. No Mohammedan will touch the body, so the nurse simply covers it, and it is taken to the mortuary. Here the sheik performs certain rites according to their religion, with which no Christian is allowed to interfere.

There are five male surgical wards, of about twenty beds each, and the same number of male medical. About sixty beds for skin disease among men, and the same number for eye disease, while the Harem accommodates between eighty and ninety, with one separate ward for special cases and one for difficult midwifery.

Each section has its own little kitchen and stove for making beef tea, poultices, etc., its lavatory, and small store of linen for immediate use.

The bulk of the linen is kept by a German woman, who is also at the head of the laundry,

and she manages it quite as well and with almost the same appliances as in England.

The drugs are also under German management, and the dispensary and laboratory are worth inspection, for they have all the latest improvements. Every thing for hospital use is manufactured on the premises, as well as all the disinfectants for Cairo, which is accomplished by means of a large sterilizing machine.

Here also during the summer the milk goes through another and a different process of sterilizing to keep it sweet. All the carpentering is done by their own native staff of carpenters, who turn out beautiful pieces of work.

The superintending sister has charge also of the Government foundlings, who are put out to nurse at the public expense, and are inspected by her at the hospital two or three times a week.

Most of these children are eventually adopted. Some of the girls by the ladies of the wealthy Harems, and some of the boys are apprenticed.

If this hospital stood alone as a result of the English occupation in Cairo, we ought to be proud and thankful, for it is impossible to say how far and wide its blessings extend.

A STORY OF WAITING.

CHAPTER IV.

NOW I understood why, and for whom, the room I had gone into on the evening of my arrival was always kept ready. Mr. Donaldson had been persuaded from the very time when his son left his home that one day he would return to it; and that he might never come as a stranger or as one unlooked for, it was always in a condition to receive him. The servants regarded this morose as an eccentricity of their master, who did many things which seemed to them unaccountable, and they had come now to dust and attend to the apartment which none ever occupied, as a matter of course. It seemed to me sufficiently touching that this should have gone on for fifteen years, and I could not refrain from creeping softly into the guest chamber now and then, and kneeling down by the empty bed, asking that my dear master might have the happiness before long of welcoming his son, repentant, under his roof.

I had not known till the day on which I heard of this life-sorrow of his that Mr. Donaldson had ever been married. For some reason I had taken it for granted that he was a bachelor. I never heard his wife spoken of, nor did I see any portrait of her. It was only a few years ago, and from people who were comparative strangers to me, though not to the Donaldsons, that I learned anything about her. She was young when she married, frivolous, utterly soulless, but very beautiful. The marriage had been the great mistake of Mr. Donaldson's life, but, however disappointed he was, he did not suffer her to be unhappy. Perhaps he might never have become the man he was if he had not been disillusioned.

The earthly love failing, he sought and found consolation in the heavenly. Seven years after the birth of their son the wife died; but the boy had her nature, and inherited tastes, undeveloped in her, were in him strong enough to conquer even the training he received in his home; or if not to conquer it yet to grow so luxuriantly as to temporarily stifle it.

For some time after the receipt of Babbie's letter and the visit to the slum, I lived in a curious mental state, depression alternating with exaltation, and heart-weariness struggling with soul development. While I was very sad because I could not be happy in the way I chose, I was yet conscious that within me something was struggling for birth which could lead me to a blessedness better than mere joy. In my hitherto satisfying life I had never had occasion to think very deeply, and though I had read many books which are usually considered liable to "make one think," yet no external appeal to the brain has the awful, the compelling force, of a call from one's inner consciousness. Here I sat amid the ruins of the past, my idols shattered and the air still darkened with the dust which was raised by their fall, yet I felt that if I could gather strength to rise up and grope my way out I should presently come into a great light, and following that light be led upward, purified and strengthened at every step, till at length I should be merged in the light itself. And even as I thought about it with longing I cast my eyes again upon the vision of the grief-filled, passionate creature whose falling hair was drenched in tears as it touched her face,

while around her were the fragments of that which she had worshipped, and it seemed that she could not cease to gaze upon them, and arise and leave them. For we who love grow to love even the sorrow which love has caused, and cannot part with it, for grief, as a greater woman than I has said, is love and grief. And so it was that even while I was calling upon God to lead me to the higher life, to let me into the fellowship of those who die to self and thus escape from death, to make me heavenly-minded and purge me from human passions, I would suddenly come down to earth with a rush, pulled back by some remembered word, or glance, or feeling, and fling myself face downward and sob, or kneel still with eyes fixed on vacancy and a mind given up to dreary and profitless musings on the "might have been."

Yet I could not live with the Donaldsons and not believe in the reality of religion. And it seems to me, it has always seemed, that it is impossible to be permanently unhappy about anything but sin if one is convinced that God is the ruler of earth as well as heaven, and we but pilgrims to an eternity of blessedness. "Thy will be done," we say daily. But how do we say it? Some with tears, some grudgingly, some wearily—how few joyfully! Yet if we believe, if we are sure, *sure* that He who orders or permits our destinies is all love and righteousness, if we are sure that we can make a ladder of our troubles, each one of which is a rung to help us climb higher up and enable us to see over the wall which separates us from the fair and pleasant pasture-lands, if we are sure that we shall hear our Father say "well done" to us when we have been brave and strong and faithful, why can't we endure for a little while? why can't we say triumphantly, though our hands are locked together in pain, "Thy will be done, though I suffer; Thy will be done, though I die; Thy will be done because it is mine. I have no other!"

I think there is only one answer. Even as I write I can hear as it were a voice, the yearning tenderness of which is in itself a rebuke:

"O, foolish men, and slow of heart to believe."

And yet again:

"Thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

And I know that it is our "doubt," our "little faith" which makes us powerless; yet that Voice is speaking to us as It spoke to Peter, that Hand is stretched forth to us and holds us, when we sink in the raging sea and cry "Lord, save me;" but we are not spiritual enough to see or hear, and so we weep because we are alone.

Alone! we are never alone. It is more possible to escape from ourselves than to escape from God.

I received in due course an invitation to Arthur's wedding. When the dainty card arrived I tore it across and wrote a formal note of refusal. Then I put on my hat and went out to the post myself in haste to be rid of the whole business. At the corner of Harewood Square I nearly ran against Mr. Donaldson, who was standing in conversation with an old woman.

"Why such hot haste?" he enquired smiling. I stopped.

"Oh," I said, "when one has something disagreeable to do it is best to get it over."

"Can't you shift it on to me?" with a glance at my perturbed face.

I shook my head.

Yet the mere sight of him seemed to have cooled my impatience, for I stood and waited for him while he finished his talk with the beggar and sent her off, which he quickly did.

"If you are not going to run all the way, I should like to come with you."

"I wish you would," I said, and we set off together.

"You must be very pre-occupied," he remarked after a few minutes.

"Why?"

"Because you have refrained from your usual question."

I laughed.

It had come to be a small joke between us that I never met him with any human being without saying afterwards, "Who is he?" And this was partly because I have always found people interesting and partly because Mr. Donaldson had a way of discovering and imparting facts about everyone he came across which made them more so. He knew the love stories of toothless old women in the workhouse, the mental struggles of dull-looking men whom one would not have credited with minds at all, the early history of wretched broken-down individuals who had known better days, the buried romances in the dreary lives and the unsuspected burdens in the happy ones. As a *raconteur* he was delightful, so it was only natural that I should be always eager for an entertainment in which he was invariably willing to indulge me.

"Who is she?" said I then.

"Oh, I shan't tell you now. People don't want to be told stories when their minds are filled with other things."

"Oh yes, they do. At any rate, it serves to divert them."

"Here is the post-office. Don't you want to drop your letter in the box?"

He held out his hand for it. Obeying a curious impulse, I withheld the note.

"No," said I, with a laugh that sounded slightly hysterical, "I think I won't—just yet."

"Very well. Now, which way are you going for the disagreeable business you were speaking of? You were anxious to get that over."

"Oh," I said, blushing hotly, "never mind about that." Then, as I met his slightly quizzical gaze, "It was the letter."

"Oh!"

"I know I shall have to tell you all about it." I said desperately.

"Why 'have to'?"

"When I am with you," I said simply, "it seems the only thing to do."

And forthwith I told him that I had just received an invitation to the wedding of the girl who had taken the place which by rights belonged to me.

He listened sympathetically.

"Poor child," he said, "and so this," touching the letter, "is the acceptance."

"No, indeed!" I exclaimed, "I am certainly not going. I have refused. You *must* think me wanting in pride if you imagine for a minute I should do anything else."

"Well," he said quietly, "perhaps I did give you credit for it."

I drew myself up quickly. I was angry. And yet, though his point of view in most matters was so utterly different from what is usually considered the sensible one, when I was with him I could not help seeing with his eyes.

"You expect too much of me, Mr. Donaldson," I said with the dignity of one who feels wronged.

"Yet I don't find you particularly disappointing," he responded cheerfully.

The tears rose to my eyes.

"Don't tell me I ought to go," I said turning to him, "I know if you do I shall obey you. But what good can it do? I should be wretched."

"I am not cruel enough to want you to be wretched, my dear. And I certainly shall not try to persuade you. Only it seems such a splendid opportunity for showing your friend that you are generous and forgiving. It would make him happy to know you were there. I don't suppose because he marries another woman he undervalues your friendship."

I shrugged my shoulders.

"I don't think he values it much," I said indistinctly, "we are strangers now."

"That seems a pity. What does dear old Shakespeare say?"

Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel.

"Ah, I could quote a greater than Shakespeare to you on the duty of loving even those friends who have wounded you."

"Sir," I said sorrowfully, "you ask impossibilities of me."

"Hard tasks, but not impossibilities, my dear. But after all, do what seems best to you. Let us talk now of something else."

So I went home with the unposted letter, and that night I fought a battle with myself, and came off victorious. For, reading in the little brown Thomas-à-Kempis, which Babbie had given me, I found these words and gained great strength and comfort from them, being as I was desirous of the better life and faintly discerning that through my sorrow I might attain to it through faith in Christ, and in this way:

"My son, the more thou canst go out of thyself, so much the more wilt thou be able to enter into Me.

"As to desire, no outward thing produceth inward peace, so the forsaking of ourselves inwardly, joineth us unto God.

"I will have thee learn perfect resignation of thyself to My will, without contradiction or complaint. Follow thou Me: I am the way, the truth, and the life. Without the way there is no going; without the truth, there is no knowing; without the life, there is no living. I am the way, which thou oughtest to follow: the truth

which thou oughtest to trust; the life which thou oughtest to hope for.

"If thou remain in My way, thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall make thee free and thou shalt lay hold on eternal life.

"If thou wilt be My disciple, deny thyself utterly."

I went to my desk and wrote a letter to Arthur's fiancée, and I sent it next day with a lovely little piece of statuary which was a far more valuable present than I should have given her if I had not been trying very hard to purge from my heart the bitterness, the presence of which was beginning to make me feel ashamed.

And I went to the wedding.

It is true that these actions which cause us most trouble to perform are among the most joyful things for after-contemplation. Perhaps, in the same way, if in the next world we remember what we did here, our sorrows will be our greatest joys.

It seemed like a dream then, it is scarcely more dream-like now; the crowded church with the fashionably dressed people in their autumn costumes, nearly all strangers to me, Arthur's dear old father beaming with happiness, and the few familiar Devonshire faces which stirred in me a longing to be back once more for a few hours in the peaceful, lovely country, walking in the lanes with Barbara. And presently I saw Arthur, and then I trembled a little and grew cold, but I summoned up courage to watch him. He looked grave but quite happy, and there was an expression on his face which was not unfamiliar to me. I had seen it there when we had read anything particularly beautiful together, and once when we walked home late one summer evening from a picnic, we very silent, and the world silent about us. At the memory of that night I crushed my hands on my breast to keep back the tide of feeling, realising for the first time in its full bitterness that I must renounce not only my future but my past.

It may be that he read the renunciation in my eyes when his at length met them. I do not know; but as the light leapt into his I could not help being glad to know that though I had lost a lover I had still a friend.

And friendship after all is not an enemy to love. Are we wise in rejecting it because it is not love? It is a poor substitute we say, but it unites even as love unites. "In friendship," says Emerson, "there must be very two before there can be very one." We then were henceforth "very two" but we were not separated. We were able to become "very one" by my making his interests my own. The love of one suffices to make a union. "He is my friend," I thought. "I may then love him and all that is his, and most, that which is dearest to him, and so, God helping me, I will love his wife."

Scarcely had I thus resolved in my heart when she came. I could barely catch a glimpse of her face as she passed, veiled and with downcast eyes, her bridesmaids behind her; but I saw that she was slight and fragile and dainty to look upon, and that a man might be pardoned for loving her.

Dream-like was the service, the music; dream-like the sight of those two standing side by side, and then of their coming down the church husband and wife.

Not so long before, had I dreamed such a thing I should have awakened from very anguish, yet now I was calm, peaceful, scarcely conscious of my loneliness, so was I strengthened to endure. I do not think any of the people could have guessed that the girl at whom after the service so many cast glances of admiration was much less indifferent than themselves to what had taken place. Perhaps they might have thought me grave, somewhat more impressed by the solemnity of the place and the occasion than wedding guests usually are. Nothing else. Those who were very happy, his mother, her's, the little bride herself, shed tears, but not I. Yet though I was far from being happy, I was not exactly unhappy. And as I prayed that to neither of those two would come disillusionment, but that each might find in the other what was needful for their well-being, I had a foretaste of the blessedness of those who "renounce all," and for a little, being emptied of self, walked in the light of God's presence.

I drove back in the same carriage as some of the Gordon's cousins. We knew each other fairly well, for the girls had often stayed at the vicarage. They were very homely and unaffected and warm-hearted. I know they had always considered Arthur's marriage with me a foregone conclusion, because they had teased me about him when we were little more than children. And perhaps it was to spare my feelings, in case I cared, that during the short drive to the house they talked of other things than the wedding. But I was glad when later on I overheard the eldest girl say to her mother, as I sat near them: "I think there was never anything serious between Mary Molyneux and Arthur. If she cared I don't suppose she would have come." And Mrs. Gordon answered: "A girl like that can soon console herself in any case."

I smiled. Perhaps I should, but not in the way she meant. In all my life I have only loved one man, and it has been a grief rather than a joy to me that there have been so many who have loved me in vain. Yet I may say now, "I have consoled myself," with truth.

"Molly," said a voice behind me.

I turned and saw Arthur, and held out my hand.

"Molly," he said again.

I had not heard the familiar name since I had been in London. It sounded good to my ears. "It was kind of you to come to day. I should not have felt my wedding was perfect if you had not been here. Will you—will you let me introduce my wife to you?"

He hesitated a little over the last sentence.

"I want to know her," I said quickly. "She is very pretty, Arthur."

"You think so?" He looked at me gratefully. "I hope—you will like her," he added. Then he took me up to her.

"Evelyn," he said, "this is Miss Molyneux, Barbara's sister, you know, of whom you have so often heard me speak."

"Babbie wrote to me about you," I said.

She raised two shy, gentle eyes to mine. I wondered if she had heard from any one a hint that Arthur had been reckoned my lover, for there was inquiry, almost anxiety in them.

I am not always a good actress, and women cannot deceive each other as they deceive men; still less can one woman who loves deceive another who loves likewise. So, perhaps, she guessed, but if she did she read in my face that my secret need never stand between us, and that she need have no fear of me, because I had no jealousy of her.

Arthur, standing by, regarding us, saw nothing of the little drama which was being played out in a few seconds. What he did see was only the conclusion, and it pleased him.

The pretty bride drew me down and kissed me.

"We must be friends," she said, blushing. "I am not clever or brilliant as they say you are, but perhaps you will like me a little, because my husband" (she said it with a shy pleasure) "is so fond of you."

And then we stood together for a few minutes and talked of Barbara. Oh, how I wanted her just then!

And afterwards I went back to Blandford Square, and told Miss Janet all about the wedding, and what people had worn, and how the bride looked, till Mr. Donaldson came in and interrupted us.

I could see he was pleased with me, for he gave me a look and handshake that meant a great deal.

"And the prettiest guest," he said, continuing my recital for me, "was a young lady from the country, with a complexion which was enough to drive any painted belle distracted, and a perfectly glorious figure. And she wore"—he scanned me critically—"a charming grey dress, Janet, and grey furs as light as mist, and a grey hat which is a picture in itself. And everybody admired her."

I made for the door, saying, if the costume were so effective as to produce these ravings from him I must go and change it in order to preserve it for a future occasion. He held open the door for me, whispering as I passed:

"Well done, my brave little friend."

And, if when I had taken off my wedding finery, I sat down and cried for an hour, the tears were not all called forth by one emotion. For I had that day learnt to understand something of the Divine Master's words: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The reaction came, as was inevitable, and yet when I slipped into the guest-chamber and added the flowers I had worn to those in the china bowl, the peace was still in my heart.

"Have patience, have patience," the room seemed to say. "For fifteen years flowers have bloomed and faded here, yet those who wait have not lost hope. Have patience till your life is ended. For you shall learn by waiting."

How little I thought that before the blossoms I placed there had perished, Mr. Donaldson's waiting-time would be drawing to an end!

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND THOUGHT IN SWITZERLAND.

I.

"SMALL, but not of yesterday, the result of the gradual labour of centuries, awakening jealousy in none, and inspiring respect in all, narrowly circumscribed as to surface, and yet possessing an enormous extent of internal frontiers, and as many centres of light and intelligence as there are regions—such is the Switzerland we know, love, and purpose to defend." This true description of the country by one of its devoted sons only too forcibly suggests the difficulty of attempting to portray in a few pages the state of religion in its twenty-two cantons.

The population, which, in 1860, was a little over two and a half millions, is now close upon three millions. This increase is made up of about 250,000 Protestants and 170,000 Roman Catholics. The two bodies at present stand thus: 1,800,000 of the former, and 1,200,000 of the latter. It might perhaps be expected from the predominance of Romanism in France, and of Protestantism in Germany, that the French portion of Switzerland would go with France in religion, and the German with Germany; in fact, it is just the reverse. Protestantism has many representatives in German Switzerland—in the cantons of Zurich, Berne, and Bale, but its power is most apparent in the French-speaking cantons of Neuchâtel, Vaud, and Geneva. The explanation of this fact carries us back to the Reformation, where Zwingli in Zurich, Calvin in Geneva, and Farel in Neuchâtel, were the means of establishing Protestantism in their respective districts. Lucerne, the Forest Cantons, and other parts such as the Tessin and the Valais, never accepted to any appreciable extent the new doctrines, and their endeavour has always been to prevent the spread of Protestantism within their borders. Even as late as 1845 a citizen of Lucerne was destitute of all political privileges if he were a Protestant. It used to be said that, apart from the shrines to be seen at the roadside, the outward aspect of things, the neglected state of the country, and the wretched condition of the people, indicated the prevalence of Romanism in a canton. And, certainly, in point of literary culture and general progressiveness, the Roman Catholic districts lag behind the others; but there has been so general an advance in outward prosperity and material well-being, that it is questionable whether the external difference is very marked.

But how, it may be asked, do the two churches stand in relation to each other? Is there, as in Germany, a sort of tacit agreement to live quietly side by side, each recognising the other, if not as a part of the church of Christ, yet as a form of religion having its rightful position in the country?

Very few, if any, direct attempts at proselytism are made on either side; still, it must not be con-

cluded from this that either party is inactive. We shall have to refer by-and-by to the growing zeal of the evangelical section of the Protestant Church. For the moment we desire to call attention to the attitude of the Romish Church. Its history in Switzerland during the last fifty years has been a chequered one. In 1847 it met with severe and deserved defeat in its attempt to establish a separate League (*Sonderbund*) with a view to defend itself against the progress of what it called liberal ideas. From that time forward it ceased to be openly and directly under the direction of the Jesuit party. In 1848, it was decreed that every canton was free to take measures for checking the encroachments of the ecclesiastical authorities, that the Jesuits should not be allowed any action in school or church, that the other orders should be suppressed if their proceedings were found to be dangerous to the state, and that no bishopric could be established without authority from the Confederation.

These and other measures, generally spoken of as the *Kulturkampf*, have served, as in Germany, to rouse the Romish Church to greater activity; and there are some Protestants who view the present position and attitude of Romanism in Switzerland with lively apprehension. There is now a Roman Catholic university at Freiburg under the direction of the Dominicans. In the canton of Geneva the priests are supported by the voluntary contributions of their people (with perhaps some aid from without); and eighteen new churches have been or are being built, called "chapels of the persecution," because most of the old buildings have been handed over to the Liberal (Old) Catholics. In Zurich, an essentially Protestant city, or supposed to be such, several large Romish social and benevolent institutions have been formed. These and other signs of a forward movement show that Rome is determined at least to hold its own in the Swiss Republic; and, with the vast resources which it can always command, it is likely, for the present, at least, to succeed. That, as many fear, it will gradually gain ground does not appear likely. Taking Switzerland as a whole, the census returns do not point in that direction, while in Geneva, between 1880 and 1890, the increase in the number of Romanists was less than that of the Protestants. In the country districts there was an increase, but in the city a considerable decrease (in 1880, 51,557 Romanists, 48,356 Protestants; in 1890, 52,819 Romanists and 51,669 Protestants).

Turning to the Protestant Church, we are met at the outset by the difficulty that it wears a different complexion in different parts of the land, while each canton has its own separate church organisation with its peculiar rules and ordinances. National Protestant churches exist in



FALL OF THE AAR AT HANDECK IN THE BERNESE OBERLAND.

fifteen of the twenty-two cantons, or parts of cantons, and each has, more or less, the form and constitution adopted at the period of the Reformation. All may be classed under the general title of Reformed, as distinguished from Lutheran churches, the doctrines peculiar to Lutheranism never having penetrated into Switzerland. But under this general title of Reformed are comprised three divisions,—the Zwinglian, the Calvinistic, and the Ecolampadian,—and each bears, more or less, traces of the doctrine and ecclesiastical predilections of the great men from whom these three systems are named. To the Zwinglian division belong Zurich, Glarus, Schaffhausen, and the Protestant districts of St. Gall, Thurgau, Appenzell (outer Rhodes) and the Grisons. The churches here are characterised—we speak of their written constitution rather than of the teaching of their pastors—by sobriety of doctrine, simplicity of worship, and full acceptance of the principle of a State Church. The Calvinistic section includes Geneva and Neuchâtel, also Vaud and the Protestant part of Berne, and gives evidence of a deeper investigation of doctrine, and of less dependence on the civil magistrate. The Ecolampadian section is very limited, embracing only Bâle (*ville et campagne*) and retains to this day the form imparted to it by its founder.

Farel was emphatically the reformer of Geneva and Neuchâtel, as Viret was of Vaud, but they were heralds of the truth rather than framers of church-systems. Their work was a grand and glorious one, and will ever be remembered with gratitude; but they had not the organising power of Calvin, and so their names are not connected with any of the church-systems which have been handed down from Reformation-times.

We shall not attempt to point out the varying forms of church-order and discipline that characterise the fifteen National churches. It may be of interest, however, to dwell for a moment on the Reformed Church in the Grisons, the only one that is not directly supported by the state. It has 52,842 adherents, and is divided into nine sections or colloquies, and one hundred and seventeen parishes. In sixty of these parishes the service is conducted in German, in forty-seven in Romansch, and in nine in Italian. These were the figures in 1856 as given by Finsler, in his *Kirchliche Statistik der Reformirten Schweiz*, but as German is now taught in all its schools, the Romansch is gradually becoming a dead language, and it may be that the number of parishes in which it is preached is, at present, somewhat less. This canton is the largest, but the least populated of all—only thirteen inhabitants to the square kilometre—and yet, as we have seen, there are one hundred and seventeen parishes. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that eighty-eight, or three-fourths of the whole number, have less than five hundred parishioners each. Yet this is the canton in which the State leaves the task of supporting the clergy to be performed by the people. In these circumstances, how are the clergy paid? According to Finsler, the highest livings, and these only in two places, amount to 68*l.* per annum, and the lowest to

1*l.* 4*s.* (30 francs).¹ In the latter case service is only occasionally conducted, while in other parishes, where not more than 20*l.* is raised, one pastor serves two or three, and thus is just able to live, all the parishes, except twenty-three, having modest manse at the disposal of the clergy. The position of pastor in the Grisons is not, therefore, a very enviable one, but still we doubt not that many a worthy man of God faithfully discharges his duties, making the best of the means at his disposal, and not envying the wealthy invalids from England and other lands who now, in the winter months, flock to their valleys—the Lower and Upper Engadine—and who live their luxurious lives with no more knowledge of these humble clergy around them than of the man in the moon.²

Passing from the question of church forms, we come to the far more important one of evangelical truth and practical religion. And here at the outset we must say that great changes have come over the Protestant churches of Switzerland during the last thirty or forty years. How great the changes have been may be gathered from the statements made by representatives of Switzerland at the great Evangelical Alliance gatherings in Paris in 1855, and in Copenhagen in 1884.

In 1855 Pastor Güder of Berne said: "As to theology, the old rationalism has but few disciples among the pastors of our churches, and the partisans of the modern speculative rationalism of the school of Hegel are not many. The large majority of young ministers embrace the modern theology of Neander, Julius Müller, and Nitzsch; and the number of old ministers who join their ranks is continually increasing." He referred, it is true, to the efforts of Radicalism, especially between 1845 and 1850, not only to destroy the principles on which the State was founded, but also to discredit the clergy and undermine the influence of the Church. He expressed his belief, however, that this downward movement was declining.

In 1884, Professor Oettli, also from Berne, said that the mark of unity among the churches was then the democratic principle, which had abolished the necessity of subscription to creeds, set aside the authority of Holy Writ, and discredited the importance of the sacraments. "Each pastor is a law to himself, and each community may follow that which is right in its own eyes. What we formerly regarded as churches exist no longer. We have instead free societies, with the professed object of developing and unfolding the religious sentiment in the direction of the utmost

¹ In the canton of Berne the highest salary is 88*l.*, and the lowest 40*l.*

² It is somewhat remarkable that as English Christians have been careful to provide themselves with religious services in one hundred different places in Switzerland, in the summer months, and as some are now selecting Switzerland as a land in which to meet and discuss subjects pertaining to the welfare of English churches, they should be so indifferent to the religious condition of the people among whom for a brief season they sojourn. The utmost that many seem to know about the people in whose valleys and on whose mountains they have found physical, intellectual, and it may be spiritual refreshment, is that some of them are Protestants and others Roman Catholics.

individual freedom, and with no higher aim than the general culture of the community."

Whence this startling change in the course of thirty years? Clearly Pastor Güder was too optimistic in supposing that the progress of "radicalism" had been stayed. The leaven was still working, and the time came when the people determined to exercise their power and bring down the churches, as state institutions, to the democratic level. No question of religious belief was henceforth to hamper them in their choice of a pastor, or the pastor in the exercise of his ministry. One is inclined, indeed, to ask, was not the secret wish of these levellers to make the church so ridiculous in the eyes of the nation as to create a desire for its abolition? In a Zurich paper, published some twenty years since, we read, "Indifference in regard to the church is increasing from day to day. The first duty of the state is to propagate this indifference. We are approaching the end towards which the whole development of our intellectual life is tending—the dissolution and disappearance of all churches."¹

The advance of a godless democracy is not, however, the only cause of the illogical, and we might add, degraded position of the national churches. About 1853, there arose in Zurich a Reformist school, which is responsible for much of the loosening of confessional bonds. Following the lead of Baur and the Tübingen lights, this school proclaimed a gospel (if such a doctrine may be designated by such a name) which is "The non-miraculous message of a Kingdom of God on earth, grounded on our filial relation to God, which was first revealed by Jesus." With them sin is only a necessary process in the evolution of good, and the doctrine of Redemption a psychological process of self-reconciliation. This party displayed great activity and very conspicuous ability for many years. Under the leadership of Professor Biedermann and Pastor Lang, editor of the *Zeitstimmen* (Voices of the Time) it rallied to the standard a large proportion of the younger clergy in the German-speaking cantons.

One thing it has accomplished pretty effectually. It has emptied many of the churches, and having lost its two chief leaders, and with them its first *élan*, it is no longer the dominant power in the Church. One of its leaders, indeed, Pastor Altherr of Bâle, said at a conference of the party held at Herisau in 1890: "Twenty years ago I entered in full sail on the current then rising in favour of extra biblical instruction. I then welcomed all so-called nonconfessional teaching. I thought I saw in it signs of a new shore where we might anchor. But my illusions were soon dispelled, and I have now for a long time past gone back to my old Bible," a confession which, though it does not mean all that some would suppose, is nevertheless worthy of being noticed.

¹ There are some districts, however, where the changes made were intended to popularise rather than destroy Christianity. In some of the churches whose constitution is most defective, there are conservative parishes, and where Christianity is a living power.

The Mediation school, or the disciples of Neander, as Pastor Güder called them, still exists, and numbers in its ranks many able men in the German pulpits of Switzerland. It serves as a link between the two extremes, the Orthodox and the Reformists, and may be said to have the pre-eminence in most of the cantons. From its ranks are drawn the Antistes (bishops), deans and presidents of synods and consistories.

What, now, has been the course pursued by the adherents of evangelical Christianity while church-bonds have been loosened, and the pulpits thrown open for the proclamation of any and every kind of doctrine? Powerless to stay the democratic iconoclasts, as we might term the destroyers of creeds and their friends and allies, the Reformists, have they separated *en masse* and formed Free Churches, or have they contented themselves with bewailing the downward course of events? Let us see:

There are Free Churches in Switzerland (apart from those of the Methodists, Baptists and others whose existence is mainly due to the action of foreign associations). The first to be formed was that of Geneva, where a separation from the national church began as the result of the revival of 1813 and following years, and with which the names of Malan, Guers, Robert Haldane, and others are inseparably connected. At length, in 1848, a constitution was framed, and what is now called the Free Church was established. Then in 1845 came the well-known movement in Vaud, where the unwarrantable interference of the state with the church led to the secession of the majority of the national clergy and the formation of the Free Church. But these movements were both anterior to the period now under consideration.

In 1868 an attempt was made by several French pastors to obtain a footing for their "liberal" or antisupernatural theology in the Canton of Neuchâtel. It met with some success at the time, but its effects were most apparent in 1873, when it was proposed to revolutionise the constitution of the national church. The measure laid before the grand council was strongly opposed, but eventually became law. Such an opening of the church to all and every kind of doctrine, was so manifest an attempt to humble it, and destroy its true character, that a large number of the clergy and professors, including the now venerable Professor F. Godet, withdrew and formed the independent church of Neuchâtel. In this movement they were heartily supported by large numbers of the earnest Christian people, and at the present day the institutions of the church are maintained in full vigour, and it cannot be doubted that as in Geneva and Vaud, so in Neuchâtel, the existence of the Free Churches has done not a little to quicken the activity and stimulate the zeal of the believing pastors and members of the national churches.

But no such movement has arisen in German Switzerland. The situation here is very different. Zwingli regarded the people of a country that has accepted Christianity as a Church, and his notion is still deeply-rooted in the popular mind.

Again there are not, except perhaps in Bâle, many wealthy families who, if churches were formed, could do much to support them. The evangelicals have, however, sought to meet their own spiritual needs and to promote their views among their fellow-citizens by the formation of Evangelical societies, and subsequently of a National Evangelical Union (*Union Nationale Ecclésiastique*). This latter was started in 1871, and gradually branch unions have sprung up in most of the Protestant cantons, even where evangelical societies were already in existence. One of the last to be formed was that of Appenzell (Outer Rhodes) where the action of the Reformist party in compelling a useful and popular minister to leave Herisau quickened the zeal and determination of the evangelicals. The spread of sound Christian literature and the formation of lending libraries in districts where Reformist teaching abounds is one of the chief objects pursued by the Union. Services are also established for the benefit of persons who otherwise would have no spiritual instruction within their reach. In Bâle a curate (*Hilfsprediger*) works in connection with an orthodox pastor, but he is not allowed by the Reformist party to preach in any of the churches. At the Berne Faculty of Theology a *privat-docent* (extraordinary professor) is maintained for the benefit of orthodox students. In Vaud popular lectures on religious and ecclesiastical topics are organised every winter, while the Geneva branch has developed a very large amount of activity. Services in a small room of the *Salle de la Réformation*, Bible readings in country places, instruction for the young, and almost every known kind of religious help are used for the purpose of supplying the needs of the members of the national church, many of whose pastors are even now men of advanced liberal ideas.

It would be not a little amusing, were not the subject so serious, to narrate the various phases of the discussions which have agitated the Protestant churches in reference to baptism and confirmation. In the democratised, creedless churches of Switzerland, the question has been debated over and over again, whether baptism was an indispensable preliminary to confirmation. Sometimes it has been decided in one way and sometimes in another. In Bâle, we believe, matters stand thus; in principle baptism is required, in practice it may be dispensed with. The whole course of these discussions shows how utterly the true idea of a church has been lost sight of, how the clergy are dealt with as mere instruments to subserve the pleasure of synods and cantonal governments, irrespective of any question of Divine teaching and Christian duty.

In some parishes the evangelical minority have asked for some concession to their needs. Thus, several years since, in the parish of the St. Esprit in Berne, over four hundred and fifty evangelicals petitioned the council, composed of Reformists, to allow them the use of the church on one Sunday morning in the month, and the right to call a preacher of their views to minister to them. Also they desired to celebrate the Lord's Supper among themselves once a quarter. After in-

terminable discussions and delays, and finding that a Reformist council would never allow the pastor they desired—although a regular minister of the Bernese Church—to ascend the pulpit of their church, nor any of the parishioners to receive the communion, except at the hands of one of the regular pastors—men whose doctrine is in direct opposition to that of Jesus Christ—the Evangelical Society was approached, and the use of their chapel was granted, and their agent, Pastor Baumgartner, was charged to conduct a service every Sunday morning.

This case of the evangelical minority in Berne is a specimen of the manner in which the liberal party, as they call themselves, deal with the rights of minorities. In a national church all parties have surely some right to be supplied with religious instruction. Sometimes this has been acknowledged, as in the election now and again of orthodox ministers in Geneva. But cases of an opposite character are frequent. When Professor Riggensbach, of the University of Bâle, died in 1890, it was fully expected that his successor would be a man of the same school of theology, and that Professor Schlatter, a young man of acknowledged ability, who had taught in Berne and was at the time professor at Greifswald, would be chosen. A large majority of the students petitioned in his favour, while the orthodox party were unanimous in desiring his appointment. Moreover, it was felt that if Bâle was to maintain its pre-eminence over Berne and Zurich in the number of its students, Professor Schlatter should be associated with the other extraordinary Professors, Messrs. d'Orelli, Kirn and B. Riggensbach, to whose distinguished ability and orthodox views the theological section of the Bâle Faculty owes its present position. But no; the position was given by the authorities to Dr. Bolliger of the Reformist party. In Zurich, on the other hand, Professor Biedermann's successor was Professor Haering, a man of a very different stamp, who has since succeeded the late Professor Ritschl in Göttingen. He has been followed by Professor G. von Schulthess-Rechberg, a decided evangelical.



CONTENTMENT.—Seneca and Lucretius, and other Pagan philosophers, were never tired of singing its praises, and Socrates, when he walked through the streets of Athens, and saw around him the evidences of wealth, art, and culture, exclaimed, "How many things there are which I can do without!" Many a man has been content without being godly, but the highest character of all is that of "godliness with contentment" (1 Tim. vi. 6).

EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED.—The mistress who has no care for her servants, except to get as much work out of them as she can; who gives them no counsel, no sympathy, and no care; the employer who has no consideration for those who work for him, and no thought for their well-being,—these, and all like them, are failing of their duty and responsibility in the sight of God; and their sin is the greater in proportion to the weakness of those dependent upon them; and in all such doings you will understand where Paul would apply his teaching in our day. *Alfred Rowland, on the Epistle to Timothy.*

THE SWEARER'S PRAYER.

IN the early years of the Religious Tract Society, there was a little four-page tract on its catalogue, entitled "The Swearer's Prayer." When, or by whom it was written, or when it was withdrawn from circulation, I do not know, but it had a very large circulation, and was on many occasions of great usefulness. In the "Jubilee Memorial" of the Society, published in 1850, Mr. William Jones, then the acting secretary, gave a list, in an appendix, of the "total issues of tracts which have obtained large circulation." In this list about fifty tracts are named as having been published before 1827, and the circulation of the Swearer's Prayer is reported then as 1,704,589; more than double as many as of any other tract, although there are among them many familiar and popular old friends; such as "The Way to Heaven," "Poor Joseph," the "Dairyman's Daughter," "James Covey," "Two Ends and Two Ways," and "Christ the only Refuge." Of these and many others, hundreds of thousands were circulated, but none of them approaching the issue of "The Swearer's Prayer," of which about two millions must have been circulated.

The title of the tract is certainly striking, and may have arrested the attention of many. Having with some difficulty recovered a copy, I find the matter to be very plain and simple, as will be seen from its opening words: "What! a swearer pray! Yes, swearer, whether thou thinkest so or not, each of thine oaths is a prayer—an appeal to the holy and almighty God, whose name thou darest so impiously to take into thy lips." And then the tract proceeds to show that the oath is really a short prayer that a soul should be deprived of eternal happiness or plunged into eternal misery. After a short exposition of the meaning of the oath, some cases are quoted, where the prayer was answered in a fearful manner. In several instances, immediate death followed the utterance of the oath; and these are not reported from mere rumour, but cited from authentic records; as in the case of a man upon whom sudden death fell while swearing, and a coroner's jury returned the verdict—"died from the judgment of God."

We can also see in perusing the tract, why it was very properly withdrawn from circulation. It is not always seemly to attribute events in human life to the "judgment of God," even when fearful punishment is seen to follow daring impiety. Some of the instances, moreover, refer to conditions which have passed away, as in the account of a man who was struck dead while uttering horrid imprecations at a cock-fighting match. The tract had become "out of date," so to speak; but, although swearing, like drunkenness, is less obtrusive than formerly in some classes of society, there is still much need of a solemn warning against thoughtless and profane oaths, and it might have been well to prepare a new and seasonable tract, so as to keep so striking a title on the catalogue.

In some of the old Reports of the Society, remarkable instances are given of the influence exerted by the distribution of this as of other publications. One of these instances was afterwards republished in a book of "Tract Anecdotes," which is also now out of print. My present object is to tell a true story not there reported, but of which there is an authentic record.

It was in "the old coaching days," as long ago as 1815, that a gentleman having travelled from Oxford to London, alighted, one rainy, gloomy November evening, at Hatchett's Hotel, Piccadilly. He asked the office porter, or the "boots," to call a hackney-coach, for there were no cabs in those days. The only coach on the stand was soon at the door, and when he had seated himself, and the luggage was placed, the coachman got the address where he was to drive, at Camberwell, where the gentleman then resided. On hearing the direction repeated by the porter, the coachman declared, with fearful oaths, that he would not go there. He lived at Shoreditch, he said, and his horses had been out all day, and could not go so far as Camberwell. The driver was remonstrated with, but in vain, and his language, became, if possible, more violent and profane. The gentleman reminded him that he was rendering himself liable to a serious penalty for refusing, but he said that if he drove to another stand, or met with another coach disengaged, he would gladly pay him for his trouble and release him; adding, that if it were not for the luggage, he would prefer walking in the rain rather than hear such horrid words from his lips. After some delay the man drove on, and on reaching the house he demanded more than double his legal fare, which under the circumstances was given.

More than a year afterwards, the same gentleman arrived again at Hatchett's in a stage-coach from Bath, and again a hackney coach was called from the stand. He was somewhat surprised at the unusual civility of the coachman, and his readiness to assist in the proper disposal of the baggage. On hearing the porter inquire the direction, he said, "Don't trouble the gentleman, I know his house at Camberwell." On arriving at the gate he was extremely civil, and actively assisted in carrying the luggage into the house. He then asked for precisely the legal fare, and on getting it, with a little over for his civility and his help, the coachman, touching his hat, said, "I know you, sir, though you have forgotten me."

He said he had no recollection of having ever seen him before that evening.

"Oh, yes, sir," replied the coachman, "don't you remember alighting from a coach in Piccadilly about a year ago, and being driven home by a coachman who swore dreadful, and for a long time refused to move? And I told you an awful lie, sir, when I said my horses were too tired; but I didn't like the long drive to Camberwell, and then to Shoreditch where I live."

The gentleman then recollected the man, and the circumstances of that night, though they had passed from his memory till thus recalled. "But," he said, "I should not have known you again, you seem so much altered."

"I hope I am, sir," said he, "and I am sure I ought to be."

Becoming interested, the gentleman asked to what the change was owing; having first ordered some refreshment for the coachman, who said his horses would be all right for a few minutes. He then answered in nearly the following words, as far as they were remembered by those who listened.

"After I left you that night, sir, I went home, having picked up no other fare. After minding the horses, I went to take a look, as usual, inside the coach, in case there might be anything left there. I did not think then about giving anything back to the owner, except there was a reward offered, but for my own use. Well, on the seat of the coach I found two little books, and took them into the house in my hand. When my wife was cooking my bit of supper, I looked at one of the books, and the first words I saw went to my heart like an arrow. The words were 'The Swearer's Prayer.' 'Here's a go,' said I, 'what, can a swearer pray?' I took it up again, and was so curious, that I never tasted a morsel till I had read it right through. I went to bed after my supper, but was awake most of the night thinking of what I had read. As soon as it was daylight, I read the little book again, and when my wife came to breakfast, I read it out to her."

"*'Mary,'* said I, *'it's true, every word of it. Many a time I've prayed for my own damnation; but look what's here—"Repent and turn to Jesus, who died for swearers and all that are bad—"* and the poor thing cried as if her heart would break, and I could not help crying too, though it was many a day since I had shed a tear."

"*'Mary,'* said I, *'this is Sunday morning; I have not been in a church since I was a school-boy, we will go to one to-day.'* And so we did, sir; and what do you think were the words that the minister took for his text—I never can forget them, sir—*'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'* Yes, thou, if ever so bad, ever so sinful, for He came to save sinners, even the very chief."

"When we got home, my wife remembered what the words of the text were, and she borrowed a Bible from a neighbour, and we talked together about what the minister said of the blessed Saviour, who had done and suffered so much for poor sinners. If ever a man prayed in his life, I am sure I prayed that night, and God Almighty heard my prayer."

"This is all I have to tell you, sir, except to thank you from my heart, and my wife's heart, too, that you ever put that little book on the seat of my coach. If you take this oard, sir, and were ever near that direction, the neighbours will perhaps tell you how we got on, and the change made on us in the year since we first met, sir."

Happy man! He spoke with the earnestness

and simplicity of truth, and he went off with good wishes from the family at Camberwell.

It was a long time afterwards—between two and three years—that the gentleman one day found himself not far from the coachman's home in East London. The man was not in the house, but his wife and two grown-up daughters were at home, in a neat and cheerful abode. They were not surprised at the visit, for the conversation had often turned to the Camberwell adventure; and they gave grateful but respectful welcome to "the good friend of the family," as they called him. "There was a large Bible at hand, bearing plain marks of being frequently read; the *Pilgrim's Progress*; and a few little books on the table, among which I saw some copies of 'The Swearer's Prayer.' The good wife saw the smile that followed my glance at the well-known tract; and she said with much emotion, 'It was a good thought that made you put that on the coach seat!'

"She told me that her husband always had some of those in his pocket, so that he might give one to a swearer and ask him to read it, and to pray it might be as blessed to him as it has been to us—she said."

"I sat a good while pleased with all I heard and saw, the girls busy with their needle, and the mother fully sensible of the happy home they were in. 'Oh, sir,' she said as I was coming away, 'when I remember what we were, and what our home was in former days, and know the comfort we enjoy now, my heart is full of thankfulness.'"

The gentleman never saw the coachman again, at least he had not when he wrote this recollection; but whatever happened afterwards, it is pleasant to give this bit of London life, in connection with the old but now forgotten tract, "The Swearer's Prayer."

INFLUENCE OF THE GOSPEL IN THE OLD ROMAN EMPIRE.

WHILE the empire was losing its Roman characteristics, it was at the same time growing more and more Christian at heart. Under Constantine and his immediate successors the machinery of government was only just beginning to be effected by the change of the emperor's religion. Though the sovereign personally was Christian, the system remained what it had been before. Many of the high officials were still pagans, and the form and spirit of all administrative and legal business was unaltered from what it had been in the third century. It is not till forty years after Constantine's death that we find the Christian spirit fully penetrating out of the spiritual into the material sphere of life. Attempts by the State to suppress moral sin no less than legal crime begin with Theodosius I., whose crusade against sexual immorality would have been incomprehensible to even the best of the pagan emperors. The old gladiatorial shows, one of the most characteristic and repulsive features of Roman life, were abolished not long after. They survived for sixty years at Rome, though Christian Constantinople never knew them. But this was

not the work of the State, but of a single individual. One day, in A.D. 404, the games had begun, and the gladiators were about to engage, when the monk Telemachus leapt down into the arena and threw himself between the combatants, adjuring them not to slay their brethren. There was an angry scuffle, and the good monk was slain. But his death had the effect that his protests might have failed to bring about, and no gladiatorial show was ever given again.

In other provinces of social life the work of Christianity was no less marked. It put an end to the detestable practice of infanticide which pervaded the ancient world, resting on the assumption that the father had the right to decide whether or not he would rear the child he had begotten. Constantine made the State assume the charge of feeding and rearing the children of the destitute, lest their parents should be tempted to cast them forth to perish in the old fashion, and Valentinian I. in 374 assimilated infanticide to other forms of murder, and made it a capital offence.

Slavery was also profoundly affected by the teaching of the Church. The ancient world, save a few philosophers, had regarded the slave with such contempt that he was

hardly reckoned a moral being or conceived to have rights or virtues. Christianity taught that he was a man with an immortal soul, no less than his own master, and bade slaves and freemen meet on terms of perfect equality around the baptismal font and before the sacred table. It was from the first taught that the man who manumitted his slaves earned the approval of heaven, and all occasions of rejoicing, public and private, were fitly commemorated by the liberation of deserving individuals. Though slavery was not extinguished for centuries, its evils were immensely modified; Justinian's legislation shows that by his time public opinion had condemned the characteristic evils of ancient slavery; he permitted the intermarriage of slaves and free persons, stipulating only for the consent of the owner of the servile partner in the wedlock. He declared the children of such mixed marriages free, and he made the prostitution of a slave by a master a criminal offence. Hereditary slavery became almost unknown, and the institution was only kept up by the introduction of barbarian captives, heathens and enemies, whose position did not appeal so keenly to the mind of their captors.—*The Byzantium Empire*. By C. W. C. Oman, F.S.A. "Story of the Nations" Series.



HER OWN WAY.

CHAPTER II.

T Firdale, Tom was duly waiting to hand her the packages.

"I wish you were coming too," said she, as he turned away, waving his cap. She saw his lithe figure run down the station steps, then he stopped to give a final wave. How straight, and strong, and handsome he looked!

Myra was proud of her bright young brother, and meant to be prouder still some day, when perhaps he had made a name in the world.

On reaching the ponds she found Bertha, Minnie, and Ada Farrant already there, with their governess, and a party of young folks. The three girls welcomed Myra noisily, which was their way of doing most things.

"We thought of course you were not coming, as you did not join us at starting," said Bertha. And Minnie added, "Fancy your aunt letting you come alone! We're not a very prim family, as you know, but you wouldn't catch mother trusting one of us."

A burning blush rose to Myra's brow. Although ready

to set propriety at defiance herself, she did not at all relish the idea that her friends were careless of appearances, or ignorant of what was correct. So having answered rather loudly—for the benefit of the governess—that her brother had but just left her at Firdale, she whispered confidentially to the rest, "Don't breathe it to Miss Field—auntie thinks we are both there, but I meant to skate, and here I am."

Much giggling, and many approving exclamations greeted this avowal. Myra forgot the momentary pang with which she had garbled the truth, and felt once more a high-spirited damsel who could not brook restraint. In a very few minutes her skates were on, and she was flying over the smooth dark ice, merrier than any of them. Myra skated beautifully; she enjoyed the keen air and brisk motion, and was by no means insensible to the fact that she looked her best and prettiest skimming along lightly as a bird, to the admiration and envy of the Farrants, and their friends. The only drawback to her pleasure was that some of the friends were rather more familiar than Myra, who loved to stand on her dignity, quite liked. She thought they treated her in rather too free-and-easy a fashion than the shortness of their acquaintance warranted. As if it were to be wondered at, considering the manner of her introduction to these young people.

The sun, a ruddy ball of fire, sank behind the church tower; a bright star glimmered here and there in the early dusk. Now for a final race right round the pond, and then with a little sigh Myra prepared to go.

"You are very foolish," cried Bertha, "you are missing the best of the fun; we are going to have torches by-and-by, and we shall walk home by moonlight."

"Besides," piped little Ada, "if you are naughty, you ought to have all you can for it."

"You shouldn't call Myra naughty," said Minnie.

"Good logic though!" remarked their cousin Fred. "Come on, Miss Myra, you may as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb."

"That's just the mistake that most people make," replied Myra, with a superior air. "They don't know when to stop, and they get themselves and others into trouble. Now as I generally do know when to stop, I get a good time, and nobody's any the worse."

So saying Myra turned resolutely homeward, comfortably complacent as ever.

The frosty air had given an edge to her healthy girlish appetite; and she remembered with much satisfaction that nurse always treated them to hot scones on Saturday, when the ironing operations left the kitchen fire bright and clear, Myra thought they would taste doubly good to-night. But on entering the house no fragrant odour of tea and toast greeted her, no cheerful clatter of cups, no babble of children's voices. The light from the hall lamp fell on a pile of rugs, and an overcoat—Tom's overcoat, surely—and on the table was a gentleman's hat—the doctor's. Myra recognised it at once, for the doctor often came to see Dick. Was Dick worse? What a good thing she had come back. There need be no delay about his medicine. The kitchen door opened, and Mary appeared, a hot water bottle in her hands her eyes red with crying.

"Oh, Miss Myra, aint it dreadful?" said she, hurrying up the stairs. "Poor Master Tom!"

For the first time in her life Myra felt like fainting. She went into the dining-room, and found Lizzie and Totty crouching by the neglected fire.

"What is it—what is the matter?" she demanded.

Totty ran to meet her.

"Myra, Myra, I am so frightened. Why do they hurt Tom? I cannot bear to hear him scream again."

"What is the matter?" repeated Myra.

Lizzie lifted a pale scared face.

"Tom was running down Care Hill," she said, "and he slipped and broke his leg."

That night Myra sat alone in her room, and reckoned up her gains. And the very most she could make of them was the fleeting pleasure of an hour. This then to the good. To the bad, honour stained, peace lost, hopes broken. The balance was all on the wrong side, and like many another bankrupt, Myra stared aghast at the price paid for a worthless bargain. And it was not her own treasure she had frittered away. The happiness of the household, the prospects of her brother, for of course this accident would cause a serious break in his studies, were sacrificed. The recollection of this was a terrible sting. And to think that in all his pain he never said it was through her he had gone down that slippery hill. "But I will tell Aunt Anna everything to-morrow," murmured Myra as after a long time spent on her knees, she prepared to lay her head on her pillow. "I will not hide from her any more than from myself, how miserably selfish I have been. Help me, O Lord, to be better!" Here was a simple prayer, but it came from the heart; and God does not mind simplicity if there be earnestness. We may be sure moreover, it was not made in vain, since He loves repentance. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."

But repentance, even though it springs from that "godly sorrow" of which St. Paul speaks, does not shield from the present consequences of sin—it would be much more popular if it did, you may be certain. It wins forgiveness, but immediate consequences must run their course. You can no more hinder them than you can hinder the widening circle of ripples which ruffle the surface of the lake when

you throw a stone into the water. The stone sinks at once, and took such a tiny space, but the ripples—how fast they spread—how large the circle grows. A little thing to cause such a disturbance. And thoughtful people know that the consequences of every action, good or bad, are too numerous to be traced.

Myra, I dare say, had heard all this, and had probably—being a girl with plenty of brains, and fond of using them—pondered over it as a curious fact. But she was now to learn the lesson practically, and with bitter pain and sorrow.

It was bad enough to feel the precious weeks were passing which should have done so much for Tom at school, and to know that many more must pass before he was strong and active again; as he would be, of course, for although the doctor pronounced the fracture a bad one, broken legs are mended every day. But when complications began to arise, and the doctor looked grave and brought a brother doctor, and a sickening fear sprang up which nobody liked to put into words, poor Myra felt that her punishment was almost greater than she could bear.

Aunt Anna comforted and consoled her more than anybody. She was so sweet, so gentle, and so patient during this time of trial, that Myra felt instinctively her secret must be worth finding out. So they had long talks together, and gradually the young girl learned something of the older woman's trust in the heavenly Wisdom which orders all things right. In one of these talks Aunt Anna said, "You know, dear child, you possess great influence over Tom as his elder sister, but you have not always used that influence for good. Perhaps our Heavenly Father sent this check in mercy. You think it hard to bear being the indirect cause of maiming him for life, but this would be nothing to the agony of feeling that your example had led him into evil ways. Influence is a mighty power, Myra. Pray to God that you may never misuse it."

"Maiming him for life?" Yes, that is what it came to. Tom had youth in his favour, and grew strong and hearty again in time, but he left his bed crippled—minus a leg.

So he never won the scholarship, and never went to Cambridge; and he maintains in his own cheery way that he regrets neither, for if it had not been for those long months of inaction with his broken limb, he would never have discovered his talent for designing. That talent, carefully trained, brings him in a very fair income to-day, and provides a comfortable home for Aunt Anna, and invalid Dick, and the once hard-working father, now grown old and feeble. Nurse Hilton too, is not forgotten, but finds a peaceful asylum by her nursing's hearth, and there "clinches her arguments," as of old, to his complete satisfaction. The sisters are all married. Myra has three boys who think her the gentlest, kindest, dearest mother in the world. They hardly believe her when she tells them what a wilful headstrong girl she used to be. But it only needs the tap tap of Uncle Tom's wooden leg to remind Myra herself of at least one occasion when she paid dearly enough for having "her own way."

SYDNEY GREY.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XXX.—p. 686.—I AM THE DOOR.—John x. 36.

1. I shmael's Gen. xvi. 11, 12.
2. A donijah 1 Kings i. 50.
3. M iriam Exodus xv. 20, 21.
4. T obiah Nehemiah iv. 3.
5. H agar Gen. xxi. 15-19.
6. E zra Ezra vii. 10.
7. D avid 2 Sam. v. 23, 24.
8. O rnan 1 Chron. xxi. 20, 21.
9. O g Deuteronomy iii. 3, 4.
10. R uth Ruth ii. 21, 22, 23.