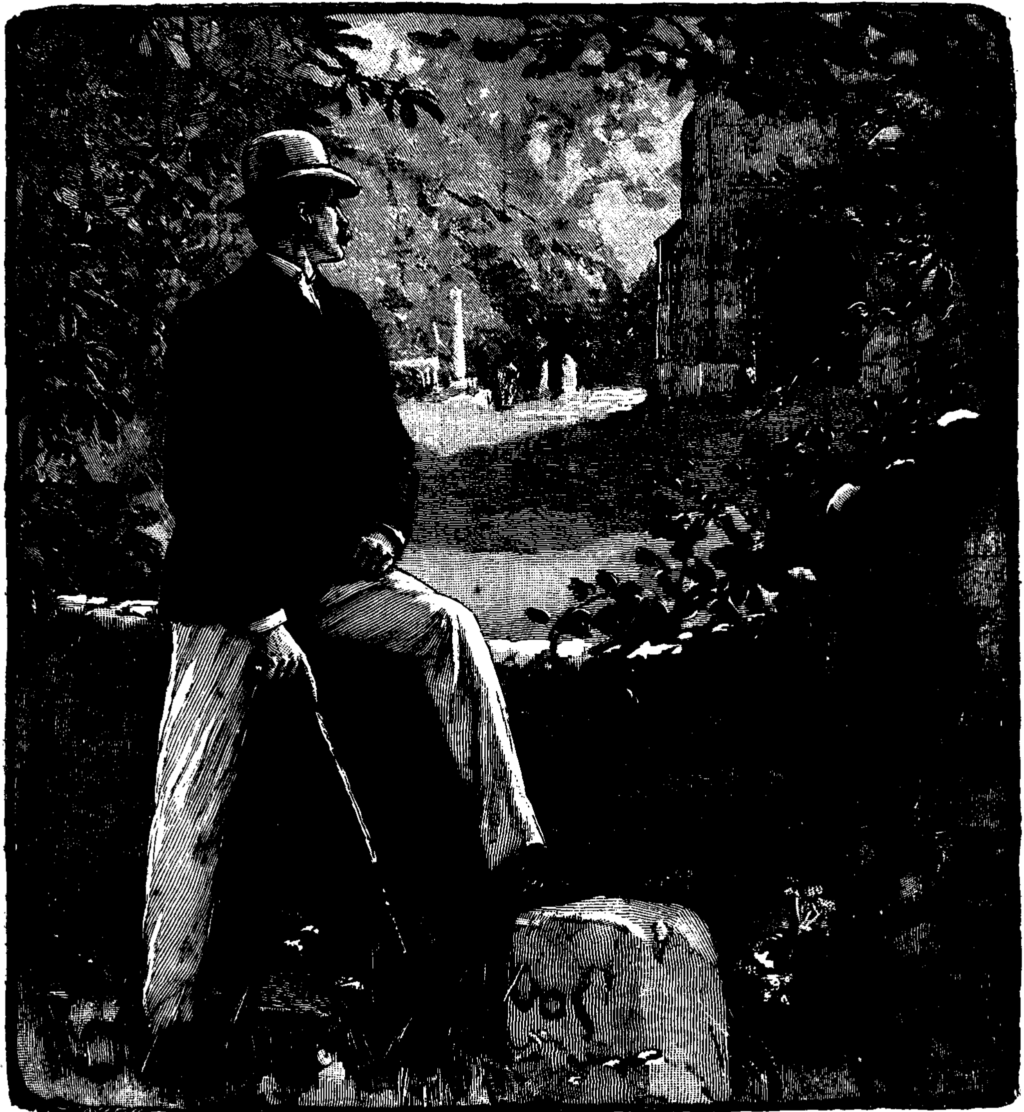
THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

THE DALRYMPLES.

BY AGNES GIBERNE, AUTHOR OF "GWENDOLINE," ETC.



HOW IT RECALLS OLD DAYS.

CHAPTER I.—HARVEY.

"MISS HERMINY'S a angel! That's what she be!" The old gardener at the rectory, who was uncle to the head-gardener at the Hall, and who prided himself not a little on that social distinction, brought down his spade with an expressive bump. Then he rested his two aged and muscular hands upon the spade-handle, and peered upward into the face of the person addressed, before proceeding to deliver himself more fully of his sentiments.

"Miss Herminy's a angel! That's what I says! And I don't care who unsays it! She's got the wings a wanting, and nought else. If 'twasn't for that, sir, she'd just soar right away, she would, to her native element, nor wouldn't stay no longer on this here sordid earth of ours. To look upon her now minds me of that what King David said, 'O that I had wings like a dove!'—sir—not but what they be fitter words for an old fellow like me, than a young thing like her. But sometimes I'm afeared it's that she *will* do one o' these days, when she comes along o' the path in her white frock, looking for all the world like a white-robed angel in them hymns we sings in church, sir, and palms in their hands, and she so lightsome of spirit still, and her hair like gold, and a look of heaven in her blue eyes that's always smiling, and never a bit of pride nor a thought for her own self. Yes, sir, Miss Herminy's a angel, and no mistake!"

"Haven't the least doubt of it," responded the other, with a curious intonation. He might have been thirty or more in age, though young-looking for that. He was of good stature, good figure, good features, with a mouth lazily good-humoured and eyes lazily kind. As old Sutton rambled on, the younger man stood close outside the rectory gate, one of those swing-gates which have five or six horizontal bars of wood, and another sloping diagonally from an upper to a lower opposite corner. He lounged against this gate, with an air of gentlemanly indolence, partly holding it open.

"And if my word isn't enough, sir, why there be the squire; and my master, Mr. Fitzalan; and Miss Marjory, as is like own sister to Miss Herminy. Not for to speak of Mr. Harry, sir."

"Mr. Dalrymple, her grandfather!"

"Aye, sir, and a fine old gentleman he do be! I don't know a finer nowheres! And a good and God-fearing man as ever you see; who'll stand up for the poor man, and who'll set right over might, let what will happen! And he be that set upon Miss Herminy, sir! He've got nought but she in the world, and she've got nought but he; and they just do hang together like,—them two! And whatever's to become of Miss Herminy, when he's a' taken away, I don't know: that I don't."

Did no recollection recur to the simple old gardener of the "Father of the fatherless," who, when He called away the earthly parent, would surely not leave the child uncared for? Perhaps at that moment it did not; and the young man lounging in front was by no means likely to act as his "remembrancer."

"Estate entailed, I believe, on the male line!" was the only remark made in answer.

"Aye, sir; so I've heard. And a wicked thing it be, giving away the place from she as has the right, to one away in furrin parts for years and years, never taking no heed to his heritage. He don't value it, sir, no more than Jacob did as sold his for a mess of pottage. And Miss Herminy to have nought; and she the apple of the old man's eye. No, sir: it's a wicked thing,—I don't know a wickeder."

The gentleman lifted his eyebrows, "Entailed to a near relative, of course," he said.

"His father and Miss Herminy's mother they was first-cousins, sir. And he as good as a brother to Miss Herminy in years past, till he took to wandering like a vagabond over the face of the earth. There's many a one thought summet 'ud surely come of that, sir, and it was Mr. Dalrymple's wish too and no mistake. But it isn't come yet. Though there be no knowing,—if so be he was to see Miss Herminy now! For if ever there was a angel on earth, it's Miss Herminy."

"A pretty child when I saw her last, Sutton."

Something familiar in tone and manner struck the old gardener. He stared, and scratched aside two or three grey hairs which had wandered over his wrinkled forehead.

"I shouldn't wonder but I'd ought to know you, sir," he said; "if you was ever at the Hall before. I'm getting old now, and my eyesight isn't none of the best, nor my memory naynther. I shouldn't wonder if I'd ought to know you." He peered hard still, blinking a little. "And I'm thinking now as I sees summat! It isn't—surely—Miss Herminy's cousin—young Mr. Dalrymple!"

"I am Harvey Dalrymple," was the reply.

"Young Mr. Dalrymple—his very own self!" ejaculated Sutton. "Well, well, sir—I'm glad to see you anyways. And maybe it's One above has brought you home, for His own purposes, sir,—if so be you're one as fears Him—and you'll pardon an old man saying it."

Dalrymple did not look offended; it was not his way to take offence easily; but he showed no particular desire to answer the question.

"I hope I have come for no bad purpose, at all events," he rejoined lightly. "By-the-bye, I have not asked yet after Miss Fitzalan."

"Miss Marjory be as usual, sir. She don't never complain."

"And Mr. Harry?"

Sutton's face lighted up proudly.

"Mr. Harry do be growed a fine young gentleman, sir—as fine a young gentleman as ever I see! And they do say he be mighty thought of at the 'Varsity, he be that clever! And as fine a young gentleman! To see him a horseback now!"

The sight of Harry Fitzalan on horseback plainly went beyond old Sutton's descriptive powers. He nodded his head, and was mute.

"Good-day! We shall meet again," Dalrymple said, with a friendly nod.

Sutton remained motionless, staring blankly after the retreating figure.

"Young Mr. Dalrymple, his very own self! And I to be talking of he to he! and never a thought in my head as he'd come back! And all them years in furrin parts! Well, well, he isn't too early nor he isn't too late neither. For the old squire he be living, and Miss Herminy she isn't married. And I shouldn't wonder—no, I shouldn't!" Sutton shook his scant grey locks, leaving the sentence incomplete.

Meanwhile Dalrymple, following the dusty high road, by which he had already come through the village had passed the Rectory, rounded another curve and found himself close to the

church of whitish stone, matching the whitish rectory. A square tower was dressed in a garment of aged ivy, and the windows of tinted glass had ivy fingers around them.

Dalrymple knew from personal recollection how those green leaf fringes could be seen from within, showing through the dull-tinted diamond panes. He had been used to worship in this church, week by week, through early boyhood, standing, sitting, kneeling, by his mother's side. He had been there also in later years, but the childish remembrances were the strongest. Almost a quarter of a century had gone by since that mother's death; yet he could recall her still, vividly as if he had seen her but one month before.

Presently he roused himself to go on, but paused anew; for a girl was coming along the road, straight towards him. He knew who it was.

She wore a dress of summer serge, dark-grey in colour, fitting closely, and made in a style of absolute plainness. There were no plaitings, puffings, or braidings, about any part of it; while the collar and cuffs were of thick white linen. Rather below middle height, she had a face uniformly pale, and habitual shadows under the eyes. The features generally were irregular, boasting no beauty, but the outline of the cheek seen from behind was pretty; abundant brown hair sheltered the broad forehead, falling partly over it in loose straight waves; and the grey eyes, with their depths of feeling, gave character to a face which otherwise had not been remarkable. A straw hat hung over one arm, and she carried a mass of small white roses in an open basket.

Dalrymple went forward a few steps, and held out his hand. There was one swift glance of scrutiny.

"Mr. Dalrymple—is it?" she said in a surprised tone.

"It used to be 'Harvey,'" he remarked, smiling. "Am I so altered?"

"I don't know. Things are altered. And I was a child then," she said. "Besides I did not expect—Hermione had not told me——"

"Hermione does not know yet that I am on English ground."

Marjory's face showed disapproval.

"It was a sudden resolution. I am not much given to letter-writing, as you know."

She said "yes," and then "no," in answer. Harvey was gazing up at the tower, and his next remark was an involuntary—"How it recalls old days!"

"When you were here last?"

"No. When my mother was living."

"Before I was born," Marjory said to this.

Though her face might have belonged to any age under thirty, Marjory was now only twenty-one.

"Yes; before you were born, and before your father had the living. . . . I have just been recalling childish fancies of mine in those days, connected with the big square pew. By-the-bye, that pew is soon to be a thing of the past, isn't it? Hermione writes of projected improvements. There was a certain window just in front, which, to my infant imagination, was the actual gate of heaven. Yes, that corner window, ivy all round, just as it used to be." He spoke half-lightly, half-seriously, adding, in a moved tone: "When my mother was taken, I fully believed that she had gone upward that way, through a path of sunbeams, and green leaves."

"Children sometimes see farther than grown people," Marjory asserted gravely.

"At all events, they fancy more."

"They see farther, sometimes."

He seemed a little amused again, and remarked, "You used to hold your own opinions very strongly, I remember."

Marjory looked up at him, and asked, "Do you think living much in the world sharpens one's spiritual sight? For I don't."

"Ah, this is old days over again! You and I were always dropping into arguments. Must you have an answer? Well, perhaps not."

"I suppose——" Marjory said, and paused.

"Yes?"—questioningly.

"I was only thinking of those lines—of course you know them—

'But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from heaven
Than when I was a boy!'"

"Isn't that a rather grave deduction from the loss of a childish fancy about green leaves and sunshine?"

"I am not making any deductions. I do not know you well enough—yourself," Marjory said. "We were speaking of children generally."

Perhaps Harvey had had enough, and did not care to pursue the subject. His next words were, "I have had to walk from the station, of course, through sending no previous notice. Curious to see old Sutton in your garden still!"

"Sutton is a fixture."

"Everything is a fixture at Westford. Even you are hardly changed—only I suppose older."

He had known her so well, eight years earlier. It had not occurred to him, till now, that the young man's recollections of the child of thirteen might be more distinct than the child's recollections of the young man of twenty-four. In truth, Marjory's mental pictures of Harvey were most vivid. Still, during his long absence, she had passed from childhood to womanhood, while he had only gone on from an earlier to a more advanced stage of young manhood; and it was by no means so easy for her as for him to drop at once into the old grooves of intercourse.

"Yes, much older. I do not feel myself the same."

"And Hermione?" he said.

"Hermione? Oh!" Marjory's whole face lighted up. "You will find Hermione everything that you could wish. She is—no, I can't describe her. There never was any one like Hermione."

"Angelic, in short. You and Sutton seem to be of the same opinion."

"Yes; and you will not wonder when you see her. So lovely, so unlike other girls. There are

not two opinions about Hermione. At least—no, not really two; only, of course, people see differently. But I cannot tell you how she is beloved in the village—almost worshipped. The surliest man there can't say a rough word to Hermione. We all look up to her. Yes, she is younger than I am; but what of that? One looks up to another, because of what that other is, not because of any particular age."

"Well, perhaps — no. And Hermione is pretty?"

"She is—no, I will not describe her. You must see for yourself."

"She could be a charming little fury, I remember, if anybody crossed her will. You were the victim occasionally."

"Was I? I have forgotten. Nothing of the kind ever happens now."

"Why, no. At nineteen one doesn't expect tornadoes of wrath."

"But there is no temper—no readiness to be vexed. She is sweetness itself. Nothing ever puts her out. If she had a temper as a child, that is all over. You had better not set me off about her, because I shall not know when to stop. I think—I almost think I could die for Hermione."

Marjory spoke the last words under her breath, and the downcast eyes glowed with a very fervour of devotion. Harvey was touched, yet entertained. His easy and pliant nature, though not without its reservoirs of strong feeling, was hardly capable of understanding Marjory. Before he had decided what to say, she added: "But I ought to go home, and I must not keep you from them longer."

Harvey lifted his hat, and shook hands. In the act of turning away, he stopped short, faced her once more, his sunburnt cheek slightly flushing, and said, "My old friends will have to congratulate me."

Marjory's voice and eyes alike asked, "Why?"

"On my recent marriage."

The grey eyes opened more widely. Harvey had not the smallest doubt that, in her mind, as in old Sutton's, he had been the destined husband of Hermione Rivers.

"Well?" he said, smiling.

"I never know how to congratulate," Marjory replied abruptly. "We don't learn that sort of thing in this rustic place."

She turned off with so decisive an air, that he had no choice about pursuing his solitary way.

CHAPTER II.—MARJORY'S INDIGNATION.

"SHAMEFUL!" Marjory said to herself, with warmth, after quitting Harvey. "Without a word to Mr. Dalrymple or to Hermione!—and Mr. Dalrymple always so good to him. He might at least have written, even if he would not come home first. Such a cruel slight to Mr. Dalrymple! I shall never like Harvey again."

Three minutes brought Marjory to the rectory. She paused a moment in the garden, to ask of Sutton, "Has my father come in yet?"

"No, Miss Marjory, he isn't."

"Sutton, I wish you would take this basket of roses round to Mrs. Pennant's. I promised to leave them for Miss Rivers; and I don't feel now as if I could walk any farther."

Sutton rubbed his head dubiously.

"Well, now, Miss Marjory, I've got all this lot of diggin' to do: and how ever it 'll be done, if I'm a gadding about at all hours for 'ee—"

"Never mind. I'll take the flowers myself," said the girl curtly.

She went straight indoors, blaming herself for the tone before she crossed the threshold. Nobody was in the drawing-room. Books and work lay about carelessly, not untidily. Marjory placed the basket on a table, pulled off her hat, and threw herself down flat on a low couch, having not even a pillow under her head. Though by no means an invalid in habits, she suffered much, and had suffered for years, from spinal weakness. The amount of work Marjory got through in her home and in the village was astounding; but frequent short rests were a necessity. "If I can just stop now and then to breathe, I do well enough," she used to say.

Ten minutes of entire stillness were followed by a light tread. Marjory did not stir, except to lift her eyelids. A gentleman entered, unmistakably her father. He, too, was under medium height, for a man, and so thin as to be bony; with long fingers and pale skin. His colouring was however more healthy than hers, and while it was easily seen whence she had inherited her expressive eyes, the loose hair was in him more scanty and was fast turning grey.

"Marjory resting!" he said in cheery tones. "What have you been doing?"

"I went to several cottages, and then to see Hermione. And on my way back I met——"

"One moment. I must look at these letters the first thing."

Marjory seemed to have no objection to the delay. She shut her eyes again, and lay as before, flat and motionless, her arms straight down by her sides. No other position so well suited the tired back; but sometimes nothing less than the floor would do; and even then Marjory had often an odd craving to get lower still as a relief to her weariness. She never spoke of such sensations, however.

Presently a slight movement aroused her, and she found Mr. Fitzalan to have taken a seat near.

"You have something to say," he observed.

"Father, Harvey has come home."

"Yes!" It was a curious long syllable.

"Did you know? Have you seen him?"

"No. Sutton told me, as he doubtless told you."

"Sutton said nothing. I met Harvey. Ought I to call him 'Mr. Dalrymple?' I did at first, and he told me not. He was on his way to the Hall. I am not sure that I should have known him, if he had not stopped me; and yet he is very like his own self—the same face and manner. But,—father, he is married!"

Mr. Fitzalan gave one rapid glance up, after his daughter's own fashion.

"Married! where and when?"

"I don't know. I heard nothing more. It made me angry, and I hurried away. Of course he is old enough to decide for himself, and he is quite independent, but still—still—Mr. Dalrymple has always been so good to him, surely he ought to have heard beforehand! And when one knows what Mr. Dalymple's great wish has been for years——"

"Mr. Dalymple's wish might have had a better hope of fulfilment, if he had never spoken of it to Harvey."

"Yes, perhaps, but at least he need not have kept out of the way all these years. Of course, a man must be free to choose for himself; and Hermione might never have cared for him, even if he had wished to marry her. I don't think she would be easily won. It is not that, but his way of treating Mr. Dalrymple that I mind,—putting him to pain——"

"Why, my dear Marjie!" for Marjory's eyes were full.

"I can't help it, father. I am cross, I know; but I can't bear to think how Mr. Dalrymple will feel, when he has so longed for the Hall to be always Hermione's home."

Mr. Fitzalan looked up again. "The old story; always trying to choose for those we love, instead of being content to leave them in our Father's Hands," he said. "How can Mr. Dalrymple tell what will be for Hermione's happiness?"

"No, only he does wish, and it is so natural to wish. And what I mind is the disappointment coming so very suddenly,—no time beforehand for getting used to it. Harvey used to be so different. He never would have done such a thing—once! It does seem to me so wrong and unkind not to have spoken or written first. And when one has looked up to a person for years——"

"Or to an idealised memory of a person," Mr. Fitzalan said quietly. Few men in his place could have entered fully into Marjory's meaning; but he knew her well, and recognised at once the dethroning of a hero. His voice held the right mixture of the sympathetic and the bracing, as he continued, "This is not the first time that Harvey has disappointed his friends."

"Oh, I know, people have blamed him for staying so long abroad, if he were not obliged. But Hermione and I have always believed that he had some really good reason. We never can forget what he used to be with us, always so kind and gentle. And that is not usual, father. Young men just leaving college don't generally care much for children of eleven and thirteen."

"Perhaps not, generally. Harvey would do anything for anybody, if it were not too much trouble."

Marjory made no answer, and her pale brow was knitted sorrowfully. Mr. Fitzalan moved away to the table, where he began writing letters, and presently Marjory followed him.

"Up again. Not rested yet, I think," he said, hardly pausing in his rapid penmanship.

"I don't know. I must go out."

"What for?"

"Hermione asked me to leave these roses, with her love, at Mrs. Pennant's."

"Why could not Hermione leave the flowers herself, or send a servant?"

"I don't know. She asked me."

"And you never say 'No' to Hermione."

Marjory's lips parted in a smile. "No: I suppose not. I did not know I should feel the heat so much. Besides, it is only down the village. I will take the basket at once, and rest afterwards."

"No—I will see to the flowers."

"But your letters?"

"They shall wait. Duties never clash."

Mr. Fitzalan's left hand went detainingly to the basket-handle; while his right, which had dropped the pen, drew her down upon a chair, close to his side. She laid her head against his shoulder, and there was the sound of a long breath, half of pain, half of content. As a rule these two were more reserved in their daily intercourse one with the other than might have been expected. They loved deeply, and they "pulled together well," as the saying is: yet their "hermit-spirits" lived apart in locked chambers, seldom touching. Once in a way this seclusion was broken through: but not often. Perhaps they were too busy in outward life; perhaps too much alike in character.

"Poor little woman!" Mr. Fitzalan said musingly. "Always knocking against hard corners in this rocky world of ours! But there's balm for bruises, Marjie."

"Am I bruised?" and she tried to laugh, then whispered, "I hate to be stupid."

"It is not stupidity. You are overstrained, doing everybody's work for everybody. The fall of a wax image from its pedestal seems a woeful event at such times. Yes—wax! How much do you know of Harvey? Eight years ago he was a good-natured young fellow, amusing himself with you two children. My dear, no doubt about that. You were clever, and Hermione was pretty, and he had nothing to do. He was kind, of course, but if you expect perfection in everybody who is kind to you, I am afraid you are in for disappointments. Human nature at its best is a very mixed concern. You don't look for perfection, eh? No, not literally, perhaps: but you have a high ideal, and you fancy now and then that you have found the ideal embodied. Whereupon the embodiment falls short of the ideal and you——"

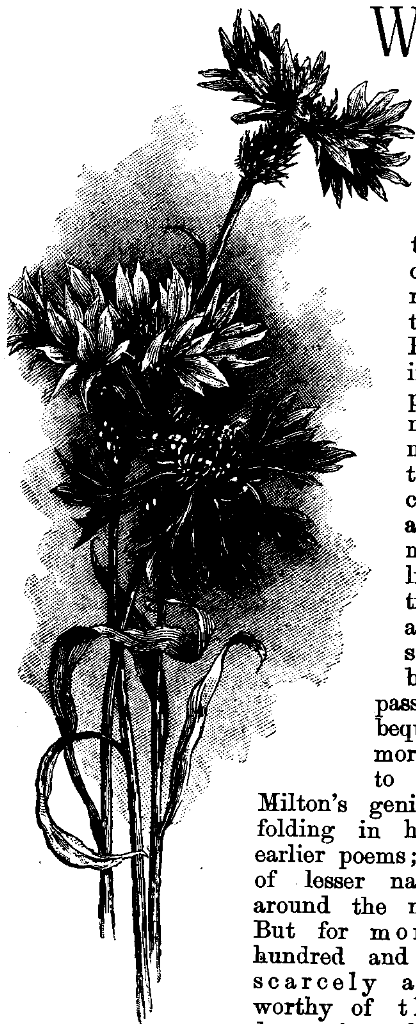
Marjory said only, "Yes," to this. Mr. Fitzalan changed his tone.

"You will never find it, except in One—in Christ. Human craving can only be satisfied in Him. He alone comes up to the loftiest ideal, and He alone can never disappoint our utmost expectations. The best and holiest of men and women do disappoint us, more or less."

"Yes,—oh, I know, father."

"Knowing is not always believing, is it? A good many of us who have got beyond the husks which the swine feed on, are very much given still to 'that which satisfieth not' in various forms. Unprofitable self-indulgence, my dear. But after all, my experience will not serve for you. Now go back to your couch, and have a quiet hour. I will see to the roses."

THE RISE OF AMERICAN DEVOTIONAL POETRY.



WHEN the great Puritan emigration founded the States of New England, more than two and a half centuries ago, much Devotion but little Poetry entered into the composition of the new community. In the mother country it was a time of magnificent literary activity. Spenser and Shakespeare had but recently passed away, bequeathing immortal strains to the world; Milton's genius was unfolding in his exquisite earlier poems; and a host of lesser names cluster around the mighty trio. But for more than a hundred and fifty years scarcely any poetry worthy of the name, devotional or otherwise, is found in the Colonies.

And yet it must always be remembered that the dwellers in New England were not in the condition of those who had no past from which to draw inspiration. The treasures of English literature formed part of their birthright, and many of the early colonists were men of learning admirably fitted to appreciate all that was best in their own and classic lore. In ancient days, too, it is significant that "Colonies" were the very home of poetry. One and another undying name—Homer—Hesiod—Anacreon—Pindar—sprang, not from Greece herself, but from the colonies with which she was identified. It was not until a late date in the history of Greek literature that the torch of poetry was carried into Greece properly so called.

With England and America the case is apparently to be reversed. Shakespeare and Milton are gone; our best is passed away. But the race of American poets has been steadily improving ever since the Revolution, and it is possible that great names may arise in the West, when the literary decadence of England has begun!

Leaving these prophecies and forebodings, it is evident from the very character of these sturdy Puritan colonists, and putting aside all such considerations as lack of leisure, that poetry was not to be expected from them. The Pilgrim Fathers and their immediate descendants were, it has been well said, like the labourers of an architect. It was their task to plant in religious virtue and useful science the foundations of a mighty edifice that should rise to a grandeur of which they had not the slightest conception. Wonderfully did they perform their part, but it was not for them to see, even as in a vision, the glory of the whole; much less was it possible for them to adorn with carving and tracery the interior of the temple. That work was left for others at a far later date. Theirs was the builder's, not the sculptor's art.

The temper of these Puritan forefathers then was not and could not be the poetic temper. At the same time, it was natural that any poetry that did obtain a hearing should be chiefly of a devotional character.

For the colony of New England stands alone in ancient and modern times. Its foundation was in religious principle, and men of eminent piety were its originators. Such topics as the Christian life affords were likely to suggest themselves naturally, for the very motive of the States' existence was religion.

The circumstances of the landing of the Mayflower on the 19th of December, 1620, were such as have inspired many a poem in later days.

> The Pilgrim Fathers—where are they?
> The waves that brought them o'er
> Still roll in the bay, and throw their spray,
> As they break along the shore:
> Still roll in the bay, as they rolled that day
> When the Mayflower moored below,
> When the sea around was black with storms,
> And white the shore with snow.
>
> * * * * *
>
> The Pilgrim *spirit* has not fled;
> It walks in noon's broad light;
> And it watches the bed of the glorious dead,
> With their holy stars by night:
> It watches the bed of the brave who have bled,
> And shall guard this ice-bound shore,
> Till the waves of the bay, where the Mayflower lay,
> Shall foam and freeze no more.

But for the first century and a half, the religious devotion that prompted the parting from country and from friends, the voyage across winter seas to seek an untried home, found expression chiefly in deeds, not words. Worthy George Herbert ejaculated in his parsonage at Bemerton, in the year 1630:

> Religion stands on tiptoe in our land,
> Ready to pass to the American strand.

We may hope, that so far as England is concerned, the prophecy has not been fulfilled; but whether religion left England or not, she certainly flourished in America.

Little poetry, then, as was found in New England, what did exist at first was chiefly of a religious tendency.

The very first book printed in America was a book of devotional poetry. It was entitled "The Psalms in Metre, faithfully Translated for the Use, Edification and Comfort of the Saints, in Public and Private, especially in New England," printed at Cambridge in 1640. John Eliot, the famous Apostle to the Indians, was one of the translators. They showed in their preface the rigid Puritan spirit of which mention has been made. "If," say they, "the verses are not always so smooth and elegant as some may desire and expect, let them consider that God's altar needs not our polishings." The modern reader may demur to this illustration in reading such a travesty as that of the beautiful 137th Psalm, of which this is a sample:

> The Lord's song sing can wee, being
> In stranger's land, then let
> Lose her skill my right hand if I
> Jerusalem forget.

And this from a specially amended and improved edition!

The first poem composed in America was by the Rev. William Morrell—a Latin description of New England with a translation. Although not a devotional poem strictly so called, it concludes with a verse distinguished alike for pious sound sense and lack of melody:

> But you whom the Lord intends hither to bring
> Forsake not the honey for fear of the sting,
> But bring both a quiet and contented mind,
> And all needful blessings you surely will find.

From the many writers who composed what they perhaps thought was religious poetry, but what was really doggrell, Mrs. Anne Bradstreet may be excepted. The glimpse obtained of this woman is a touching one. At the tender age of sixteen she came out in 1630 with her husband Simon Bradstreet, afterwards governor of the colony; and she must have possessed a character of sterling worth and fortitude to encounter the hardships of the new settlement in her delicately nurtured youth. She seems to have been much respected and beloved by her fellow-colonists; at her death she was greatly mourned; and her poetical reputation in her adopted country was such that she was called the 'Tenth Muse' and compared with Virgil to his disadvantage!

Her 'Elegy on a Grandchild' is really very pathetic, and is almost the only production worthy the name of poetry, devotional or otherwise, that we can discover in America in the seventeenth century.

> Farewell, dear child, my heart's too much content,
> Farewell, sweet babe, the pleasure of mine eye;
> Farewell, fair flower, that for a space was lent,
> Then ta'en away into eternity.
> Blest babe, why should I once bewail thy fate,
> Or sigh the days so soon were terminate,
> Sith thou art settled in an everlasting state?

Until after the Revolution there is indeed little to admire; and the tone of many of the foremost men of New England with regard to literature is shown by the declaration of Sir William Berkeley, governor of Virginia, in 1660: "I thank God there are no free schools or printing presses here, and I hope we shall not have them these hundred years. For learning has brought in heresies, and disobedience, and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them. God keep us from both."

This reads curiously, by-the-bye, when one reflects that the writer would undoubtedly have been deemed a "sectarian" by the church at home, and that religious "disobedience" to authority of a certain sort was the very motive of the colony's foundation.

But be that as it may, the tide of literature, such as it was, flowed chiefly in the direction of prose theology. "The poetry of the colonies," says Griswold, "was without originality, energy, feeling, or correctness of diction." When America ceased to be a colony and became a nation, her literature, strictly speaking, began—but not till then. While she remained part of England she caught no spark of the poetic fire that still burned brightly on the hearth of home.

The Greek colonists carried with them from the parent city a portion of the sacred fire to blaze upon the altar of Vesta, and never was it allowed to die out. Converting the fact into metaphor, no such sacred fire was borne from the altar of English poetry into the American colony. But when national life began, there arose a school of poets with an individuality and a tender grace of their own.

About a hundred years after the Puritan emigration we encounter a character of some interest in the person of one Dr. Mather Byles, minister of the church of Hollis Street, Boston, and a man of such note that Pope presented him with the Odyssey, and Dr. Watts sent out his works to him as they were published. He was an eminent preacher, and also, what all Puritan divines were not, an exceedingly agreeable companion. The colonial governor Belcher coveted his society on a journey to Maine, and invited him to share the voyage, which the doctor declined to do.

The governor, resolved not to be baffled, induced Dr. Byles to come on board the Scarborough ship of war in Boston harbour one afternoon to share a cup of tea, and while the two were seated quietly in the cabin, the anchor was weighed, the sails were set, and the ship was far out at sea before the learned divine perceived the stratagem of which he was the victim. Dr. Byles resigned himself good-naturedly to his position. While making preparations for service next Sunday it was found that there was no hymn-book on board and he wrote an appropriate psalm to be sung on the occasion. The concluding verse is perhaps the best.

> Each various scene, or day or night,
> Lord! points to Thee our nourished soul;
> Thy glories fix our whole delight;
> So the touched needle courts the pole.

After the Revolution, Washington Allston, painter, prose writer, and poet, is worthy of attention. His more celebrated pictures were representations of scriptural subjects, and his lines on Immortality are well worth quoting:

To think for aye; to breathe immortal breath,
And know nor hope, nor fear, of ending death;
To see the myriad worlds that round us roll
Wax old and perish, while the steadfast soul
Stands fresh and moveless in her sphere of thought,
O God, omnipotent! who in me wrought
This conscious world, whose ever-growing orb
When the dead Past shall all in time absorb,
Will be but as begun,—Oh, of Thine own,
Give of the holy light that veils Thy throne,
That darkness be not mine, to take my place
Beyond the reach of light, a blot in space!
So may this wondrous Life, from sin made free,
Reflect Thy love for aye, and to Thy glory be.

John Pierpont, born in 1785, was the author of the verses on the Mayflower that have already been quoted. His "Airs of Palestine," a long poem of about eight hundred lines, was renowned in its day, and Griswold says, "The religious sublimity of the sentiments, the beauty of the language, and the finish of the versification, placed it at once in the judgment of all competent to form an opinion on the subject, before any poem at that time produced in America." Few English readers have probably seen the work, but many of this author's shorter poems are worthy of attention. His ode for the Charlestown Centennial Celebration breathes the spirit that characterises his verse:

God of our fathers, in whose sight
The thousand years that sweep away
Man and the traces of his might
Are but the break and close of day—

Grant us that love of truth sublime,
That love of goodness and of Thee,
That makes Thy children in all time
To share Thine own eternity.

And the beautiful Dedication Hymn has found its way into our service of song—the first perhaps of American hymns that has become familiar to English worshippers.

O Thou, to whom in ancient time
The lyre of Hebrew bards was strung;
Whom kings adored in song sublime,
And prophets praised with glowing tongue:

Not now on Zion's height alone,
The favoured worshipper may dwell;
Nor where at sultry noon Thy Son
Sat weary by the patriarch's well:

From every place below the skies,
The grateful song, the fervent prayer,
The incense of the heart may rise
To heaven, and find acceptance there.

In this Thy house, whose doors we now
For social worship first unfold,
To Thee the suppliant throng shall bow
While circling years on years are rolled.

To Thee shall Age with snowy hair,
And Strength and Beauty, bend the knee;
And Childhood lisp with reverent air
Its praises and its prayers to Thee.

O Thou, to whom in ancient time
The lyre of prophet bards was strung,
To Thee at last in every clime
Shall temples rise, and praise be sung.

The "Hymn of the Last Supper" and "Jerusalem" show a mental realisation of the scenes of our Saviour's passion, and are well worth reading.

Andrews Norton, who was appointed in 1819 Professor of sacred literature in Harvard University, wrote several hymns, of which "Fortitude" is perhaps the best.

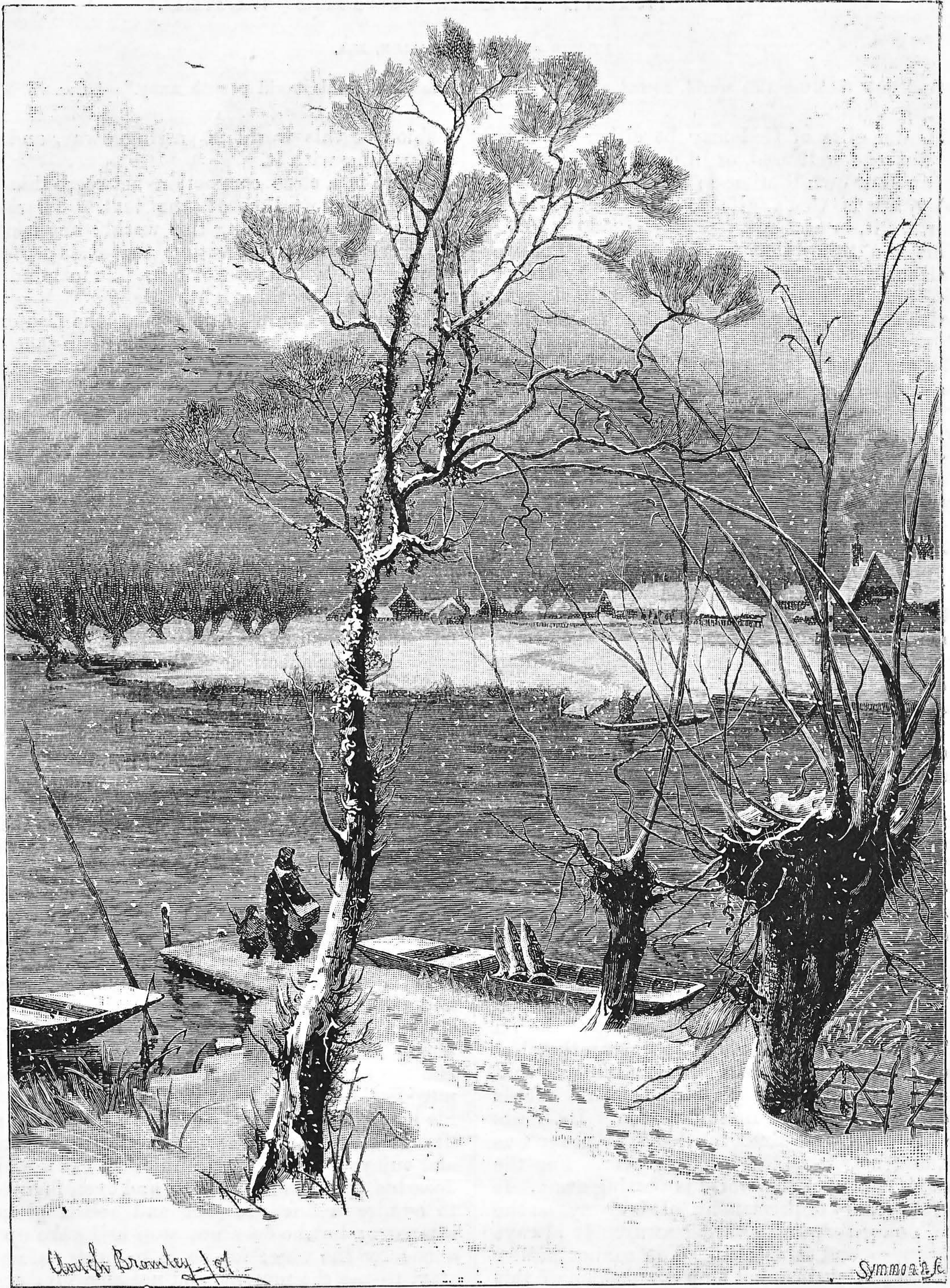
Faint not, poor traveller, though thy way
Be rough, like that thy Saviour trod;
Though cold and stormy lower the day,
This path of suffering leads to God.

Nay, sink not; though from every limb
Are starting drops of toil and pain,
Thou dost but share the lot of Him
With whom His followers are to reign.

The finest specimens of American devotional poetry belong to a later period—always excepting the Dedication Hymn by Pierpont just quoted—and have been purposely left for further consideration. Until long after the nineteenth century has begun, little is produced that is of sterling value.

It is singular to observe how constantly the thoughts of earlier American poets turn upon death and bereavement. In looking through a collection like that of Mr. Griswold, one cannot but be struck by the extreme frequency of such topics as "Human Frailty," "On the Death of a Friend," "Funeral Hymn," "Consumption," and so forth. The theme of bereavement is indeed one of the most sacred that can inspire the devotional poet. Has not sorrow for the loss of a friend given to modern readers the priceless treasure of *In Memoriam?* But there is a certain style of poetry which adopts the expressions current about sorrow, death and the grave, and somehow produces the impression of a lack of intensity and of real heart experience. Very young preachers are fond of choosing the topic of Affliction. They have at their fingers' ends all the stock consolations, and are ready to point out the good that is to be derived from the pains of this troublesome world. Their words are true enough, but lack force and are irritating. The easy commonplaces on the consolations and benefit of loss from some fluent young orator who has evidently never known bereavement do not touch the root of the matter at all. If the comparison may be admitted, these young poets—the poets of a young community—are also too prone to sing of sorrow. There is, as an English critic justly observes, a hectic tinge in their verse. But as time advances, strength and originality advance also, and there is much that is beautiful to note and admire in the sacred verse of America.

LILY WATSON.



THE SILENT SNOWS.

THE USE AND ABUSE OF THIS WORLD.

BY THE REV. F. BOURDILLON, M.A.

"And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."—1 *Cor.* vii. 31.

ALL the gifts of God may be either used, or abused: well used, or ill used. This world, and our own lifetime in it, may be so. Our earthly life is God's gift to us; and we may either use it, or abuse it.

This is a thing that touches us all. For we are all making some use of the world, by living in it, and passing through it, and having to do with it. We are at this very time making use of it.

We are not to look upon this world, and our time in it, as merely something to be got through. Our time here below is as much our appointed lot now, as our better life above will be hereafter. This is where God places us now; that is what He will bring us to hereafter. This world is a very important place to us, and our time in it is a very precious time.

It is possible to use it well, to make a right and profitable employment of it, to turn it to good account, to use it as God would have it used. We may use it in seeking and serving Him, in doing good, in preparing for the world to come, in making others happier, in leading them to God, in spreading our Redeemer's Kingdom on earth, and thus promoting God's glory. God would have us make the most of this life, with all its opportunities. He would have us thankfully receive and enjoy His manifold gifts; but always keeping in view what is coming; ever looking forward, even while engaged in the present.

The key to this exhortation about the use and abuse of the world is to be found in the latter part of this verse, coupled with the 29th verse: "This I say, brethren, the time is short: . . . the fashion of this world passeth [is passing] away."

"The time is short." This means more than the bare fact that the remainder of our life on earth is but a short space. It does mean that, but it has also a more precise meaning. It means that the season of opportunity which this life affords us is a contracted and limited season. Its limits for each of us were fixed by God. It never was long, and now it is shorter than ever. For the fashion, or state, of this world is passing away. It is not stationary or permanent. It is always on the move, going forward, passing away. It always has been so, and is so still. You cannot hinder or alter this; you cannot stop the fashion of this world from passing away. You may take stones and clay, and dam up a stream, and stop the flow of the water; but you cannot check the flow of time. You may turn aside from the path you are treading, and so never reach the end to which the path leads; but you cannot turn aside out of the path of this life, and avoid the end. The fashion of this world is passing away, and you are passing with it.

There is a close connection between this fact and the exhortation of the text. There are various ways of abusing this world; one consists in overlooking or forgetting that it is a passing world. He who does not bear this in mind will never use the world aright.

It would be hard to deny that the fashion of this world is passing away. It is plain that it is.

Many have gone from among us, one by one; and we are following. They have passed away, and we are passing. For we are in a passing world, and it is carrying us all along with it.

This cannot be denied, but it may be overlooked and forgotten; and, alas! it is so by many. They say that the world is passing away, or agree with those who say it; but they do not live as if they thought so. Many live as if this present state were to last always; they let worldly things take fast hold on them, as if there were nothing beyond; their whole mind is fixed on what is slipping away—their mind, their interest, their affections. To get as much of this world's gain as possible, and to suck out of this life the utmost possible enjoyment—that is all their aim. They forget that they cannot keep what they get, and that all these pleasures are but fleeting pleasures.

Now this is abusing life; for He who gave it did not mean it to be used so. To abuse it is to use it in a way that is contrary to the will of God; and this way is so. He does not mean us to use this world in this way. We are to use this world in which he has placed us, and to use it diligently; yet to sit loose to it, to have something better in store, and to be ready to take leave when the call comes. This is not our rest; we are not at home here. We are but like travellers, staying at an inn by the way, or dwelling in tents. A traveller uses the road, and the inn, and the tent, but he uses them for their proper purposes. He is always pressing on; his country, his home, is before him; and on that his heart is fixed. He chooses his way, and minds his steps, and enjoys his rest at the inn or in the tent, and does his business as he goes, and even finds time to admire a fine prospect and relish pleasant company; but he does not stop and take up his abode by the way; for he is to press on, not to stay, to use the present, and not abuse it; and it would be abusing the helps and conveniences of the journey, if he were to sit down at his ease, instead of pressing on homewards.

The two verses just before the text are striking: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as

though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;" and then follow the words of the text. We are to treat all possessions, and all connections, and all sorrows, and all joys, as belonging to a passing state; we are to sit loose to them all. It is true that the time was peculiar —a time of difficulty and change and uncertainty —and the apostle referred especially to that time; but the spirit of his words applies to every time. The world was a passing world then, and it is a passing world now; if we would use it aright, we must treat it as such.

There is a world that is not a passing world, and the fashion of which will never pass away— the eternal world to come. We are travelling towards it, and every step brings us nearer. But there are two roads through this present earthly life, and there are two ends; there is a happy home, and there is also a dreadful abode. That happy home is in the presence of God: to dwell there is to be in His presence, and to enjoy His favour perfectly and for ever. Christ is the way to it—the living way, the sure way, the present way. He is the way for us now, the only way by which we who are now passing through this world, and passing along with it to the end, may reach God and live with Him for evermore.

Oh, use this world as not abusing it; use it for seeking God, and doing His holy will, and pressing toward the mark. Make sure that you are in the way. Leave nothing to chance, or to a vague and baseless hope; do not let the great concern remain in doubt. Make sure of an interest in Christ; make sure of His being to you now "the way, and the truth, and the life." Seek Him, trust in Him, love Him, and serve Him. Let Him be first in your heart. Live in faith and hope. Sit loose. Set your affection on things above, and press on. This is to "use this world as not abusing it."

A New Year's Prayer.

O GOD of Ages, at whose word
The new is throned above the old;
For whom, by listening angels heard,
The tale of all our years is told;

Before Thy throne in vast array
The records of the centuries shine,
Our morrows live in Thy to-day,
And all eternity is Thine!

Once more, Time's silent hand hath moved
O'er life's broad dial its onward space;
Once more, our doubting hearts have proved
Thy faithful love, Thy boundless grace.

For all the failures of the past,
The might-have-beens we did not see,
The fervid aims, too weak to last,
We come for pardon now to Thee.

Absolve us, Lord; new grace instil
Each fainting virtue to restore;
Give strength that we may do Thy will:
Give love that we may love Thee more.

We bless Thee in this opening year
For mercies human and divine;
For all our hands hold close and dear,
For all that waits us still in Thine.

We know the new and unseen track
Will surely yield enough for praise;
We know we shall not suffer lack
If Thou art with us all the days.

Increase our faith, for this we plead
With soul-abasement at Thy throne,
That we may love Thy will indeed,
And trust no leading save Thine own.

Till, past all mortal joys and fears,
Past heights of service yet untrod,
We come to spend eternal years
At home with Thee, our Father-God.

MARY ROWLES JARVIS.

THE LESSON OF THE SNOW.

IT fell—softly, silently, thickly, from the overladen clouds. Large flaked, whirling, driving, from the deadly-grey sky. Relentlessly, pitilessly, ruthlessly it fell, hour by hour. It covered the grass; it besprinkled the bare branches; the leaves of the evergreens were laden with it; it heaped with white masses every railing and wall and post and vantage ground, be it what it might. And yet it fell, softer, quieter, more silent, more thickly, more deadly than ever.

It fell all night as well as all day, then the storm-laden heavens were emptied of gloom, and the cold clear sunlit sky appeared, swept by an icy wind. The pale blue of the vault above was imaged beneath in the pale azure of the shadows upon the field of white, covering alike the frost-bound waters and the frost-bound earth. The world was changed, changed into a dream-like wizard beauty, with the chill of death over all.

They looked from the window upon it, he and she. The storm of affliction had swept over their lives, and left them as bare of prosperity as those trees were bare of summer leaves.

"Everything gone?" asked she sadly, "everything, home and all?"

"We shall find a home of some sort, dear," said he, "but this one is bound to go, and we must wander forth to seek a new one."

And it went. The home to which he brought her, a bride; the home they had decked so joyously together; the home where they had set up their Lares and Penates, and gathered around them their simple stores of refinement and comfort; the home in which their children had come to them, and from which some dear ones had been carried out. It was scattered to the winds. Some of its treasures went here, some there, and the remnants of the wreck were gathered together in a distant place, beneath a far humbler roof, where self-denial, and labour and toil and deprivation ruled, in place of quiet, cultured ease. The winter of adversity fell upon them in all its bleakness and bareness, and they shivered beneath it, almost to death, the struggle was so dire.

But he strove to support her; and she smiled to comfort him; and both laughed to bring the dimple upon the baby faces, that wore a happier look because papa and mamma were so much more with them now than before. What nurse could tell the beautiful stories which never failed the mother's memory? What toy horses so good to ride upon as the father's foot and shoulder? How charming now to be always downstairs, nor ever banished to nursery or play room! What fun equal to the grand new play of "helping papa and mamma?"

The snow was gone from field and furrow, and the lark sprang up into the sunlit sky. The snow had melted from tree and bush on whose branches diamond drops hung galore. The snow had vanished from garden-bed and border, and there appeared bunches of tender, delicate snowdrops, each in its green sheath yet, but saved from the keenness of the frost by the softly lying cushion of snow, the upper crust of which had frozen while yet keeping the earth soft and moist through which the slender spikes could push up.

They dearly loved their children, that struggling he and she. Their hearts were tender; had all been easy in their lives, they might have done as others have done, and spared them every disappointment, every toil, every burden, till those young souls grew up devoid of pith and strength to withstand, and were fain to succumb when scorching sun, or blasting winds, or spring draught fell upon them. But, like the snowdrops, the wintry cold strengthened and supported them; they did not outgrow their own strength; the weight of homely deprivation, the burden of homely toil made them sturdy and strong to bear the realities of life and keen to judge truly and well between their pleasures and their responsibilities.

The snow kept back the flowers, and withheld them from breaking their sheaths too soon; the parents' troubles, gallantly shared by the young ones, ere they felt the deprivations brought in their train, caused them to estimate joy and sorrow at a more true worth, to value the former rightly, to dread the latter less.

The snow had not long disappeared from every sheltered nook before the snowdrops were tossing delicate bells joyously in the fresh, cold, air, See them in the old orchard, beneath the gnarled lichen-decked hoary apple-trees; the ground is white with them, almost as white as with the snow itself; they cluster around knotty roots, among moss and fern; they bloom in sheets; they group themselves in clumps; they spread over the ground; they climb in knots up the hedge; they push their way even through the ancient fences, and bedeck the outer bank down to the streamlet which dances at its foot. The sweet young things, the pure young things, how delicate and fragile they are in their simplicity, yet they are the nurslings of the winter, and the harbingers of spring. They burst forth to assure man of brighter days and more gorgeous blooms to follow; they hurry on, in advance of violet and crocus, the very first to sing the welcome song "winter is over and gone."

And the children. No frail hothouse blossoms are they. They spring up around the knees of their anxiously toiling parents, pure and beautiful, brave and hardy, yet joyous too. No laugh so merry as theirs; no fun so enjoyable; no relish for pleasure so keen, because the laugh seasons labour, the fun is rare from lack of time, the pleasure unfrequent and innocent. They have

ever shared their parents' labour and cares, they have ever brightened them by their joyousness.

And now, the silence of the snow has fled, and the softer atmosphere resounds with the song of the birds gathering together from their winter resorts, and preparing for sweet St. Valentine's carnival. The lark soars, singing each day more shrilly from the clouds; the robin's sweet note is heard again near the house, ever grateful for winter ministrations from man in its hour of need; the blackbird's mellow whistle is heard melodiously in the thicket.

The children, grown to man's stature, and woman's loveliness, disperse to make homes for themselves, understanding well what such homes should be; hoping for sunshine to bless them, but not fearing beyond measure the days of darkness and cold, for they have experienced the worst that the snow can do, and felt its blessing.

And he, and she? A "season of sweet shining after rain," awaits them, while the birds' happy music is heard around, and they can patiently abide until the earthly note swells into the rapture of the celestial choir.

G. N.

The Royal Law.

BY CHARLOTTE MASON, AUTHOR OF "A FRIEND FOR LITTLE CHILDREN."

CHAPTER I.—LONELY PAUL.

THE sunlight was lying everywhere,—flooding the white road as it wound its way between the hills overshadowed by trees, where the patches of soft grass were tender and green; on the broad river slowly eddying under the wooded banks, until its shiny waters were lost in the hazy distance; through the great orchard, where the twisted boughs of the apple and pear trees interlaced, and where the birds piped and twittered from twig to twig.

Bright warm sunshiny rays; every nook and corner was bathed in the glow; the purple fox-gloves and the yellow iris, the marigolds and the lilies reared their heads and quivered in the golden light. The world of nature was smiling under the touch of summer, after the long spring; and the same gladness stirred the heart of Aleck's mother. as she stood near an open window, and watched the beams lighting on flower and tree. Her face was a little sad in expression when the features were in repose, but in Mrs. Vincent's smile and voice there was a fascination which inspired confidence, and which made her friends think of her as good and wise and gentle. She was a widow; her girlhood and youth were gone in the vista of years which lay behind her; but at thirty-five her spirit was still young, and she looked eagerly into a future which was bright and beautiful, not for herself, but for the little son, whom she loved better than her life; for him, she lived and hoped and dreamed, as though his welfare depended on her love, her wisdom and her prayers.

Now and again, a smile lit up her face, as the sound of merry voices and childish laughter was borne to her through the sultry air from a distant part of the garden.

Little Doris Vane was spending the day with Aleck; and when they were together, Mrs. Vincent knew that they were perfectly happy and needed no companionship but the society of their two little selves. They were seldom apart in the holidays; day by day, they met in the meadows; rowed on the river; galloped their ponies under the hedgerows, elms, and confided wonderful secrets to each other, as they wandered hand in hand through the fields, plucking

the daisies and buttercups, and letting their shrill young voices fill the air with their songs and laughter.

A dark, sad-eyed little boy, dressed in shabby clothes, often followed in their footsteps, and watched their games from behind a clump of trees. Paul Stafford was an orphan, and owned no tie of blood save his cousin Aleck; thrown on the charity of his uncle by marriage, Mr. Geoffrey, who lived at the Hall, he felt like a waif whom nobody claimed, and his holidays were very dull and lonely. His guardian was a stern man, who laboured in his office through the week; returning home on the Saturday night, worn out and jaded in spirit, to seek the rest and repose of the country after his arduous city life. But the weekly home-coming brought no happiness to Paul; his uncle allowed him to indulge in no fun or play in the house, and he rarely noticed his presence there, except with a frown or a sharp word, which made Paul feel that he was in his way; and he always moved about the great still rooms as though he were expecting a reproof.

The old housekeeper was too busy to heed him, beyond attending to his bodily wants; and Mrs. Vincent regarded him as a shy boy who liked to be left alone, and who shrank from any attention, while all the time his little heart was pining for sympathy and love. He felt full of health and vigour, but there was nothing to cheer him in his solitary life, and he envied the spirits of the two children, who seemed full to overflowing with merry glee.

Sometimes he ventured to join them in their rambles, but Aleck was selfish in his pleasures; he paid little heed to him as he trotted by their side, and often forgot his presence after the first few minutes, so that he felt more friendless with them than when he was alone, and was glad to draw back to the shelter of the clump of firs, where he could battle unseen with his feelings of lonely disappointment. The only happy days of the holidays were the days spent at the Laurels, Doris' home, when Mr. Vane called him Paul in his kind voice, and bid him go and play with the little white-robed girl, in the garden, who did not mind his shabby clothes, and who let him hold her hand in his, as they crossed the river on the narrow plank.

The path in life had been made so easy for Aleck and Doris; their every wish was gratified, and they dwelt in an atmosphere of love. His own path had not always been so rough; he also could remember a sunny home and a dear mother, who loved her curly-headed boy so tenderly that she always had him with her. He was never in her way, and she never told him he was troublesome when he ran and skipped by her side, or played with his dog and rushed about from room to room. She never wearied of the eager voice asking question after question, as he sat by her, with his bright happy face upturned to hers; she was always ready to listen and to give him the sympathy he wanted in his childish joys and sorrows. He loved her so dearly, and while she lived he was never lonely and needed no companion but his mother.

They had very loving talks together in the quiet summer evenings, when he used to coax her out into the fresh air, and then throw himself down in the clover meadow, with a smile in his eyes as he rested near her and felt his hand close folded in hers; and long, long after she was laid to rest, and Paul had a different home, her gentle words rang in his ears and were echoed in his heart.

A deep longing to do right was early implanted in the manly little breast, and he learned perhaps to think more seriously than other children of his own age, from the close companionship, but he was very happy, and the days then were never lonely or dull.

The time came when the brightness was clouded. The dear mother grew weaker and weaker; and when she was called to the Home they had so often talked about together, Paul felt he could never be happy again. The change in his life seemed too terrible. The gloomy old Hall—where there was no familiar face or voice—was strangely desolate for one so young. The little home-nurtured lad had no one to comfort him, none to whom he could take his troubles, only as he sobbed them out in the ear of Him who is the Father of the fatherless, and who was the only One who witnessed the bursts of tears which were shed out in the fields during the early months after his mother's death.

Yes! Paul was very lonely and very sad, though two long years had rolled away; but he had a brave unselfish spirit, and the memory of his mother was like a sweet sound in his heart; he loved to recall her words, and do everything that he knew she would wish.

He had one treasure of his own, which he always carried in his pocket: it was a little leather Testament, very brown and very dingy, but he loved it, and touched it very reverently; he began to love it first, because there was his mother's name, "Mary Stafford" in it; and then it grew very dear to him as he lay in the sloping meadows and read again the precious truths in it that she had taught him, and tried to live them in his young life.

He had no remembrance of his father, he was barely four years old when he died. Mr. Stafford was a minister in the East of London, and his life was spent among the poor and wretched in the alleys and slums; but his strength was not equal to the work, and his self-denying spirit would not let him take the rest he needed, so that when an epidemic of fever broke out and he visited the stricken people in their infected crowded dwellings, going in and out among them, night and day, his health gave way. He caught the fever himself, and in less than a week he laid down his life here and entered into the joys of Paradise.

Mrs. Stafford constantly talked to her little son about his father, and Paul loved his memory. Of all the talks he had with his mother, these made the greatest impression on his mind, and he liked best to think about them after she died: for it was in one of these conversations, that she first told him about "the Royal Law." He was sitting by her side, with her hand resting on his curls, and he had read the verse aloud to her in the little brown Testament; he did not understand it very well then; but he could remember what she had told him of its meaning—of the Royal Law being a law of love, sent from the King of kings for His people to obey, to teach them to be self-denying, to be ready to do little acts of kindness as they have the opportunity and so to follow in the footsteps of the Saviour.

Paul liked to think about it, and he had pondered his mother's words so often in his loneliness, until they had become to him the very spirit of his own life. His faith was very simple, and a trusting look of love used to light up his features when he thought of mother so safe and happy; but he often found it hard, dreadfully hard to believe that it was right and best for him to be left behind when he was so lonely, and found it so difficult to be good now he no longer had her gentle voice and loving words to help him. He had many a tough struggle with himself, to keep his lip from quivering and the tears out of eyes, when his uncle spoke harshly to him, and bid him be quiet, if he only ran quite softly across the floor, when he used to scamper about just as he liked. It was no easy matter to know how to get through the lonely days and the silent hour in the evening, when Mr. Geoffrey dosed over his newspaper, and he was afraid to move; but he did try to bear it patiently, and with a great effort restrained his feelings and choked down his sobs. Still the lively boyish voice had lost its ring and the bright face had a very wistful look; no one understood how his loving heart had been bound up in his mother—how his thoughts dwelt upon

the past, and how glad he was to be in bed, where he could bury his head in the pillow and cry, and the sleep took all the sorrowful thoughts away.

Aleck would have been happier had he tried to cheer his cousin's lonely hours, but he was selfish and too fond of going his own way.

One warm sunshiny morning, Paul arose very early and his dark eyes looked out eagerly from his window, on a cloudless sky: he had been anticipating this day for more than a week, and a bright glow of pleasure illumined his countenance when he saw the sun's beams, and the grey mist fading into the distance. Aleck had promised to take him in his boat for a long day's fishing up the river and Doris Vane was to go with them to take care of the lunch. He had spent hours of thought and labour in preparing the tackle, and his clever ingenious fingers had been busily employed in manufacturing the flies, which were a marvel of success.

Aleck had thanked him very warmly for them, when he told him the evening before, and had warned him not to be late, as they would start punctually at half-past ten. This was an unusual treat for the boy, and the *real* invitation pleased him; it was so seldom that he could be with Aleck without the thought oppressing him that he was looked upon as a bore; but this day he knew he need have no such feelings, because Aleck would not have asked him if he had not wanted him.

There was no fear of his missing the time; as soon as his basin of bread and milk was eaten, he seized his rod and fishing basket and started along the road, bordered on either side with the fragrant woods, and his quick little feet, as they tramped in the dust, speedily put a mile between him and the old Hall. There were not many joys by the wayside for him to cull; but in this great joy awaiting him, he felt really happy and even fancied that the wild flowers in the hedge-rows nodded to him and danced in gladness for his sake.

When he passed the Laurels he peeped through the iron railings to see if he could catch a glimpse of little Doris' soft blue eyes and golden-curled hair; but there was no one in sight, except the gardener who was mowing the lawn. So on Paul trudged again, until he came to the meadow which lay at the foot of the woods and stretched down to the river; this was the last field he had to cross; and as he paused a moment by the stile, the village clock chimed the hour of ten; then he knew, there was only just one half hour before they would paddle out the boat. He gathered some of the lovely honeysuckle, and wreaths of wild roses for Doris, while he was waiting, and whistled to the birds who were singing joyously in the warm air. He turned his head resolutely away from the old clump of trees and half shut his eyes until the hill had hidden it from sight; he did not care to look at the spot where his dreary hours had been spent, when he was going to be so happy; and he hoped that Aleck would be blind to his shabby clothes and not see how threadbare they were, nor how long his arms had grown for his jacket-sleeves. He was rather surprised that no sound of voices fell on his ear as he neared the meeting-place, and that Aleck and Doris were no where to be seen; he had expected to see Doris standing on the river banks while Aleck helped the boy to unmoor the boat; but no one was in sight, and only the hum of the bees broke the silence.

A slight fear awoke within him; he crept to the edge of the hill and gazed along the sunny lane, stealing away under the trees to Aleck's home; but there were only some speckled and spotted cows, walking quickly along to the pastures behind the village, with the little red-hooded girl who milked them every morning. Then the half-hour chimed, and grasping his rod tightly in his hand, he ran with rapid steps down the sloping sides of the hill, and never paused until he found himself standing breathless in the front of the boat-house; but even there he was all alone; to his surprise he found the doors thrown wide open and no boat in the harbour.

LEFT BEHIND.

"How late they are," he said to himself, "but they are sure to come," and he threw himself on the grass to wait.

The river flowed silently on at his feet, the gleams of golden sunshine made the ripples sparkle, and he longed to be gliding down the stream while the light was dancing on it; but after half an hour of patient waiting he grew weary, and wondered if he might venture into the old garden to see if Aleck were there; so he laid his tackle and basket and rod down on the soft grass, and set off at a swift trot to find out why they did not come. Paul was naturally very shy, and his life made him more so; he was almost afraid to enter the garden when he reached the door, but his great anxiety conquered his shyness, and he let himself in so softly that he almost startled old Joseph the gardener by stealing so quietly to his side.

"Can you tell me, please," he said in an entreating voice, "where my Cousin Aleck is?"

"Ay! to be sure I can," was the ready reply; "the little master has gone fishing up the river, more than an hour ago, and he won't come home before evening, so you had best not wait for him."

Paul's face clouded, and he stood for a moment twisting a piece of fishing line round his fingers; he seemed in a mist, and he could not understand why they had left him, or why they had started so much earlier than Aleck said.

"Are you quite sure they have gone?" he asked; and it was hard work to keep the sound of tears out of his voice.

"As sure as I am alive;" and the spade was dug vigorously into the celery bed; "and who would be so like to know as me, when the little master has taken the boy with him, and there are these beds to be weeded for the mistress; and they never so much as said, 'And by your leave!'"

"Did any one else go with them?" Paul felt that he must go on asking the questions before he could satisfy himself that they had really gone.

"Ay! there was a party of them: Miss Doris and her cousins, Master Gerald and Alfred; it was a real surprise and pleasure to the little master when he saw the young gentlemen. Ay! and there was the sister, too, Miss Margery, and they were a lively party! I think the river will ring with their voices to-day, if they be as merry as they was on starting; but they'll have to sober down a bit if they means the fish to bite."

He talked on, pausing a second between each spade-full of earth he turned up, and without knowing how sorely he was wounding the feelings of the little fellow by his side; but if he had raised his eyes from the ground, he would have seen the glow fade away from Paul's face while the white look which came there instead made his features look thin and sharp.

Paul understood now, and the knowledge gave him pain. Aleck had forgotten him; merrier boys had come in his way and he had never given another thought to him; he had passed from his mind as completely as though he had never invited him; he was forgotten, and he was left behind.

For a moment Paul let his eyes rest on the flowers around him, and then he rubbed them with his little fist. He thought there must be some clouds flecking the bright light, but the garden was still bathed in sunshine.

"I thought I was going to be happy this morning," he said to himself, as he turned away into a side path which led to the wilderness part of the garden; he wanted to get away from the sound of the river, and he fought with all his strength against the sobs which were almost suffocating him. A struggle too was going on in his mind; he could not help feeling angry as well as miserable; it seemed such a mean trick for Aleck to play him; and it cost him so little to make others happy, when he had everything he liked. But better thoughts came: he didn't wish to be in a temper about it, and he did not want to cry; he wanted to be brave and to bear his disappointment well, but it was hard work and he did not like to be forgotten. He threw himself down on his back and lay among some feathery grass which nearly buried him, and rested his head on his hands; he could not return just then to the great still house, so he lay there with his tearful eyes fixed on the blue sky, watching the white clouds, and wondering if father and mother knew up there how lonely and miserable he was. Then he took the little Testament from his pocket and pressed his lips to the name on the first page; it was his mother's writing, so he knew her hand must have rested there, and the thought comforted him.

"I should like to have died with you, mother," he whispered into the long grass. "Why did you leave your lonely little boy down here?" And then he was able to bear no more; the flood of repressed feeling burst forth and he fell into a wild fit of sobbing, which was deeper than any ordinary childish grief.

Poor motherless child! but he was not left long to weep alone; a human heart of sympathy was nearer than he thought.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. I.

He hath spoken blasphemy.
The day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen.
Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously.
Am not I better to thee than ten sons?
Thou knowest the people that they are set on mischief.
Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?
Come up this once, for he hath showed me all his heart.
If a man find his enemy will he let him go well away?
The God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked.
I have enough, my brother.

Find out these speakers ten;
Two women's names are here,
And all the rest are men
Who in the list appear.

See Samuel's father's name,
And one who, doubting, came
To find the Lord.
One did a treasure sell,
And one in battle fell
Upon his sword.

One wore a robe of blue;
And one, an aged Jew,
Died broken-hearted.
One was a prophet wise;
And one, in great surprise
And horror, started
And from his seat arose
Rending his priestly clothes
As he departed.

Now take initial letters, they will spell
Three words familiar, and remembered well;
Thrice in one gospel is this sentence read,
And, in a vision, it is four times said.

L. T.

SCRIPTURE VERSE.

NO. I.

1. It contains reference to three several days of the months, one of them being New Year's Day.
2. It is an account of work done by priests and Levites.
3. It was idolatry that made the work necessary.
4. It relates the beginning and end of the work.
5. "The thing was done suddenly."
6. The work occupied sixteen days, and was followed by sacrifice and praise.
7. Four instruments of music are mentioned in the same chapter as employed in praise; also the writers of the words sung.
8. The verse contains a word which now means "to make holy."
9. It mentions no name but that of "the Lord."
10. It is said of the king then reigning that "in every work . . . he did it with all his heart and prospered." Also that "God left him to try him." His son reigned fifty-five years.
11. This king wrote letters just after the work was done and sent them out by posts which were laughed and mocked at.
12. The verse contains fifty-three words: two of them occur three times over.

L. T.