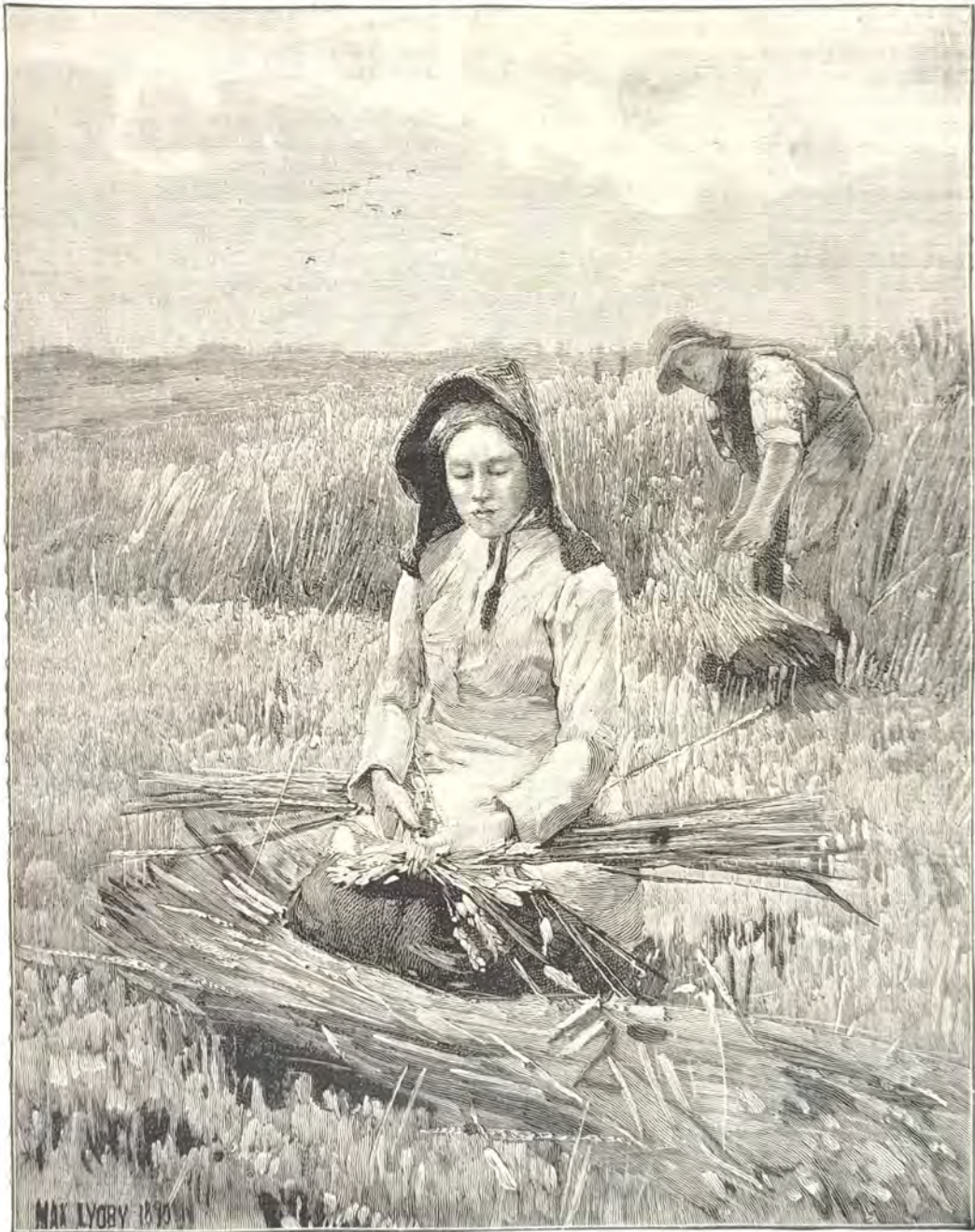


THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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



THE TIRED GLEANER.

By Little and Little.

WE grow by littles, gathering as we go ;
Through life's broad fields, by small degrees
and slow,
Our steps are homeward brought ;
In every sphere of action, word, or thought,
Where character by discipline is wrought,
He shall take highest place
Who fills the least with faithfulness and grace.

Learn well the secret—how earth's mighty things
In slight beginnings have their secret springs ;
The future shall make clear
How vast the issues we may strive for here,
By patient effort ; in thy narrow sphere
Be like the insect brave,
That builds its steadfast home beneath the treacherous
wave.

For long well-doing gird thine eager soul,
And thou shalt make, though storms above may
roll,
An island of the blest,
Whereon the palm may rear its fronded crest,
And the wrecked heart find sustenance and rest ;
So shall thy labour be
An Elim of delight amid life's desert sea.

Live, that each day, for noble uses lent,
May hour by hour in Christlike aims be spent,
Thy work, though poor at best,
Before a listening world at last confessed,
Shall win high guerdon where all work is blest ;
To heavenly stature grown,
Thy little things, well done, shall lead to throne
and crown !

MARY ROWLES JARVIS.

A STORY OF WAITING.

CHAPTER VI.

MISS JANET and I were spending the evening quietly together. I had been reading to her certain scenes from "As You Like It," in which she took special delight, and then I had gone to the piano and played to her. When I am playing I lose all sense of the flight of time, and presumably she did not trouble about it either, for both of us were startled when, as I ceased the Adagio which had been an accompaniment to thoughts scarcely possible to formulate in words, the clock struck twelve.

The servants had gone to bed. They were never expected to sit up later than half-past ten, for Mr. Donaldson's hours were erratic ; if he had work which detained him—and much of his work was done at night—it might be two or even three in the morning before he let himself in. If he were no later than eleven, he invariably found Miss Janet waiting for him, but beyond that time he would not permit her to linger, especially as she could not employ herself otherwise than with her thoughts. But now and then it happened, as on the present occasion, that her companion and herself would be alike too interested to note the lateness of the hour.

"My dear," said Miss Janet, "you must certainly go to bed."

But I was not tired at all. And, not being as accustomed as his sister to Mr. Donaldson's nocturnal adventures, and being to a certain small extent implicated in this one, I was anxious to hear the result.

"Let us stay up a little longer," I pleaded. "Mr. Donaldson is scarcely likely to be much later."

"No. He said he was sure to be back by eleven. I hope he is all right," said Miss Janet, who, after many years of apprenticeship, had not altogether conquered a not unnatural nervousness.

"You see," she added, more to reassure herself than to give me an explanation, "sometimes when he is out like this he meets some one who has need of him, or whom he tries to rescue from temptation, or he hears of a dying soul whom he can comfort, and then, all hours are alike to him."

"Miss Janet," I asked, as I put fresh coal on the fire, which had sunk low during our forgetfulness, "was Mr. Donaldson very fond of his son?"

The old lady started.

"What makes you ask that, my dear?" she said, for she had never spoken to me of him, and could not possibly know why he was so often in my thoughts.

"Because," I said, "I have sometimes wondered a little if it was his love for him that made him so forbearing, and patient with all wrongdoers, and so eager to help them."

"I think he has been more—more devoted since Eric's fall," she answered. "But he was always good—always unselfishly anxious to help others. Did he tell you about Eric?"

"Yes," I replied softly.

There was silence between us for a little while. Then Miss Janet spoke, and there were tears in her voice :

"We both loved him, my dear."

"I was sure of it," I answered.

"Sometimes," said Miss Janet, "I ache to hear that boy's voice again. And yet I blame myself when I think how hard I found it to forgive him. If I had cared less for my brother, I might have sooner felt as I feel now. He had some good in him truly, but he brought shame and sorrow and disgrace upon us. I thought of those things with bitterness. My brother thought only of the boy. I am beginning to realise that his grief is a nobler one, and so I too must lose my anger against Eric in my pity for him."

The blind eyes were full of tears, and they ran over on to her cheeks. I could not but wonder at the nobility of these two beings, who had learnt their way of loving from God, and so unconsciously led those who watched them, nearer to belief in Him and trust in His goodness.

"We never sent him away, you know," said Miss Janet. "It was he who went of his own accord. He had wild companions and they led him astray. We have heard of him from time to time, and when we have known of his whereabouts my brother has written to him, but the letters have never been answered. I sometimes wonder if he was ashamed to write. The last time we heard of him was about six years ago. He had married; I know nothing about his wife, except that socially she was beneath him, or, I should say, beneath what he had been. She may have been in other respects his superior."

"Is she living still?"

"I do not know, my dear. For all I can tell, Eric himself may not be still alive. Only, my brother is so sure that he will see him again, that I cannot help believing too. You know we always keep the room ready for him?" she added shyly.

"Why is Mr. Donaldson so sure? Because he wishes it so much?"

"Because he has such a childlike faith," said Miss Janet simply.

"It will be sad," I could not help saying thoughtfully, "if Mr. Donaldson should die before that happens."

"Oh, no," said Miss Janet quickly. "That would not be sad. When he is with God he will not be capable of any regrets. And perhaps he will be able to help Eric himself then. Who knows? David thinks the only difference between our work on earth and in heaven, is that there we co-operate with God, seeing Him, and that here we go on in faith: half our troubles here arise from our blindness to the fact that He is aiding us, rejoicing in our success, and willing to comfort us in our failures."

"Miss Janet," I said impulsively, "I would give all I have to be as spiritual as you and Mr. Donaldson. You live in light."

"Ah, my dear," said the old lady gently, laying her hand on my head as I leant against her, "it is my regret that I lived in darkness for many a long year, before I realised the meaning of the unseen things which are eternal. It was not till I had become blind to the earthly light that I saw the heavenly. God closed my eyes to make me see. . . . And David led me to Him," she added very softly and tremulously.

"I think, perhaps—some day—I shall see too,"

I stammered. "My earthly light has been put out."

"I knew you had suffered, my dear," said Miss Janet tenderly. "I have been so sorry."

"How did you know?" I asked, blushing. "Did Mr. Donaldson tell you about—it?"

"No. He respected your confidence. I am a woman, you see, dear. And though I am blind, there are other ways of understanding than by looking at a person's face. I just—understood."

"He is married now," I said.

"And will his wife make him happy?"

Something flashed upon my mind and compelled me to an unwilling honesty. I spoke rather to myself than to Miss Janet, and yet I think I must have gained unconsciously a little of her insight to be capable of my answer.

"Perhaps," I said, "he will be happier with her than I should have made him. I should have been very ambitious for him. But he will learn now to forget himself, because she has need of him."

"Perhaps some day," said Miss Janet, "you will love again."

"No," I answered, in a whisper. "I am of those who give all or nothing. I wish it were not so. Sometimes"—I cried involuntarily, encouraged by that soothing touch, which showed that as Miss Janet said, she "understood"—"sometimes when I think of all the dreary years that stretch before me, all the long lonely evenings, all the longings that I must crush, I feel it would be easier to die."

"Don't think of it like that, dear. Even the years are made of single days, and you will find each day brings its strength. And then, youth passes and with it the passion of youth. You will learn contentment. My child, believe me, what other women have done you will do, and bravely."

"Yes. It may be. Only we are not all alike. I have not much in common with the meek, gentle women who are calm and submissive. I care so much for life. I want light and warmth and love. It isn't such a wild ambition surely. Any peasant woman has it—a home, and love, and little children, other lives to need one, to be glad when one is happy, and sad when one is sorrowful. I want to share my life. I have always been like that, wanted to talk things over and have sympathy and appreciation."

"It is only in an ideal home that you would have all you crave, my dear. We none of us believe it till we have proved it, but there is no human love that can be absolutely satisfying. We must suffer, every one of us: by love, if love fail us, by death if love be granted us; life would not be life without its passion and its pain. But I know what you mean—you are young, and you say: 'I don't want to be "absolutely satisfied"'—I want what you call "the passion and the pain."' Peace seems too calm a thing for you."

I was silent.

"Am I right?"

"Partly. I want joy, I think."

"That you can have," she said, with a note of triumph in her voice. "Give yourself to God, for His children and His servants 'sing for joy

of heart.' There is no such thing as perfect happiness on earth, there cannot be while men suffer around us; but even in the midst of sorrow you can have a joy which nothing, no person can snatch from you. I know it."

She spoke the truth. I did not attain to the knowledge she had until long afterwards; though there are some who at one bound cross the border and never look back upon the land of doubt, I am not of their number. "Da martirio venni a questa pace."

It must have been nearly two o'clock before I heard the sound of wheels. They stopped at our house, and very soon after Mr. Donaldson's key turning in the lock proved that he had returned.

"He will be very angry with us," said Miss Janet, with the comfortable assurance of a spoiled child.

"And very pleased with us," I supplemented, with a glance from the bright, genial fire to Miss Janet's welcoming face.

And then I ran to the top of the stairs, and looked over.

When Mr. Donaldson came home it seemed as if all the lights had been turned up.

But how cold it felt! And why did he not shut the door and come up? For what reason had he gone back into the street? To pay the cabman, perhaps. Hush, what was that? The sound of shuffling footsteps, as though a heavy weight were being carried up the steps. A great fear fell upon me—a fear of I scarcely knew what. I shivered, but it was not only because the night air was blowing upon me, and for a minute a mist came before my eyes, so that I could not distinguish who they were that stumbled into the hall beneath me.

And then I felt Miss Janet's hand on my arm. Her quick ear had detected unaccustomed sounds, her quick instinct had told her that something was wrong. She had followed me on to the landing, and stood beside me.

"Why does he not come?" she asked, in a hurried whisper. "Is anything the matter?"

I could not answer her. But another had heard her voice. Some one looked up. The mists cleared away. Thank heaven, it was Mr. Donaldson's face I saw. It was not he then who was covered with the cloak and seemed as one who had not power to stir, so that he had to be borne in the arms of others.

I am glad she could not see how white and strained was that face which was raised for a moment. His voice he controlled. Making a sign to the man who was helping him with his burden, they halted where they were.

"Is that you, Janet?" he asked; "I had hoped you were in bed long ago."

Again he signed to his companion, and they laid that which they carried on the ground, carefully and reverently. Then the other man closed the door, while Mr. Donaldson ran up to us.

Now that he came close to me I could see that there were marks of blood upon his clothes, and that his expression was that of one who had gone through some great crisis. That he suffered I could not doubt, in spite of the forced cheerful-

ness of his voice, but I knew not, in my inexperience, if the suffering were physical or mental.

He raised a warning finger to me, and I was silent. But the sensitive blind woman did not need that one should tell her something was amiss, and that he whom she loved was in pain.

"David!" she said, catching hold of his hand, "what is it? Have you been hurt?"

"Oh," he answered quickly, "we have had a tussle. Nothing to speak of. But there is some one hurt worse than I. I have brought him here to attend to him."

"David!"

"I had hoped to avoid disturbing you. Will you and Mary go back into the drawing-room, or better still, to bed. And I will tell you all tomorrow."

She did not remonstrate as some women would have done; she asked no questions.

"Come, dear," she said, and drew me back into the room we had been in, and closed the door.

And very soon we heard the footsteps pass and go up the staircase above. We listened till they paused.

"That is David's way of loving his enemies," said Miss Janet, turning towards me a pale face, a faint smile crossing its anxiousness as a glimmer of sunshine falls on a cloud-darkened stream. "It has cost him something, surely, to take any one to Eric's room."

In spite of his injunction to go to bed it was some little time before we obeyed him. At Miss Janet's door we parted. I went to my little room, but made no effort to undress. I was not tired, and a strange excitement which was upon me made the notion of sleep impossible. I thought of what was going on in the room downstairs, and wondered who it was that had been brought to it. I heard the street door close, and knew that the man who had assisted Mr. Donaldson had gone. Then I longed to go to him and ask if there were anything I could do. For I understood that his desire to get rid of us was entirely on Miss Janet's account; and that he had been anxious to avoid for the present her questions, or any answers to them which might excite or trouble her. And it was this anxiety on his part, combined with the intense expression of his face, that suggested to me what was indeed the truth. Then I remembered how tired he looked, and that he was surely in want of food. I rose at last from my chair, and went downstairs, in tremulous eagerness. I could see that Miss Janet had not yet extinguished her light, and presumed that she too was keeping vigil.

When I reached the spare room I hesitated, having half a mind to go back. Instead, however, I crept timidly down to the deserted basement, and foraged about to the best of my ability, preparing a little tray with the most tempting morsels of food I could discover in the larder. Armed with this, I again made my way to the closed door, and knocked as loudly as I dared. At first there was no answer. I waited with a beating heart, then knocked again. This time I heard a movement within, and a voice said—

"Who is it?"

"It is I—Mary."

The key turned in the lock. Mr. Donaldson opened the door a little way. A great shyness fell upon me when I saw his face. I felt, and feared to be considered, an intruder, and yet I longed so much to be of some service to him, however slight.

"Do you want me?" he asked, for I stood with downcast eyes, not speaking.

I held the tray towards him.

"Sir," I said in a low voice, "I brought you this."

He took the tray from my trembling hand, thanking me, and set it down. I think under no circumstances would he have forgotten the courtesies of life, especially towards a woman.

"Are you alone?"

"Yes, sir," I answered.

It seemed a natural thing, so did he inspire me with reverence, to call him by the title which has to my ears so respectful a sound, and comes well from the young to the old, though in this generation its use is almost abandoned in that connection.

"My sister?"

"Is in her room."

"That is right."

He did not ask me why I had not obeyed him and gone to bed. This omission encouraged me to say, "Won't you let me do something for you, sir?"

He smiled, and as he did so, I noticed for the first time that he had been weeping. There were tears in his eyes now, brought there perhaps by the sympathy I could not keep from my voice and manner. Then he took my hand and drew me into the room. He did not speak to me; maybe because he could not yet control his voice, but he drew aside the curtains of the bed.

Still keeping my hold of his hand, I bent forward and looked, with bated breath, fearing to disturb the sleeper.

The sleeper? He who lay so still beneath the white counterpane, would not have stirred for any footsteps of mine, for any word I had spoken, since another voice calling to him in love and agony had been powerless to rouse him, or to evoke an answering look. It was death, not sleep, which wrapped him in this awful silence.

I glanced at the dead man, then hid my eyes. I was afraid.

"You see, dear," said Mr. Donaldson, "you can do nothing for him. He was—not living—when I brought him home."

"Why?" I asked, in a hushed voice, "Did you bring him here?"

"It is his rightful place."

"Sir!" I uncovered my eyes and looked at him.

He did not answer the unspoken question, but yet he knew all I would say. The strong face quivered, and then he turned away from me and moved into the shadow.

There was a long, long silence. I could not have moved, I could not have spoken had a life hung on the issue of movement or of speech. I do not

think I have ever experienced such an agony of pity as I felt then. I was as one stupefied by its force. And yet I was filled with a most keen longing to say or do something that might testify to my sympathy. I stared at the room, remembering what love had gone to its adornment, what hopes had blossomed there, what prayers ascended, what patience had been cultivated. And there, ungrateful, because he could not realise, unappreciative because he could not see, unmoved because he did not know, lay the long expected guest. Many a beautiful blossom had bloomed and faded here. A handful would have been enough to lay upon that quiet breast.

I thought of Miss Janet's words to me that very night. And this thing seemed too sad to be true.

"I ache to hear that boy's voice again," she had said, knowing it was vain to hope to see his face. Remembering the words and the manner of their utterance, a sob broke from me, and I burst into tears.

In a moment Mr. Donaldson was at my side.

"My little girl," he said, forgetful at once of himself in his desire to comfort me, "do not be so sorry. It is right. It is well."

"But you have waited so long," I said, rebellious for him against the inevitable. "And it seems all no good. If he had only lived a little while, been with you just long enough to realise how you cared, it would not be so hard."

"It is not hard, my dear. He is with God, and realises that He cares. For me, I can wait a little longer. You must not think," he went on, for in spite of himself the brave voice faltered now and then, "you must not think I have not been well dealt by, for my prayers have been answered fully, abundantly, in a way beyond that which I could ever have thought or hoped, only that the joy is sorrow. My own son has given his life for mine."

"For yours?"

I shuddered to think what had been going on while we had been so quietly playing and reading.

There was a curious ring in Mr. Donaldson's voice, as he continued:—

"I've offered many a time to suffer for his sake, to die that he might be saved, to bear in my flesh or in my spirit the penalty of his shortcomings. That would have been too easy perhaps. Instead, God has given me the knowledge that he has laid down his life for my sake? Whatever his sins may have been in the past, his last words seemed to show he repented of them—and he died for me. Ought I not to be proud for him? And glad for him, too?"

I think nothing in all my experience of Mr. Donaldson either before or after, testified like these words of his to his absolute loving submission to the will of God. The natural cry of his heart had been, and was, the cry of David, of any bereaved parent who really cared for a child: "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" It was above nature, beyond it, to be capable of rejoicing in his own grief, because, to the believer in immortality, it had been the gain of the son. It is a far, far easier thing to

die for another than to bear through life the knowledge that he has died for us. That he has died for some one else may be cause for exultation, but for us, who loved him—that is hard to bear.

As my master thus spoke of him, God seemed so near, that involuntarily, and in deep humility I sank upon my knees, awed by the solemnity, nay the sublimity of the scene I had been permitted to witness.

Mr. Donaldson knelt, too, and he prayed aloud.

I may not have reported other words of his quite accurately, though I have endeavoured to keep the spirit of them, but that prayer I have remembered through all the years.

"Lord, I am Thine and all that I have is Thine. I know that Thou lovest my son more than I love him, and that though Thou hast taken him from me he is safe with Thee. Thou hast broken my heart, but that heart I have laid at Thy feet, and it is well with me. Good Shepherd, take the heart of this child likewise, that she may rejoice in Thy will eternally, and know that life is Thy gift, and death Thy gift, and that all Thou doest is well done. Amen."

He kissed my forehead, as my father had

kissed me before he died. It was as though I had received a blessing.

"My child," he said, "for all your love and sweetness, I thank you. I shall never forget it But see, it is nearly morning. Leave me now. I want to be alone for a little while before I face to-morrow, and—Janet."

I moved towards the door. But as if that last word had suggested a new thought to him he said, "Come back for a minute."

I obeyed him.

"You must be able to assure her that there was peace upon his face. She would have you tell her just how he looked. You are not afraid?"

No, I was not afraid any longer.

He drew back the curtain, and once more I glanced at the silent figure. But this time I gazed long and earnestly at the face of the dead, knowing who he was. And as I watched it it seemed familiar to me. I had seen it before. Where?

It flashed upon me suddenly.

"Sir," I cried, "You are not left desolate. I have seen your son before. And he had with him a little child."

CAIRO.

CHAPTER IV.

WE asked the kind sister who went through the hospital with us if she would give us a history of a day's work.

The nurses commence at six in the morning with the usual home routine of bed-making, washing, etc. At 7.30 the sister comes on duty, and the resident medical officer inspects the work just finished—each employée being stationed at his or her special post. Then comes medicine-giving; and the dispensing of stores by the sister. Arabs are so dishonest that everything has to be kept under watch and key and given out just as they are needed.

When the doctors make their rounds the dressings are done, and on operation days the theatre or operating room is ready by nine o'clock. It is an exceedingly good theatre, with a gallery for the large medical school, and a room adjoining well supplied with all needful instruments—a collection which could bear comparison with those in any European hospital. These two rooms alone are lighted with gas.

At eleven o'clock the dinners come up, and after their meal the convalescents go to the roof or the garden. The nurses have some of their lectures between ten and eleven, followed by their dinner, the remainder being given between three and four in the afternoon. At two in the afternoon dressings are done. Food again at 3.30, then the nurses have a rest until seven on

alternate days, the off days being free from twelve to two, which, in the summer, is the hottest time of day, and everyone, patients as well, takes the all-important siesta. At six the wards are settled for the night, and at 7.30 the resident medical doctor makes his final inspection and all is left straight for the night sister, who comes on with her staff of three *Termerguys* for the male side and two *Tirenagials*, or ward maids, for the female. The native nurses cannot yet stand night duty, and invariably sleep, so that the sister is obliged to inspect every single order for the night and personally to see it carried out.

Our next experience was to visit the soldiers in their hospital in the citadel. This is like all military hospitals, inasmuch as it is complete in itself, nursed by Netley sisters, and takes in only soldiers. All sorts of illnesses are admitted. It differs from other hospitals in the strangeness of its position, and beauty of decoration, having been Saladin's palace. Outside and around it is a garden kept neat with the military precision of most soldiers' quarters, and it is nursed by two Netley sisters, who, however, are not allowed to go near infectious cases, which are nursed by orderlies specially told off to tend them. A womans' hospital is attached to the barracks, but they are usually nursed in their own quarters. The head Netley sister, Miss Hart, loves her work, and says she would never care to nurse

civilians after soldiers, whose habits of regular obedience make them excellent patients. From July to January there had been only six deaths in this hospital, which, at the time of our visit, had a hundred and twenty patients.

We went with Miss Hart into a large cruciform hall with elaborately carved and painted walls and ceilings, with wards round it, which in time of war would be fully occupied, and was so once, being filled with beds, and mattresses laid between on the floor.

The marble floors and staircases suggested to us the palace rather than the hospital, and the chapel for the staff was exceptionally beautiful. It used to be the royal bath room. The floor was exquisitely sculptured. At one end was the fountain where the water used to flow down in little cascades, and in the centre was the bath itself, now covered with a wooden lid. The wonder of all was the large and magnificent ward into which the principal staircase led direct. It was full of beds, and the patients who were well enough to observe had something beautiful indeed to look upon. From this ward two corridors led to the sisters' quarters. Miss Hart's sitting-room with its bright fire (a novelty in Cairo), pretty curtains, and elegant knick-knacks, looked wonderfully home-like, though, as she said, "when one is liable to be moved to another post at any moment, one has not the heart to spend time, trouble, and money in fixing up many things or buying furniture." This room was large, requiring four lamps to light it properly; but her bed-room was larger still, and it was like going into a church to sleep, with its vaulted and carved ceiling in which sparrows build their nests and let their eggs fall on her bed. She said that at night no light seemed to fill it, the corners remaining dark, and at first she disliked it very much on account of the rats, but that now she is getting used to it. She says the sparrows collect round her butter-dish, and indeed we saw several flying boldly about.

She kindly took us up on the roof where the sisters sit of an evening. From here you get a splendid view of Cairo, the desert, the tombs of the Caliphs, and the Nile, beside, as a matter of course, the whole citadel, including Joseph's well.

Miss Hart said her chief recreation was a good gallop across the desert. Her uniform was grey with scarlet cape like all the Netley sisters, and her face inspired one with confidence.

Seeing that many hundreds, nay, thousands, go to Cairo every winter for health it is not unreasonable to think that many may become very ill and even die there. What accommodation, outside private nursing, is to be found in Cairo for these? I asked this question and for answer was told to go and see the Victoria Hospital, which is nursed by German deaconesses. This we did, little dreaming that in a few days we should have to take advantage of it, for a very dear friend who was taken there and died within its walls.

It is really a cottage hospital, and was built in 1884. It stands in the midst of a garden of palms and is presided over by six deaconesses. There is an isolated house for infectious cases,

which was built in the jubilee year as a memorial, and has a separate sister told off to it. Her food is sent over from the general table.

The Victoria Hospital is bound to take German, Swiss, English and American patients, and if there is room they take Arabs and Greeks as well. The main building is for men only, and contains on the ground floor a room for the doctor, a sleeping-room for a sister, and a good-sized sitting-room for all the sisters; this was redolent of roses and fresh air, and in here they have sewing and mending bees once a week. They are glad of the help of visitors in this work, for although most of the patients pay, and only the very poor come in free, money is sorely needed, and indeed help of all kinds, for they have only three girls to assist them.

The little kitchen was clean, good, and appetising, with no unpleasant smells; dishes of oranges were ready, and preparations going on for the ten o'clock luncheon of bouillon. Next came a small store room lined with cupboards of polished wood, and in excellent order. A dispensary well stocked, which the Oberin, or lady superintendent, looks after herself. And then an operation room, to which patients are carried, well arranged and covered with oil-cloth and having plenty of fresh air; this, together with a servants' room, completed the ground floor.

We learnt on the way upstairs that forty patients can be accommodated, and that only twenty-seven were present at the time of our visit. When a patient dies, the friends, as a rule, see to the burial, and if there be no friends, the church of the sect to which the patient belonged performs the act of burial. On the upstairs floor was a pretty sleeping-room for a sister at the end of the passage in case she is wanted in the night (this was given up to the use of my dear friend who died there). There are three classes of payment for patients, the 1st class pay 50 piastres, or 10s. a day; the 2nd class 25 piastres, or 5s. a day, and the 3rd class 12 piastres, or 2s. 5d. a day. The rooms of the first class patients are made pretty and home-like with books, pictures, rocking-chairs, screens and flowers. The American Consul was occupying one of these.

Everything is on too small a scale, notably the bath-room. On this floor there is also a tiny room with taps and other necessities where they can prepare food, and a noisy lift for carrying the food when ready, up and down. But to our minds everything was on too small a scale for the requirements. Outside is a nice balcony, with creeping plants and lounging chairs where the patients can sit when well enough.

There is an English doctor for English patients, but the head physician and surgeon is Dr. Wildt, a German. The Oberin, or lady superintendent, was eleven years in a hospital at Jerusalem: she is the most kind and sympathetic of nurses.

Upstairs, yet again, there is a large flat sunny roof, where patients much enjoy sitting, but they would like to turn it into a third floor if they had the means, for room is so greatly needed.

There are two rooms for special skin diseases which require to be kept separate. This block or cottage is really for men only, that for women

is across the garden, a bad arrangement, and one that increases the labours of the sisters and takes up much of their time. Sixteen women can be accommodated in this cottage, though there were only nine at the time we were there.

It was the time for out-patients, who come every day, and of whom a great crowd was waiting, many of them ophthalmic cases. There is a waiting-room painted green and provided with glazed benches which are readily washed; there is a second room where they are examined, and a third where the drugs are given out, and a wicket at which they stand in turn.

There is no mortuary, only a room at the end of the garden, and no operating room in the women's cottage, which is reached by an outside staircase, and contains a room for children, one

nothing has been done for them till quite lately, when the Rev. Naser Odeh was appointed by Bishop Blyth to this special work as missionary in charge. The history of this missionary is very interesting. He is a Syrian, his mother died when he was very young, she herself being a mere child. The father married again, and the little son of the former wife was placed in a Roman Catholic school. Subsequently he was removed and sent to live with a dear old German pastor and his wife who lived in Jerusalem, both of whom held the strictest Lutheran doctrines; so that the boy had experienced the two extremes of teaching. As he grew older, he became tutor in a school at Jerusalem, and here, by means of the strictest self-denial, saved up enough money to pay his passage to England, and there prosecute



HIGH ROAD AT OLD CAIRO DURING A FAIR.

for the sister and a balcony, as well as a tiny first class ward and a third class with six beds.

They want money to build with, and then they could have all under one roof; now they are terribly handicapped, especially as native servants are difficult to manage.

They sometimes have Jewish patients, but not often. Of those patients who were in the hospital last year, numbering 344;—55 were English and Maltese, 12 were Americans, 90 Greeks, 37 Germans, 25 Italians, and 10 French. 9569 patients attended from outside in the one year for ophthalmia. Wherever Dr. Lancing, the celebrated oculist, is to be found, there the patients throng.

The sisters struck us as exceedingly kind, clever, attentive nurses, but decidedly overworked.

WORK AMONG THE JEWS IN CAIRO.

The Jews began to settle in Cairo when expelled from Spain in Queen Isabella's time, and

his studies for the ministry. At length the wish of his heart was granted, and he was ordained by Bishop Jackson and sent out to the East. He laboured in the Plain of Sharon one year and a half, in Nazareth five years, and in Jerusalem five years. It was in Nazareth he met his wife, an English lady, also working in the mission field, and they married. She is very fair and fragile looking, he has the dark skin and beautiful eyes and hair of the Syrian; they have a lovely little girl of about six with all the characteristics of her father's country.

At length he was appointed to his present work, one that he loves, but it is one that demands his very life to get it into good working order; he has to make bricks, and, like the Israelites of old, has no straw wherewith to make them.

His first starting in Cairo was one of great privation, he could not afford to take his family to an hotel, and for the first few days and nights



PORT OF OLD CAIRO, OPPOSITE RHODA ISLAND.

had neither bed nor furniture. And now we will glance at his interesting work among the Jews.

Our first visit was to the schools. We went down a curious old street out of the Mousky, abounding in carved lattices and doors which would have sent an artist mad with delight. This street is not in the Jews' quarter, but just on the opposite side of the Mousky. The premises which the Rev. Naser Odeh uses as a school were to be let or sold in the Sharia-Darb-Saada, rent 48*l.* if let, or sold for 2000*l.* It is an immense place, containing a large number of rooms, and forms quite a block of buildings; it would be a blessing, indeed, if they could get the money together to buy the place.

There are a hundred and twenty children of both sexes, speaking Arabic of course, they are taught English, French, arithmetic (many of them are through Euclid), needlework, writing, and a little singing.

One day the Old Testament is taught and the next day the New. One class of boys, quite young men, were being instructed by Miss Shaw, who is well known for her work in the medical mission at Zanzibar, and who reluctantly had

to give it up in consequence of her health failing. She seemed to have considerable influence over her scholars. She, in common with all the other teachers—and there were several—kept a book in which the names of her pupils, age and religion, were set down neatly.

The third class consisted almost entirely of Arab Jews. The girls are taught plain needlework, the articles made being sold at a small price to their parents. As a reward for doing plain work well, which they much dislike, they are allowed to do fancy work, which they love and at which they are very successful. The work going on here under Rev. Naser Odeh is of the greatest benefit, but it is

painful to see under what disadvantages he works; he is in want of so many things that a



FOUNTAIN OF ABLUTIONS—MOSQUE OF MAHOMMED ALI.

little money could supply. Maps and pictures for the walls, and a harmonium would be a great help in the teaching. The children sang very sweetly, "Art thou weary?" in Arabic.

A class for Jewish girls of high rank is held here also by Miss Allen. In connection with this school and in the same building is the dispensary which is open from half-past two every day for as long as it is required, principally for Jews. Miss Shaw is of the greatest use to Mr. Naser Odeh in this department as it is her special work.

There is no special hospital in Cairo for Jews, and rather than enter the native, or indeed any other, they will hide away their sickness in their own crowded home, to the danger of their families and neighbours. So it is easy to understand why this dispensary is so valuable to them, and to see the number who take advantage of it, it is only necessary to be there at the opening hour. The best doctors of Cairo spare a little time to give help gratuitously in this good work, but if money is wanted in the schools it is doubly wanted here.

The drugs are bought in England and paid for, but they greatly need ophthalmic instruments, about 15*l.* worth. The doctors are often obliged to send patients away for lack of them; and then how glad they would be to receive as a present cod liver oil, senna, rhubarb pills, citrate of magnesia, creosote, and many other necessities for the successful working of the dispensary. July and August are the two most sickly months.

Of Jews in Cairo there are about 15,000 Arab and Spanish Jews, 2000 Askkenazim (German and Polish Jews), 2000 Karaïtes (Jews who reject the Talmud), 1000 mixed nationalities, such as Greeks, Italians, etc., and until quite lately scarce a thought has been given to them. They have ten or eleven synagogues.

The British Mission School, better known as "Miss Whately's School," has done much good work, first under Miss Whately, and after her death by Mrs. Sekoor. But at present there are changes contemplated, and a recent announcement

in the *Times* informs us that Miss E. J. Whately and her brother and co-trustee, Archdeacon Whately, have retired from the management of the school. Let us hope that, with the help hitherto granted by the Egyptian Government, an institution which has done so much good will not be discontinued, but still be of service to many, as in Miss Mary Whately's time.

The teaching seemed very thorough and successful, and many of the scholars subsequently do well in the finance, medical, educational, and other government departments.

Both boys and girls are very intelligent and sharp, and many of them had exceedingly good faces. The girls wore Moslems, Copts, and Jews, and we noticed on some a great quantity of jewelry. It constitutes their fortune, and if at any time they want money they can sell part without loss, by weight.

The girls' needlework, both plain and fancy, is of the most elaborate kind, both sides being alike, and the thread broken off after each stitch; this is frequently sold for the benefit of the school. The girls sang us one of Sankey and Moody's hymns in Arabic, with a very good idea of time and tune. Across a small garden are some class rooms for better off children who receive lessons in music, and where blind children are taught to read from raised letters. All the scholars pay something, those not well off pay what they can, but the highest is 25 piastres or 5*s.* a month.

The schools are now supported by a yearly grant of 205*l.* from the Egyptian Government, and by the fees; but these fall far short of being sufficient, and it is with the utmost difficulty it can be kept at its high standard. Mrs. Sekoor, who worked jointly with Miss Whately, gives her own private means as well as her life to the work, otherwise it must deteriorate.

In this as in many another instance, visitors to Cairo do not know the great need there is for help. True, they go there for health or amusement, and they cannot give help in time, but if they would strengthen the hands of those who spend their lives in the work their visits to Cairo would be rich in blessings indeed.

THOMAS COOPER, THE CHARTIST.

THOMAS COOPER was born in March, 1805, and lived to July 1892, thus attaining the patriarchal age of eighty-seven years. His father was originally a member of the Society of Friends, his mother of Methodist connections. Left a widow when her child was four years of age, she returned to her native town, Gainsborough, endeavouring there to carry on her husband's trade as a dyer. It was a peculiarly bad time, for at the end of the great wars of 1813, the false prosperity of the country collapsed, and everybody's income began to diminish, while their burdens more and more increased.

The valiant woman did her best to procure her son an education fitting him to retain his father's place in the world, and succeeded in getting him into a Gainsborough foundation, locally called the "Blue Coat School," from the livery the boys wore. There Thomas Cooper remained until fifteen, and then, impelled by an inquiring mind, induced his mother to let him go to sea. Frightened, however, by the brutal language of the sea-port to which he went, he returned to Gainsborough and apprenticed himself to a shoemaker. His young master was an enthusiastic admirer of Byron and Burns, and made a pet of

a boy, who he found had tastes like his own. It was, indeed, this literary bent which from the first gave direction to Thomas Cooper's life, for it brought him a series of intelligent companions who fostered his hope of achieving distinction as a poet or writer.

If indefatigable industry merits success, success should have been Thomas Cooper's. When a shoemaker, working from seven A.M. to eight, or nine P.M., he rose at three or four o'clock in the morning all the year round, spending the three or four hours he thus stole out of his sleep in historical reading or the grammar of some language; he was studying Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French all at the same time. While at work he was repeating something audibly, either declensions, conjugations, or rules of Syntax, or propositions of Euclid, or pages of *Paradise Lost*, or *Hamlet*, or verses from some more modern poet.

At eight or nine when he left off work he commenced to walk about his room still committing something to memory, until sheer exhaustion drove him to bed. In the very cold weather, between the time when he arose and his mother lit the fire, he put a lamp on a stool and, wrapped up in his mother's old red cloak, he studied grammar and Euclid, beating his feet to keep them warm. This was "self-help," if ever there was or is such a thing, but it was not the self-help that succeeds, for Thomas Cooper had feeling as well as intellect, a soul as well as a mind.

He was about twenty-two years of age when his health gave way. For nine weeks he lay ill, once or twice in so complete a collapse that he was thought to be dead. Meanwhile his mind turned inward, and religious friends came to visit him, all urging him to be truly penitent.

Happily he recovered, and by the advice of these friends became a schoolmaster. In twelve months he had a hundred scholars, with an average attendance of eighty. He threw himself with ardour into the work, and did everything he could to inspire the boys with his own love of learning, covering the walls of his school-room with pictures, and turning the window sills into miniature museums of pebbles, coins, etc. But he found little sympathy from the parents, who regarded learning as simply a means of getting on. So his ardour flagged, and in the end he began to find school-keeping painful drudgery.

Of all the qualities of his multiple nature the religious instinct was the strongest, and it required very little to call it into activity and to make the most potent force in his life. When he was about fourteen years of age the Primitive Methodists came to Gainsborough and preached in the streets. He listened, fell into deep grief over his sins, and continued in this state for several weeks, reading nothing but the Bible, and getting into secret places to pray for pardon many times a day. But he stumbled over the way in which he was told to find pardon, and besides, these good Methodists wished to confine his reading to the Bible. So he went to the Wesleyan Chapel and joined the Mutual Improvement Society. With another youth, gentlemanly and of intellectual tastes, he formed a

close friendship which resulted in their spending part of every Sunday together, walking in the woods, or by the Trent. Cooper's Jonathan was a grocer's apprentice, whose parents supplied him with plenty of pocket-money, which he spent on books, the use of which was common to both. Unaware that the mind could wander into dangerous paths as easily as the body, they roamed on from step to step, until they became disciples of Volney and Voltaire, and students of Astrology. Advised to read the Evidences of Christianity, Thomas Cooper determined not only to do so, but to lead a strictly moral life and attend to what he conceived religious duties. The friend who advised this being an Independent, Cooper went to the same chapel, but not for long, as he found the service of the Church of England more in harmony with his taste. Remaining, however, still wretched about his spiritual state, and thinking the Wesleyans knew the secret of true piety, he joined a class-meeting, and in due time became a local preacher and might have ended as a distinguished member of the denomination. But trouble arose between the office-bearers of the district and their superintendent. Thomas Cooper taking a leading part, drew upon himself the animosity of his superior, who made it so unpleasant that he threw up his school and went to Lincoln. But even there his opponent pursued him, prejudicing the mind of his new superintendent, so that the latter treated him harshly. Cooper, indignant, withdrew from his class and threw himself into other work. His wife, for he had now married, and his life-long friend Jobson, afterwards Dr. Jobson, grieved sorely over this untoward event.

Without having in any essential matter lost his faith Cooper now took his first step in the direction of Secularism. Connecting himself with the Mechanics' Institute, of which his wife's uncle was the Curator, he not only began to attend its classes, but undertook himself to teach Latin. He became likewise the secretary of a choral society, and a writer on a local paper. His contributions consisted of a series of "Personal Sketches of Lincoln Preachers." He also wrote some historical tales, and began to think of a great work in verse.

Press work brought him into connection with political parties, public dinners, and other busy scenes. He now felt an ambition to try his fortune in London. Arrived there he waited on Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer, Sir Culling Eardley Smith, Josiah Couder, and Alaric Watts, but the more or less conventional patronage they accorded him availed little, and he came down to a very low point financially.

One day a letter arrived from the Independent minister of Lincoln, enclosing another from a Leicester paper asking for Cooper's address. "The message," he exclaimed, "has come at last, the message of destiny." Leicester was his birth-place, and at Leicester he had a conviction he was to find his career. He went off at once and accepted an engagement on the *Leicester Mercury*.

Sent to report a Chartist Meeting in Leicester, Cooper became deeply interested in what he saw; the ragged poverty-stricken audience, the earnest

old shoemaker who came to urge them to stand by the Charter. Still more was he impressed by what he learnt of the neighbourhood in which the meeting took place. As he left he observed that the upper stories of the houses were all lit up. The poor stockings were at work, and the sight led him to make enquiries as to their wages and condition. Four and sixpence a week was all they were paid for their work. The Cooper he studied the matter, the worse things appeared, and he gave himself heart and soul to the cause of unrequited toil. His tendencies soon appeared in his work; he wrote in fact now and then for the Chartist print called the *Midland Counties Illuminator*. He was consequently dismissed from the *Leicester Mercury* and naturally became the editor of the *Illuminator*. Nothing could be more hopeless from a money point of view. This, however, was never a question with Thomas Cooper, the real sacrifice to him was the giving up his literary hopes. And would he not be struggling to win the social and political rights of millions?

His first work was to deepen and educate the religious sentiments of the poor people whose cause he undertook to champion. He accordingly proposed to the Chartist Committee a Sunday evening meeting. When he had gathered the people together he offered a prayer, then spoke partly on a religious theme, partly on the wrongs and sufferings of the poor, and on their obtaining political rights, finally concluding with another prayer. The movement continuing, he began to hold open-air Sunday meetings in the marketplace, taking a text and mingling religious teaching with politics. In a large room connected with the Amphitheatre he formed an adult Sunday-school, his text books being the Bible and Channing's Self-Culture, and his classes were named after the great names he admired in history, Sydney, Marvel, Hampden, Tell, Washington, Cartwright and Cobbett. He also advocated teetotalism, getting the people to pledge themselves to touch no alcoholic drink until the Charter became Law. He introduced the singing of hymns composed by himself and two working men. Some were defiant, some pathetic.

One evening he had been appealing to the patriotic feelings of young Englishmen, and, citing the names of Hampden, Sydney and Marvel, eulogised the spirit of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice. A good-looking youth of fifteen years of age, evidently not of the working class, sprang on the platform and, with glowing earnestness declared that he would be on the side of the people. That young man lived to become one of the Queen's ministers. The Right Hon. A. J. Mundella has ever laboured in the cause to which he so early and so disinterestedly devoted himself.

The page following this bright one is blotted and smirched. Out of spite to the Whigs the Chartists supported the Tories. Naturally the former did their best to suppress a foe so malicious. The Leicester Corporation was Whig, and employed the same printer as the *Illuminator*, he must make his choice, and so the *Illuminator* was extinguished. Cooper went to a little Tory

printer and started the *Chartist Rushlight*. Then he threw himself into the coming election, and 30*l.* in Tory money was given him to collect a few determined men on the day of nomination. The determined men came, and in the scrimmage destroyed the Whig flags which were of silk and had cost 70*l.* But in the middle of the function some one dropped an immense extinguisher over Thomas Cooper.

The next is a page of mourning. On the 1st of August in the same year his mother died. It was her birthday and she was seventy-one years old. Thomas Cooper's feelings are expressed in the following lines:

I laid her near the dust
Of her oppressor; but no gilded verse
Tells how she toiled to win her child a crust,
And, fasting, still toiled on; no rhymes rehearse
How tenderly she strove to be the nurse
Of truth and nobleness in her loved boy,
Spite of his rags.

Things in Leicester looked hopeless, the adult school was closed, the men being too despairing to care about learning. They had to pawn everything, and Cooper himself ran into debt that he might let the poor have bread on credit. These things gave bitterness to his harangues, and the hopeless atheism of the sufferers crept into his own heart.

Elected a delegate to the Chartist conference at Manchester, he determined to pass through the pottery district. On his way there he found things in a ferment, and every day he addressed meetings at which many thousands of men were present. On the 15th of August he presided at a meeting at Hanley at which it was determined no more work should be done until the Charter became law.

Arrested on his return to Leicester and thrown into prison on a charge of aiding a riot in Hanley, at which arson had been committed, he was tried on October 11th, and acquitted. He had no barrister, but defended himself.

The authorities, however, were determined he should not escape, and he was now charged with conspiracy and sedition. While awaiting this second trial he took part in a conference at Manchester between the Complete Suffrage Party, led by Joseph Sturge, and the two sections of Chartists, led by Feargus O'Connor and William Lovett. Cooper followed the former. In March, 1843, he was put again in the dock, and again defended himself, making a speech of ten hours in length. Points of law being raised he had to go up to London, to the King's Bench, where he was sentenced by the judges to two years' imprisonment.

Subjected to the treatment of a felon in Stafford Gaol, refused pen, ink, and paper, or permission to write a letter, he determined to break down the prison rules. At last he succeeded in getting a letter read to the House of Commons and so procuring a great change in his treatment. Among his visitors was the Earl of Harrowby, who entered into conversation with him about the study of Hebrew. One day the

chaplain told him that if he would give up politics he might go from Stafford Gaol to Cambridge. How often had he longed for University training, and now, alas, he could not accept it. Amidst agonising attacks of neuralgia, rheumatism, etc., occasioned by his damp cell and his passionate struggles, he wrote the poem already alluded to—the “Purgatory of Suicides,” and a series of tales which he called “Stories from the Midlands and Elsewhere,” subsequently published under the title “Wise Saws and Modern Instances.”

Carlyle found indisputable traces of genius in the poem, “a dark Titanic energy of struggling there, for which he hoped there would be clearer daylight by-and-by.” Cooper’s idea of making the spirits of suicides the actors or conversors in a great poem was a venturesome idea, but the subject needed a Dante.

On his release Cooper went to London and saw T. S. Duncombe who sent him to Disraeli. The author of “Coningsby,” “with eyes like living lights,” was very friendly, giving him introduction after introduction, none of which, however, bore any fruit.

Douglas Jerrold was the first to be of real service to him, finding him a publisher for his poem, and sending him on an expedition through the country to collect information on the industrial, moral and social state of the people. When in Westmoreland he visited Wordsworth, who astonished him by telling him that he thought the Chartists quite right in what they asked, but wrong in the way they went about it. Among other distinguished people Cooper came to know at this time he mentions particularly Emerson and De Quincey.

In 1847, W. J. Fox asked him to take his place temporarily at South Place, Finsbury, and on Sunday evenings at the National Hall. In the same year he was invited to lecture at John Street Institution, Tottenham Court Road. In the autumn of 1847 he joined the International, and had the opportunity of being instructed by Mazzini, who, Cooper says, months before it occurred, prophesied the coming of the great European convulsions of 1848. Cooper himself was entirely out of the 10th of April, having learnt to distrust Feargus O’Connor and physical-force Chartism.

We must pass over the stages of his subsequent career as lecturer and author; referring those who are interested in his life to his own “Autobiography,” published by Hodder and Stoughton. The last of his movements has for us the most enduring interest.

He was engaged in 1856 to deliver a series of lectures at the Hall of Science, on “Various countries, their productions and peoples.” He had given “Russia and the Russians,” and later he was to give “Sweden and the Swedes.” But when on the platform he could not utter a word of his lecture, but told his audience he must relieve conscience by confessing to them that he had neglected to teach the right foundation of morals; the existence of a Moral Governor,

and the fact that we have to give up our account to Him, and receive our sentence in a future state.

The audience heard him in breathless silence, broken at last by whispers, angry sneers and contemptuous jeers, ending in tumultuous talk: some defending, some denouncing, loud cries finally rising of, “Insane!” “Apostate!” “Traitor!” Thomas Cooper folded his arms and waited until the storm abated, and then offered on a future occasion to debate the argument for the existence of God, and of a future state with anyone they chose to appoint.

Thus he entered on that course of theological disputations, which now became the work of his life. In the new career his honesty, courage and generosity retained for him the goodwill of his most powerful opponent, Mr. G. J. Holyoake, for whose disinterested, consistent integrity, he had a corresponding respect. From Mr. Holyoake’s good-natured criticisms on “Cooper as Convert and Controversialist,” we get some characteristic touches. The old veteran’s irascibility and dogmatism, his willingness to display his learning, his pedagogic way of bringing down his ferule on trifling misquotations, and other lapses of memory. He had himself a marvellous memory, and that Mr. Holyoake says was the reason he refused his opponent the use of books, and betrayed such a horror of black bags. But in the main his fairness was exemplary, for his severity was as likely to fall on friend as foe.

His return to faith was slow, in fact it was two years before he could conscientiously and truly say that he was a Christian. The Rev. Dr. Jobson, to whom his “Life,” is dedicated, appears to have been the friend who helped him most at this time.

At the end of six months he began to teach Theism at the Hall of Science. Commencing with the design-argument, and the moral government of God, he came to the evidences of Christianity, and at last to the doctrines of the gospel. We imagine he was rarely beaten in argument, but that at the same time he seldom convinced any but those who already were convinced. He himself came to doubt the good of these debates on the evidences, and in the end gave up his time entirely to preaching Christianity in the ordinary way.

After having had links with the Society of Friends, with the Methodists, both Primitive and Wesleyan, with the Independents, and the Church of England he was led in the end to unite himself with the Baptists, being immersed on Whit-Sunday 1859, by one of the friends of his youth. In 1858 he commenced itinerant work, believing that God had laid the duty upon him, and would provide for his wants, which was done, as long as he was in active service for Christ. In the course of his ministry he visited every county of England, and many of Scotland and Wales, preaching and lecturing in every town of importance in Great Britain, and in some, many times. At last he broke down, and old and new friends combined to render easy his declining years by a small life annuity. Latterly he obtained a pension, which he lived only a year to enjoy.

WEARY WOMEN.

BY MRS. G. S. REANEY.

"A GOOD woman's path," says Ruskin, "is full of flowers, but they are all behind her!" a thought akin to the old legend that gave to a certain woman-saint a pathway of thorns, which, as she passed along with steady and firm step, blossomed under her feet into roses. A beautiful and tender suggestion! Who does not know by experience, that trials long dreaded but courageously met at the time, in a way quite unaccountable and full of mystery, became blessings of untold worth. David said, "Thy clouds drop fatness," and how many a tried heart has proved the fact over and over again!

* * * * *

She was the merriest of the merry, a light-hearted girl, a laughter-loving woman. She had many friends, and an unlimited number of admirers. Amongst these she lived and moved, as one beloved for her brightness and enjoyed for her splendid gifts of sunny-hearted service. Only the weary-hearted turned from her with a sigh. Her brightness was to them as the sun shining on a day when death was in the house and the blinds were down. A dull and cloudy day would have been more in accord with the feeling of those who spoke in whispers and trod softly, awed by the presence of death. The brighter, laughter-loving woman did her part in life, but her work was circumscribed, her sphere limited.

In due time all life was changed to her. Home sorrows gathered, health grew enfeebled, one by one the children given were taken back to Heaven, and that laughter-loving woman of the past seemed to be broken-hearted and forlorn. Only for a little while, until her heart has hushed its beating, and could hear the heavenly Father's voice; only until her tear-filled eyes, in older days so satisfied with earthly scenes and beauties, glanced upwards through the mist of sorrow and saw afar off, but strangely real, an outline of the form of "the King in His beauty;" then the saddened woman realised for herself the text with which she had been for long familiar—"the things seen are temporal, the things unseen are eternal." Why fret and grieve over the loss of the less when the greater was hers in all its increasing weight and expanding fulness? She might at that time have said with the poet—

Sitting alone in the shadow
Of a grief that was all mine own,
Silently thinking it over,
Silently making moan.
Sudden there swept the music
Of a gladness great and deep,
Over the chords of feeling,
Till my heart forgot to weep.

"Because of Thy loving kindness!"
The words stole into my brain,
Like a cool hand soothing its fever
And charming away the pain:
"Because of Thy loving kindness,
Better than life to me!"
My life shall be keyed to the measure
Of praise unchecked and free!

* * * * *

Better than friends and kindred—
Better than love and rest,
Dearer than hope and triumph
Is the Name I wear on my breast!
I feel my way through the shadows,
With a confident heart and brave;
I shall live in the light beyond them—
I shall conquer death and the grave!

It was then that her mission expanded, her sphere of usefulness enlarged. Taught herself in God's school of suffering, she could help young beginners with their lessons. Her life was what the world calls "a hidden one," hidden away amid homely duties of every-day toil, hidden away amongst the so-called unpicturesque common-places of even, monotonous, uneventful weeks and months, and years. But is it not the hidden springs of the earth that keep our world so fresh and fertile? We have one Niagara, we have ten thousand hidden springs, the world sings the praises of the one, and is utterly unmindful of all it owes to the other. Thus with these hidden lives, the world does not recognise them as "workers," but are they not "workers together with God" in being His Light in the dark places of the earth—His Love where much is hard and selfish and cruel—His patience, His forbearance, His hopefulness where restlessness and intolerance and despondency threaten to molest and destroy human lives, without God and without hope in the world?

The one of whom we speak was what every true believer in Christ may become. Her life, like Mary who received her Master's commands at the open sepulchre on that Easter morn, was charged with a message to tell to others that He had risen from the dead, and she gave that message in what she was, even more than in what she said or did.

Weary ones, take heart! Things seen are temporal, belonging to time which passes away. It is with the unseen, the eternal you have to do. You will find all you need at the Cross of Christ—penitence, pardon, peace, power, purpose, possibility, privilege. This is that inner life which no outside circumstances or conditions can touch or molest. Do not linger, or lose time; claim what is yours in Him, "Whom to know is life

eternal," "through Whom we have access unto the Father," "with whom He, the Father, doth freely give us all things."

What are the passing trials of the passing hour when compared with the lastingly secure possession of the true child of God? Supposing thorns do bestrew our path, having faith in God we bravely step upon them, and lo! they are roses, fragrant flowers to gladden other hearts and lives. Our triumphant walk over difficulties, gives some thought of help and comfort to those around us, and makes Heaven more real, and faith in God more to be desired. How differently the days would pass, if we believed this and lived it. Each day would be complete, a little lifetime of twenty-four hours. First the dawn with its sacrifice of praise and prayer, then the noon-tide of work, always done in God's presence, the evening hour of rest after labour, and night with its "hush" and silence when in peace we lay ourselves down to sleep knowing that the Eternal Father is with us to make us dwell in safety.

If this be true, why are Christian women so heart-weary? Why does life drag to them?

Because, while they acknowledge a belief in all the promises of the Bible, they have not personally claimed them for themselves.

The incident of the Bible marked with the letters T. and P. has been often told—"Tried and Proved" they meant. There was a history in all those promises. Once they were just beautiful things to be admired—and they gladdened the eyes as they read and passed on, and nothing more; but when the soul claimed them one by one and made them its own—then they became a part of the life. "Neighbour," said the dying woman to the one to whom she had given this well-marked Bible, "each of us must try and prove for ourselves." As the aged saint folded her hands she whispered with a radiant smile, "Not one thing hath failed of all His promises."

They were her last words, and they may be ours, if we, too, test the promises which are of God—hence *cannot* fail.

A MYSTERIOUS LETTER.

CHAPTER II.



UPERT
and
Vera
did not
go out
to play
at all that
entire day.
They were
far too much
frightened and
unhappy to
stir from the
house, and re-

mained, when auntie was not with them, sitting together in a cosy corner of the school-room.

What was to be done, was their one thought. What did it all mean? The very thought of being given up into the hands of the gipsies was too terrible.

At the same time, as Rupert kept constantly saying, it was certainly a fact—there could not be any doubt at all about the matter—that they were both to be taken away, next Thursday too, by those dreadful people. They must run away, they both decided; get out of the place as fast as possible before Thursday came.

Run away! Yes, yes; though that was all well enough, and easy enough also to say—but how was it to be managed? That was the puzzle.

"What a good thing we found the letter, and that I read it, too," exclaimed the dismayed Rupert, as soon as he had recovered from his first shock. "Else we should never have known anything at all about it."

Vera, however, was so much frightened that she half wished in her heart they had neither of them ever come across the letter in question, and in fact, said as much.

But Rupert pronounced her to be a stupid girl for saying so, as he added, "I suppose you would rather, then, have remained here, and been taken away on Thursday, whether you liked it or not. Ridiculous."

And Vera began almost to think the same of herself. How miserable she felt no one but herself could ever tell.

"Lucky I could read, wasn't it?" demanded Rupert, with no little air of self-conceit.

"Perhaps it would have been better if you couldn't," returned Vera, dolefully.

Somehow she could not help feeling that something in the matter was very, very wrong.

"Why, you're ridiculous again," broke in Rupert.

The children had been too much scared, so far, even to think of returning the letter to auntie; but now another thought had entirely taken possession of Vera's mind. It came to her quite suddenly.

"I don't believe that letter—tiresome old thing—was ever auntie's at all, Rupert. It couldn't be. Why, good old Auntie Madge—she wouldn't let the gipsies have us, I'm sure of that, not for the whole world."

"I've been wondering myself, too, about that part of the business," and Rupert started now, as if waking up from some very uncomfortable dream.

"No! she's far too sweet for that, however strict she may be," and Vera looked thoroughly unhappy as she spoke. "I wonder we didn't both think of that before."

"But, then, if it isn't her's, whose is it?"

And then, as if by a sudden impulse, they both started to their feet. The matter should be a secret no longer.

Whether they were to be captured by the gipsies or not next Thursday, they would confide everything at once to Auntie Madge; for, of course, it couldn't have been one of her letters. That was certain. Away rushed both children upstairs; but their errand was all in vain. Aunt Madge

could not possibly be disturbed that evening. She had other important letters to write, arrangements to make for next Thursday; and nurse must attend to Rupert and Vera until bed-time, had been the message, should they require any special attention.

Arrangements to make for next Thursday! The children became pale again even as they listened to the words that fell. What could all this mystery possibly mean, they wondered.

Oh, if Auntie Madge would only come out herself and speak to them, if it was but for ten minutes. But no; she must not be disturbed on any account. And auntie's word was always law in that household.

The frightened children crept sadly to bed that night, and gladly forgot themselves in sleep.

The following morning auntie was suddenly called away from home. An old friend had been taken ill and wished to see her as soon as possible. When she would be able to return home she could not exactly promise. She kissed her "dear children," as she always called them, tenderly, and then drove away in the carriage which was waiting.

Meanwhile Vera and Rupert, who had not found a single opportunity of talking with Aunt Madge on the subject that now troubled them so sorely, had made up their plans, fully, how to act.

Yes; they had quite decided. They would not mention a word of the matter to either cook or nurse. Somehow Vera thought it was better not to do so. Possibly one, or it might be both of them, knew something about the plan of which they had themselves so lately heard. Then, if auntie returned on Wednesday evening, they would instantly take possession of her, and shew her the letter; casting all their trouble, in fact, into her hands. If she did not arrive by that time, they must simply take the matter into their own hands and run away that very evening. Thus at any rate reasoned the frightened children.

Wednesday evening arrived, true to date, but no Auntie Madge. There was a hasty post-card from her, however, saying that she hoped to be with them early the next morning—possibly before eight o'clock, the card said.

They would be surely safe until then, the anxious children thought. They would not stir out of doors an inch, and, surely, if she came thus early, all would be well.

What, then, were their feelings when at seven o'clock next morning, when they had scarcely risen, there came a thundering rat-tat-too at the front door, and nurse came into the room, saying that a gentleman and a young lady—a most pretty young lady, too, she added—wished at once to see both the children.

"We can't go. Oh, nurse—dear good nurse—please say so for us!" whispered Vera entreatingly.

Whilst Rupert pretended to look very defiant and brave, though, in reality, he was quaking in his shoes, as people say.

"Why I never heard of such nonsense, or of such bad manners, either. I can't tell what to make of you, children. You ought both to know better. Make haste and dress yourselves prettily, I say, and run downstairs to greet the lady and gentleman.

But Vera's hands trembled so much that she could hardly do the least thing for herself. And then a sweet, well-known voice was heard upon the staircase, and footsteps advanced nearer and nearer.

Never had auntie been so warmly welcomed in all her life. She had slipped in quietly by the back garden-gate, and then stolen upstairs on purpose to surprise the children, and now positively clung to her with delight.

"Be quick, and come downstairs quickly," she said, but

in a voice that trembled somewhat. "Your father, who has not seen either of you since you were babies almost, only reached England five days ago, and is already waiting in the drawing-room to welcome his pets. He says he sent a short note here, simply saying they would fetch you to-day, but such note never reached me. I only received a letter saying how he longed to meet his children again."

This, then, was why Auntie Madge had been so tempted to cry when reading her letters that morning when we first saw her. She could not bear the thought of parting.

Only a few minutes later on, and Rupert and Vera were both standing, shyly, as was perhaps only natural, by the side of their handsome, and also delighted-looking father.

As he says, they are certain to love Gipsy, the orphan niece whom he has brought up, and who prefers that name to the one given to her by her parents. Yes; they are sure to be good friends with Gipsy. Everyone likes her.

And Gipsy, as Vera thinks, has the most beautiful winning face she has ever seen.

This, then, is the end of the story.

Rupert and Vera both feel horribly ashamed of themselves. They have, however, learned one very good lesson, not to jump to hasty conclusions, by which injustices may be done, and useless fears cherished. Also they see that it is better never to open, much less read, a letter that belongs to some one else; and, before they went to sleep that night, they did not forget to thank their Heavenly Father for having preserved them from further rashness. They shuddered to think what might have been the consequences had they actually run away from their loving friends.

ANSWER TO BURIED TEXT.

NO. IV.—p. 686.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.—1 John v. 4.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE VERSE.

NO. III.—p. 720.

And after this Joseph of Arimathæa, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.—John xix. 38.

Luke xxiii. 50, 51. Secretly: Nicodemus. John iii. 1, 2. Joseph: Psa. lxxvii. 15; Acts vii. 9; John iv. 5. Arimathæa: See Matt. xxvii. 57; Mark xv. 42; Luke xxiii. 50. "For fear of the Jews": "The body of Jesus": Joseph, Jesus and Pilate: Pontius Pilate: Matt. xxvii. 2; Luke iii. 1; Acts iv. 27; 1 Tim. vi. 13; Luke xiii. 1; Matt. xxvii. 19-26.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XXXI.—p. 768.—SHEPHERD.—John x. 11.

S amaria		{ 2 Kings vii. 1, 2; Acts viii. 5-8. [18.
H ebron.		2 Sam. ii. 1-7; Gen. xiii.
E phosus		Acts xix. 1, 2, 23.
P hilippi		Acts xvi. 12, 31, 22.
H oreb		1 Kings xix. 8, 9.
E numaus		Luke xxiv. 13, 28, 29, 35.
R amah		1 Sam. viii. 4, 5; vii. 17.
D amascus		Acts ix. 10, 16, 29.