

THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

OF ALL DEGREES.

CHAPTER X.—UNCONQUERED.

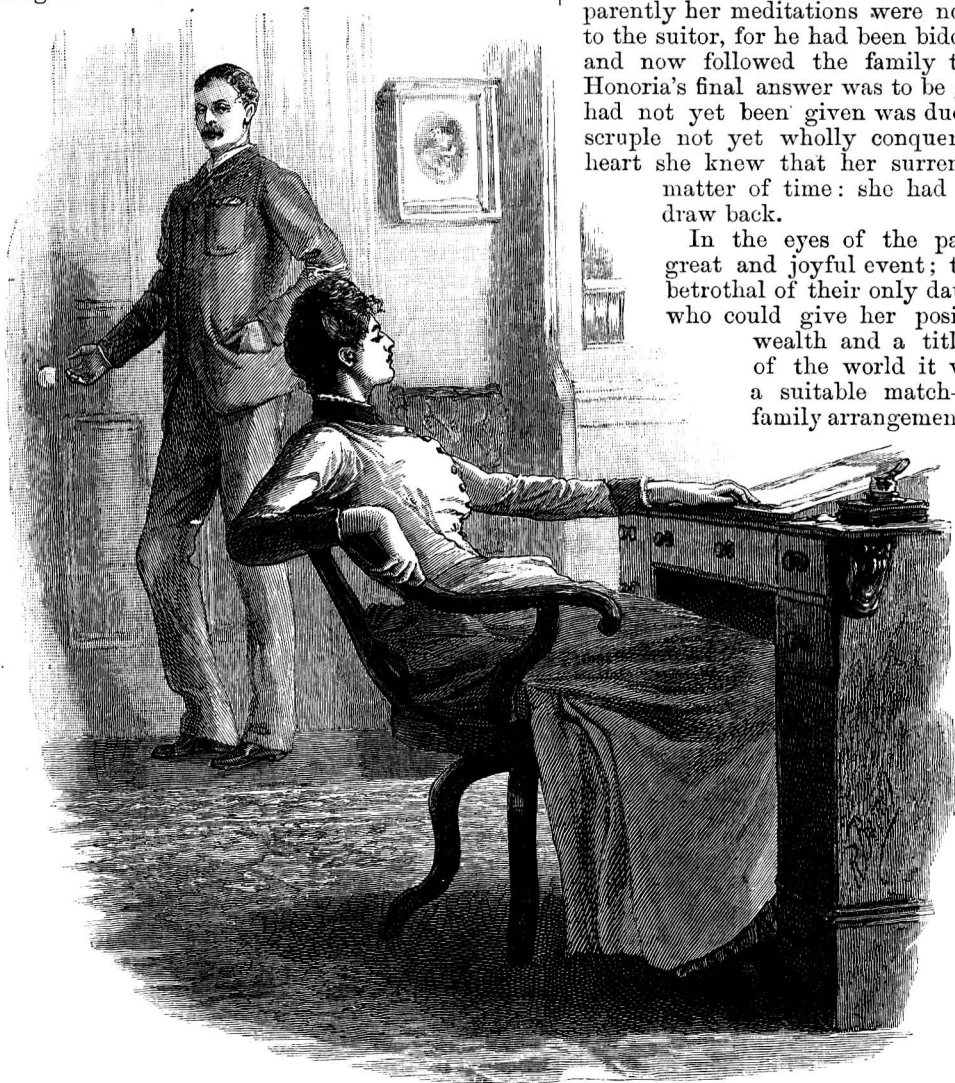
WHILE these things were happening in the Euston Road, while the shillings were painfully saved to make a little feast of tea and muffins for some who were poorer even than their entertainers, hospitality on a very different scale was being planned and carried out in the mansion in Grosvenor Square to which Mr. Vivian had now returned with his wife and daughter.

The sudden retirement of the family to the seclusion of Oakdene while the season was at its height, was the response to a demand from Honoria—a demand to which her parents yielded for reasons which seemed to them good and sufficient.

Honoria professed to wish a little time to consider the question of her marriage with Lord Reigate, and the request was granted. Apparently her meditations were not unfavourable to the suitor, for he had been bidden to Oakdene, and now followed the family to town where Honoria's final answer was to be given. That it had not yet been given was due to a lingering scruple not yet wholly conquered, but in her heart she knew that her surrender was only a matter of time: she had gone too far to draw back.

In the eyes of the parents it was a great and joyful event; the approaching betrothal of their only daughter to a man who could give her position and added wealth and a title. In the eyes of the world it was held to be a suitable match—a comfortable family arrangement by which both

contracting parties would profitequally. There was money on both sides, and for youth and beauty there was rank and position—a fair barter. But what of the things that were left out? What of honour, what of love, what of mutual respect and esteem, what of "that large freedom of soul" which comes of faith in another's goodness and greatness,



HONORIA REJECTS HER BROTHER'S ADVICE.

what of that mutual store of shared aspirations, hopes, beliefs, in the absence of which marriage is a mockery? There is no sacredness in the outward tie without the inward bond. And these things, which Honoria held herself able to despise, are without price and are never either to be bought or sold.

Of all who knew her there was only one who tried to warn Honoria Vivian of the falseness of the step she was taking. For she made no pretence of affection for the man she was persuading herself to marry. She suffered him with a kind of silent scorn, born perhaps of self-scorn. For all her splendid pride could not save her from inward self-abasement.

"Nora," it was her brother who spoke, "you remember young Lindsell?"

"Of course I do. He gave me some reason to remember him. I saw him quit the platform and make his bow to society, it was quite melodramatic."

"Don't be sarcastic, it is hateful in a woman."

"What is it you want to be, then?"

"I want you to be kind to him. You can get him asked here, and treat him with a little decent civility. You would be melodramatic too, I dare say—I should be something rather worse—if you lost everything at one go, all your prospects and chances and ambitions and had to chuck up everything."

"Except stone-breaking. I think he mentioned that was to be his future work?"

"I've got my father persuaded to give him a stool in the bank," said Jim rather shortly, feeling checked and irritated by her light indifference. I thought women were sympathetic and that kind of thing—I thought they were supposed to feel sorry for a fellow when he is down on his luck."

"What do you want me to do, Jim?" Honoria asked again. "Would Mr. Lindsell like to come and meet Lord Reigate at a family dinner of congratulation and rejoicing? It will be such a lively and hearty dinner, and the speeches will be so sincere and Lord Reigate will be such charming company that I should think he would enjoy it very much. But you forget that you have to reckon with papa, what will he say to a clerk—a junior clerk in the house sharing this very private and particular family feast?"

"You know you can get him to do anything you like," said Jim, but he answered absently. He was thinking of her words, of their awful flavour of bitterness. Was this the manner, this the tone of a well-satisfied bride? Love the man she could not perhaps, but how perilously near this sounded to hatred.

"I can get him to do that, I dare say, and I will go to see Miss Lindsell. We travelled to town in the same train, only she went third class, not even second with the maids and the footmen. Is that what people have to do when they are poor? It will never be my unhappy lot—I am going to take out a first-class ticket for the rest of my life."

"Nora," said Jim, with a kind of remonstrant roughness in his tone which hid some stirred feeling—"what, are you marrying that—that—"

"No strong language, please; he is about to become my property, and whatever I may privately think of my bargain, I prefer that you should seem to think it all that is excellent."

"Excellent! you know what he is," cried Jim, not to be restrained; "you know what his [past has been, you can't know all as I know it, but you know enough—you know that he is not a man to respect or look up to. Perhaps you may think yourself able to do without respect and looking up—a lot of women do, no doubt, and without love or affection or even liking, but they get something else out of their bargain. What are you going to get? You don't want his money?"

"No, I don't want his money. Let us suppose since we are so very frank with each other that I want his title."

"Nora," said Jim with a very concise gravity, "give it up—send him about his business—back out of it before it's too late. That's my solemn advice to you."

"It is the advice of a tempter," said Honoria with a dreary sadness underlying her accents of pride. "I have all but consented; papa, at least, considers me pledged, and I suppose even with us there is such a thing as honour, so the line of conduct you suggest in such eloquent words is no longer possible. Lord Reigate knows very well that I have no affection to give him. Hearts are no part of the bargain. He has never been deceived on that point, nor have I. We understand each other perfectly; if we agree to spend our lives together it will be because the arrangement benefits us mutually, and we are sensible enough to know it. You needn't be afraid of any display of sentiment at that family dinner to which you want young Lindsell to be invited. I promise you my emotions will be well under control, even when the [family diamonds are presented to me as the price of my consent. Bad taste, isn't it?—a little like buying a wife—but the Reigate diamonds are famous, you know, and are not to be despised."

"Don't ask Lindsell," said Jim turning on his heel. "I should be ashamed for him. I thought you would be kind to him, poor fellow—"

"And you think I would be cruel; yes, I feel cruel. I don't think I have much sympathy left even for the sorrows of a second lieutenant. I suppose it is the effect of being about to be engaged. People are always said to be selfish on such occasions."

Jim made for the door with a frown contracting his brow; no man ever likes to hear a woman talk as Honoria had talked, even if he persuades himself that half her cynicism is assumed.

The bitterness was fed from within—the bitterness that is bred of a deliberate yielding of the soul to baseness. There is no punishment like this, no torture a proud nature can suffer equal to the torture of knowing that one has willingly stooped to accept moral defilement.

Honoria was in sore need of help and comfort, if but to restore that vanished self-respect, and she cared for Jim, in her own imperious way she loved him, and her need of him seemed to wake and throb to a quicker pulse when she saw him

go from her despising, disapproving, condemning. She cared at least enough to wish that he should not go from her in anger.

She followed him to the door and said in quite a new and gentle voice—

“I will ask him some other day, Jim, when we are alone, if we ever are alone, or to one of the larger parties, I dare say he will like that better.”

But Jim was thinking no longer of Charlie and his woes.

“If you marry him, Nora,” he said with his hand on the door turning to look at her gravely, “it will be the worst act of your life, and you will repent it all your days.”

She ought no doubt to have been glad of this homely warning to a sleeping conscience, but she was not glad, because its efforts to awake and assert itself only reminded her disagreeably that she had not wholly conquered its realm as yet. She relied on her resolute pride to sustain her in rebellion. For it was to be rebellion. No wiser or better voice was to prevail. She had chosen deliberately and with open eyes as she told her brother, and she meant to go on. To go back as Jim suggested would be a fresh and worse humiliation; what was she about to do that any other girl, given the opportunity, would not do? She loved power, her pride demanded a kingdom to rule, her beauty asked for subjects to subdue. As Lord Reigate's wife she could command social opportunities that could not be hers as Miss Vivian the wealthy banker's daughter, she would be lifted into a new sphere where her powers would have a freer sweep, her attractions a finer setting. And these things were to be enough—were to answer and fully meet all the cravings, the heart-hunger, the deep spiritual restlessness which were as God's angels warning her with sword of flame from the path she had chosen.

She told herself, poor foolish girl, that she would be very clear about the future and allow no mistaken hopes to creep in which might call for after disenchantment. She lived much in the scenery of her married life, picturing its public side (such an union has no home side), its pomps and splendours, its conquests and gratifications, and already the hardening effect of her resolve was making itself apparent in her manner.

Depend on it, we can make no bargain with the devil without paying his price to the last farthing. Honoria was paying now in a hardness of heart and callousness towards the feelings of others which might have enlightened her if she had been willing to be enlightened, and showed her the abyss on which she was treading.

Even as it was, conscience was not wholly dead. It revived at moments and had life enough to cast a sudden flash of light on the picture of ease and freedom and splendour which was her vision of the future, and in that illuminating ray she saw herself—not admired, flattered, courted, but humiliated, defeated, degraded and branded in her own eyes—a woman who had sold her soul into slavery.

Such a moment came to her in the interview with her brother. The hour was that compara-

tively early one before the day's engagements claimed her. It was the only free hour in the busy whirl of social engagements with which the June days are filled for a fashionable world, and it was the only one that Honoria feared. From ball and reception she could come home with bodily and mental weariness enough to let her sleep, but was young and strong, and in the morning Nemesis visited her.

Jim and she had had their little talk in the library where Honoria had gone to write one or two notes, her brother following her to smoke. It was a large, handsome room full of books which no one read, the kind of library which is the proper equipment of a man of wealth, necessary, like the pictures on the walls and the bronzes and statues, as a part of the expected furniture of a mansion.

Honoria had scarcely more than an outward acquaintance with the well-bound rows on the shelves, her energy was of an active order, and had found vent chiefly in riding, of which she was passionately fond. Her impulse was to do, not to meditate; and indeed the mind must be clear and disengaged before reading becomes an enthusiasm. But on this morning, smarting under a sense of Jim's contempt, and stung by one of those torturing doubts that would not be wholly exorcised, she passed the volumes in review with the instinctive desire to shield herself from her thoughts by finding a new channel for them. The book she picked out almost at random was an old and worn one; its shabbiness compared with its gilded companions had perhaps made it conspicuous enough to attract her unconsciously; and with a passing wonder as to how it came there, and who had cared enough for it to thumb it into tattered dinginess, she turned the yellow leaves.

“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, except to love God and serve Him only. Vanity it is therefore to seek after perishing riches and to trust in them.”

“It is also vanity to hunt after honours and to climb to a high degree. It is vanity to follow the desires of the flesh, and to labour for that for which thou must afterwards suffer more grievous punishment.”

“Vanity it is to wish to live long and to be careless to live well. It is vanity to mind only this present life, and not to foresee those things which are to come.”

“It is vanity to set thy love on that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither where everlasting joy abideth.”

“O, how senseless are these men and unbelieving in heart, who lie so deeply sunk in the earth that they can relish nothing but carnal things. But miserable as they are, they shall in the end feel to their cost how vile and how nothing that was which they loved. Whereas the saints of God and all the devout friends of Christ regarded not those things which pleased the flesh, nor those which flourished in this life, but longed after the everlasting riches with their whole hope and earnest intention.”

“O, my brother, lose not thy confidence of

making progress in godliness; there is yet time, the hour is not yet past."

"Why wilt thou defer thy good purpose from day to day? Arise and begin in this very instant, and say, 'Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be striving, now is the fit time to amend myself.'"

The grave voice that spoke warnings such as these had long been silent, the hand that penned the lines long crumbled into dust, and yet the words rang in her ears like a trumpet-call.

"All is vanity, except to love God and serve Him only." She closed the book with a shiver of half physical fear, and glanced round her dreading she knew not what. But the large well-lit room was empty of any disturbing presence and she rallied her courage.

What voice was this that had thundered in her ear? Not at the first demand would the proud spirit make surrender. She told herself that she was fanciful, nervous. With a fierce unreasoning haste she thrust the offending volume back, hiding it behind the others and closing the row so as to leave no betraying gap visible to the eye, by which she might recognise it again, and when her maid came to summon her to an interview with her dressmaker, she gave an order to have the horses brought round at once.

A gallop in the summer's sunshine was the medicine she prescribed for herself.

"Lord Reigate was to call at eleven," the maid ventured to remonstrate.

"I have said that I will ride now," Honoria replied haughtily. At the moment she felt that nothing would induce her to see the man she was about to accept as her husband. She had been stung acutely enough to feel a shuddering repugnance at the mere thought of his presence.

And yet the next day, before the family dinner already alluded to, when Lord Reigate sent the cases of diamonds with a note begging her to do him the honour of wearing them that evening, she complied.

For an instant she felt inclined to dash the brilliant stones out of the window—their touch contaminated her—but the next she compelled herself to a different judgment.

"It is only one step more—the last," she said. "If I wear them it will be a sign, a seal, a pledge, on my part from which there will be no going back."

So she let her maid clasp them on her throat and wrists and deck her for the shameful sacrifice while she crushed down her better nature and let it have no voice. She was beautiful, but it was not the beauty that makes a lover's heart glad. There was no kindness in her eyes, and no love or gratitude in her heart, which was cold and hard as the jewels she wore.

THE LATE MARY L. WHATELY OF CAIRO.

MARY LOUISA WHATELY, the subject of the following sketch, was the second daughter of Archbishop Whately, and was born in 1824, at the country Rectory of Halesworth, in Suffolk, where her father resided for some years before his appointment to the See of Dublin. The chief part of her early life was spent in Ireland, where, under her father's roof, she and her sisters received the highest educational training, mental, moral, and religious—from a father and mother such as few are blest with.

A nature full of activity, energy, and intelligence of no common order, distinguished her from childhood; and after the Irish famine, when so many organisations were formed to help the poor and ignorant, she found a field for those energies in active work, especially in the Ragged Schools opened in Dublin, in which she and her mother and sisters were constantly employed.

She often said in after life that the training she received in the Irish Mission Schools, in which she helped to teach, was an invaluable preparation for the work in which she was afterwards to be engaged.

She had learned before this early beginning, that the first step was to give herself to Him who had "bought her with a price," and in this

spirit her work at home and abroad was ever carried on.

In 1858 she visited Cairo and the Holy Land with some friends, and the interest awakened in her mind by this visit was the first preparation for her life-work in the East.

In the winter of 1860 she was ordered for her health to a southern climate, and her thoughts turned to the country to which she had already become attached. While residing in Cairo she was struck with the neglected state of the little Moslem girls she saw around her. At this time no attempt had ever been made in behalf of Moslems in Egypt, and even education for women among the nominal Christians was at the lowest ebb.

In spite of innumerable difficulties and discouragements, she resolved on opening a small school for girls in the house in which she was living, and with the help of a respectable Syrian Christian woman, who knew about as much English as her employer then did of Arabic (which of course was the Syrian teachers' native tongue), she succeeded in gathering a few little girls round her and teaching them the rudiments of reading in their own tongue, sewing, and some knowledge of the Scriptures.

About two years later she was enabled to fix her residence permanently in Cairo—her own home being broken up; and with the help of two excellent and highly-gifted Syrian missionaries (the brothers Mansoor and Joseph Shakoor) she was able to add a boys' school to the one established for girls.

In 1869 the Khedive made her the grant of land on which she built the mission house described in the present sketch, and ten years later a Medical Mission was added to the work, which has done untold good to body and soul, to multitudes of the sick poor.

The following picture of her work from the pen of a relative who visited her about three

It was a bright evening in the end of October, about three years ago, when two wearied travellers arrived at the Mission House in Cairo. For many years one of our most fond wishes had been to see the work of one whom we had known and loved all our lives, and at last here we were. The setting sun was crimsoning all the surroundings, tinging the yellow sands of the not very distant desert with pink; gilding the distant domes and towers, and the flat roofs of the brilliantly white houses.

On the steps of the house Miss M. L. Whately was waiting to receive us; her face beaming with smiles of welcome. We were brought up the wide stone staircase that led to our spacious rooms,



Mary L. Whately

From a Photograph by J. Jeanneret, Montreux.

years ago, may interest readers who have mission work at heart.

How suddenly her career was cut short, most of those readers know. Her exertions on her last Nile excursion, made when she was suffering from an accidental cold, and not equal to the fatigue she imposed on herself, laid the seeds of the illness which carried her off in a few days.

The worker has been called hence, but the work will not die. Her sister and the devoted friend and fellow-helper alluded to in the sketch (Mrs. Shakoor, the widow of her first missionary associate, Mansoor Shakoor) are endeavouring to carry on the same aims,—Mrs. Shakoor residing on the spot, and continuing the work as she had done jointly with her friend for many years.

The following description speaks for itself:

whose balconies overlooked the garden, and there refreshed with the ever-welcome cup of tea which never comes amiss to English travellers in whatever clime they find themselves, and is especially welcome after the dust and heat of the day.

The large dwelling-house of Miss Whately was only divided from her school buildings and medical mission by a garden—which at the time of which we speak was glowing with flowers; the beautiful "consul's daughter," whose red blossoms mingled gloriously with the deep violet creeper that covered the summer-house and walls of the house—a small grove of plantain trees near giving the background of green that so refreshes the eye.

This site of ground had been given her many years ago by the Khedive; and was specially suitable to the purpose, being out of the town, and with a view of the distant desert from some of the windows.

With the earliest dawn Miss Whately was about her daily vocations; she loved to see the sun rise from the balcony in her room, and often said it was the only quiet time she could secure in the day for her private reading. After early breakfast her work of greatest interest began, namely, reading the Bible and talking to the poor women who came to be doctored by her admirable medical missionary, Dr. Azoury.

It was a sight not to be forgotten; and one feels it a privilege to have been present on some of these occasions. There she sat on a low chair surrounded by women and children. Some of these young mothers were scarcely more than children themselves—looking as if they should be playing with dolls instead of having to mind the big brown black-eyed babies that lay in their laps. It was intensely interesting to note the expression of the different faces. Some countenances looking worn and sad with hard life and ill-treatment, would light up as they drank in the message given them by their "Sitt Mariam," as they always called her; and her bright smile and earnest words made them grasp the reality of the good message of salvation. She taught the despised wife, down-trodden by the wretched social laws of her country, that hard as her lot was there was One who could sympathise with her. As she spoke of His love, who had wept over the sorrows of His people while on earth, many a dull eye would swim with tears, and the look of hard despair change to a softer expression. It needed the real missionary spirit with which this worker was endued, to sit thus in the midst of disease and filth; no look of repugnance crossing her face. She followed in her Master's footsteps in seeking the good of the soul as well as the body.

In any difficult case "Sitt Mariam" would take her place in the surgery ready with a kind word, and practical assistance. The writer well remembers on one occasion when an operation had to be performed on the eyes of a dirty old Egyptian woman, Miss Whately stood by the patient as she lay on the surgical table, holding her hand, and patting her shoulder, while she spoke encouraging and cheering words to her: such as "Don't fear, my sister. Trust in God; it will soon be over." This was only one of the many cases of the sort in which she ministered by her presence to the patient. Can it be wondered that she was loved, and that on the day of her death the cries and laments of those to whom she had been as "a mother in Israel" were piteous to hear?

This medical mission in which she took such interest, and for the maintenance of which she had made such efforts, was undoubtedly one of the most important departments of her work. The medical missionary, Dr. Azoury, a most earnest Christian man as well as an efficient doctor, had always a "word in season" for his poor patients. Many came from villages great distances off to see him. From among the many interesting cases connected with this department of the work, one incident may be given.

A young woman came one day to Miss Whately weeping bitterly; she was one of the wives of a

sheik of a village some miles away, and her eyes were diseased, in fact she was almost blind. Her husband told her that she was no longer of any use to him, and he should divorce her. She was in a pitiable state of distress, and, while waiting for admittance to the doctor (for there were always crowds of men and women waiting, the men in a separate room where a Scripture reader read and talked to them),—the "Sitt" told her of One who could cure the soul as well as the body, and went about doing good while on earth. The doctor, by God's help, was able to cure the poor young wife completely. She returned to her village in deepest thankfulness, and was taken back into favour by her lord and master.

Some time afterwards she returned again, this time bringing a tall turbaned man with her, who proved to be her husband; he was the sufferer this time, and the good and forgiving wife had persuaded him to come and see the doctor to whom she owed so much. After some time the man was cured, and during his bodily treatment we may be sure that his soul was not forgotten. He showed his gratitude for what had been done for him, by sending many from his village to the Medical Mission; so that the seed was sown broadcast. Whether he was properly grateful to the wife who had "heaped coals of fire on his head" is not known; but if the gospel message had indeed penetrated his heart, we must believe that it would have changed him in this respect also.

The female school was especially interesting to us, knowing as we did the extreme difficulty of getting at the Eastern girls. The boys' school is full of interest as well, and the education they there receive has been of benefit to them in many ways, as has been fully proved by the excellent appointments obtained by those who have passed through these schools.

Education cannot be carried on so satisfactorily among the girls, who are taken away often before they are in their teens, to be married. Two-thirds of the girls are Moslem, and it is well known how difficult it is to do anything among the Mohamedans, with the views they have about women, and looking on the education of girls as utterly useless and even injurious.

One was forcibly reminded of a flower garden as one entered the girls' school and saw the brightly-attired children, with their gay cotton dresses, their faces mostly very dark, with large handsome eyes, and delicately-formed limbs. It was pretty to see them stand up, to repeat the verses they had learnt in the Bible, and sing their Arabic hymns in the language, which, though incomprehensible to us, sounded very rich and soft. Though the time these girls remain in the schools is often very brief, the seed sown has brought forth fruit in several cases, as may be seen in some of Miss Whately's accounts of her work.

Perhaps of all this mission work, the most interesting feature was supplied by her missionary efforts in the Nile villages. It seems but yesterday that we had the pleasure and privilege of accompanying her on one of these trips.

It was early spring at that time, and everything exquisitely green—the feathery palms, the verdure

of emerald hue, and the mud huts making a picturesque contrast to the general surroundings.

Memory carries one back to those bright days, and we see her as she then was in her full vigour, seated on the ground surrounded by a motley group of women and children, whose attention she had succeeded in riveting. She would at first be constantly interrupted by questions irrelevant to the subjects in hand, such as the price of her dress, the ages and conditions of those who accompanied her, etc., but she had the happy faculty of never being put out by such childish questions, and would persevere till she had subdued them into listening. She had the gift in work of this kind of knowing how to adapt her explanations to her hearers, giving bright, lively illustrations and anecdotes, speaking to these grown men and women as she would to children. On these occasions she was often accompanied by Dr. Azoury (her medical missionary), and her invaluable helper, Mrs. Shakoor.

In the last mission trip of this sort she was

alone with her sister; much blessed work was done, and then she came back to die. In the midst of her active work for her Master, she was suddenly called to come "up higher." Instead of those blue Nile waters which she so dearly loved, she is now beside the crystal waters of the River of Life; instead of the waving palms and glittering domes of her adopted city that she delighted to watch from her window, she now views the glories of the Celestial City.

In a moment, almost without warning, the summons came. She had been ill for some days, but no one thought there was real danger until just at the last those near her saw a sudden change. She was told, "You are going to Jesus;" and a radiant look was her only answer as her happy spirit broke its earthly fetters.

That unselfish and self-denying worker has heard the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

THE PAST AND THE PRESENT OF SAMOA.

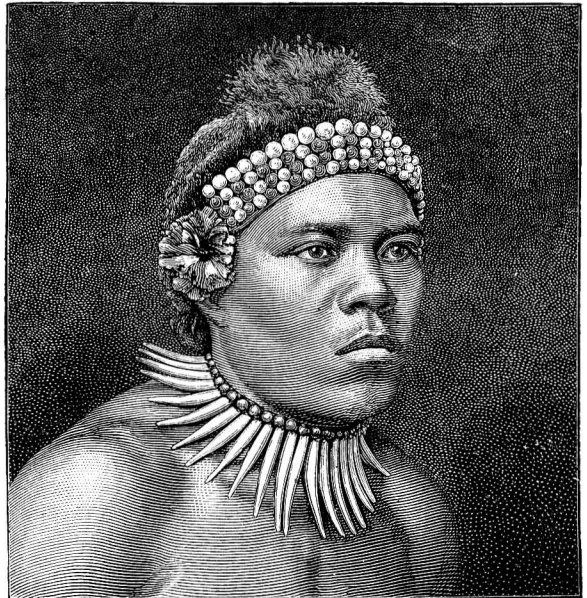
IV.—SAMOA IN CONTACT WITH THE GREAT OUTSIDE WORLD.

THE missionary preserve, as a newspaper paragraph recently described a similar group, has been unceremoniously entered. Samoa has been forced into prominence, and is now an object of interest to the civilized nations of the earth. The eyes of the statesman and of the merchant, as well as those of the friend of missions, have been anxiously turned to these lovely islands. For the present, at any rate, they have fallen upon evil days, especially Upolu, which is the centre of cloud and storm. There are three or four principal factors which must be taken into account in any attempt to understand the present crisis, or to estimate future probabilities.

First, there is the character of the Samoans themselves—their social and national weaknesses, not to use the sterner word vices. Christian teaching has done much for them, but much remains undone. Notwithstanding their honest acceptance of Christ's Gospel, and the sincere desire of a large number to walk circumspectly and humbly with their God, defects are painfully manifest. Not that that is unusual or peculiar to Samoa. Is not the Christianity of an Englishman, of a Scotchman, of a Welshman, of an Irishman, sadly marred by the infirmities of the English, Scotch, Welsh, and Irish national character? Is not the same the case with all so-called Christian nations? Is there not a constant conflict between what in these scientific days we call the law of heredity, and "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus?"

Undoubtedly the Samoan has his own characteristic frailties and imperfections, and one fears sometimes that they will sadly hamper him in

his international relations. He is naturally quarrelsome. The rivalries and jealousies of different chiefs, different districts, different villages, foster a contentious, factious spirit, and constitute one of the greatest obstacles to steady progress. Long before German intervention and

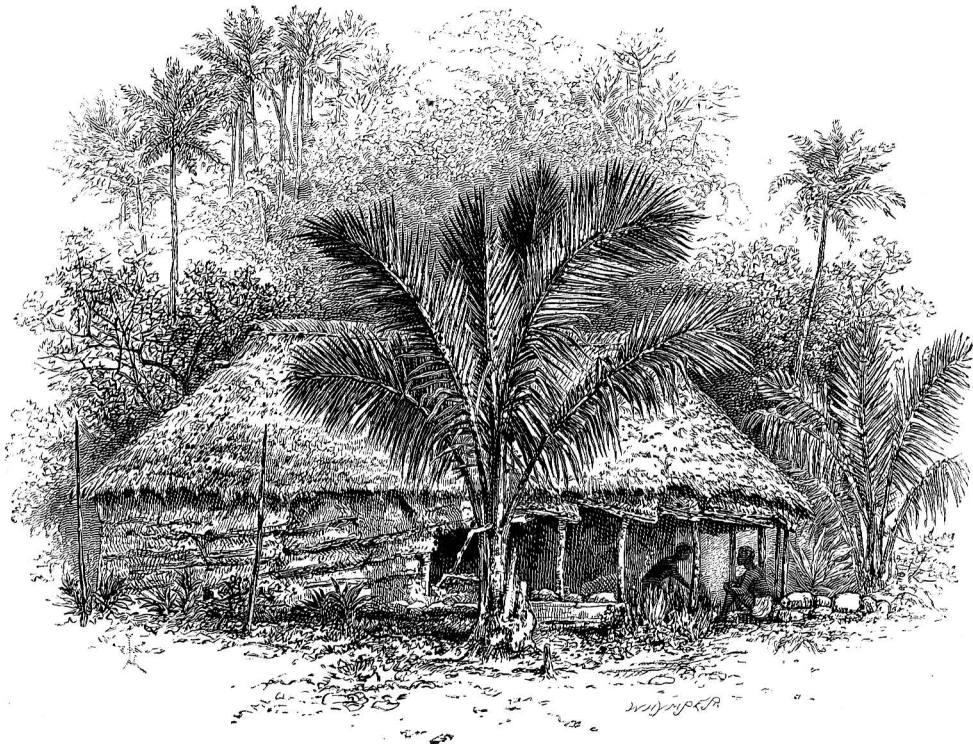


SAMOAN NATIVE.

the deposition of King Malietoa in favour of Tamasese, these rival chiefs, and others who

preceded them, and many more of subordinate rank, indulged in struggles for supremacy. Petty wars have broken out from time to time, and missionaries have often found their efforts to arbitrate and pacify futile. Instability and fickleness also mark the people. They seem almost incapable of well-sustained, prolonged effort. Spurts, rushes, over-powering ardour and intensity for a brief period they are adepts at; but in staying power, in "patient continuance in well-doing" they are sadly lacking. They need constant stimulus, external pressure, and whipping up, or remain inert. To a large extent this is attributable to their inbred sluggishness. The ease with which a Samoan can procure abundance of food nurtures indolence. The work of two

not such a simple thing as it sounds. Under the Christian garb a whole world of iniquity may, and alas! often does prevail. It is, however, a great satisfaction to know that in a multitude of instances corrupt heathen nature has been renewed and cleansed by the power of Christ, that many a Samoan has lived a consistent Christian life, and died a happy Christian death. The report of the deputation that recently visited the islands, already quoted, is clear and convincing on this point. It frankly confesses that the people are not paragons of virtue, that they are not superior to the grosser forms of vice, but maintains that a great change has been effected in their moral life, a change quite as thorough and deep as in the time could reasonably be expected.



A SAMOAN HOUSE.

days suffices to meet the requirements of seven, and he deems it folly to exert himself. He says (a resident informs us): "White man fool, he work after he eat dinner." Laziness is a terrible hindrance to healthy growth, and the ordinary native of Samoa is lazy in the extreme. Apparently he has no ambition, no desire to get on. Indeed social customs make it next to impossible for him to do so, for no sooner is it known that a man has become possessed of a little property than his friends come and stay with him until it is exhausted. That is the custom, and *volens volens* he must submit to it. Add to these faults the grave moral defects summed up in the words untruthfulness and impurity, and it becomes evident that for a native of Samoa to be chaste in thought, speech, and life, to be thoroughly trustworthy and reliable in character and conduct is

Having been specially appointed to investigate such questions, and having had exceptional opportunities for ascertaining the opinions of the foreign residents generally, as well as of the missionaries, the framers of this report may be regarded as delivering a judicial as well as a judicious utterance.

A second factor in the problem of Samoa's future progress, is the effect of missionary methods. Speaking broadly, the outcome of the evangelistic, pastoral, and educational work carried on for fifty years cannot but receive our cordial approval, and inspire us with confidence as we look forward. In one or two directions, however, through misapprehension or misuse of the teaching given, results otherwise gratifying are open to objection, and need serious attention to prevent abuse.

For example, to have succeeded in raising an educated native ministry (comparatively speaking, that is), a ministry capable of meeting the needs of so many and such large congregations, is no small achievement. But the very success has created a new difficulty. At times even the missionaries have to exercise considerable patience, discretion, and tact to avoid collisions with their native colleagues, who are wonderfully sensitive as to any seeming infringement of their prerogative, and ambitious of becoming in all respects the equals of their teachers. In dealing with their less educated countrymen, the Samoan pastors are sometimes arbitrary and overbearing. Church discipline for trivial offences is anything but rare, and the decision of the pastor in such cases is absolute.

length he proceeds to describe in serio-comic style the observances of the day—the early morning prayer-meeting at which the congregation appears in a sort of superior undress; the striking and grotesque exhibition of finery at the morning service proper, when all varieties of semi-foreign attire, antique and modern, are doffed for a short time, only to be laid aside on the return from chapel; the afternoon spent in sleeping, bathing, or visiting; the resumption of Sunday garments for the evening service; the careful depositing of these in family boxes at the close of this last service of the day. The description is exaggerated and somewhat of a caricature, but those who know the Samoans best are well aware that many of them are disposed to make Sabbath observance the distinguishing feature, if



A NATIVE CREW.

Again, to have induced a community rescued from heathen superstitions to value and reverently observe the Lord's Day, by making it a day of rest and worship, is to have accomplished much for its present and future welfare. Missionaries have done this for Samoa. The islanders keep the Sabbath most scrupulously. Mr. Churchward, formerly H.B.M.'s Consul at Apia, lets us see how this strikes the ordinary Englishman. "Sunday is a great day with all Samoans," he writes. "With the exception of the intervals of sleep, so necessary to their existence, hymn-singing goes on very nearly from the first thing in the morning till the last thing at night. Really the Sunday in and about the schools begins on Saturday evening, when as a rule they carry on practice to a late hour." Then at some

not the alpha and omega, of their Christian practice. There is far too much mere Sabbatarianism as distinguished from an intelligent apprehension of the true meaning of the day, or a real appreciation of its spiritual joys and blessings. A story is told in missionary circles of a teacher, sent to commence work in an outlying island, who reported that his new charge were fast becoming Christians. On being questioned as to the directions in which progress was being made, it became evident that he was easily satisfied. He knew of no true converts, of none that had even got the length of decently clothing themselves, but they "kept the Sabbath," he said, and that was all he had to tell.

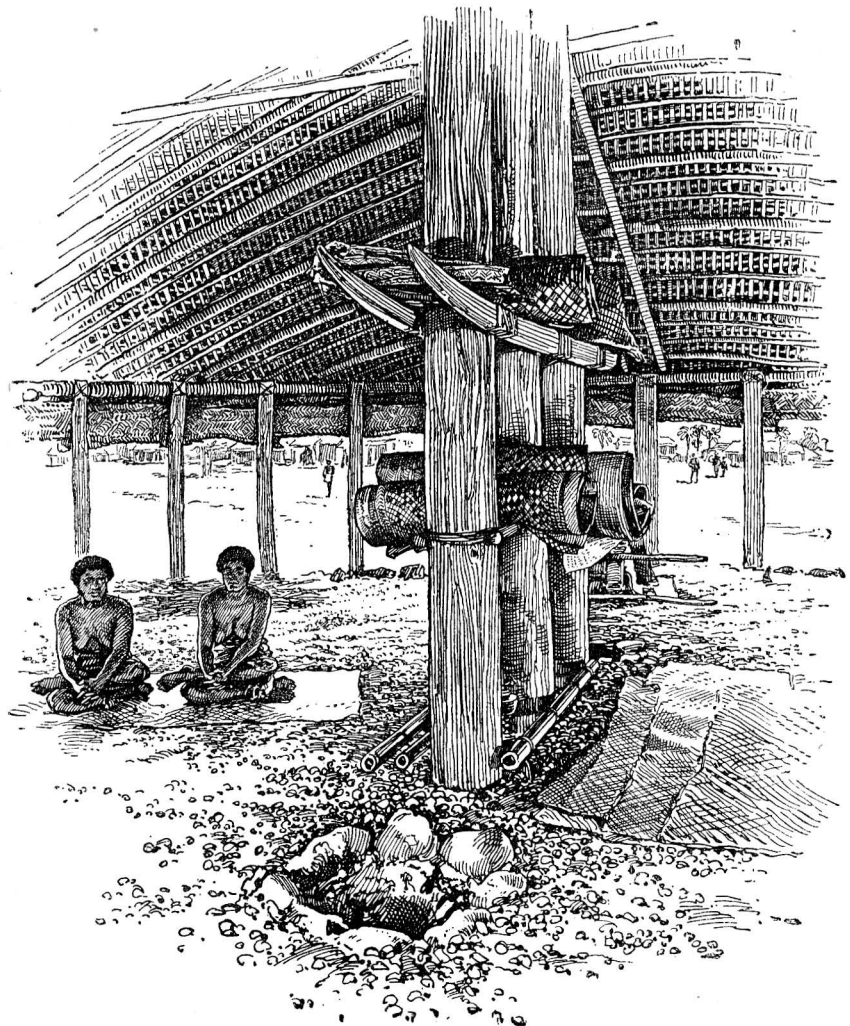
In another respect the results of missionary tuition leave something to be desired, namely,

in the matter of female education. The mixed day-schools taught by the pastors, supplemented by occasional classes conducted by a missionary's wife, are the only direct provision made for the education of the majority of the girls, and for the cultivation of refined womanliness; though the pastors' wives, many of them, go with their husbands to Malua. In this respect it certainly seems that those under Romanist care have the advantage of their Protestant sisters. This defect in a system which in so many ways has proved highly beneficial, one rejoices to think is easily remediable, nor is it likely to continue.

The third and in some respects the most important factor in the question of Samoa's ultimate place among the nations, is the influence of non-missionary foreigners who now predominate, and number some four or five hundred. They are mostly German, American, and British merchants and those they employ. The firms have their head-quarters in Apia, but their agents are scattered all over the group. These men collect copra, that is the dried kernel of the cocoa-nut, which they despatch in small craft to Apia. A few foreigners take their wives with them to Samoa, others are legally married to Samoan women; but the larger number live with native women without incurring the responsibilities of marriage. Of far too many it must be said they have proved a gambling, drunken, dissolute set of abandoned beachcombers, the scum of the Pacific, a disgrace to civilisation, a terror and a stumbling block to the natives. A great improvement is stated to have taken place in Apia during the last ten years. Prior to 1879 law and order were unknown; every man did what was right in his own eyes; and demonised by that vile and poisonous trash called Hamburg gin (which can be purchased at eightpence per bottle, and all over the Pacific as on the west coast of Africa is working incalculable ruin), reckless men indulged in all kinds of violence and devilry. Half-caste Samoans joined them in their debaucheries, and many pure blooded natives became completely demoralised. But in 1879 Sir Arthur

Gordon, who visited Samoa in the capacity of British Commissioner, executed a convention by which the municipality of Apia was established, with power to levy taxes, issue licenses, appoint and control police, and carry on works of public usefulness. This convention has borne good fruit. Still, even now the example set by a large proportion of the foreign residents is a sad hindrance to temperance, purity, and righteousness, and tends seriously to neutralise the teaching and influence of Christian men and women. Efforts are made by the missionaries to touch this foreign population, especially in Apia, where they have a small foreign church, erected forty years ago and still in use. Sailors from the ships in harbour and other visitors are seen within its walls, and a few of the residents regularly attend the Sunday services, to some of whom the Gospel has proved God's power unto salvation.

The weakness of the Samoan character is severely tried by the flagrant and unblushing vices of the white man. It is also liable to manifest itself even in relation to his amusements. The visit of a circus sent many of the people almost mad for a time. Cricket was introduced



INTERIOR OF A SAMOAN CHIEF'S HOUSE.

by some English lovers of the game. At first the Samoan cared a straw for it; but all at once they began to take interest in the game, to play it themselves, and that with ridiculous extravagance. Cricket became the one absorbing interest. Every village took to it. Not eleven a side, but thirty and forty, and in one instance two hundred played. Matches lasted for weeks, and all work was for the time neglected in its favour. Need it be said that sensible people found it necessary to set their face against cricket, and did their best to put a stop to it.

Then the energy and activity of the foreigner are both a puzzle and a menace to the Samoan. Their innate dislike to continuous work makes it necessary to import labour. As plantations are multiplied, and the demand for steady toil in cultivating them increases, the difficulty will become more urgent. Already Tongans and others have been introduced, and unless the Samoans learn wisdom in time, these strangers to their soil will thrive at their expense.

Finally, Samoa is face to face with the three greatest nations of the modern world. Germany, the leading military, and Great Britain the chief naval power, together with America, the most enterprising and go-ahead nation on earth, are those directly and immediately interested in her affairs. Matters recently reached an acutely critical stage. The trade of the islands has developed, the exports and imports both being about £100,000 per annum. As regards the commercial stake in Samoa, Germany stands first, America comes next, Great Britain last; but as regards the moral stake, Great Britain heads the list. Her influence is the greatest. This is testified to by the position and work of the missionaries, by the use of the English language as the recognised medium of communication between foreigners and their half-caste or imported labourers, and by the definite request and petition to undertake the protectorate of the group sent by the late king to Her Majesty

Queen Victoria in 1884. The British Government did not see its way to accede to this request, partly out of deference to German sensitiveness and large investments, partly from an unwillingness to accept the burden of additional imperial responsibility when this could, with good grace, be avoided. Subsequently the whole course of events was changed by the intervention of the German Government, who by deposing Malietoa, the rightful king, and setting up Tamasese, a chief whom the people were determined not to recognise, hastened the crisis. Mataafa, who came to the front after Malietoa was carried off into temporary exile, is a Romanist, but has the support of two-thirds or more of his countrymen, whereas Tamasese can command but a small following, and but for German support would soon be overthrown. Still the political question after all is not so much that of settling the claims of rival chieftains as the international jealousies of the three powers. It is devoutly to be hoped that the conference now sitting in Berlin will arrange all differences, and definitely adopt a scheme for the wise and just administration of the group. The chiefs are awaiting such a settlement, and an announcement that it had been determined on, would be hailed with delight. The present state of affairs is simply disastrous.

Our brief survey is finished. We have looked at the story of the little people's regeneration and enlightenment from a broad, and we trust both just and generous, point of view. The net results of Christian work, when all deductions have been made, are very large. The money, the service expended on the elevation of Samoa has secured a moral and spiritual return that is most encouraging, and one cannot but hope that He who has brought the Samoans thus far on the upward and onward pathway, will still manifest His presence and blessing, and lead them forward to yet greater, higher, and nobler things.

GEORGE COUSINS.



A TERRIBLE NIGHT ON THE MARSHES.

THE following is a true account of an adventure that happened to the boat of one of the training ships on the Mersey.

It had been a stormy January day; but there was a lull about four o'clock in the afternoon, and the boat started from the *Akbar* for her usual passage to Rock Ferry Pier. The wind was north-west at the time—a wind that exercises a peculiarly disturbing effect on parts of that river. Especial precautions were taken on this occasion to ensure the safety of the boat during her intended short passage. Extra oars were placed on board, the stoutest and most experienced of the ship's boys were picked out for the crew, and these wore "sou' westers" and oil-skin jackets. An officer, as usual, went in charge of the boat.

The crew consisted of twelve boys, and besides the officer on duty there were, as passengers in the boat, another of the ship's officers, the son of the head schoolmaster on board, a workman who had been employed from the shore, a youth about nineteen who had come from Blackburn to visit his brother, who belonged to the *Akbar*, and also a young woman, one of the captain's servants, in all eighteen persons.

The short voyage to Rock Ferry Pier is accomplished scores of times during the week. It usually takes ten minutes, sometimes with a fair wind and favourable tide, very much less.

No accident had hitherto been chronicled in connection with this passage. The boys often do the trips in rather rough weather, thereby gaining the hardihood, skill, and sailor-like

qualities they will need in their future calling, when they "go down to the sea in ships" and "do business in great waters."

The storm increased after the boat started, and it was soon observed by those on watch on board the training ship that, in consequence of the strong flood tide and the heavy contrary wind, she was not making progress towards her destination—nay, that rather she was beginning to drift out of her course.

A buoy attached to a long rope was immediately thrown after her, so that the crew might catch it and make their way back to the ship; but the wind swept her so rapidly off that the assistance was in vain. And then drifting, drifting away, the unfortunate craft was subjected to an experience, the like of which seldom happens on our English rivers.

They tried to steer her near some of the schooners that were anchored close by, in the hope of catching hold of one of them, but so swift was their course that their efforts again failed.

Away drifted the unfortunate boat past the ships, past Broomborough, past Eastham—on they went, struggling vainly to resist the fierce elements that were bearing them off into darkness and danger; for the night had come on by this time, and the storm was increasing with the pitchy gloom that shrouded their view.

For hours the boat drifted on, and the misfortunes of that period of agony were many and various. No less than five of the oars were broken; one of them was dashed by the wind so violently into Mr. A., the officer's, face that his lip was severely cut, and his front teeth nearly knocked out. They bailed the boat with their hats until the hats were blown away; oil-skins, and, indeed, all the movable gear soon followed the fate of the hats, as the waves swept over them, filling the boat to her thwarts.

The cold was so intense that the crew's hands grew numb. They could hardly handle the few oars there were left, and one of the boys—the youngest of them—fell off his seat exhausted, unable to row any more.

By this time the craft had grown completely beyond control, and was tossed about at the mercy of the wind and waves. All hope seemed gone; the voyagers gave themselves up for lost, and each one felt face to face with an awful death—none of them knowing how soon the summons would come to call them to render in an account of the deeds done in the body. Happy, indeed, are those who have so lived that at such a time, guided by the Spirit's teaching, they can say, "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." "In the midst of life we are in death: of whom may we seek for succour, but of Thee, O Lord?"

At last what seemed the climax of misfortune was reached.

For some time past they had heard the thunder of the waves against the sea wall that bounded that part of the river, and they were aware a new danger was at hand. Should the boat be dashed against this barrier she would inevitably be broken in pieces. But whilst they were

dreading this result, a huge wave drove the boat close to the shore, at the same time throwing all its occupants out into the water. Fortunately they had escaped the wall, and were driven up a small creek.

They could feel the ground under their feet, though the waves still rolled as high as their chests. Helping each other towards land, on they waded, not one of them knowing where they were stranded, or which way to turn in the darkness.

The place they had reached was truly "the dark fens of the dismal swamp,"—for it was Frodsham Marsh—than which a more dreary inhospitable region it would be hard to find anywhere. It is in Cheshire, lies between Ellesmere port and Frodsham, and is about seventeen miles from Rock Ferry. Though some miles in extent, travelling on it is very unsafe by night, in consequence of deep dykes filled with water, which are met with every here and there, lying in all directions, bare and barren, without a friendly hedge or hay-stack, without a tree or wall, from which to seek shelter. There was plainly nothing to be done, but to remain where they were, and to make the best arrangements possible for passing the rest of the night as well as they could.

The officer in charge had recognised the reality at last, and knew its dangers, so he called on his party to halt.

It was indeed a hard matter to keep heat and life in their bodies during that awful night. Fierce gales swept over the waste with violent force; heavy hail-storms beat on the unfortunates, and cut their faces and hands wofully; all the elements seemed risen in war against them, and their poor bruised and beaten frames had well-nigh been overcome in the struggle. With the innate gallantry that ever characterises British sailors, they did their best to secure a resting-place for the girl who was their companion in misfortunes, and they found one of rather a novel character. A large market-basket that had been cast ashore from the boat, served her as a seat, and here, with her feet up to her ankles in water, with her little phalanx of fellow-sufferers around her, she shared with them the horrors of that terrible night.

From the force of contrast, it was a peculiarly trying experience for her. She had left the ship with the anticipation of spending a pleasant evening with her friends in Liverpool, who had invited her there to go with them to some place of entertainment, and who had been anxiously expecting her, and wondering at her non-appearance, little dreaming she was spending the night out in the fury of the storm on Frodsham Marsh.

By-and-by, came the muster and roll-call, then it was found one of the party was missing. He was the youth who had been visiting his brother on board the ship, and who had taken passage in the boat, intending to return to his home in Blackburn that same evening. He was a comparative stranger to the others, a delicate lad, who was but little accustomed to the dangers of the sea, and who had seemed more nervous than any of the others had been, during the time the boat was tossed about helplessly on the river.

They called his name, and shouted to him in the darkness, but the howlings of the storm overpowered their voices, and no reply came back to them. Where could he have wandered off alone? Knowing the perils of the place, his absence added a fresh anxiety to their minds.

At last the day dawned, and a miserable little party the shipwrecked voyagers looked in the pale light of a stormy sunrise. Bruised, drenched, cut, half-frozen, half-starved, they were hardly recognisable as the same people who left the ship the evening before. Some of the boys had fallen into a numb, insensible state that was partly stupor, partly sleep; one of them lay on the ground apparently dying, and all the rest bore evident traces of the horrors through which they had passed. Bitterly cold and hungry as they were, it was soon evident that some assistance must be had speedily, or the results would be fatal. One of the officers set out to try and reach Frodsham village, and on his way he met a man who had come out early on the marshes to shoot birds. He at once gave up his expected sport, directed the officer the nearest way to the village, which proved to be three miles off, and ere long returned with food and assistance. A search was soon made for the poor young lad who had wandered away from the party, and, after awhile, he was discovered about a quarter of a mile away, lying on the sodden ground, and quite dead. Cold and exposure had done their work on his feeble frame, and amidst the war of the tempest,

and the noise of the waves, he had passed beyond the tumult.

The loss of their companion saddened the hearts of the little party; they felt his fate would have been theirs had they not been mercifully sustained through dangers that seemed to them unparalleled. The two officers who had seen much service afloat, who had been in scenes of danger and wreck before, both declared that as a case of protracted misery, they had never met with any catastrophe so trying to human endurance as that boat-wreck on the river Mersey had proved.

At last, with what assistance they could obtain—no conveyance could get near them and the sick lads had to be carried—they made the best of their way to Frodsham village. There they met with kindness and hospitality that was most cheering to them in their forlorn condition.

They were provided with food, lodged at the inn, had clothes lent to them to replace the drenched mud-stained garments they wore. The doctors from the place came to attend to the sick. The curate also and several ladies visited them to minister to their spiritual and bodily needs, so that in the course of a day or two they were all sufficiently recovered to return to the ship. And amongst its annals will long be preserved the history of that terrible night on the river, of the wreck on Frodsham Marshes, and the kind sympathy that awaited the helpless voyagers when they reached the village next morning.

THE GLORIOUS RETURN.

CHAPTER X.



BREAD FOR THE WAYFARERS.

TWO women walking northward through the quiet air of the summer-time, carrying modest bundles on their shoulders, their arms laden with osier-baskets, which they offered in exchange for a bit of bread or a night's lodging—were not travellers likely to awaken remark or

cupidity. Madeleine Botta and her foster-child traversed the Lucerna valley unmolested. The hue and cry after the heretics had died away—perhaps even a reaction had set in, and there might be pity mingled with any suspicions that the Papist peasants entertained as the two passed by.

There was a garrison at the town of Lucerna, and large monasteries established at La Torre and Bobbio. But these places were easily avoided, the travellers entering only the most retired hamlets and hill-side cottages when seeking a market for their wares, and unless in want of food, keeping as far as possible from all human haunts. Though immediate danger seemed afar off, they had suffered too bitterly not to be cautious.

The planning and the caution was mostly left to Madeleine, for *Rénée* still looked round her with indifferent eyes, and seemed too hopeless, too miserable to care whether they ever reached Switzerland or not. She walked by her foster-mother's side, gentle indeed, and sweet and bidable, but unlike the gay girl whom *Gaspard* had wooed before the fury of this last persecution had burst upon Savoy.

One evening, it was the 29th of August, the travellers halted on the slopes of the Giuliano pass. They had come through *Armatier*, and up the banks of the torrent that runs down to *Bobbio* from the mighty glacier-skirts of *Mount Cournan*. They were weary, for the day's march

had been unusually long. They had taken shelter in a cottage—deserted as so many Piedmont cottages were in those sad years—and Madeleine folding her cloak about her lay down to rest.

Rénée stood by the doorway; the broken hinges told their tale of forcible entry; the few rude articles of furniture were broken likewise; the feet of the spoiler had entered here, and that not so very long ago, judging from the splinters of the fir-wood which showed white in the gathering shadow.

The girl's eyes were fixed on the snowy dome of the great



A VISION OF THE MOUNTAINS—"COLD AND CRUEL."

mountain which shone to the northward in a radiance and purity which might almost befit the hills of heaven, round its feet soft mists, as of opal and of pearl, floated in streaming trails and wreaths. And beyond it the clear sky was fair and stainless in its immensity of blue; one glittering point of sharp silver trembled above—the first shy star of the summer night.

"Rénée," Madeleine called to her in tones which were full of love—of yearning love that longed to help her child. "Rénée, of what thinkest thou, now in the evening silence? Of the difficult ways we have trodden? or of those we yet must tread? Shall our prayer to our Father this night begin with thankfulness? or with pleading for yet more of His help? Come here, to me, Rénée, and let me hear thy voice."

The girl turned and came to her side. The listless mood had lifted, and there was a sense of suppressed emotion in her gait, in her voice, and her very hands, as she stretched them out to Madeleine.

"Is there ever an answer, mother?" she said.

"An answer?"

"Aye, to these prayers of ours? And to all the sighs and burden of prayer that has gone up from the Valleys these centuries past! Does He hear us at all, our God? or are the places of His dominion too wide for Him to have thought to spare for the narrow shelters where the Vaudois have tried to hide from the spoiler and oppressor? Look here, mother! see where the head of that mountain lifts itself into the skies; it is the same, always the same, silent and cold and cruel, though our forefathers were hunted across its ridges in the past years, and we are now creeping wearily towards its feet. It cares nothing. It smiles in the sun, or it frowns in the tempest, and heeds not Savoyard, nor

Frenchman, nor Vaudois! Mother, is it not like this Power that we implore?—this Power that is deaf to our cries—in-different, though we His servants are dying here on His earth?"

There was no reply to this outpouring of long up-pent emotion. Madeleine drew the girl's figure close to her side, and laid her forehead against the throbbing breast.

A faint wind sighed amongst the pine boughs, and a far-off rustle and dull roll told of the passage of a distant avalanche. Rénée shivered.

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," repeated Madeleine, the fervent words coming distinct and brave, although her lips were trembling.

"It is through the suffering that we must follow our Lord," she went on, after a long pause. "He refused the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, and chose to wander homeless, and to die in shame. O child, thou hast lost much, and even yet more may be asked of thee—home and dear ones are gone; food, raiment, life itself may be wrenched away—but, Rénée, do not give up thy faith!—thy faith in the rest that remaineth for the Vaudois—thy faith in thy Saviour who loveth even thee and me."

The girl was weeping. Not the burning tears of a passionate despair, but the blessed drops that ease the heart from whence they flow.

Into her soul there came some faint fair imagining of the meaning of it all—this trial, and torture, this desolation and weariness of waiting. Just such a glimpse as had come to Gaspard when he knelt alone on Mount Vadolin came now to her. Life, and the wreck of such riches as life had held for her, was small indeed compared with this higher wealth and wealth—the unsearchable riches of Christ.

And, presently, when the purple shade crept over the gleaming snows of the upper pass, and even the mountain's mighty brow was shadowed—two voices sang the "Chant of Strong Confidence," albeit the notes fell quaveringly, and the words were mingled with the echoes of sobs.

"The earth trembled and was still when God arose

To help the meek upon the earth.

Then the fierceness of man shall be turned to His praise,
And the fierceness of the violent shall be refrained."

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XI.

Who, as a due reward for conflict brave,
His daughter Achsah to her cousin gave?
When Uzzah's sudden death the king dismayed
Who took the ark of God, nor felt afraid
A river-side by which a prophet lay,
Who, once, when persecuted knelt to pray?
The town on which king Ahab set his heart;
(That king in battle played a coward's part)?
Third name among a bold, courageous three
Who dared to disobey a king's decree?
Who all the armies of the Lord defied,
Yet fell before a noble lad, and died?
What prophet bold, threatened by Ahab's wife
Fled to the wilderness to save his life?

What by the band of spies would be required
To search the land as Moses had desired,
To see its produce, whether bad or good,
Cities or tents, or pasture-land or wood?

By these initial letters may you read
What was most wanted in that time of need.

L. T.

Monthly Religious Record.

PROMINENT among the societies which recently held their May meetings, was the British and Foreign Bible Society, which met under the presidency of the Earl of Harrowby. His introductory speech abounded in facts of great interest. He reminded his audience that at the beginning of the century the versions of the Bible were confined to fifty-four languages, whereas now the Bible Society circulates the Scriptures in 287 languages. During the last year translation or revision has been going forward in some seventy or eighty languages, or dialects. Amongst these may be mentioned the Kalmuck New Testament, just finished after every sort of difficulty. Professor Pozdnieff spent a long time on the steppes, and afterwards went to the nomadic camps of the people to read to them what he had written, so as to make quite sure his version was good and sound. As regards the circulation of the Bible in Japan, it last year advanced from 16,000 to 37,000. It should be noted that the complete Bible for Japan was only published a year ago, and that now it profits by the recent proclamation of religious liberty. From Egypt and Arabia come tidings of gradual distribution, showing that the Bible is at length penetrating into the remotest corners of the East. From Constantinople Dr. Thomson writes: "It is my growing conviction that the truth is taking hold of the members of the Greek Church in a manner unprecedented for many centuries." Incidentally, the colporteurs in France, Germany, Italy, Austria, even Moscow, all speak of the increasing poverty of the working people. "It is a sad and melancholy picture, but perhaps a sadder tale is reported from France and Belgium of an increasing decay of faith. It is impossible not to be startled by the news that reaches us of the abandonment of old faiths and of the growth of materialistic and atheistic views in every country in Europe, but especially in the two that I have mentioned. Yet many of the reports of the colporteurs are full of encouragement." In Austria, and Hungary, and in Italy, the Bible is exercising a new attraction, while in South Russia the movement is still more encouraging. If it be asked what is the effect of this world-wide distribution, many instances attest the living power of the Word. The stray copies purchased have often proved the instrument of wonderful changes. Many a poor man has found a mine of wealth in his home. The Rev. W. M. Paull read the annual statement. The Society's statistics do not present so favourable an aspect as in recent years. This is chiefly owing to the exceptional figures of 1888, when both the pecuniary receipts and the issues were the largest ever reported. The total receipts amount to 212,655*l.* 15*s.* 7*d.* The expenditure has been 226,164*l.*, an increase over 1888 of 1,441*l.*, and 13,508*l.* in excess of the receipts. The meeting was subsequently addressed by Sir Richard Temple, G.C.S.L., the Rev. T. Macgowan, of Amoy, Archdeacon Scott, the Rev. T. Jameson, of Spain, and the Rev. E. R. Young, of Canada.

THE ninetieth annual meeting of the Religious Tract Society was presided over by Mr. George Williams, in the absence of the Bishop of Bedford, who was prevented by illness from taking the chair, as had been announced. From the report, which was read by the Rev. Dr. White, it appeared that there had been issued during the year 905 new publications, of which 172 were tracts. The Society has already published in 196 languages, dialects, and characters. The total circulation from the home depôt, including books, tracts, periodicals, counted in numbers, cards, and miscellaneous issues, had reached 62,696,190, of which 25,840,900 were tracts. This circulation is in itself a testimony to the value of tract distribution as an evangelising agency. The issues from foreign depôts may be stated at 15,000,000, making a total of 77,696,190. The total amount received from sales, missionary receipts, and all other sources, had been 201,881*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*; the total expenditure, 199,931*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.*, leaving a balance in favour of the Society of 1,950*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.* The total amount received from subscriptions and other contributions is 27,631*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.*,

the whole of this sum being available for the missionary objects of the Society. The missionary expenditure had amounted to 44,486*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*, showing an excess over the missionary receipts of 16,855*l.*, the deficiency being met from the trade funds, which have also borne all the cost of management. Among the works published or in progress, altogether or in part, at the cost of the Society during the year, having a missionary interest, have been a Bible Dictionary for Spain, a Hymn Book for Portugal, a Church History for Bohemia, a Book of Prayers and Meditations for Hungary, a Commentary for Bulgaria, "Bible Stories" and "Come to Jesus" for Poland, a Church History for Samoa, a Hymn Book for Bechuanaland, the "Pilgrim's Progress" for East Africa and for the Chinese of Swatow, a Hymn Book for Foochow, "More about Jesus" for the Congo, a Concordance for the Loyalty Islands, and an original tract by John Williams, the martyr of Erromanga, for the Hervey Group, Polynesia. Reviewing the history of the Society during the past year, the ninetieth of its existence, Dr. White continued: "Certainly, the need for such an agency was never so great. The influence of the press continues daily to grow—as education spreads through the world—as the number of readers increase—as means and inventions for increased production of popular literature multiply. Infidel tracts, agnostic magazine articles, penny dreadfuls, sensational novelettes, low-class papers and periodicals abound at home and abroad, and the increasing host of readers find everywhere to hand literary food provided for them—often directly poisonous and deleterious, often of a kind to take away the appetite for more wholesome and solid nourishment. The cause of the world, the flesh, and the devil finds ample support in the use made of the press by the adversaries of Christ's Gospel. The barriers which the natural heart of man, in any case, oppose to the entrance of the truth, are thickened and strengthened by it. All the more need, then, for the spread, through the press, of that simple Gospel message, which, by the power of the Divine Spirit, is able to pierce even the strongest barriers and to penetrate the hardest heart, and of all literature which helps to the right understanding of God's Word, and to the defence of the Faith. All the more need for a literature which shall be subsidiary to that which is directly evangelistic and religious; permeated by Christian principle; always on the side of pure morals; always, whether in prose or poetry, whether treating of science or history, whether dealing with fact or fiction, with study or with sport, holding up for commendation all that is high and noble and pure in human conduct, and discouraging all that is false and low and mean—not obtrusively religious, but using all its influence on the side of Christ; lively and interesting, and yet not sensational in any bad sense of the word; truth teaching, but not dull; elevating, but yet attractive." The speakers of the evening were the Rev. F. B. Meyer, Mr. Sidney Gedge, M.P., and the Rev. W. Evans Hurndall.

THE London City Mission has now nearly five hundred missionaries engaged in its work. House to house visitation is steadily maintained. Its total receipts last year were 56,724*l.* Among the speakers at the annual meeting was the Rev. Peter Thompson, of the East London Wesleyan Mission, who said that through the help of friends he had himself converted two of the most notorious public-houses into centres of mission work. He had not changed their names, and they were still known as "Paddy's Goose" and the "Old Mahogany Bar;" but the work there carried on was very different to that which previously characterised them. Speaking personally of the results he had witnessed from the labours of the missionaries, he said that he knew of many instances of some of the worst characters having been brought to lead a new life. Mr. Barnett, a missionary to common lodging-houses in Westminster, said that within the compass of his own district there were no fewer than forty-seven such houses, and that they were frequented by very nearly 4000 men, women, and children. The number

of the lodging-houses and the population which frequented them were increasing on every hand throughout the metropolis. He spoke of the character of the class who went to the lodging-houses, and said from his own experience that they came from all classes, for he had met barristers, ministers and doctors. No doubt there was a considerable number of criminals in London, but the class was not so large as many persons imagined.

THE Salvation Army mustered in full force, and with great enthusiasm, on the occasion of its annual meeting in Exeter Hall. General Booth, who spoke on the Future of Missions, said his own idea was that the Christian Church should resolve itself into one vast missionary society, and divide the nations into two distinct classes, the friends and the enemies of Jesus Christ; and in doing so they would be acting on strictly Scriptural lines, and be in touch with the teaching of Jesus Christ. And when this mighty missionary society had been formed and the division effected, they must set upon the devil with fury until he was vanquished, and all the human family were ready for heaven. At present, although converts were so few, people were found who were satisfied with what had been done. They said that the heathen had been civilised, that the Scriptures had been circulated, that the distribution of tracts was enormous, and that the great and glorious work of missions was going on, and that the various organisations could rightfully claim confidence and support. They pointed to the results; but he would raise yet another query—Were they in proportion to the vastness of the machinery employed? and it was with pain and sorrow that he emphatically said they were not. What he said in condemnation of other institutions he applied to their own, for although the Army had sent out during last year 150 missionaries, nearly as many as all the other societies put together, yet that was but little. There were 80,000 soldiers of the Queen in India, why should not there be 80,000 soldiers of the Cross there also? Climatic and economical difficulties barred their way, and so they must raise up native officers. In Holland, where the Army went only two years ago, now, without any very great effort, or the expenditure of 20L., there were no less than seventy officers, sixty of whom had been raised up from among the Dutch, while there were independent societies in twenty-two different towns. The missions of the future must be self-supporting. At the present time they had 250 officers supported in India by natives. In Great Britain during last year there were 1276 corps, or an increase of 169, whilst the increase of officers amounted to 1268. The Army was doubling its forces every third year. It was also stated that 1039 persons had come forward recently as candidates for missionary work.

THE Navy Mission Society finds from time to time new spheres of action. Thus the Manchester Ship Canal is reviving the memory of the old railroad days, when large bodies of men wrought together in preparing the England we now know. Notwithstanding the increased use of machinery, and the improvements introduced by inventions, it is estimated that there are still 90,000 navvies scattered through the country. The Society, which for the last twelve years has made the spiritual welfare of these men its special work, has done much to raise the tone of the whole class, while not a few men living in darkness have been brought by its aid to know and love God. It supplies missionaries, Sunday and day schools, night schools also, and ambulance classes; and it sends libraries to all settlements. Help nevertheless is much needed. Its temperance work, for example, just now is crippled by the want of funds to provide coffee stands on large works. The excellent "Quarterly Letter to Navvies" is supplemented by details of fact—and by lists of marriages and deaths, and the names of those injured by accident—which are not only of interest to all navvies, but show how real is the sympathy which the mission embodies. According to a recent statement, the Navy Mission employs twenty-six missionaries, an itinerating missionary, and a clerical secretary. It supports thirty mission rooms, circulates twenty-five libraries, lends Bibles to the huts, gives the Scriptures, or induces the men to buy them; provides at Christmas much needed gifts of warm clothes, through the kindness of its lady friends; circulates on an average 88,000 Quarterly Letters, and an untold number of tracts each year; looks after the sick, and ministers to the dying. All this it does with an income of 2409L. which is met by about

1400L., raised and expended locally where works are in progress.

THE disarmament of Europe would be a gain to the world as great as the destruction of slavery. The horrors of war are a commonplace of speech; yet the colossal mischiefs of an armed peace such as the continent now endures are scarcely less fatal. If the nations will not lay aside their jealousies, can no concert of statesmen devise such a simultaneous movement as shall at least reduce the existing armies? The question has been several times mooted, and allowed to lapse. Once again it has been raised, and this time a provisional committee has been formed to attempt to strengthen opinion in this direction. At a private meeting held in Canon Westcott's house, a resolution was adopted calling the attention of all Christian communions to the subject, with a view, first, to united prayer to Almighty God, and then to "combined action, in any ways possible, for the bringing about a simultaneous reduction of the armaments." In a letter since published, Canon Westcott explains their aim. "The proposal to work for the simultaneous reduction of European armaments is definite," he says, "and deals with an urgent peril. It does not involve any abstract theories. It is not complicated by any considerations of party politics. It emphatically recognises that which is the object of our greatest statesmen. Such a disarmament would secure the lasting and honourable peace which leaders of Europe have shown lately, once and again, that they sincerely desire. And we may reasonably hope that a strong expression of popular feeling will be welcome to those who have the conduct of affairs, as strengthening and encouraging them to adopt measures by which they may be delivered from the embarrassment of a policy which more and more tends to turn the provision for home defence into a menace. We are all sensible of the difficulties by which the question of disarmament is beset, but we cannot admit that they are insuperable. If once we realise that the true interests of nations are identical, and not antagonistic, it must be possible to find some settlement of the existing causes of debate upon the Continent which will satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the great and generous nations in whose satisfaction Europe will find peace."

A CORRESPONDENT who has been staying at St. Moritz in the Upper Engadine, writes protesting against the growing laxity in the observance of the Sunday by English visitors: "Amongst the amusements indulged in by some of them were billiards, tennis, card-playing (for money), skating, tobogganing, chess-playing, &c. Sometimes the workmen were called out to clear the ice-rink on Sunday mornings. This is only one of the resorts where such things are regularly occurring." They are symptomatic of a changing practice. "Surely it is high time for Christian England to wake up, if she intends to hold fast to her Sundays, or else, before we are aware of it we shall drift into the continental Sabbath, with its horse-racing, theatre-going and other adjuncts." On the other hand, it is noticeable that at the general assembly of shareholders of the Northern of France Railway, held in Paris, a shareholder called attention to the necessity of ensuring a Sunday rest to the company's servants. Baron Alphonse de Rothschild replied that the question had been under the consideration of the board, and that the six days' system had been extended as far as practicable at present, and the company would endeavour to extend it still further. In the same association we note also that another shareholder complained that immoral books were allowed to be sold at the railway bookstalls; and that this was a distinct abuse of the monopoly which had been granted to a firm. The chairman agreed as to the existence of the evil, and promised that the board would meet the wishes of the meeting by henceforth exercising their right of censorship over the bookstalls.

At the Catholic Congress which met at Vienna, the social section discussed the question of rest on Sundays and holidays, and after some discussion adopted a resolution in favour of more vigorous adherence to the prohibition against Sunday trading, to extend the prohibition to Christian holidays, and to extend the benefit of Sunday and holiday rest as widely as possible, especially among officials. It was noticeable how many topics debated at Vienna corresponded with themes which have occupied our own church congresses.