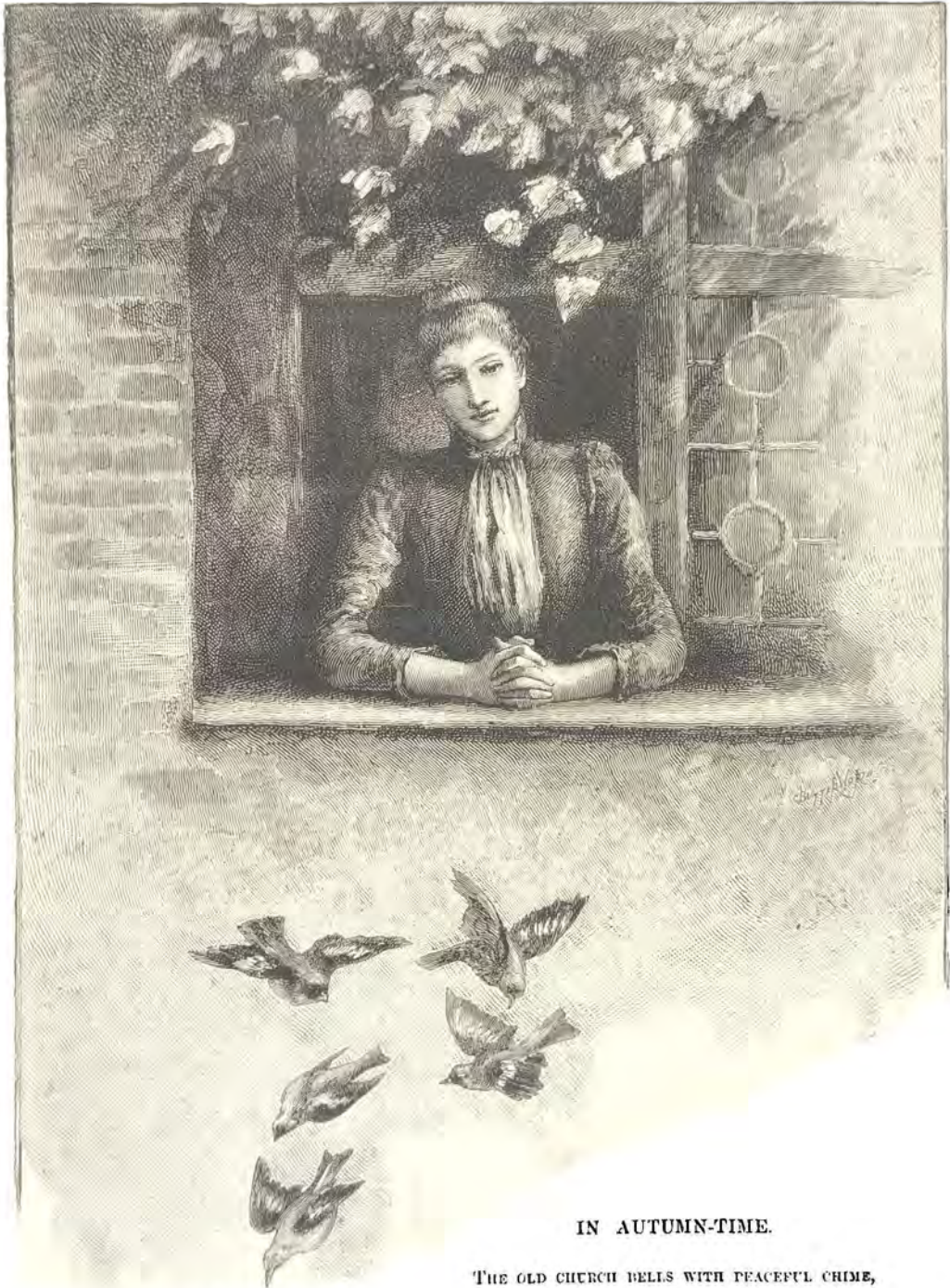


THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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



IN AUTUMN-TIME.

THE OLD CHURCH BELLS WITH PEACEFUL CHIME,
JUST AS IN JUNE, ARE CALLING, CALLING.



October.

THE skies are blue as skies in June,
Grass, green as June's, fringes the river
Whose voice still keeps its summer tune,
While, as in June, grey willows shiver.

The old church bells with peaceful chime,
Just as in June, are calling; calling;
And yet it is the autumn-time,
And red and golden leaves are falling.

Along the sun-kissed riverway
No whisper breathes of loss or sorrow;
Yet summer died—like yesterday,
Winter is certain as to-morrow.

Ah—but spring too? Need autumn grieve
To read the end of summer's story;
The faithful earth, we know, will weave,
From winter's thorns, spring's crown of glory.

And we—the flowers life's summer wore,
Which autumn bids our hearts surrender—
Do we not know they bloom once more
In the eternal spring-time's splendour?

A STORY OF WAITING.

CHAPTER VII.

IT was not till some time afterwards, that I heard the details of that night's work. For though the facts got into the papers after the inquest I had not the heart to read them thus baldly stated. It appears that Mr. Donaldson was not unknown to the thieves, for his reputation had spread among those who were not personally acquainted with him, and when he first asked for admission into the room where two were sitting together it was readily granted him. And so he went in and fell into conversation with them in his usual manner when he called upon people. He often paid his visits to the poor in the evening when there was a chance of finding the men at home, and his unvarying tact, and the consciousness they had that he had come to gain nothing for himself, saved him as a rule even from insult. He made himself an acquaintance, then a friend, then a helper; for he chose to work on his own lines and they were almost invariably successful. He was very good company, so that the men, though they found his presence embarrassing on this particular evening, were not averse to it provided he should not stay long. But though under ordinary circumstances his visit would have been of very short duration and only the introduction to more serious work, he was obliged to speak out to-night and let them know that he was in the secret of their threatened burglary. I do not know how he made them aware that this was the case. He had stopped thefts before by threats of disclosure, perhaps he used the same means. The men received the news differently. One appears to have been mainly anxious to discover who it was that had enlightened him, believing, not unnaturally, that there was a traitor among them,

for the gang was not a small one; his suspicions of course did not attach themselves to the old woman upstairs, of whose existence the burglars were indeed aware, though not of her habits, nor of her possible connection with Mr. Donaldson or any other creature to whom she would be likely to betray them.

The other man was surly, said little, but regarded Mr. Donaldson with sullen, ominous eyes. "I have warned you," said the latter. "And now you can do as you please. If you abandon this scheme it will be better for you. If you determine to go on with it I shall speak to the police, and then you must look to yourselves."

The men talked a little while together. Then one, the more amiable of the two, said:

"I see you're trying to act square by us. But we ain't goin' to be bullied out of earnin' our living. We intend goin' on with the job, and I wouldn't advise you to interfere with us."

"You are determined?" said Mr. Donaldson taking up his hat from the rough dirty table.

Perhaps something in his manner made the man waver in his resolve. At that minute steps were heard coming up the stairs, and almost directly the door was flung open. The spokesman laid his hand on Mr. Donaldson's arm and pulled him back into the room.

"Stop a second," he said, "We may as well take another opinion, eh, Bill?"

The other muttered some unintelligible reply, and the last speaker moved aside and greeted the new-comer. "Why," he exclaimed, "If it ain't Gentleman Dick."

The person who was thus accosted, and who had evidently not been expected, stopped short

and remained by the entrance in the semi-darkness as if transfixed. Mr. Donaldson was close to the oil-lamp, so that its light fell full upon his face which was turned towards the door. It was barely possible for him to distinguish what the stranger was like, though he felt some curiosity; the man's hat was pulled low on his brow, and the gloom alone sufficed to render his features indistinct, and to conceal the startled expression of his countenance, the sudden dilating of his eyes and the instantaneous change in his complexion.

He did not heed the salutation of his comrade, nor appear conscious of his presence till the latter forcibly attracted his attention. Then he submitted to being led on one side while the man, in a whisper which was perfectly audible to Mr. Donaldson, told him who the intruder was and for what purpose he had come. Mr. Donaldson, not being unaccustomed to scenes of this description, and being in no way alarmed, calmly awaited the verdict. It was some little time before the one consulted spoke at all, and Mr. Donaldson was conscious that his gaze was eagerly fixed upon himself. He remained looking down, with an indifference partly real, partly feigned.

"Come," said the thief impatiently, "you might say how it strikes you. We can't wait here all night." "I am not one of you," replied the new-comer. His voice had a strained, harsh sound.

"Well, you've kept us company before now. And you ain't usually so chary of your advice. I put it to yer, because Bill and I don't hold quite the same opinion, and a third party's views is sometimes acceptable. You just came in the nick of time."

"Throw it up, now and altogether, for God's sake," said the man hoarsely, and like one in a dream, "but as you are not alone I will go again."

"Oh, I forgot you'd turned Methody," growled the burglar, detaining him, "but I know you daren't split on us."

"Give it up!" repeated Gentleman Dick, in the same hoarse voice, "and let me go!"

He pushed aside the housebreaker's arm with a hand that trembled like that of a drunkard. Mr. Donaldson, discerning from his manner and his answers, that though he was the associate of thieves, he was as he had said, "not one of them," hoped to find in him an effective ally, and accordingly moved a step towards him in order to speak to him himself.

At his motion, the man who had been sitting close to the fire, with his sullen eyes fixed on Mr. Donaldson, and who had maintained his sinister silence and impassibility, now slightly shifted his position, and drew from his breast something which flashed for an instant in the firelight.

This man was of a low type; poverty and semi-starvation had led him to a life of dishonesty. He had seen his wife die of want, and he who has once become desperate will be henceforward swift to act. He trusted "Gentleman Dick," but knew the other would interfere unless

silenced. He had nothing to lose that was of any value to him. We learnt much about him afterwards.

"I wish to tell you," began Mr. Donaldson quietly, "that I seek to act fairly by these men——"

There was a cry followed by a click and a loud report, as the stranger rushed forward with outstretched arms.

"No! No," he cried, "Not *that* man!—He is my father!"

It was a groan which interrupted the avowal, and the wounded man fell backwards into the arms of that father—shot through the heart.

Thus it was that Mr. Donaldson's son was given back to him after fifteen years of waiting.

I like to believe, with Mr. Donaldson himself, that he knew that he was forgiven and loved none the less, though his eyes never saw the earthly father's face as it bent above him, but looked instead on the face of the Father in heaven whose forgiveness and whose love exceeded and included his.

The murderer, scarcely waiting to realise the extent of the mischief he had done, conscious only that he had shot the wrong man, fled away. It was his companion who helped Mr. Donaldson to bring home the body, himself so much impressed by what he had witnessed, that he put himself willingly under the influence of the "thieves' friend," so that this night was the turning point in his life and the beginning of a new era.

It was through this man that Mr. Donaldson obtained his son's address. He asked for it, not knowing to whom he would have to communicate what had happened, or who might have claims upon himself.

There was only little Louie.

My revelation of a knowledge of her existence was a stimulus to action. He must have gone at once and almost before dawn to the house where he expected to obtain news of Eric and any connected with him, for it was not yet the breakfast hour when he returned with the child.

He had found her asleep, and happily ignorant of her father's absence. The woman who let the lodgings informed Mr. Donaldson, who was obliged to tell her what was necessary, that the child and the man had come to her about three weeks previously, and that, except the slight help she herself gave, the father did everything for the little girl, to whom he seemed very devoted, and who had apparently neither mother nor nurse.

From this person many details were gathered which strengthened the poor father in his belief that the prodigal son was in truth returning to the Heavenly Father's house, when the earthly father met him. But shame for his past wrongdoing made him seek to avoid that very tenderness which watched for him night and day.

To this day I do not know who Louie's mother was, or if she be living or dead. But I do know that the child was not suffered to feel the want of her, and that now she is a woman her greatest happiness is to talk of her grandfather, and of

the days in Blandford Square with him, and the blind aunt to whom in later years she was so devoted a companion. Long before that time arrived I had been called away from my work there to watch by Babbie's bedside, as her life ebbed from her, and to fill imperfectly the place which was left empty, doing the humble tasks she had beautified by love, and learning to wait in humility and patience till I was called to something different.

Mr. Donaldson did not tell the little girl that her father was dead. He brought her away in the belief that she would see him. She had no fear of the stranger. All children loved Mr. Donaldson instinctively. But exactly, how he won her confidence and induced her to accompany him so quietly and happily I cannot say. He brought her straight to me, and bade me take off the little hat and pelisse in which I had first seen her. She was delighted to see the "pretty lady" whom she recognised, and who had apparently made a deep impression on her fancy.

The bell rang as I was unfastening the child's cloak, she meanwhile chattering excitedly, and quite without shyness. Doubtless in her short existence frequent changes had familiarised her with altered circumstances, so that they did not cause her great wonder. For me, I could hardly realise how few hours had really passed, so quickly had one event followed another. We all went down together. I had been holding Louie's hand, but when we came to the locked door of that room Mr. Donaldson stooped down and lifted her into his arms. She submitted to being carried, merely remarking with an air of injured pride:

"I can walk quite well, thank you."

Miss Janet was awaiting us, looking, I thought, unusually pale and anxious.

Mr. Donaldson, still holding little Louie, who had grown suddenly silent, went up and kissed her, saying in a voice that he tried vainly to steady:

"Janet, there is a golden-haired waif here that wants some breakfast."

"I do," said a small shrill voice; "I am dreadfully hungry."

Miss Janet smiled, and held out her arms for the child.

"Who is she?"

"A little orphan."

Miss Janet sat down, with Louie in her lap, and began to feel the face and soft hair, the child watching her with wide wondering eyes. "Where did she come from, David?"

He looked at me, being unable himself to answer her.

"Dear Miss Janet, she is the child of him who was brought here last night."

These words, coupled with his answer to her last question, sufficed for Miss Janet's quick intelligence.

"You were right to fetch her, David," she said, adding, "Poor fellow!" in a lower tone.

"And so you are hungry, little maiden? Give her a chair, Molly, by me. What is your name, dearie?"

"Louie."

"What else?"

"I don't know, Louie," was the answer, and then she fell to work on the bread-and-butter Mr. Donaldson had put on her plate.

Neither of us could eat. We could only wait for the next question. But Miss Janet did not seem eager to ask more. She talked to the child, charmed with her, for she was passionately fond of children; and had often said that, but for her blindness, she would have adopted one. Presently she said, delightedly, in French:

"David, she speaks like a little lady, does she not?"

"Quite," he answered.

"And what is she like?"

Again his eyes called upon me to answer. "She is very pretty," I said, also in French; "and has a pale, fair, little face, with dark eyes, and her hair clusters round it in golden curls. And when she smiles she has dimples."

"Why are you looking at me?" asked Louie of me, solemnly; for in order to be accurate, I was gazing at her critically.

Miss Janet laughed.

"It is rude to stare, isn't it, dear?" she said.

"My papa says so. Where is my papa?" she asked, suddenly, recalled to recollection of him. "You said I should see him."

And now for the first time her lip drooped ominously.

"Oh David," said Miss Janet, sorrowfully. "You will have to make her understand."

"You said I should see my papa," repeated the poor mite wistfully, and now the tears were very, very near.

Mr. Donaldson rose and came to her. Then he took her in his arms, and carried her out of the room.

I was afraid to be left alone with Miss Janet, so I stole after them.

"I can't stay," I said. "How could I tell her?"

"Louie will tell her," Mr. Donaldson answered.

"We shall be back very soon."

And they went upstairs.

They did return before many minutes were past. The child's face was very grave and sweet, and she held a flower in her hand. At the door of the breakfast room Mr. Donaldson put her down.

"Now," he said, "go in, darling, and tell the lady what you have seen, because she is blind, and cannot see anything herself."

The little girl ran in.

We waited by the door.

She went up to Miss Janet, and pulled her dress.

"I have seen my papa," she said, in her lisping voice.

"Have you, dear. Tell me about it."

"I am going to tell you about it, because you can't see. He is asleep in the pretty room. And his papa gave me this flower for you, and said you were to get some more like it, because—" She hesitated over the unaccustomed word, "because—Eric is come home."

SOME OF THE OLD WELSH PREACHERS.

BY D. BURFORD HOOKE.

OWEN THOMAS, D.D.—JOHN THOMAS, D.D.—JOHN ELIAS.

ON page 505 of the present volume of the *SUNDAY AT HOME*, will be found a poem by Lewis Morris, entitled "At the Meeting Field." It will not be without interest to say that the "old man eloquent" to whom the poet refers was the Rev. OWEN THOMAS, D.D., whose name stands at the heading of this sketch. Since the first sketch was written Dr. Thomas has passed away, and now he has been followed by his younger brother, to whom reference was made in the same paper, the Rev. JOHN THOMAS, D.D. They were two of the foremost Welsh preachers of this century, and with their decease one of the last links between the old and new generations has been broken. They were men of unrivalled power, and the Welsh pulpit and the Welsh people are poorer because they are gone, though Welsh life has been ennobled because they lived.

Dr. Owen Thomas was born on 16th December, 1812, and thus was nearly nine years older than his brother, who was born on February 3, 1821. Holyhead was the birthplace of both, but owing to their parents removing in 1823 to Bangor, the younger brother spent his boyhood in the cathedral city on the banks of the Menai.

The parents, though poor, were among the salt of the earth. His mother was a "sweet singer of Israel," and at one time her hymns were very popular at Welsh gatherings; but they were never collected, and as they only appeared in a fugitive form they passed away with her. The hymn book had not then come into general use in Welsh gatherings. She was a woman, it is said, of more than ordinary ability, and possessed a strong will. The father, who was deacon of a Calvinistic Methodist church, was a man of very devout and intense feeling; but he died comparatively young, so that the burden of the home-life became very heavy. As the oldest son, Owen resolved that a share of the burden should rest upon him, and he became a worker in the stone quarries. Meanwhile he had given evidence of being the possessor of very marked ability.

When a mere child he was proficient both in reading and writing. As only a few persons could at that time write their own letters, young Owen soon became the general letter writer. Though this work brought him little remuneration, yet it proved to be excellent training. It is said that he insisted on those who sought his help stating the substance of what they wished to have communicated, and thus he retained the liberty of writing the letter in his own way and in his own words. His mother, when living in Holyhead, journeyed to all parts of Anglesea to hear the great itinerant preachers of those days, taking her son with her. This, too, formed a

useful educational process, for the men and their methods, as well as their messages were discussed, and so Owen, early in life, began to realize the greatness of the true preacher. He began to take down the outline of the sermons to which he listened. This habit he continued for many years, and it used to be said that he was more particular, when a child, in writing down the sermons of others, than when he became a man in writing his own.

When his father died he was eighteen years of age, the oldest son of a family of eight children, so he had to work hard to support his widowed mother. Yet the cultivation of heart and mind went on. Whilst working in the Penrhyn Quarries his powers as a debater were tested. The dinner-hour was occupied with controversies on theological and ecclesiastical subjects. There is a story told that in one of these debates, Owen Thomas, who often took a leading part, pointed out the difference between natural and moral power, as it is explained by the Christian philosopher, and that without ever having read or heard the difference so explained; thus he gained a complete victory over his opponent. He rose at four every morning, winter and summer, devoting the hours before work to hard study. Some one gave him a copy of Jonathan Edwards on "The Will." This he read seven times, whilst pursuing his work as a mason! Mosheim's "Church History" he mastered one winter, in the early hours which preceded his daily work.

It soon became evident that God had a place for him in His service. The church to which he belonged recognized this, and called him to its ministry. Strange to say his first sermon was in the open air, and he became the prince of open air preachers. It was on "the meeting field" that he won his greatest victories, for over fifty years, he, like his brother, was a great *Cymanfa* preacher. The chapel which he attended was being rebuilt, and so the evening services were held in the open air, and there he preached his first sermon in 1834. The news of that sermon quickly spread; invitations to preach soon reached him from all parts of the district, and in 1838 he preached for the first time at a *Cymanfa* in Pembrokeshire. It may be of interest to note that at one of these gatherings, held in 1852, at Bangor, Charles Dickens was among the congregation. In writing an account of the service the great novelist expressed his opinion that no other living orator could have kept together such a vast concourse of people on such a broiling hot day "as that Welsh preacher. And," said he, "although I did not understand a single word he said, except the word 'Chalmers,' I could not tear myself away from the spot until the sermon

was over." A great tribute this to Dr. Thomas's power as an orator.

In 1838 he entered Bala College, being one of its first students. From Bala he went to Edinburgh, there he came under the influence of Dr. Chalmers and of Sir William Hamilton. Want of funds alone prevented him taking his degree. An incident connected with his University life, and that of a fellow student, John Parry, is worthy of record. At the close of their first session, they found to their dismay that they had not sufficient money left to take them home. They however were able to pay their way to Glasgow, and there they resolved to throw themselves on the good nature of the captain of the boat going to Liverpool. They told him that they were young Welshmen preparing for the ministry, but their funds were so low they had not sufficient to pay their fares. They asked if he would allow them to go by his boat, and on its arrival in Liverpool, one of them would remain on board with the joint luggage as security while the other went to procure the needful money. The shrewd but kind hearted captain, a Scotchman, consented, conditional on their promising to "obey orders." The promise was given. By-and-by the dinner bell was rung, much as they would have liked, the young Welshmen could not respond to it. Soon the captain sent for them with a request to "obey orders," by joining him at dinner; this they gladly did, and at the meals which followed. When Liverpool was reached they promptly prepared to carry out their bargain, but the captain released them with, "Gentlemen, you can both go ashore, together with your luggage, for I think I can trust you to return with the money." When later they returned he refused to accept a penny-piece from them; with a kindly smile he said, "Good-bye, gentlemen, accept of my hospitality, and may God bless you both."

Dr. Thomas was ordained in 1844 at Bangor. His first pastorate was at Pwllheli, thence he removed to Newtown, and in 1851 to London. In that great city he did a lasting work among the Welsh inhabitants—a work, the abiding influence of which is felt to this day. To the end of his life he was known in many parts of the Principality as "Owen Thomas, London." The late Thomas Jones used to declare that there were "only two preachers in London—Thomas Binney and Owen Thomas." When in London he occasionally preached in English, generally for Dr. James Hamilton, the then famous minister of Regent's Square Presbyterian Church. In 1865 he left London for Liverpool, became minister of what is locally known as "The Welsh Cathedral," in Princes Park Road. While he held those important pastorates outside Wales his intimate connection with the Principality remained. He attended nearly all the great association meetings, where his wise counsels were most helpful, and he was rarely absent from a *Cymanfa* platform.

He was a writer of the first rank. The Welsh language has no more charming biographies than his *Memoirs of John Jones, Talysarn*, and *Henry Rees*, while his *New Testament Commentaries* are

invaluable. One of his essays in *Y Traethodydd* on "Lampeter Theology," at the time of the "Essays and Reviews" controversy, attracted much attention, and the late Dr. Rowland Williams acknowledged that it was the only article on the subject, the writer of which clearly understood his position. He collected a magnificent library, one of the largest, it is said, which any minister ever possessed. He revelled in his books, yet he would leave his studies to preach to a few people in a mission room. He preached with all his soul the gospel of the grace of God. While the thoughtful and cultured were fascinated, yet "the common people heard him gladly." The Rev. Dr. Hughes, who had long and close friendship with him, said truly at his funeral that Dr. Thomas formed a right conception, a high ideal of what preaching should be and what it should aim at. In his earnest warning to the sinner to turn from the error of his ways, he was master of the assembly and unequalled in his personal appeal.

He died on August 2nd, 1891, from sheer exhaustion. The text of his last sermon gives the key to his life: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." To him Christ was all and in all.

DR. JOHN THOMAS in early life came under the influence of Dr. Arthur Jones, and while his brother continued a member of the communion to which their parents belonged, he himself joined the Congregational body and became one of its most honoured leaders. The necessities of the home compelled him to work so as to help his mother in meeting the claims of her family. He was so placed as to hear much that was said on both sides in theological disputes which just then were occupying the thoughts of Welshmen. This led him to read everything he could get bearing upon the points in dispute. In the end he left the denomination in which he had been trained. About the same time the temperance question was being pressed to the front, the first meeting ever held in Wales for the advocacy of total abstinence was held in Bangor, May 5th, 1835. This young Thomas attended, and at the end affixed his name to the total abstinence pledge. The deed was characteristic of the man, for in those days few movements were more unpopular, especially in a city like Bangor, than the cause of temperance. But throughout his life Dr. Thomas never asked if a movement was popular; but always, "Is it right?" If he was convinced of its righteousness, at all costs he supported it. He used to urge the claims of such movements upon the Christian Church, maintaining, to quote his own words, that "no religious body can secure itself in the affections of a nation unless it takes interest in those questions which the people think belong to their political liberty and their social elevation." The pledge thus taken in boyhood was faithfully kept to the very close of life. Dr. Thomas publicly acknowledged on several occasions that, under God, he owed everything in life to the simple act of signing the temperance pledge.

The church at Bangor, of which he was a

member, soon recognised his ability. In 1839, when eighteen years old, he preached for the first time. Three years later (June 15th, 1842), he was ordained to the ministry and recognised as pastor of the church at Bwlchneydd, in Carmarthenshire. The intervening period was spent in preparation at Marton School, Salop, and at the Ffrwdvale Academy.

Like his brother, he soon became popular as a preacher, for in the year following his ordination he was a "*Pregethwr Cymanfa*"—an Association preacher—an honour never before or since bestowed on so young a man. But that position he held to the end. It is said that he preached at no less than 120 "*Cymanfaoedd*;" often twice or thrice, and generally in the open air—a service unique in the history of his denomination, equally only by the service which his brother rendered to Welsh Methodism. It was, however, but a small part of his labours in this direction. Altogether he preached not less than 13,000 times, being an average of 250 times a year for fifty years. Of the nearly 1000 Welsh chapels belonging to the Congregational body, it is said that there is not one in which he had not preached.

The opinion which the old minister gave, quoted on page 504, as to modern ministers coaxing the people and not facing them as did the old prophets, who came direct from the mountains, with "Thus saith the Lord," cannot be applied to Dr. Thomas. He once declared that whilst it was true as to the fearless declaration of the old preachers, yet he could not admit that it was correct as to the "coaxing" of the generation to which he belonged. His words uttered nearly twelve years ago in Mid-Wales deserved to be placed on record. "The old men," he said, "preached the truth as it is in Jesus without any hesitation, and they brought every truth to centre in His Cross. Their hearts were burning with the love of Christ and a strong desire to save souls. The Word of God was in them as a burning fire shut up in their bones, and they could not stay. They felt that necessity was laid upon them, and that woe would be to them if they preached not the Gospel. They cared nothing for their pay, because preaching was their meat and drink; and they would not be bribed to be silent." "It is all very well, he added, that others think of paying a minister, but the true preacher forgets all such things because of the delight which he has in his work." In such words he truly described himself. He toiled most unselfishly, making no pecuniary gain, anxious only for the advancement of God's kingdom.

Like his brother he was called upon to fill the highest office in his denomination, first in Wales and then in England. Probably he achieved his greatest success as an orator in delivering his address from the chair of the Welsh Union. His subject was "Denominational Theology," and so powerfully did it impress his hearers, that, like the speaker, they lost themselves in the theme. Its effects have been described as "electrical," for when the speaker's voice was hushed, the audience gave vent to its feelings in a most re-

markable manner, and it was only with great difficulty that the business of the Assembly could be resumed.

He was also a voluminous contributor to the vernacular press, and it would be impossible to make anything like an adequate list of his writings. Among his works may be mentioned his "*History of the Temperance Movement*," several volumes of sermons, *Memoirs of Rev. John Davies and Dr. Thomas Rees*. With the latter he edited the "*History of the Independent Churches of Wales*," in four large volumes, to which he added a fifth a few months ago. For upwards of twenty-five years he edited *ŷ Tyet*, a weekly denominational paper, the first page of which was usually occupied with notes from his pen, signed "*Lladmerydd*." These notes were regarded as among the best of their kind, they were written in chaste language, and in excellent spirit on all kinds of subjects. It was said of a well-known Welsh bishop, that in the town where he resided, prior to his appointment to the episcopacy, he weekly sought in its public reading room to see what "*Lladmerydd*" had written, regarding his notes as both interesting and valuable.

To do justice to his character some reference should be made to his position as a political leader. Men might differ from him, but his leadership they readily acknowledged. But his politics he subordinated to that which is far higher and more important. The writer well remembers him saying in the presence of several members of Parliament, that Welsh Nonconformists "existed not for political, but for religious purposes—not as a political but as a religious power. That power had made Wales what it was, and that power alone could help it in the future."

A few months ago the jubilee of his ministry was celebrated. Men of all denominations gathered, and abundant proof was borne that he had not lived in vain. Though allowed to attend the celebration he was forbidden to take part, one of his sons, therefore, read the reply which he had prepared. One sentence which he had penned referred to the thousands whom he had received into Christian fellowship, and in it there occurred these words, "with this hand." Instinctively as the sentence was read he raised the thin worn hand, which so many of his church members had grasped in that solemn moment of their spiritual history, and as they realised that perhaps they might never more grasp it, they bowed their heads and wept. It was a pathetic incident in a memorable gathering. Dr. Herber Evans has more than once referred to that hand-grasp which welcomed him to Christian fellowship, when a stranger in Liverpool. Now that hand, which was so often uplifted on behalf of truth and righteousness—that hand which penned so much that sought to elevate and bless mankind—that hand which pointed men to the Cross as the answer to their sin and sorrow—is still in death.

Dr. Thomas died on July 14 at Colwyn Bay, among the hills of his native land and in sight of the sea he so much loved. The name of the

house in which he passed away was "Uch-y-don," which signifies "above the wave," a fitting omen of his triumph as he passed to the other shore. Both brothers were buried in the city where they so long lived and laboured. In life and in death they were not divided:

Two hands upon the breast, the work is over—
The warfare o'er;

And they who have toiled and striven in faith,
Shall fight no more.

Two hands upon the breast, the work is over;
And then the promised rest

Which yet remaineth for the Lord's own people
Who have His name confessed.

Two hands upon the breast, the work is over;
And then that shore,

Where we shall meet the loved ones whom
God took before.

These imperfect references to Welsh preachers cannot better end than with the mention of the name of JOHN ELIAS, who for many years occupied a foremost place among the preachers at the great open-air services. His greatest victory was won at Rhuddlan, a quiet village, beautifully situated under the shadow of a magnificent castle at the entrance to the Vale of Clwyd. At the beginning of the present century a large fair was held there on the Lord's day. When he was only twenty-eight years of age, John Elias went, unarmed, to put it down. Standing on a horse block, near the "New Inn," he began to preach to the accompaniment of harps and fiddles. These, however, soon ceased. His burning words, founded on the fourth commandment, soon arrested the farmers and their servants. The fear of God fell upon the crowd, the people listened and trembled as if Sinai itself with all its thunder had suddenly burst upon them. It is said that one man who had purchased a sickle let it fall to the ground thinking the arm which held it had withered, and was afraid to pick it up lest the same thing should happen to the other. He lost his sickle, but he found salvation. The Sabbath fair has not been held from that day to this at Rhuddlan. The then vicar of the parish confessed of John Elias, "that man by one sermon has done more than I have been able to do all my life."

The wage paid to men then hired as farm servants was settled at the Cross—a stone erection with which a good deal of sanctity was connected, for it is said that when King Edward visited Rhuddlan he received the regalia of Wales which included a part of the veritable Cross of Calvary. This, with great solemnity, he placed on the altar of Westminster Abbey. In this and other ways a good deal of superstition gathered round the Cross at Rhuddlan: it was more than a symbol, it became almost a witness. In harvest time the weekly wage was declared each Sunday at the Cross, and it became the settled wage for that week throughout the district. No one disputed "the wage of the Cross." Under its shadow bargains were made, and as its form rested on those who there entered upon agreements, it was felt to have made the agreements binding. No promise made at the Cross

could be denied. Superstitious it may have been, but release could only be secured, from a promise thus made, by an oath of the person seeking release and by the oath of two men nearest to himself in worth, taken in the church wherein would be found "his sacramental bread and water." To break a bargain made at the Cross was said to "break the Cross itself."

Of the old Welsh preachers it may truthfully be said that they took their oath at the Cross. Its shadow rested upon them, and on them it was binding. Despite their differences—theological, intellectual, ecclesiastical,—there they were one. Their oath was truly sacramental—never to desert their leader, never to abandon His cause. They were faithful unto death, and theirs has long since been the crown which fadeth not away.

Within the radius of that same Cross we stand. On us its shadow rests. To the same Leader we are pledged—may our fidelity be as theirs.

O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in their train.

Things New and Old.

THE VIOLET AND THE OAK.

A VIOLET shed its modest beauties at the turfy foot of an old oak. It lived there many days during the kind summer, in obscurity. The winds and the rains came and fell, but they did not hurt the violet. Storms often crashed among the boughs of the oak. And one day, said the oak, "Are you not ashamed of yourself when you look up at me, you little thing down there, when you see how large I am, and how small you are; when you see how small a space you fill, and how widely my branches are spread?" "No," said the violet, "we are both what God made us, and we are where God has placed us; and God has given us both something. He has given to you strength, to me sweetness; and I offer Him back my fragrance, and I am thankful." "Sweetness is all nonsense," said the oak; "a few days, a month, at most—where and what will you be? you'll die, and the place of your grave won't lift the ground higher by a blade of grass. I hope to stand some time, ages perhaps, and then when I am cut down, I shall be a ship to bear men over the sea, or a coffin to hold the dust of a prince. What is your lot to mine?" "But," cheerfully breathed the violet back, "we are both what God made us, and we are both where He placed us. I suppose I shall die soon, I hope to die fragrantly, as I have lived fragrantly. You must be cut down at last; it does not matter, that I see, a few days, or a few ages, my littleness or your largeness, it comes to the same thing at last. We are what God made us. We are where God placed us. God gave you strength, God gave me sweetness."

What a common mistake—what a vulgar prejudice that is—that God loves and takes care of, and watches over, and uses, great things, great people, noisy people, rich people. We are the slaves of the senses in all this. . . . I know no attribute of the divine nature more cheering to us than that of the infinite love and tenderness of God, amidst the minute things and beings of this creation. He gives His infinite regards to the least, to birds and to flowers; to men and to women, and to lowly villages. There is nothing small or insignificant with God.—*Paxton Hood's "Dark Sayings."*

THE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE OF ST. PAUL.

A SIN THAT WAS CONTINUALLY BEFORE HIM.

"Less than the least of all saints."—*Eph.* iii. 8.

"Sinners, of whom I am chief."—1 *Tim.* i. 15.

"As one born out of due time."—1 *Cor.* xv. 8.

THE love of Christ to him, the blasphemer, the persecutor, the injurious person was with St. Paul a theme that never grew old, that by frequent repetition lost not its charm. At least the frequent references which in his later years, and in the epistles written in captivity the Apostle makes to the great crisis of his conversion suggest that he was even more and more clearly understanding the mystery and significance of that act of Divine Grace.

No one can charge St. Paul with the dull, lifeless repetition of a threadbare story. Often he merely uses a phrase or figure suggesting the fact his readers knew full well, but of which some new feature presents itself with commanding force. Very varied are the aspects of that event, so momentous for the universe and for the Christian centuries. It was a "Heavenly Vision" which rose before his eyes and exercised upon him a spell which he could not resist. It was the rising of a sun upon a darkened heart, the coming of divine "Illumination" to a soul that had long been blinded to the Light, until "it pleased God to reveal His Son in me." It was an "Initiation" into divine mysteries, the learning a secret which bestowed power to despise and conquer the world, and to dare, to endure, or to do the will of God. At times he regarded his as an "Arrested Life," whose mad obstinacy had been checked by the hand, tender and strong, of the Christ he had persecuted. Or he considered himself as the spoil of Christ's warfare, and as led in His triumph the "Captive of the Conquering Lord." Again there came home to him the sense of his irrevocable consecration and of Christ's indisputable ownership, he was one who "bore branded on his body the marks of Jesus." He regarded the crisis of life as a "Great Renunciation," in which all merely national privilege, all of human merit, and all righteousness through himself or in his circumstances were once and for ever rejected; while in an equal act of "Resignation" he entrusted to Christ all his interests, alike temporal and eternal, in fearless confidence that He would keep the trust "against that day." Again he felt that Christ had bestowed upon him a high "Commission and Trust," even "the glorious gospel of the blessed God;" had made him an ambassador of "the kingdom of heaven, a herald of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal."

Among these figures are some which have associations which are honourable. It was only to approved persons that Initiation was granted and permission given to gaze upon the mysteries and emblems of the divine counsel. Not empty

was the honour of being the ambassador of God, the herald of the King of kings. A conqueror's trophies were not commonly found in the basest, but the noblest, of his captives; and St. Paul might well feel that snatched from the very schools of the Rabbis, arrested while he played the part of chief Inquisitor, he was among the signal trophies of the Victor "who always led him in triumph."

But the Apostle took too true a view of life, had seen too clearly the character of his sin, had entered too deeply into the sufferings of Christ, alike as Victim, and as the compassionate Head of His Church, to be capable of empty self-praise, or self-satisfaction. And the darker aspects of his life which he could never forget, must be forcefully expressed by a spirit so impetuous alike in its mistakes and truest convictions, by a nature whose passions were profound and imperative. Such a man cannot fail to write bitter things against himself. And in the emphatic language, the seeming hyperbole, and the figures strong to nauseousness, which stand at the head of this paper, we have the tokens of the intense emotions by which his past life moved the Apostle's inmost soul.

He was "less than the least of all saints." What was the character of these early saints? "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble were called."¹ They included the social and moral sweepings of the great cities of the Roman world. The slave element was largely represented. The early Christians were in the majority of cases, poor, ignorant, socially depressed; men who could do comparatively little for the Redeemer, possessing no lofty mental powers to propagate His truth, no great social influence to forward His claims. They were for the most part men who would lie in obscure graves, having passed unnoticed from the great throbbing world. But lowest among them St. Paul set himself. Such keenness of spiritual vision had been granted him that his sin against Christ more than outweighed the powers he could dedicate, and the service he could render. Pondering the enormity of his revolt against the claims of Jesus, he felt, even as he gazed upon poor, ignorant, enslaved believers who were the rank and file of the army of the saints, that he was less than the least of all these.

He claimed, too, that he was the chief of sinners. Who were the sinners of St. Paul's day? More than once he has catalogued the sins of the world he moved in with a plainness from which our modern taste shrinks.² It was an

¹ 1 *Cor.* i. 26.

² *Rom.* i. 1 *Cor.* vi.

age of violence, bloodshed, drunkenness, when natural ties were loosed, and vice, the most abominable, was rampant and unabashed. How different the life of the Apostle! He had possessed the highest privileges of Judaism, had lived "after the most straitest sect" of that religion "in all good conscience before God."¹ He had rendered loyal service, never shrinking from toil and sacrifice: had faced toil in almost every form; he was now about to crown that devotion with martyrdom. Yet he claims to be the chief of sinners, not because he was polluted by the crimes and vices of heathendom, but because he had persecuted Jesus. He beholds, too, the hollowness of that legal righteousness and the faults of his best service. He can tell the vilest of his past when "concerning zeal he persecuted the Church" and forges for himself a triple crown, but of shame, "I was a persecutor, and a blasphemer, and injurious."

He saw, he felt his sins; he understood the terrible significance of the life he lived; and his words though so strong, and seemingly exaggerated were "words of truth and soberness" but they

Sprang from an infinite and tender sorrow,
Burst from a burning passion of regret.

He was "less than the least of all saints," yet the first among sinners; hindmost in the ranks of those, here he stood first and foremost, of sinners he was chief.

St. Paul has one other expression to declare his loathing of the past and his deep sense of unworthiness, he was the abortive-born Apostle, "one born out of due time." His conversion was of no common character and affected by no ordinary methods. He contrasts himself with his fellow-Apostles, men who had come under the spell of the Incarnate Saviour, and had yielded a glad obedience to the commandment "Follow Me." They were "as ripe fruits which fell, so to speak, of themselves, from the tree of Judaism, gathered without effort; whereas Paul was torn, as by a violent operation, from that Judaism to which he was yet clinging with all the fibres of his heart and will."² Ere he could receive the new life of the Gospel he must hear the reproof of the heavenly voice, see the blinding light and be led into Damascus a man crushed and overwhelmed. His passage into life was by a tremendous crisis, by the vision of the awfulness of an offended God, the pathos of a persecuted Saviour.

So, as he pondered the violence and abnormity of his conversion, cast down in a moment from the throne of self-sufficiency into the dust of penitence, he regarded himself as the dwarfed, immature and despicable member of the Apostolic brotherhood. He thought, perhaps, of what he might have been, had he become a member of the "household of faith" as they did who had journeyed with the Lord Jesus. He felt how

much he had lost by want of personal intercourse with the Incarnate One; how much he might have gained had he sat at His feet, and received there the impress of His character. He remembered how different his life had been if the years of early mankind spent in "making havoc of the Church" had been spent in the evangelising of the world. He felt how different life would have been if there could never rise before him the memory of himself "the persecutor, the blasphemer, the injurious," if never there could ring through the chambers of his memory the reproachful cry, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"

In words and figures such as these did St. Paul, pondering his early life, fathom the depths of his self-humiliation. He no longer regards himself proudly as "circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews;" he is no longer the wise student, the acknowledged saint, the lauded devotee; he has come from every eminence to lie prone in the dust. There is one fact which turns beauty into ashes, one ingredient which dropped into the cup of life, turns the sweet into bitterness: "I persecuted the Church of God." And while his thought dwells upon that supreme error, that crowning sin of his life, no phrase is too strong, no language too mordant, no figure too lowly or too loathsome to express the deep tempestuous emotions of his heart. It was a triple crown of shame he set upon his head "a blasphemer, and a persecutor and injurious"; it was a threefold legend of shame he inscribed upon his shield;—

"Less than the least of all saints."

"Chief of sinners."

"As one born out of due time."

It is the lot of few to descend to such depths of penitent humiliation. Men of shallow mind and transient experience accuse him of exaggeration and unreality. They are few in whom even what may be regarded as the greater sins or stupendous crimes have produced such profound contrition. Yet those who commune with the Apostle and learn the secret of his heart; who judge life by his God-taught standard, and see sin in its enormity know that there is no unreal and hollow exaggeration in his speech; and with him they experience the blessedness even of the pangs of penitence.

It is in the lowly vale of penitent humiliation remote from the haunts of men, and little trodden by men of shallow emotion, shut off from the sights and sounds of the busy, noisy, but trivial and superficial world, and guarded by the everlasting hills of holiness and love and truth, that the deep significance of divine and eternal things is learnt. Lonely indeed is that valley where men ponder their sins and Christ's love and call themselves in passionate but unfeigned self-reproach, "the chief of sinners." But they whose feet are now in that vale of self-contempt shall hereafter ascend, and shall stand foremost and highest upon the Mount of God.

¹ Acts xxvi. 5; xxiii. 1.

² Gudel.

EXCELSIOR.

In all places then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us by most persuasive reasons
How akin they are to human things.



"PLEASE help me up," cried a tiny voice at the bottom of a great pear-tree which, covered with fruit, stood in the centre of a flower-bed. "Please help me up," and the seedling convolvulus held out its wee tendril towards the trunk of the tree.

"What do you want to do—and where do you want to get to?" asked the pears in chorus.

"I want to get to the top, and—" but the rest of the sentence was lost in the noise that the pears made as they laughed fit to crack their sides at the idea, and shaking from side to

side. At last, one, more steady than the rest, about half-way up, said—

"To get to the top! Pray how can such a ridiculous little thing as you are speak of such a thing? Why I never got there, though I have some right to it, as I belong to the tree! What is the use of it? I get quite as much sun and air as ever I can wish without trying to get higher; take my word for it, that it is not worth the struggle. Look at the beautiful fuchsia there who, with her downcast and modest blossom, is quite content where she is."

"I cannot help that," said the convolvulus. "I do wish to get to the top," and she said it so emphatically, that the pears all set off laughing again; but the sweet heliotrope, who had been quite quiet during the discussion, whispered—

"Never mind, I quite understand your wish. I cannot grow as high as you, but I can send my perfume up into the bright sky and all around, and that must do instead."

Just then, a kind old pear, who also had been listening in silence, took advantage of a passing breeze, and lending his weight, lowered the twig on which he grew towards the little seedling, which caught tight hold of it and lifted herself up, curling her tendril round and round, and the pear, who really had a soft heart, was pleased to be useful to his little friend.

But alas! before long a brisk breeze arose, which swayed the tree-branches to and fro, and in a moment, before she could detach herself, the head of the little convolvulus was severed from the plant and remained on the branch while the rest fell to the ground. Poor little thing, it was sad to see her lying in the dust rudely torn; the fuchsia bent low to comfort her, and the mignonette and heliotrope sent her sweet messages; even the sweet peas offered to help her if she could reach their props. But, alas! it was impossible now to reach so far, and she remained where she fell, very wretched and miserable.

Next morning a gentle rain fell, and, washing the dust off her, raised her drooping spirits, giving her renewed life, so that in the morning, when an inquisitive sparrow (the special correspondent of that little world) came to pick up food and information, he found the convolvulus looking quite fresh and ready for another start.

"Please help me up," she cried again; and the pear tree listened attentively, and helped her up so nicely and tenderly that she was able to cling comfortably to a twig as firmly as

before. The old pear greatly admired her perseverance, and encouraged her with cheering remarks, but some of the others, sour and hard, laughed not too politely, and made fun of her efforts to get higher, to all of which she replied smiling, "While there is time let me do all I can. I know that I have but a short time to do it in."

In a few days she had quite recovered her strength and gained more than she had lost before—blossoms came out along the stem, and looked quite gaily from their great blue eyes. Each day the leaves increased, her tendrils rose higher and higher, inch by inch, until in a few days she got up to the old pear, who nodded and smiled, and had many a chat with his little friend. Once he asked her where she meant to stop, and begged her not to go out of his sight, for he liked the persevering and grateful little thing; but the convolvulus replied:

"I cannot help my nature, I must try to get to the top, even if I leave my friends behind."

"But," said the pear, "suppose you die before you get to the top."

"That may be, but I shall have got as high as I could."

The other pears overheard them, and one, a hard disagreeable fellow, leant over in mischief to break off a blossom which was near him, but he overbalanced himself, and his stalk snapping, he fell to the ground.

The convolvulus went on climbing, in spite of the wind and rain, and as for ill-natured remarks and injuries, she fast outgrew them. Higher and higher, till at last, in her eagerness, she outgrew her own strength, and died before she reached the top. But she was consoled at the last with the knowledge that she had done her best, having had plenty of sunshine and help on the way, and had left behind her the example of contentment and perseverance.

C. M. FINN.

Monthly Religious Record.

The
Troubles in
Uganda.

A REMARKABLE series of papers have now come to hand which seem conclusively to show the origin of the troubles in Uganda. The English government, however, has decided that an impartial report be obtained, and that for this purpose the services of Captain Macdonald be used. Mr. John Rose, of the C.M.S., says plainly: "The direct cause of the war was the murder of a Protestant in one of the main streets of Nungo, on January 21st at noon. This I firmly believe was purposely done to make the Protestants fight. The British East African Company asked Mwaanga the king to give up the murderer for punishment, but he refused." Then followed persistent efforts in the direction of peace put forth by Captain Lugard. These failing, he felt compelled to serve out arms to the Protestants. Bishop Tucker, writing to the Rev. H. E. Fox, his commissary in England, said: "It was apparent that the supreme moment had come. A decision had to be made whether England, represented by the Company and Captain Lugard, or the forces of misrule and superstition were to prevail. It was evident that a life or death struggle was to take place." He continues: "the attack was made by the Roman Catholic party, with the result with which you are already acquainted. It seems to me that Captain Lugard had been patient in the extreme . . . he seems to have done his utmost to protect the French priests." Mr. Portal, in a despatch to Lord Salisbury, July 27th, says, in conclusion: "It is suggested that the French bishop is urging the Roman Catholics to go on with the war, but the position of the Protestants in Uganda is now absolutely secure." He also states that Mwaanga has returned to his capital, resumed his royal sway and hoisted the British flag, declaring himself also to

be Protestant. May God in His mercy establish peace, and abundantly bless the declaration of His message of love.

Hunan and the Chinese Riots. A VERY interesting and reassuring letter has been received from Dr. Griffith John in which he tells of the downfall of the great persecutor and fabricator of the abominable literature which set the great valley in a blaze. The booksellers' shops most concerned in the distribution of the vile libel, as well as the "Benevolent Hall," where the plottings took place, have all been closed. Best of all, the spirit of earnest prayer has met with its blessed reward from the One who takes care of his messengers. Dr. John sends a letter from a convert at Changsha (where Chou Han the leader of the rioters lived) and anything more beautiful could not be penned. He has been cruelly persecuted and beaten, but a letter to a younger brother, also now a convert, contains this glowing passage: "Having been thus blessed of God, it is my supreme desire that we both should in all things live in harmony with the principles of the Christian religion, abandoning the false and following the true. We must diligently observe the customs of the Christian Church, attend divine services regularly, and ever pray to the true God. We must also bring our mother to the services, so that she may walk the heavenly way with us, and become partaker of Eternal Life. That the entire family should obtain the Gospel's unspeakable gift is a matter of the utmost importance. Let me exhort my worthy younger brother to take the conduct of the pastors for an example, and urge all men to resist the devil, and abandon the world's evil customs." Well may the missionaries be encouraged at this early fruit after the recent time of sifting and trial.

Translating Conference into Action. A LADY has made a very pertinent observation which may yet result in a new movement in the kingdom of grace. She asks who of those that have had such a full measure of the blessedness of communion at Keswick and other Conventions will now turn conference into work, and devote a quickened life to carrying the Gospel into priest-ridden and atheistic France. So many of the attendants at the Conferences can speak French, and many have leisure. Can they not, therefore, for the Master's sake, and for the ingathering of souls, remove tent and home and reside where the heart-hunger has nought to satisfy it? We re-echo this appeal, in the hope that some may hear the call to forget insular selfishness, and live and speak the Gospel where the Truth has few to proclaim it. Who will go for Christ to fields of work so very near our own doors?

The Field of Literature Widening. THE Church Missionary Society has asked the help of the Religious Tract Society's Committee in bringing out Christian literature in yet another language. This time it is the *Sagalla*, spoken by a large tribe north-west of Zanzibar, and the publication is a Gospel Catechism. The Tract Society's Committee feel it a great honour to be thus so constantly co-operating in the foundation of new literature. It is indeed the great Christian Literature Society for the world,

and this will make the 206th language or dialect employed. For at least eighty-five years it has been providing Christian literature for India, and the various publications number many hundreds. But the Committee say they are forced to decline many new applications, and to reduce old annual grants which are more needed than ever. And they naturally ask—Who will help them to maintain this most blessed work of printing and sending out the Gospel message in all these tongues?

Sunday in the Navy. MR. MARK J. STEWART, M.P., has called attention in the House of Commons to a contravention in the Naval Discipline Act. The captain of the *Garnet*, after prayers and preaching by the chaplain, and of course after the usual recital of the Fourth Commandment, arranged a rifle competition, with Government arms and ammunition, inviting some of the British community in Peru. On another day a public regatta was held between the British and Peruvians. The lot of the sailor is attended with a large amount of temptation, and we may hope that the calling attention to the matter will suffice to stop what has been described as a matter of no small scandal to the British merchants at Callao. There is a growing disposition on the part of those in command to aid the good work and influence of such work as Miss Weston carries on in the Navy.

THESE words from the well-known hymn "Holy Bible, Book Divine; Precious Treasure," have received curious and literal illustration recently. The matchless private library of Earl Spencer has changed hands, and has been purchased for a sum not far from a quarter of a million by Mrs. Rylands of Manchester, where it is to be located. Among the treasures in the collection, none are of greater value than the early copies of the Sacred Scriptures. Here was a Gutenberg Bible, a copy of which sold not long ago for nearly 4000*l*. It is generally thought to have been the very first book printed from movable type—invented by Gutenberg at Mayence. Viewed as a work of art it has scarcely ever been surpassed, but to all who revere the Word of God it possesses special significance that the man who invented the art should have dedicated it first to so divine a purpose.

The Death Roll. AMONG those who during the month have been called to the higher service are the Right Rev. Bishop Piers Claughton, at the age of eighty-four, a man distinguished in many ways; Thomas Cooper, the Chartist poet and at one time an atheist, but latterly a very devoted preacher of the Gospel and defender of the faith which once he opposed; Thomas Cook, the head of the world-wide tourist system which bears his name, a godly and earnest Christian man, whose influence was widely felt; the Rev. Dr. Eustace Conder, author, among many other works, of "The Basis of Faith," who had been pastor of the Congregational church at Leeds for many years; John McGregor (Rob Roy), founder of the Open-air Mission, and the Rev. Henry Simon, pastor of the Harecourt Congregational Church, one of the famous poet-preachers from Wales, a man of gentle life and of great spiritual power.

