THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

SPRING TIME.

"The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air."

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THE DALRYMPLES.

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

CHAPTER XXVII.—A PRIVATE ARRANGEMENT.

HERMIONE was shown into a lavishly-decorated drawing-room, which might have been taken as a very symbol of City wealth set down in a country corner. She did not like the style of thing; for her tastes had been educated in chaste lines; and the superabundance of money-outlay, witnessed to by every inch of the room, went against the grain with her. Even where beauty existed, it was spoilt by ostentation.

The three Daltons, father, mother, and daughter, appeared in quick succession, each more or less flurried, and all disposed to welcome her with *empressement*. Mr. Dalton was stout and plain, Mrs. Dalton plump and comely, Miss Dalton thin and excitable. They were charmed to see Miss Rivers, but amazed to hear that she had come on foot. What a pity that she had not driven! In her dear grandfather's time—but of course things were different now! Everybody was talking of it. But Miss Rivers would sit quiet and rest, and have a cup of tea presently; and by-and-by they would drive her home themselves—delighted to do so! No trouble at all to have the carriage out, but quite a pleasure—and all those lazy horses in the stables wanted exercise. Positively Mr. Dalton did not know how to give them enough.

"I assure you, I prefer the walk," Hermione said somewhat distantly. For although she had come to seek a favour, she did not at all wish to have favours thrust upon her unsought; and it was too much to have people supposing that she had walked because she might not drive if she chose. The slight figure straightened itself, and the fair cheek flushed a little.

"Well, we will see; we will see!" Mrs. Dalton responded, nodding her head. "Yes, you are a good walker, no doubt, my dear, but it begins to get dusk early, you know, and you are much too young and pretty to walk home alone after dusk. Is she not, Anna? Much too young and pretty. And we see you so seldom, you are not going to hurry away now you have come at last."

Hermione again could have resented the patronage of that "my dear," but taking offence at such trifles was hardly compatible with the aim of her call. So she restrained herself.

It had not been her intention to remain long, certainly not longer than was needed for the object in hand. But that object seemed for awhile to elude her grasp. Every conceivable subject came under discussion, except the one which she wished to bring forward. She did not wish the bringing forward to be too obvious an action on her own part. She wanted it to come up naturally, and this it refused to do.

Mrs. Dalton and her daughter were people who liked to air their ideas before a good listener, and Hermione was a very good listener, for whether interested or no she always looked interested. Mr. Dalton had a way of appealing deferentially to ladies for their opinions on vexed questions; and as he usually made their notions the text for a supplementary address by himself, the process consumed a good deal of time.

"I really must leave," Hermione said at length, seizing on a minute break, and she sighed but did not rise. "There is so much to be done, in preparation for leaving home next week!" Hermione sighed again.

"Are you really going away? But, as I was telling you, Miss Rivers, the article which my husband read to me——"

"Yes, we are leaving. It is a trial to me, of course," Hermione said, with her gentle air of sadness, ignoring the elder lady's desire to discuss the last "Quarterly." "My cousins have decided to spend a few weeks at Eastbourne. But——"

"How delightful!" exclaimed Miss Dalton. "The very queen of watering-places, as—— Who was it that said so, mother?"

"But I——" persisted Hermione,

"Yes, indeed, a most charming place," added Mrs. Dalton, dropping the "Quarterly" to pick up Eastbourne. "A few breezes on Beachy Head will soon bring a little more colour to these pale cheeks, my dear Miss Rivers."

"But I do not——"

"And just the right time of year," said Miss Dalton. "Of course, the season is in August. But our friend, Lady Maria, always says—you remember, mother—she always says the very best time in Eastbourne is through the autumn, when the height of the season is over. That is the season she prefers. So Miss Rivers is particularly fortunate to be going just now. Lady Maria says it is often delightful there, quite on into November, and even December."

"But I am not sure——"

Hermione's pale cheeks were gaining a good deal of colour already, with the impossibility of making herself heard. She grew so vexed that tears actually rose to her eyes.

"Yes, yes, to be sure, a most enjoyable spot for young folks," Mr. Dalton broke in.

"If I were in spirits for it," Hermione murmured. She did not in the least know that there was anything untrue, anything of acting in this. The words came naturally at the moment, and she believed she felt what she said. Hermione was not, strictly speaking, in spirits to enjoy the proposed change. But her low spirits came mainly from a different cause than that which she wished to be understood.

The words were heard at last, and Hermione's three companions, suddenly silenced, noted the

tears filling her blue eyes. Glances of meaning were exchanged.

"Yes, yes, to be sure," assented Mrs. Dalton. "To be sure, my dear, we were forgetting ——"

"A gay sea-side place,—after what I have gone through so lately," Hermione almost whispered. "My cousins' wish—but ——"

"So very thoughtless of Mrs. Dalrymple," Miss Dalton asserted, falling in promptly with the little note of implied blame. "Young brides never do think of anybody except themselves. But after all, must you go at all? Why not stay quietly in Westford? It really is very soon to have to turn out, and be among a lot of strangers. Why not just stop behind?"

"I did think of that—but—the house is to be closed and left in charge of servants," Hermione faltered. "And the friends with whom I hoped to stay are—unfortunately—cannot have me just then."

Was this absolute truth? Hermione's conscience gave her a sharp twinge. But the others suspected nothing. She spoke so quietly and simply, with no appearance of expecting anything from them. A little sigh came once more, and then she added—

"But it cannot be helped. One must make the best of things. Only, of course, it *is* a change."

Hermione had won her will at last. Three sentences broke in quick succession from her sympathising hearers.

"Mother—don't you think you could persuade Miss Rivers ——?"

"My dear, it's plain enough what you've got to do! You just come and stay here, while your cousins are away!"

"Yes, yes, that's it, Miss Rivers. You make our house your home. Let other folks go their own way. We'll take you in, and count it an honour; and you shall be as quiet as you like—not see a single person, if you don't feel yourself disposed."

"Thank you!" Hermione answered faintly, glancing from one to another. "But, indeed ——"

A sudden doubt swept through her mind. Would this plan be really better than the other? Apart from Mrs. Trevor, might not Eastbourne be the pleasanter alternative?

Only, it could not be apart from Mrs. Trevor. If she went to Eastbourne, Mrs. Trevor would have triumphed. That decided Hermione.

"Oh, we won't hear any 'but'! You must come, you positively must," Mrs. Dalton was declaring. "Just to be at home, my dear, for as long as you like, and to do exactly whatever you choose."

It was very kind. Hermione could not but be sensible of the kindness, even while she shrank from the thought of the companionship. There seemed, however, to be no other alternative. It had come to Eastbourne or the Daltons! And since Eastbourne meant the yielding of her own will, and the chance of a triumphant glance from Mrs. Trevor, Hermione chose the Daltons.

In ten minutes all was settled; but Hermione could not get away then. Mrs. Dalton refused to listen to any suggestion about departure. Hermione was to stay till five o'clock tea; and then she had to see this, to hear that, to discuss the other, until it was quite too late for her to think of walking home alone. The sense of obligation put her doubly into their power; and there was not among the Daltons that delicacy of feeling which would have made them fall in at once with her evident wish to leave.

The afternoon at last was gone, and Hermione found herself driving homeward in the Daltons' carriage, with Miss Dalton by her side. Miss Dalton talked ceaselessly, and Hermione listened, putting in a word now and then. Not many such words were requisite. A Dalton could always flow on indefinitely, with small exterior help; and Mr. Dalton alone of the three ever appealed to others for their opinions.

Poor Hermione! It was not interesting talk. She was getting very tired of it already, after only two or three hours of intercourse. How would she feel after weeks of intercourse?

But she had taken her deliberate choice.

When Hermione came in at the front door, Mittie met her, with scared look and tear-swollen eyes.

"O cousin Hermione! have you heard?"

Hermione had found the front-door on the latch—unwontedly late—and had entered without ringing, after an effusive farewell from Miss Dalton. The effusiveness vexed Hermione, though she did her best to conceal vexation and to respond only with a gentle dignity. "For, of course, it is most kind of them," Hermoine thought—"most kind, and I am really grateful. But I do not intend to be drawn into an intimacy. I see no need for that. We shall continue on pleasant terms—nothing beyond."

After which her glance fell upon Mittie's troubled face, and the half-sobbing question reached her—"O cousin Hermione, have you heard?"

"Heard what?"

"About—about aunt Julia and uncle Harvey?"

"I don't understand. What have they done?"

"The horses ran away, and the carriage is all smashed, and—and—poor Emperor is dead," sobbed Mittie. "And mother has gone off to aunt Julia. And Marjory came here, and stayed with me ever so long,—she did, cousin Hermione—and you were so dreadfully late, she couldn't wait any longer. And aunt Julia is very bad; and uncle Harvey is hurt too."

Hermione stood gravely looking down on the child, with an air of grieved concern, exactly the right air for the occasion. Nobody would have guessed the instant thought which shot through her mind, that Eastbourne would now be given up, and there would be no need for her to go to the Daltons'. Hermione would have been the last to confess the thought; she scarcely allowed its existence even to herself.

"Who brought the news, Mittie?"

"John did. He came back from Captain Woodthorpe's."

"Are they there—at Captain Woodthorpe's?"

Mittie was crying too bitterly to respond further than by a nod. Hermione led her to the

drawing-room, where she rang for Slade. The whole tale was then told her.

"And you understood that Mrs. Dalrymple was in danger?" Hermione said at length. It seemed very terrible. Only a few hours earlier in full health, with every prospect of a long life, and now——

"I did, Miss," Slade answered solemnly. "John was under that impression."

"Is John here now?"

"He drove back with Mrs. Trevor to see to the horses."

"And Mr. Pennant,—you say that Mr. Pennant was to follow."

"Mr. Pennant was absent on his rounds, Miss, but Mrs. Pennant undertook that Mr. Pennant would set off immediately on his return. He did return about an hour later, and when he left, Mr. Fitzalan went also."

"I must know when Mr. Pennant and Mr. Fitzalan come back," said Hermione. "Send some one to the Rectory, to wait. Mr. Fitzalan may come here; but if he does not I should like a message."

She had to wait long for news. Mittie went to bed, vainly imploring to sit up longer. Hermione had her own ideas of discipline for children, and she counted this no bad opportunity for counteracting in some small degree the mother's spoiling method. So Mittie disappeared, sobbing in a heart-broken style, and Hermione sat alone with a book, keeping anxious watch.

Hermione really was very much grieved and shocked, though not to any crushing extent. Such an accident happening to even a mere acquaintance would come as a blow; and Hermione felt it quite as a blow. She could not settle down to her book in any comfort. Harvey had shown her invariable kindness, and Julia had almost succeeded in winning her affection. "Poor Julia!" Hermione said repeatedly, with a little sigh of commiseration. Perhaps, as she sighed, the recollection would dart into her mind—"Now I need not go to the Daltons'!" followed by a regretful wish, "If only I had waited one more day!" But she did her best to smother these suggestions, and only to let herself think pityingly of "Poor Julia and Harvey!"

The announcement, "Mr. Fitzalan!" came at length abruptly. Hermione sprang up, greeting him with outstretched hand.

"Oh, I am so glad! You have been to Captain Woodthorpe's, have you not? How are they both? Where is Mr. Pennant?"

"He will not return till morning," Mr. Fitzalan answered.

Hermione's face fell. "Are things so serious? Is it—Julia?"

"Yes. Mr. Dalrymple is in no danger, though much hurt."

"And they thought Julia was not hurt at all at first, Slade tells me. Do sit down, Mr Fitzalan!" for he stood facing her, with his hand on the back of a chair.

"She did not appear to be."

"Was it true that she walked two miles? Could she?"

"She did. It was wrong, of course; but till they had gone some distance she was not aware of her own state; and then she struggled on for Mr. Dalrymple's sake. That made matters worse. She ought to have given in at once. They seem all to have been under the impression, that Mr. Dalrymple was much more hurt than has proved to be the case."

"And Julia gave in—when?"

"When the doctor pronounced him to be in no danger."

"Slade spoke of a fainting-fit."

"Yes,—the result of over-exertion, I suppose,—and there are internal injuries. They have not dared to move her from the sofa where she was first carried. Captain Woodthorpe's doctor was obliged to leave, and Pennant said he would remain till morning"

"You did not see Julia?"

"For three minutes I did. It was her wish that I should pray. Talking was not allowed."

"And she did not say anything? Poor Julia! How did she look?"

"Very ill; and very calm. Yes, she whispered a few words. She said, 'My love to Hermione. Tell her—all is peace.'"

Mr. Fitzalan's grey eyes were moist. Hermione only said "I am glad. But I should not have expected ——"

"Expected what?"

"That Julia—I have never fancied that Julia had much real religion."

"Our fancies about one and another are very apt to be mistaken. The Great Shepherd knows His own sheep, and calls them by name."

"But still, one may sometimes judge——" began Hermione.

"No, that we have not to do. We may judge lines of conduct, but we may not judge individuals. Happily the decision on that head does not rest with us. If it did, we should too often in our conceit shut out those who may be nearer Christ than we are ourselves."

CHAPTER XXVIII—JULIA'S COGITATIONS.

JULIA was very ill, and she knew it; and she had no fear.

That seemed wonderful. For years she had dreaded the end of life; had shrunk with a chill horror from the thought of death. And now, suddenly, it might be close at hand; yet she was not terrified.

It did seem wonderful. She had indeed been seeking God of late, trying to pray, trying to learn more about Him, blundering vaguely towards His footstool, hardly knowing whither she went. It had not occurred to her that while she, the wandering sheep, sought the Shepherd, the Shepherd also sought her. And not till the moment of dire peril and need came, did she realise that He had found her: that she was actually safe in His keeping, that under the shadow of His Hand no harm could arrive. She had not known Him much hitherto; but knowledge grew fast in the hours of silent suffering, when she had just to lie and wait for what He might will to do to her.

Julia said little through those days of weakness. Much talk was forbidden and impossible. If it had not been, her sense of peace was too new, too real, too sacred, for careless handling. She wanted to learn, not to teach. The peace was apparent, however, in her quiet face, in the absence of all murmurs. From time to time she asked anxiously after her husband, and smiled to hear that he was doing well. For herself, she wished to get better, but there were no impatient longings.

Then the tide turned, and Julia knew that she was on the high road to recovery.

A certain re-action followed; not in actual peacefulness, for that remained, but in thronging recollections and conjectures. The burdens of common life had to be taken up once more, or they would have to be, soon. Julia could not put them aside till the necessary moment. Her very lack of physical power made control of thought the more difficult.

She could not get Hermione out of her head; and the remembrance of her husband's words at the moment when he believed death to be near, was incessantly present.

What were Hermione's rights?

Did Harvey know something more than she knew?

If so—what did he know?—and what would he do?

What had he meant her to do, if his life had been taken?

Mr. Selwyn knew! Then of course there was some additional fact hidden from herself. She would have had to appeal to Mr. Selwyn.

Would have had—if Harvey had died, and if she had been left, a lonely widow! Julia shuddered at the thought!

Thank God, that great sorrow had not come. She and Harvey were spared each to the other.

But Hermione's "rights" claimed attention still, from Harvey and Julia together.

What "rights" again? What had Harvey meant?

Something precise and definite, surely! Something beyond the general sense that Hermione ought not to have been left unprovided for.

That might be easily set straight. Only, since Harvey felt so strongly on the subject, why had he not taken action sooner?

Thus round and round on one pivot Julia's mind circled, sometimes for hours together, as she lay recovering.

But Julia would not breathe a word of all this to any human being. She had no notion of betraying an iota of her husband's confidence. What she had to say would be said to himself, not to Mrs. Ogilvie or Mr. Fitzalan, least of all to Francesca.

"How soon are we to be allowed to see one another?" she often asked, and Mrs. Ogilvie always answered, "Before long, I hope." Julia knew that Harvey might be expected to come to her, before she would be allowed to go to him. She did not know that he already had leave, if he could or would arouse himself to make the effort.

Somehow Harvey seemed very inert, very averse to the said effort. He was so affectionate a husband, so full of solicitude about Julia's state, that those around were puzzled. It would have seemed to them more natural, if he had been in a hurry to go to Julia before permission was given, than that he should fail to use the permission when it came. His reluctance was ascribed purely to physical weakness; still it was looked upon as odd.

Nobody knew what had passed between him and Julia just before the accident. Harvey forgot it himself for a short time. but after a few days the whole came back vividly.

Came back; yet with a difference. He was not disposed now to view matters precisely as he had viewed them from the standpoint of immediate danger to life. It is one thing to be willing to give up twenty thousand pounds or so, if one does not expect to have any further use for the money. It is quite another thing to give up the same, if one expects to feel the loss permanently through thirty or forty or more years of earthly existence.

Somehow, too, that old simple question of right and wrong is apt to assume new aspects, when looked upon from the bank of a certain dark river, into which one may have immediately to plunge. Right is unequivocal right, and wrong is unequivocal wrong, seen thus. But when a man leaves the said river behind, and gets back into the foggy atmosphere of common life, right and wrong do sometimes assume very misty shapes; and so many matters of will and inclination are involved that the question loses a good deal of its simplicity. The question is of course the same, and the answer must be the same, but the mode of viewing it is different.

Not that approaching death necessarily makes a coward of a man; but it clears his eyesight. We are all much given to thinking that life will last indefinitely, and that what is crooked will somehow manage to get straight before the end. Many a deed is done in broad earthly daylight, quite placidly and with scarcely a whisper from conscience, which would not pass muster for an instant if the doer stood face to face with the last enemy.

This was Harvey's experience. As Prince and Emperor rushed madly down the hill, Harvey had very clear views indeed of right and wrong, in connection with a certain vexed point. There was no hesitation at all in his mind just then, as to what might or might not be Hermione's claims upon himself. The legal aspect of the matter slipped out of his thoughts altogether, as not worth consideration. The great moral question of right and wrong, as seen in the presence of the living God, over-shadowed all else.

But now Harvey was back in the fogs again. He remembered what he had felt, and he told himself that it was absurd—extravagant—mere over-excitement, and so on.

He would have given a good deal for power to blot out those short utterances to his wife. Harvey could not resist a consciousness that Julia's conscience might prove less malleable than his own; not that his own was quite so submissive as he could have wished. But Julia—why, Julia was a woman, more than that, a

mere girl. Women never would hear reason, if they took up a certain notion on any subject. It was always with them a matter of feeling, not of logic. And as for Julia, she knew about as much of business and money affairs as little Mittie.

It was a marvel to Harvey how he could have done so unadvised a thing as to speak out to Julia at all. Dear, good creature she was; and the best of wives; but Harvey feared she might give him no end of trouble here. The decision of course rested with him; and he was not afraid that she would let out anything to anybody; still he did not wish to lower himself in her eyes. He would have to discuss the whole question with her; more than this, he would undoubtedly have to settle some amount on Hermione without further delay, as the best hope of pacifying Hermione.

Then the old bother would have to be met and answered. How much was the least that would do? How little was the most he must part with?

If only he had kept his own counsel, and said nothing! After all, he and Julia had both come through the peril with only passing hurts. From his present position of safety he could hardly realise how dire the peril had been. It mystified him, that for a short space he should have viewed things so differently. For past scenes soon lose their vividness; and earthly life seemed now so full of reality, so likely to go on for another half-century or thereabouts, that Harvey was little disposed to look further ahead. He wanted to get along comfortably in this present life; and to give up twenty thousand pounds, or even half of twenty thousand pounds, would not be comfortable.

"We should have to consider every sixpence, before spending it. And as for keeping hunters! But there could not be a more extravagant idea! Absurd! The estate simply could not stand it. I shall have to explain all this to Julia."

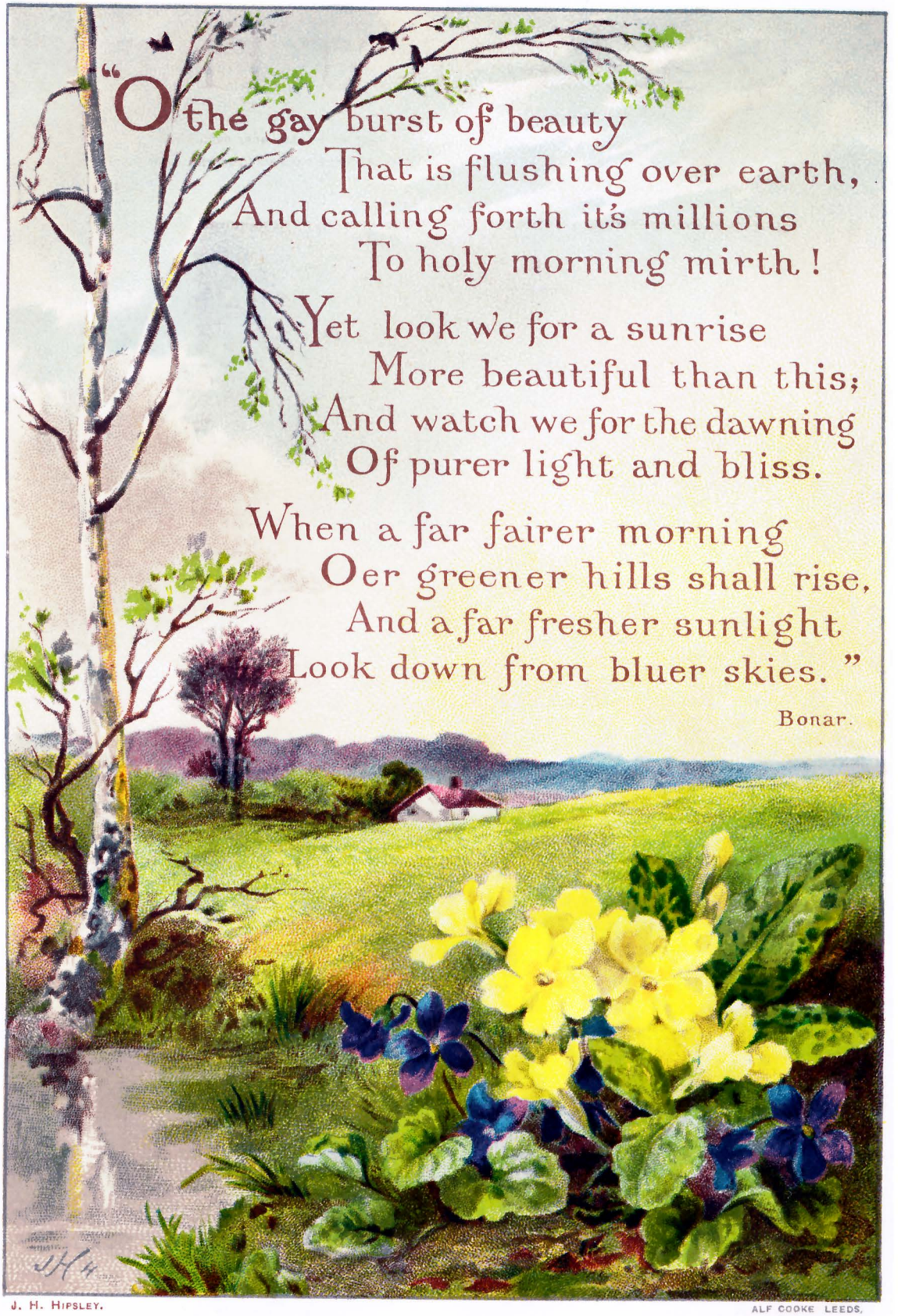
Explaining means trouble, however; and Harvey hated trouble. So, much as he really wished to see Julia again, he was on the whole languidly disposed to plead weakness, and to defer the first interview.

THE PROMISES OF SPRING.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE," ETC.

SPRING comes to the earth again and again. It knows its appointed season. "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and Summer and Winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Each New Year brings with it the old routine. January and shivering February are left behind, hoiden March with her lap full of daffodils bursts upon us, and casts them over the meadows, and goes: and, then, sweet April comes. Not that all Springs are alike fair, no, nor even all Aprils, sweet. Not so, but the very name of Spring, and the sudden thought of April, are dear to the heart, and fraught with tender hopes, and poetic dreams, also with some kindly reminiscences of a *very* Spring, an ideal April, now and then. Indeed, was not *always* Spring spring-like and kind, and April always sweet—in the days when we were young? It seems to us now that it was so—now in the wanings of life's year, and when the sere and yellow leaf and the "evil days" have come. I dare say there were north-east winds when we were young. But then they made the blood tingle, and the pulse quicken, and the firm cheek ruddy as that of the stripling David. They did not then search us through and through, as they in Winter search through the trees that have lost their clothing of green leaves; they did not harass and hamper the feeble step, but rather sent us forth "gamesome as the colt, and livelier than the lark," in eager race, or in pursuit of the flying hoop, to come back, panting and aglow, to the senior who—we scarce could understand why—had plodded behind, with pinched face and blue nose.

No, I doubt not but that there were capricious Springs, and austere Aprils, when we were young; even as now. But the pulse of the Spring was in our heart, and the promise of it in our life. Life's garden had but given us, by its snowdrops, its sky-blue scillas, and its pale daffodils, earnest of the abundance of blossom and of produce yet to come. Each green point that pushed aside the mould, each delicate shoot that glorified the bushes, every ploughland ruled with emerald, every bank, and copse, and bush, was instinct with a promise-germ. Aye, youth is, indeed, the spring-time of promise.—Methinks that, in our life, the journey of Israel is reversed. It is through the Land of Promise that we set forth on our journey, and it is from this that so many enter, later in life, upon the Desert—crossing the Jordan from the other side—the Jordan of dis-illusion; and leaving behind, the Land that floweth with milk and honey. Or, to vary our parable, it is Pharaoh's dream over again. The days of Youth are the seven kine that came at first, fullfleshed and well favoured, feeding in fair meadows of abundant pasturage. And seven other kine came after them, the days of ill-health, and broken spirit, and disappointment; kine poor and ill-favoured and lean-fleshed. And the lean and the ill-favoured do eat up the fat kine, and when they have eaten them up, it cannot be known that they have eaten them, they themselves remain lean as before, for all that they have devoured



J. H. HIPSLEY.

ALF COOKE LEEDS.

the promise and the fulness of the days when we were young.

And yet, for all this, which they can hear with their ears, and see with their eyes;—can note beauty gone; gaiety eclipsed, brows furrowed, spirits low; the young press on, ever on, eagerly, impatiently, to the "evil days" which lie before, and the "pleasureless years." Strange, we exclaim. And yet—it is our instinct. The promises of Spring, of youth's spring-time and April days, are given for this life's needs; the impetus it is of the launch, which propels the gaily-trimmed vessel for a while, until the impetus dies down. They are not enduring, the lovely visions: this is, after all, not our home; not the Land which God hath prepared.

No. There is so much of mirage-loveliness. It tempts us on; how else should we dare the wilderness sojourn, the journey through bare sands, with famine, save for the Bread from Heaven; with drought, save for the Water from the Rock? They are gracious and merciful illusions, the promises of life's spring-time. This is not our rest. And it is but that the desert is seen in its very semblance, as life goes on. Then the friends, that used to accompany us in Dream-land, fall away on this side and on that; then the mirage rises before our *seeing* eyes no longer; then the younger, who enter upon the inheritance of illusion, gather together apart from us in sweet sympathy, and wonder at our blindness, and understand not our flagging step as we lag behind; and heed not our Cassandra-warnings, and laugh at the trouble of our fears: as they throw into this life of time "an energy of expectation which only a whole eternity is worth." But we have learned that the illusiveness of life is not meant to delude us, no, but to help us on the journey Homeward. And we learn, as this life's illusions fade, that they were not sent to deceive, and then leave us desolate in the desert which we had fancied Canaan. Not so; they were but given to us, transient delights, as types and promises of something that shall not pass away. Fading away, but full of promise, as they go, of delight that will never fade. That which seemed a Garden of the Lord, seen to be really a desert, but even so, revealing to our opened eyes Jordan near, and, beyond, the true, and enduring, Paradise of God. "We do not preach," one says, "that all is disappointment, the weak and dreary creed of sentimentalism. We preach that *nothing* here is disappointment, if rightly understood."

No; there remaineth yet a rest that no earth-Joshua can give, there remaineth a Sabbath rest for the people of God. And the true promises that underlie the illusive promises of life's eager Spring, they cannot delude us: they are utterly reliable, "For He is faithful, that promised." Faithful. 'Tis a beautiful word. For in it, God (who is a faithful Creator) acknowledges a responsibility towards the trembling creatures of His hand; He does not declare His right to crush us and our hopes, as He pleases, according to a whim. No; He is a faithful Creator, and a faithful Promiser. He has saturated youth's very being with promise. And it shall be fulfilled. "For (we love to repeat it), He is *faithful* that promised."

Broken, and weary-hearted, and sad,—there may be some, not all—but not a few, who must thus falter on, towards the journey's end. Life to them was an illusion, the promise of it was a dream. But the kind illusion helped them on in the journey. And towards the journey's end, if they are disillusioned, and find that childhood and youth were indeed vanity—why, they helped them on, so far, homeward. And now they are nearing, they hope, the journey's end. And what if their eyes are opened, and the desert is the desert to their eyes—and the mirages that gladdened them are gone? There is, beyond the horizon of the wilderness, the dim glory of the everlasting hills, and the gleam of the Celestial City. And—"The time is short."

* * * * *

New Years wax and wane, and every year repeats the routine of those that came and went before. But the spring days are not that, to us now, which they were even twenty years ago. If we go out into our garden, and watch the sequence of the flowers, and note the returning songs, and the nest-building, it is with the feelings of those who are about to leave the old home of childhood days. This and that we planted and have watched—this we meant to plan, to alter, to do—but what matters it? We are going away, and the son of the stranger will plan and alter, will watch the snow-drops come and the roses go. With a quiet half melancholy we feel that we shall soon have nothing to do with it all ---that the promise of Spring will make others blithe, and that others will enter upon the feelings, the excitement, the hopes, that are already, for us, of the past.

Even thus, with a tender compassion in which is no touch of scorn, we look at the past promise of our life:

> Its old agitations
> Of myrtles and roses.

These are of the past—but we remember these kindly, the old sweet illusions and interests, even while the spirit that is, now, "out of it" all,

> —Fancies
> A holier odour
> About it, of pansies,
> A rosemary odour
> Commingled with pansies,
> With rue and the beautiful
> Puritan pansies.

"There's rosemary—that's for remembrance," and pansies—tender *pensées* of the days that are no more, and of the schemes that proved futile, and the promises that put up sweet flower faces all about us, and faded—seeding, or not,—and passed away.

The buoyancy of youth is gone, it was life's effervescence, it was bound to die down. But what, when Spring returns to us, and April days come round, in later life, what remains to us in the waning years?

The promises of Spring—these remain.

How so, one asks, perhaps. You have been speaking of them as illusive. As of that which was once, was beautiful, but is gone. The

promises of many a Spring have passed into Autumn and died down into Winter. How can the recurring Spring, and the delicate April, delude any longer the once disillusioned spirit? What promises can the spring-time bring to the eyes of age, from which, as it were, scales have fallen?

Nothing in life
Bids us good-bye
But to leave gifts;
When the leaves die,
Sky fills the rifts;
Something instead
Always we find it;
Daylight is dead?
Starlight behind it!

For let us not be misunderstood, when we speak of Youth as illusive, and Age as contemplatively sad, we speak of what is, in some degree, the experience of the majority who outlive ripe age. We speak of that which is the keen experience of many who in the later years, from various causes, often through their own fault—are, more or less, "afflicted and distressed in mind, body, and estate." But we do not wish to present the after-years in a too sombre light. We would not represent *all* later life as nothing but a disenchantment. Youth—spite of the protest of "the young man's heart to the Psalmist"—as merely an illusion, and full manhood and ripe Age as only weariness and waiting: twilight only, in which one can but sigh for the breaking of the eternal Dawn. Full life (as we call it) may have its peculiar glory, and be dowered with riches of thought and purpose far beyond the realisation of the dreams of Youth. No, sadness is not the whole truth of the result of life. Many a vigorous mind, in the heyday of its powers, would be out of sympathy with an Ezekiel-scroll[1],—even though it be a palimpsest, with golden hope-words, writ over the black letter. And there are hearts so blithe (—God made them so, God keep them so!—) that they go singing from the cradle to the grave. As thus:—

Everything is so lovable
And life so kind and true;
I am sure that I love everything
That ever I saw or knew.
And in human hearts, and in flower and field
All over the world, you read
Wherever you come, a welcome,
And wherever you go, God-speed!

And, indeed, this pen has once and again dwelt on the connection of the relations of Spring days with the beauty of June, and the golden maturity of August.

But there are those—and they are many—who must "go softly in the bitterness of their heart," in the wane of life. And of these, and to these, we may sometimes speak. To these, also, we may say, as to those others:—

Nothing in life
Bids us goodbye,
But to leave gifts.

[1] Ezekiel ii. 10.

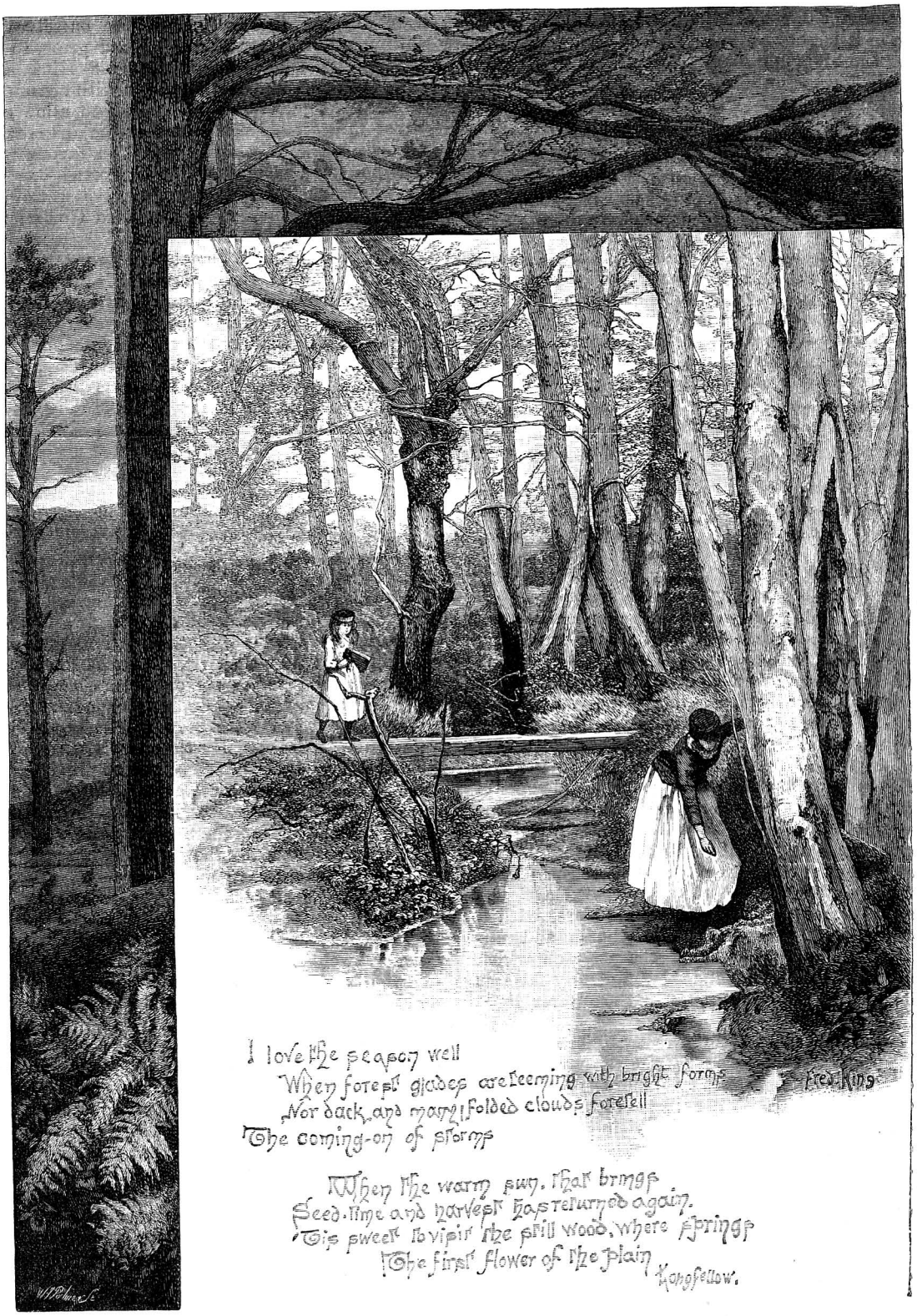
And so, when the buoyancy of heart, which Spring used to bring, is of the past, we take refuges in its promises. In its deeper promises, those which the spiritual eye discerns, the antitypes which underlay the types.

The promises of Spring extend—as life grows Autumn-wards—beyond this brief life and its interests, and its hopes, and its dreams. Looking back at the illusive hopes of youth, we see that "these things were an allegory." That love, which failed us, and hope, which disappointed, and faith, which cruel disillusions overthrew, were but the patterns of Heavenly, enduring things. That the "Lessons sweet of Spring returning," have deeper meanings than the blithe heart of youth could read in them. The blade that pierces the ground, green and tender, and yet strong to push aside obstacles, and vigorous to grow, and take in grace of sun and air and dew, and develop into flower and grain—this gives a promise of a life better than only life here. It does not only typify the glad and gracious hope and growth of youth, and its quick termination, with the melancholy epitaph, "The grace of the fashion of it perisheth;" "So soon passeth it away, and we are gone!" Life, and the hope of life, and the promise of its Spring, do not end with the Burial Service. No. St. Paul tells how the thin green blade of the corn is, to hearts that listen and learn, a preacher of the spiritual Resurrection Body. In that which is animal (psychic, from ψυχή = anima), lies the germ of that which is spiritual—that which is of the πνεῦμα—so the promise of the Spring tells us of the development, from this "body of our humiliation," of a Christ-body of glory.

Then the corn-blade has yet more to teach us. In the gradual spring-growth towards perfection, there is encouragement for God's humble and abashed servants. Is it not *try and fail* with us here, who long to love the Lord who bought us, and to prove to Him our love? "Our efforts after Christian growth seem only a succession of failures, and instead of rising into the beauty of holiness, our life is a daily heart-break and humiliation." That which I would, I do not—oh, that chapter of the letter to the Romans, words penned by an Apostle, too: how our inmost souls endorse them, and how our anguished cry echoes his, at the end: "Who shall deliver me from this death—this death?" When, and how, shall I live—aye—*live?*

The corn-blade has for us a sweet consolatory promise. Has there not been given to us, who are Christians, the germ within us, of the Christ-life? And, if this be fostered, even under unkindly skies, and unfriendly influences, yet, if it be fostered, and die not, must it not fulfil its promise? By degrees, not developing in all its fulness in this life. "That were a time too short for a development so magnificent." First the blade—of yearning; then the ear—of endeavour; then the full corn—of fulfilment; not fulfilment here, nor now, it is, now, the spring-time. But the Summer will come, the Harvest be here, and—"I shall be satisfied, when I awake, *with His likeness.*"

Aye, one says: "In this world, only the corn-



I love the season well
When forests glades are teeming with bright forms
Nor dark, and many folded clouds foretell
The coming-on of storms

Fred. King.

When the warm sun, that brings
Seed-time and harvest, has returned again.
'Tis sweet to visit the still wood, where springs
The first flower of the plain

Longfellow.

less ear is seen; sometimes, only the small, yet still prophetic blade. The sneer at the godly man for his imperfections is ill-judged. A blade is a small thing; at first it grows very near the earth, it is often soiled and crushed and down-trodden, *but it is a living thing.* That great stone beside it is more imposing." Only it has in it no germ of life. "It will never be anything but a stone. But this small blade—*it doth not yet appear what it shall be.*"

> Still we hope
> That, in a world of larger scope,
> What here is faithfully begun
> Will be completed, not undone.

Then the same writer, from whom I have quoted the above, points out how, in our anxiety and effort after growth, we have forgotten the parable of the lilies of the field. They toil not—yet God clothes them with beauty. Fretting and trying may but hinder spiritual growth. To take that which is at hand, as the flowers do, for growth, and to commit ourselves to the care and fostering of God, to court more the breath and the dew of His Spirit—this is that which some of us, at least, have to learn to do. Let us give ourselves up willingly to the grace of God, and grow, so far as may be, spontaneously towards Him. Not with too much consciousness, nor with spasmodic effort. But quietly, copying our Lord, allow ourselves to grow (as nearly as may be), as He did, "in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man." Plant-like, to spread out our leaves in trustful prayer, to receive gratefully the gracious influences of the Lord God who is a Sun, and "as the Dew to Israel."

This thought might be abused, to presumption or indolence; but, rightly used, it is a promise to us, a promise of comfort, for those who humbly fear the Lord, and wait upon His word.

And, in all that has been said, we have but given mere suggestions of the fulness (for waning life, with its deeper insight into life's true meaning) of the PROMISES OF SPRING.

HANNAH MORE.

A GRIM old woman frowning upon innocent gaiety; expressing herself in season and out of season in an extremely prosy and didactic manner; writing tedious and feeble works, once undeservedly praised, now deservedly forgotten! Is not some such vision as this conjured up before the minds of the present generation by the name of Hannah More? And perhaps it is not wonderful that modern young people should have no truer idea of her worth and work, since even in her own day she was misjudged. When she had reached middle life, for instance, a lady in London gave a very large children's ball. At the upper end of the room stood a figure dressed out to represent Hannah More, with a large rod in her hand! The harsh and unpleasant conception of her character on which this caricature was founded, was utterly false at the time, and is inexcusable in the clearer light of posterity.

The life of Hannah More recently issued in the "Eminent Women Series" from the pen of Miss Yonge, is so bright and readable that it may do something to diffuse a correct estimate of her worth and work among the rising generation. Young people are, rightly or wrongly, not very fond of "Memoirs!" They cannot enter into the ripe experience described in copious extracts from diaries; the records of success in religious work are apt to become monotonous, unless invested with unusual distinctness and reality. And yet the story of Mistress More is full of interest for the young. Her latest biographer shows us, instead of the prosy school mistress, "a very pretty girl, with delicate refined features, rather sharply cut, and beautiful keen dark eyes, which were enhanced in brilliancy by the whiteness of her powdered hair." Bright, fearless, innocently piquante in conversation, of quick intelligence and ready wit, she must have been the cleverest of the five clever sisters who set forth from their frugal home to establish a ladies' school in Bristol. "We were born with more desires than guineas," said Sally the third sister to Dr. Johnson, "as years increased our appetites, the cupboard at home grew too small to gratify them, and with a bottle of water, a bed and a blanket, we set out to seek our fortunes."

Hannah was at first the pupil, afterwards the colleague, of her sisters. She was a favourite in the intelligent society of the Bristol of that day, and at the age of twenty-two she became engaged to the "Squire of Belmont," a Mr. Turner, twenty years her senior, and the guardian of two of her pupils. The trousseau was bought, and all was in readiness for the wedding, but on one and another pretext, Mr. Turner postponed the day; her friends became indignant, and the engagement was broken off. As compensation Mr. Turner, without Hannah's knowledge, settled an annuity upon her, which she finally consented to accept.

In a double sense this formed a crisis in her life. The disappointment caused her, no doubt, to dismiss for ever any thought of marriage, while the pecuniary independence set her free from the necessity of working in the school, and allowed her to follow her bent. Her dream had long been to visit London, and it was now realised. Armed only with a letter of introduction to the sister of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Hannah More entered the great world; and the following year she found herself admitted into "what was probably the choicest circle of intel-

lectual society then in existence; not so brilliant, original or eloquent, as those *salons* at Paris, where philosophy was already preparing the way for change, but infinitely purer, deeper, and more conscientious, and with no lack of vivacity." Dr. Johnson, Mrs. Montagu, Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, Edmund Burke, Miss Burney, Mrs. Barbauld, Sir Joshua Reynolds, are some names, selected at hazard, of the brilliant personages among whom Hannah found herself—society of so choice an order that Boswell when admitted into it, at the house of Sir Joshua, describes himself as "wandering about in a kind of pleasing distraction."

In this circle Hannah appears as the fresh ardent young enthusiast, possessing a keen sense of humour withal, and a capacity for sally and arch retort. We find her amusing Dr. Johnson, rousing him to hearty laughter, and winning his favour in every way to such an extent that he says, "I dined yesterday at Mrs. Garrick's, with Mrs. Carter, Miss Hannah More, and Miss Fanny Burney. Three such women are not to be found."

Miss More's next step was to publish poetry which had, it must be confessed, a success quite out of proportion to its merits. She became quickly accredited with that most fascinating of characters: a pretty, bright, earnest, interesting literary woman, and in London, where she spent some time every year, she was fêted, flattered and caressed. Throughout all her social success, however, she preserved the religious thoughtfulness that was the basis of her character, and, although her views might differ from those of many good people, she was never drawn into any action she deemed inconsistent. She kept up her habits of Biblical study throughout the whirl of a London season.

"I have read through all the Epistles three times since I have been here," she writes from London, "the ordinary translation, Locke's paraphrase, and a third put into very elegant English I know not by whom."

Her views on the observance of Sunday exposed her to much wonder and comment. "A visitor has just gone," writes she, "quite chagrined that I am such a rigid Methodist that I cannot come to her assembly on Sunday, though she protests with great piety that she never has cards, and that it is quite savage in me to think there can be any harm in a little agreeable music." Mr. Garrick was more tolerant. One Sunday evening at his house when music was talked of, he turned to her and said, "Nine," his pet name for her as embodying all the Muses in one, "you are a Sunday woman; go to your room, and I will recall you when the music is over."

Horace Walpole was wont to call her "Saint Hannah."

That she had "the courage of her convictions" is proved by the character she bore among those who were scarcely of "the Sunday woman's" way of thinking. Respect is never won by concealment of views on any matter of religious conviction. People always admire consistency, though it may run in a different groove from their own ideas, but they are quick to detect and despise the time-server, who vainly hopes to please by little subterfuges and evasions of principle.

A change in Hannah More's life was drawing near, and its beginning was marked by the death of her friend Garrick in 1779, when she was about thirty-four years of age. She spent a great part of the next few years at Hampton, with his widow, sharing Mrs. Garrick's deep seclusion, and ministering to her tenderly, but coming occasionally to London to see old friends. Subsequently she removed to a cottage named "Cowslip Green," at Wrington, near Bristol, where her sisters joined her.

The record of her life, first at Cowslip Green, and afterwards at the larger house, Barley Wood, built by the More sisterhood, ceases at this point to be a mere story of social success. But it is a mistake to suppose that a violent change passed over her, transforming all her ideas, and effecting a complete transition between the brilliant morning, the tranquil afternoon and evening of her day. The one glided naturally into the other. The thoughtfulness of maturity doubtless added earnestness to a nature that had always been sincerely religious. The life in London had widened and enlarged her outlook on the world, and culture and enlightenment, working on a Christian basis, did what they can never in such case fail to do, increased her sympathies with humanity. Intimacy for example, with such a man as Dr. Johnson, tender of heart as well as wise of head, who had his house in Bolt Court, full of distressed protégés—*that* could not fail to be an admirable training for a philanthropist. We agree then with Miss Yonge, that the brilliant career in London was not marked sharply off from the beneficent activity of Cowslip Green by any gulf of change.

Miss Anna Buckland, in her admirable "Life of Hannah More," published by the Religious Tract Society in 1883, well points out that her heroine was a woman of two centuries. She entered with zest into the spirit of the eighteenth century; she clung with reverence to the past and its traditions, yet she was ready to appreciate the wider sympathy with humanity, the greater freedom of thought and action that characterised the nineteenth century. "In the twilight of the old, and in the dawn of the new era, Mrs. More accomplished her date here," says her early biographer, William Roberts; and the words contain the key to her character and life. Reverent and earnest, she presented the unusual spectacle of a woman moulded in the old school, but ready to receive, seize and welcome all the best teaching of the new. She was devotedly attached to the Church of England; its liturgy and ritual were dear to her: many of its dignitaries were her honoured and familiar friends; yet we find her saying more than once to the well-known publisher, Mr. Joseph Cottle, "There is no man in the Church nor out of it comparable in talent to Robert Hall." Wherever goodness and ability existed, she could recognise them; wherever need for help claimed her, she was ready to give, not only her money, but herself.

It is not as a star in literary society, nor as a

didactic author, but as a practical philanthropist, that Hannah More deserves most to be remembered. The distinctive work of her life was undoubtedly the mission she undertook with her sister Patty among the savage and lawless population of Cheddar and Mendip. Ten miles of rough road, or no road at all, separated Cowslip Green from villages scattered among the hills where vice, ignorance, and degradation reigned supreme. The rich farmers were brutal and apathetic; the clergy were non-resident, indifferent, worldly, or else so poor and overworked that they could not cope with their duties. It is vain to attempt within the present limits, to sketch, even in outline, the progress of the work by which Mistress Hannah and her sister Patty established schools for children, classes for adults, benefit and provident societies, and taught and reformed whole districts, reclaiming young and old from actual barbarism to decency, respectability, and in many instances to real religion. Their efforts were arduous to a degree that can scarcely now be realised, and the story of the work is one that deserves to be held in lasting remembrance.

Hannah More's last literary attempt before entering on this undertaking, had been a treatise entitled "Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society," in which she attacked the minor immoralities of the time. She subsequently wrote "An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World," but, when she had become thoroughly engrossed in the Cheddar and Mendip work, she turned her attention towards providing cheap literature for the working classes. The best specimens of her efforts in this direction are "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain," "Village Politics," "Black Giles the Poacher," and "Turn the Carpet." The pamphlets are political as well as religious; in one sense, they forestalled the work of the Religious Tract Society, in another sense they lie a little outside its scope. But, Hannah More was the first who addressed herself directly to the poor; and although the style of her tracts strikes the modern reader as too patronising, the substance as too "goody-goody,"—if that offensive expression be ever allowable—the faults are inseparable from the age in which they were written. The noticeable point is that Hannah More caught the idea of the nineteenth century —the right of every class in the community to opportunities of enlightenment and development. She recognised, in fact, that labourers do not exist merely to be "Children of Gibeon"—hewers of wood and drawers of water—for the so-called upper classes. Dimly she saw this; but she saw it nevertheless.

And a second point in which she caught the modern tone, lies in her views on the education of women.

She understood that true education is something more than a smattering of information on various topics; and she also understood what has not yet been fully grasped by English society, that a woman will not make the worse housewife, because her understanding has been enlarged by a wide and generous culture. "It is the most vulgar and ill-informed women who are ever most inclined to be domestic tyrants," says this wise observer. Her "Strictures on Female Education," "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife," "Hints towards forming the character of a young Princess," contain views decidedly in advance of her time.

The blushing Lucilla Stanley, overwhelmed with confusion and escaping from the room because she is detected as a Latin student, is a real, though a somewhat incongruous ancestress of the Newnham and Girton girl-graduate of the present day!

Hannah More's nature was gentle rather than what is erroneously called "strong-minded," she deserves, therefore, all the more honour for her custom of resolutely establishing a principle by at once putting it to test under the most unfavourable circumstances. If she made a new resolution, she would carry it out under the greatest difficulties first of all; then, she would say, subsequent efforts became easy. For instance, she found it necessary at one time to avoid the expense of private posting and to travel by stage coach, "a conveyance," Mr. Roberts writes in 1834, "at that time much less used than at present by persons of high respectability." She determined at once to sacrifice her pride by going in this style to call upon a nobleman through whose park there ran a public road, and she amusingly describes her sensations when his lordship, proceeding through a line of servants in rich liveries, came to hand her out of her vehicle! She was a true woman, by no means superior to human weaknesses, but with the courage of her convictions. Many more serious instances of the same course of action may be found in her life, but this incident, trivial as it is, exactly illustrates the point.

Mistress Hannah More survived all her sisters, and notwithstanding many sharp attacks of illness, preserved her general vigour of mind and body until long after eighty. Had Wordsworth known her, he might well have addressed to her his prophecy:

> And an old age serene and bright
> And lovely as a Lapland night
> Shall lead thee to thy grave.

A copy of her latest work "Bible Rhymes," composed at the age of seventy-seven, lies beside the writer. The inscription on the fly-leaf "By her affectionate friend Hannah More, Barley Wood," betrays none of the weakness of threescore years and ten.

The publisher and intimate friend of Southey and Coleridge, Mr. Joseph Cottle, was well acquainted with Mistress More, and was accustomed to read aloud to the bright appreciative old lady, extracts from the works of the "Lake Poets," then rising into note. On one occasion, he chose Wordsworth's poem of "Goody Blake and Harry Gill," not, one would think, a very happy specimen of the poet's genius. Hannah More smiled and shook her head in amused deprecation, but added words of insight: "Your young friend Wordsworth will exceed all your other young friends."

The picture of the tiny, sprightly old lady with sparkling dark eyes, dressed in the becoming cap and ruffles then fashionable, full of beneficent thoughts and deeds, honoured by men of worth and intellect, beloved by such children as the little Tom (afterwards Lord) Macaulay, regarded by the rising generation of young girls with a sort of heroine-worship, is to the full as fascinating as the picture of the brilliant young débutante in London literary society, with which the "Life" begins. We do not like and admire Hannah More the less because in her old age she proved incapable of managing a houseful of troublesome servants. "Her reluctance to offend or even displease, was too apt to disarm her prudence," writes her first biographer; and at the age of eighty-three, she was obliged on this account to break up her large establishment at Barley Wood, and remove to a smaller house at Clifton. We have it on Mr. Joseph Cottle's authority that she was thoroughly happy and contented in her new home, where she lived five years longer. At the age of eighty-eight she gently passed away, honoured and regretted by all who knew her.

For countless men and women to-day, life is in some degree a better and a happier thing because Hannah More strove towards the ideal she dimly discerned. She was one of the souls who leave the world the better for their work in it, and, read and admire as we will, it is not possible to estimate the number of channels into which her fine nature diffused itself for good.

LILY WATSON.

THE LATE DR. J. K. MACKENZIE,

OF TIENTSIN.

PROFESSOR LEGGE, of Oxford, in a letter to a young friend asking his advice, used the following striking words: "A missionary in the present day is nowhere without the eyes of many upon him, and of many who do not sympathise with him, or look upon his work with a friendly eye. An inefficient man, to use no stronger term, is sure to be 'spotted,' and such unfriendly critics take him to be a specimen of others, and through steam communication and the press, their unfavourable judgment soon spreads all over the world, and the best and noblest enterprise in the world is evil spoken of and comes to be regarded as a mere foolish or sentimental enthusiasm. Therefore, the missionary going out of himself, or sent out by a Society, ought to be the best of his kind, the best in himself, of the most earnest piety, and the finest powers both of body and mind, and the best trained, so far as the training which education and discipline can add to his natural and God-given suitability for the work before him."

Such a man, by common consent, was John Kenneth Mackenzie, whose early death left a sad blank in Tientsin, where he had won the esteem and love of hundreds of hearts. Among his colleagues he was noted for singleness of purpose and thought, and whole-hearted consecration to the service of the Master.

"What an example," wrote Dr. Roberts, his successor, "he has left behind him. He was a man who lived very near to God, having always uppermost the spiritual well-being of his patients, and being remarkable for his humility. Without a doubt his career has been one of great victory and accomplishment for God. Many a sick man has he been the means of leading to Christ."

He was born at Great Yarmouth, in August, 1850. During his boyhood his parents moved to Bristol, and the first we hear of him is from Mr. Thomas Ostler, who conducted a Bible class in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association in that city, and which young Mackenzie used to attend on Sunday afternoons. On one memorable Sunday, May 10th 1867, he was greatly impressed by an address given by Mr. D. L. Moody, then on his first visit to England, but the impression was not lasting. A year later Mr. Ostler pleaded very earnestly with his young men to come to decision, and at the close of his address Mackenzie and a friend, now working in connection with the China Inland Mission, openly confessed Christ. From that time he engaged in active Christian work. Shortly after he determined to enter the medical profession, and commenced his studies at the Bristol Medical School and Royal Infirmary; and in 1874, he took his Diplomas of M.R.C.S., in London, and L.R.C.P., in Edinburgh.

Reading the lives of the Rev. William C. Burns, and Dr. James Henderson, he began to think of China; and finally, after listening to an address by the Rev. Griffith John, he offered himself to the London Missionary Society. He was accepted, and sailed for Hankow, in April, 1875.

The opening words of his missionary career were these: "If no obstacle prevents my leaving, and I see clearly that it is the Lord's will, I shall start for China in April. I wish, even in the matter of my leaving, to have no will of my own, but that the Lord guide me."

Starting in this spirit, and with a heart overflowing with love towards God, and his fellowmen, it is not to be wondered at that he was successful in the highest and best sense. From 1875 to 1879, he worked at Hankow, hand in hand with Mr. and Mrs. Griffith John; not contenting himself with hospital work, but joining with Mr. John in evangelistic excursions to the districts

round. On one of these expeditions they were mobbed and nearly murdered.

In one of the neighbouring villages, a native Christian, named Wei, had been the means of converting twenty of his fellow villagers. He asked Mackenzie and Griffith John to visit them, which they promised to do. The day before leaving, however, Wei appeared, telling them that the Christians had been attacked, and the house in which they used to worship pulled down. Still the missionaries determined to go. On nearing the village, they met with much opposition, stones being thrown so that both were much cut and bruised. Turning to the river they saw another mob in front of them. They were quickly dragged down to the river. But changing their tactics, they suddenly faced round on their pursuers and succeeded in breaking through them, one Christian shielding Mr. John at the risk of his own life, saying, "You may kill me, but don't kill my pastor." Tired and disheartened, the missionaries reached Hankow again the next morning. But in a short time that village was a centre of Christian work and influence, so changed did the people become through the power of Christ and His gospel. Mackenzie is still remembered with gratitude and love in those parts.

Griffith John, writing about him after his death, said: "I have never known a man more earnest and devout. To do the will of God was his one aim. He was and has been throughout my ideal medical missionary, thoroughly capable in his profession, but subordinating all to the spiritual interests of his work."

His greatest success, however, was attained not at Hankow, but at Tientsin, an important town on the Grand Canal, and the residence of the Viceroy Li Hung Chang. When Mackenzie arrived there in 1879, things looked very black from a medical standpoint, there being no hospital; and only a dispensary in charge of a native assistant; and this was in debt. A petition was therefore sent to the viceroy, setting forth the need of a hospital and asking his help, but without any result. After prayerful waiting, the day of hope came, for Drs. Irwin and Mackenzie, assisted by Miss Howard, M.D., were enabled to cure the viceroy's wife, who had been given over by the native physicians, and in so doing made the viceroy their friend and the friend of the mission. He at once generously set aside a part of a fine temple to be used as a dispensary, offering to pay all expenses; and before fifteen months were over, a hospital in connection with the London Missionary Society and under the charge of Dr. Mackenzie, was opened by the viceroy himself, containing sixty beds, and costing 2000*l*., all of which was subscribed by the Chinese themselves.

Never for one moment in the midst of his popularity and success did the doctor forget that the main object for which he was in China was to be an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. When at the viceroy's request and at the expense of the government he undertook the training of eight young men for the medical profession, he made only one stipulation, which was that he should be allowed to speak freely to them about Christianity. These young men were taken from the best families, picked ones from a hundred government students educated in America, and he saw that if these became Christians, the Christian religion would thus secure an entrance into the highest circles of the Chinese. So greatly did the Chinese Government value him, that no restrictions were placed upon him; and he was not disappointed, as results have shown.

At the same time that he was so zealous for the souls of his patients, not for one moment did he neglect their bodies. In an article entitled, "The Double Cure," penned just before his death, he wrote: "We omit nothing within our reach which can help our patients. We are lavish with costly restoratives, if they are necessary to the saving of man's life; but herein are we different from hundreds of medical men in other parts of the world, who owe no allegiance to Jesus Christ, and yet who spare neither strength, time, nor money in the enthusiasm of hospital work? The difference lies in the fact that we are as thorough, as definite in seeking the cure of the soul's malady, as they and we alike are in succouring the bodies of men."

Shortly after writing these words, in the midst of his career, he was suddenly called home. On Saturday, March 21st, 1888, he caught a chill, and on Sunday, April 1st, he passed away to be with Christ for ever. A short time before his death, the same spirit which marked the commencement of his missionary career made him say: "It is all right which ever way it is; whether I live or die; I want to be just as the Lord wills. I should like to do a little more work, but I think the Lord is calling me, and I am quite ready to go."

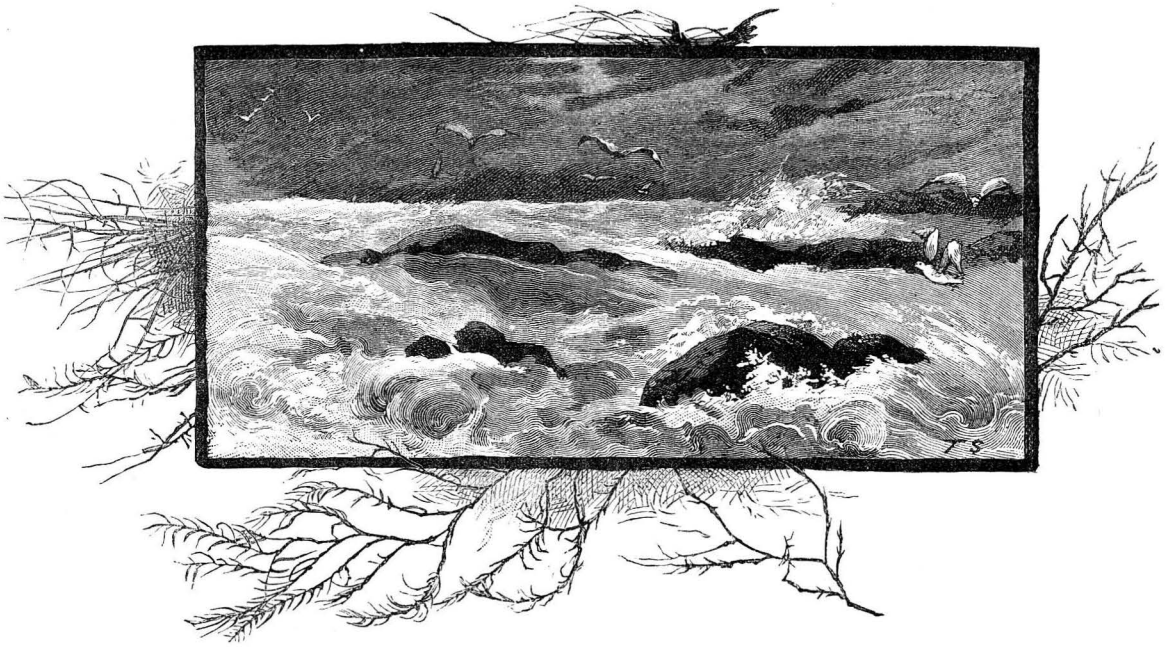
Perhaps the most pathetic incident was his parting with one of his most talented assistants, who was a professing Christian, but who had grown cold and lukewarm. Turning to him, Mackenzie said, "Ah, sir, when it comes to this, there is no peace, no rest for a man but in Christ. Don't let the world get hold of you. Don't let anxiety to please your worldly friends, and the cares and honours of the world draw you away from Christ. I am afraid for you." Then, as the man turned away, speechless with grief, he added, "Whether we meet again it is for you to decide."

On the day of the funeral, the street was crowded with Chinese, from the house to the cemetery, a distance of about half a mile. Never had there been such a funeral before in Tientsin.

The missionaries of seven different societies bore him to the grave, assisted by his medical students and the native Christians. The community were so impressed with his high Christian character that, on the following day, a deputation representing the leading foreign nationalities present in the city, called at the Mission House, requesting permission to place a monument over his grave,—a suggestion which, coming from outsiders, may be regarded as a remarkable testimony to his worth.

W. A. H. L.

A LEGEND OF THE SEA.



ON the bleak, savage coast of Brittany, near the extremity of the Pointe du Raz, and not far from Audierne, may still be seen a curious little hut built of stone, and wedged in among the fierce forbidding rocks which are here scattered in thick profusion.

In this hut, at the end of the last century, lived Job de la Mer. Job was the most famous pilot in the district, and for years he had lived in this rocky nest with his wife and boy.

Many were the ships that Job had saved from destruction on this rugged and dangerous coast, and numberless were the perils that he had run in doing so. He did not know what fear was, and his skill and judgment never failed.

But although Job was the cleverest and the boldest man for miles around, he was very poor, and now he was growing old, and he felt that he must find something for his boy to do. The lad was a fine, spirited little fellow, and Job determined to make a sailor of him. There had been a violent storm, and on the previous day Job had been at sea, engaged in an unusually daring rescue of a distressed ship, but he was now at home, and this evening the sea was calmer, and the weather was warm and sunny.

Job came up to his wife Marie. She was seated outside the cottage, knitting.

"Well, Marie," Job said, "I have been thinking much about our boy to-day. There is no help for it. Dearly as we love him, we cannot afford to keep him at home any longer. Why, if anything happened to me he would be a beggar. He must go out into the world and earn his living, it is absolutely necessary. I will go to Douarnenez to-morrow, and see if I cannot find him a place on board some ship."

"Yes, dear," said Marie. "I knew it must come sooner or later. I suppose it will be for his good: but it will be hard to part with our boy."

The pale, delicate woman tried to speak cheerfully, but she sighed as she finished speaking. Her boy Henry was only twelve years old, and she idolized him.

The next day Job went to Douarnenez. He started early, but it was a long walk, and the moon had risen just before he reached the top of the hill leading down to the town and its famed bay. When he came to the brow of this hill he paused, and gazed out over the bay, always beautiful; and now tranquil under the silvery light of the moon.

Job's life of danger and exposure had made him very susceptible to the quiet beauties of nature, and though his long walk had tired him, he fully enjoyed the peaceful beauty of the scene.

He soon found the friend he had come to see, and they went together to a ship-owner, who consented to give Henry a berth on one of his vessels which was to start in a week for South America.

Henry was a handsome, manly boy. During his short life he had not been more than a few miles beyond Audierne; he was grieved to leave his father and mother and his home amongst the rocks; but he had much of his father's spirit and love of adventure, and with the sanguine expectation of youth, he looked forward keenly to his new life.

"Never mind, mother," he said, when she bewailed his going away. "I shall come back again soon, and, meanwhile, I shall be earning money."

His mother sighed and kissed him, but she did not say anything, she could not trust herself to speak.

After a few preparations, Henry was ready: he tearfully said good-bye to his mother, and he accompanied his father to Douarnenez.

When they went on board the ship, Job put the boy under the protection of one of the sailors named Matelinn, who had known Henry from a child; and the following day

the ship set sail in a fair wind, and Job went back alone and sorrowful to his rock-bound cottage. Months passed by and nothing was heard of the boy; but Job and his wife, although grieving at his absence, did not at first feel anxious about his safety.

They thought that the strange new life and the fresh companions had made Henry for the time forget his old parents and his home; and then they thought that perhaps they should not hear of him until they saw him.

"He hopes to give us a surprise," Job said. "Cheer up, Marie, Henry will come back suddenly without letting us know beforehand."

But as time went on, and they heard nothing of either Henry or the ship, they began to fear that some accident might have happened.

The poor mother bore up bravely, but after a while she gave way, the anxiety preyed upon her weak health, and at last she took to her bed.

Job grew moody and silent, and more adventurous than ever in his pilot's work.

One evening, about a year after Henry had left them, Job was sitting by his wife's bed. They were talking on the topic which was so dear to them both.

"Yes; I do wonder," said Job. "What can have become of the lad? It is very strange that we should have heard nothing of him. I begin to fear the worst; but I will not make up my mind to it yet."

The poor frail woman did not answer. She only grew a shade paler than usual. She took Job's hand and pressed it. She looked as if she were going to speak, and then it seemed to Job that she made a strong effort in checking herself.

Job was saying, "What is it, wife?" when the cottage-door opened, and a bronzed, good-humoured face, and sturdy figure appeared in the opening.

"Ha, Matelinn!" cried Job, "Welcome, where in the world do you come from, and what news do you bring of the boy? We were just speaking of him."

Matelinn came in, and then Job saw from his face and hesitating manner that something was wrong.

The old pilot was much excited at the sight of the sailor; but he restrained himself, and made a sign not to speak before Marie; but the poor woman saw the movement.

"Speak out, Matelinn, I implore you," she said. "It is useless to conceal anything from me. I know all. A few weeks ago I had a horrible dream; I saw my boy plainly, and he told me that I should never see him again on this earth. I did not tell you, Job, I thought it would only make you miserable. Let Matelinn speak. I want to hear exactly what has happened to our dear Henry. I feel sure that he has met with foul play."

At this, Job's anger flamed out.

"If I thought that," he said, "I would not rest until I had avenged him. Speak, Matelinn, tell the whole truth. I swear I will avenge my boy if any one has harmed him. Speak, I say, and woe be upon you if you keep back any of the truth."

He spoke with the fierce anger of a father's troubled spirit. Those divine words, "Love your enemies," were unknown to him, or if known, unheeded. He thought only of revenge. That demon passion which has lured so many to destruction awoke within him.

Matelinn hesitated.

"Do you want to drive me mad" cried the furious pilot. "Speak, man, speak."

Thus urged, Matelinn began—

"We were off the coast of Brazil when we were overtaken by a violent storm. We had made the voyage very leisurely, and we had exceeded the time for which we were provisioned, and, by bad luck, we had used up nearly all our water. I found out soon after we left Douarnenez, that the captain was a hard-drinking bully; for some reason or other he had taken a dislike to Henry, and he now ordered him and two others to take a boat and put to shore for water. I tried to interfere on behalf of the boy. I told the captain that it was not safe to put out the boat in such a sea; that it was not fair to make a mere boy run such a risk; and that we ought to wait until the weather was quieter. The captain swore; for all answer he struck me savagely and felled me to the deck. Meanwhile, poor Henry and the others had got the boat ready and were afloat. The storm increased. I watched the boat for a time battling with the waves, then it disappeared in the mist and gathering gloom I never saw it or any of its occupants again."

While Matelinn was speaking, Marie wept quietly. Job walked up and down. He was very pale, and there was a set look upon his strong weather-beaten face.

When the sailor finished his tale he walked towards the door. Job went slowly up to his wife's bed; he reproached himself bitterly for sending the boy to sea.

"Marie, forgive me," he said. "I did it for the poor lad's good. God knows I did; and the boy wished it himself. Can you forgive me?"

There was no answer. The pale delicate face was turned close to the wall. Job thought he heard a sigh. He took his wife's thin hand.

"Will you not forgive me, Marie?" he said again.

Still there was silence.

"Why do you not speak?" he said, and bent over her. Suddenly he dropped her hand, looked at her earnestly—then with a deep groan he fell senseless beside her.

SCRIPTURE CHARACTER.

NO. II.

1. He received "a present of silver and gold."
2. He accepted a suggestion made to him to break a promise.
3. He prevented a town from being finished.
4. A wicked king sent him a very wise warning.
5. He fell into a sin mentioned in Gal. v. 21.
6. He escaped from danger on horseback.
7. He acted upon a rash proposal and suffered for it.
8. His enemy said of him, "He is my brother."
9. He suspected treachery among his servants.
10. He sent a handsome present to a man whom he had tried to take prisoner.

L. T.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE VERSE.

NO. V.—p. 192.

And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet; but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone, for her soul is vexed within her; and the Lord hath hid it from me and hath not told me.—2 *Kings* iv. 27.

(1) Elisha, the Shunamite and Gehazi, 2 Kings iv. 27; (2) Elisha, 2 Kings iv. 27; (3) 36, 37; (4) 25; (5) Matt. xxviii. 9; (6) Mark x. 13, 14; (7) 2 Kings viii. 1, 2; (8) vii. 2, 19, 20; (9) iv. 25; (10) iii. 12; (11) iv. 27; (12) 25; (13) viii. 1–6; (14) 1 Sam. xxviii. 4, 2 Kings iv. 8; (15) 9; (16) 30, ii. 2, 4, 6; (17) iii. 14–16; (18) v. 20–25; (19) v. 1–7, 35, 41, 44; (20) 27.