THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

IN A COTTAGE GARDEN.

"A lovely nook in sultry hours,
Where year by year the same old flowers
Are known to friend and neighbour."

No. 1836.—JULY 6, 1889.

In a Cottage Garden.

A LOVELY nook in sultry hours,
Where year by year the same old flowers
Are known to friend and neighbour;
Where lingers long the southern breeze
Among the gnarled and ancient trees,
And the continual hum of bees
Gives drowsy thoughts of rest and ease
To spirits spent with labour.

The monthly rose beside the door
Sheds wandering petals on the floor,
And in the sunlight shining,
With many a dainty curl and ring
The sweet-pea tendrils climb and cling,
And woodbine clusters come to bring
The tale of summer after spring
Around the casements twining.

Above this gate the lilacs spread,
And the laburnum overhead
Its hidden gold discloses;
All day its wavering shadows stray
Where crimson daisies edge the way,
And children, rosy-flushed as they,
Bare-headed round the borders play
Or hide among the roses.

Sweet be the lives such flowers surround;
From snares that in the world abound,
From bonds that fret and harden.
Safe-sheltered all their days below,
Love's blessed sunshine may they know,
Till gift and grace within them grow
As gladsomely as flowers that blow
Within their cottage garden!

MARY ROWLES JARVIS.

OF ALL DEGREES.

BY LESLIE KEITH, AUTHOR OF "THE CHILCOTES," ETC.

CHAPTER XI.—CHARLIE MOUNTS HIS PEDESTAL.

"I DON'T want to disturb the festivities, so if there's anything in the nature of a 'swarry' coming off ——"

"The 'swarry,' you disrespectful boy, isn't till to-morrow night. And, oh, Charlie, as if to see you would disturb us at any time!"

This from Allie who was devouring him with eyes of affectionate delight. To have Charlie back once more—their own Charlie with something of his old lordly air, his "head of the family manner," as Janey christened it, his smile and his jest—was not that happiness enough for the two women who both loved him—the one with something of a maternal love, the other as a young brother and comrade, a playmate of childish years?

"Tell us all about yourself," they both cried, "oh, never mind us, we are very comfortable, as you can see ——"

"You do look pretty snug, I shouldn't have thought there was anything so decent in this quarter."

"You should have seen the room in the reign of Mrs. Jones's antimacassars," said Janey, "then we might hope to have some credit in your eyes for our ingenuity."

"Oh, Janey, we can tell him that after," said Alice, with a very rare touch of impatience, "that will keep very well. What does it matter about us? It is you we want to hear about, dear boy. Do you know you have not written to us, not once?" There was loving reproach in the tone.

"I know," said Charlie penitently. "I was awfully down, and I didn't know what to turn to. You see, when you've been brought up to expectations, it's hard on you."

He pulled up suddenly, warned, perhaps, by a look in Janey's dark eyes. What right had he, after all, to harbour those expectations? He had inherited nothing from his father but his sword, and as for his grandfather, there was Allie who had a nearer claim. But the trifling fact that we have no right to most of our hopes and pretensions does not hinder us from entertaining them.

"I couldn't make up my mind what I was good for," he went on more lightly. "It's easy to tell a fellow he must work, but if he can't do anything decently, except sit astride a horse and play a tolerable game at billiards—what's he to do? I hadn't any marketable accomplishments," he went on with a laugh, "and when I'd exhausted the proceeds that my possessions fetched down there, I saw nothing for it but to test the cooking and sleeping accommodation of the various casuals. If you can take kindly enough to skilly, you needn't starve, you know."

"Oh, Charlie, did you part with your things—

your beautiful uniform?" Janey's voice was tragic.

"Every Babylonish garment of them, my dear."

"And Selim?"

"Vivian bought Selim"—Charlie's tone showed that he sought to hide some stirred feeling. "Beggars don't ride on horseback nowadays."

"Tell us your good news, dear," said Allie, leading him gently away from this painful topic. "You have something nice to tell us, haven't you?"

"I don't know about 'nice'" he said dubiously, "You mean such a lot of things by that word, you women."

"Snub us, Charlie, but go on," cried Janey.

"I've got some work to do, you would call that nice, I suppose? Anyhow the unemployed make it horribly nasty for everybody all round when they haven't. I can't join their chorus now. Behold me—Charles Dalrymple Lindsell, Esq.—or is a bank clerk only mister?"

"A bank clerk!" they both cried simultaneously. Then Janey's sharper wits jumped at the right conclusion.

"It is Mr. Vivian's bank," she said, "and you have got the post through your friendship with Lieutenant Vivian."

"Even so—a good hit, Janey. Jim is a very good fellow, and I'm not ashamed to take a favour from him, though I don't think I could have taken it from the old boss. But when Jim came and asked me to think of it as if—as if—I were conferring a favour on the firm by consenting——" he broke off with an embarrassed laugh—"Jim is a good fellow," he ended.

Vivian's delicacy had touched him, as it touched them all.

"One would think he knew what it was to be a 'decayed gentleman' himself," said Janey smiling, and indeed it is not given to every one to understand and make just allowance for the extreme susceptibility that so often makes part of the worst pain of changed fortunes. "It is a great thing to get into Vivian's bank, isn't it? They say if once you get in there you are safe to rise and to be pensioned off by-and-by."

"Yes, and I suppose I'll get used to it—in time. It's immensely confiding in them to take me; Jim worked that; for there couldn't be a worse hand at figures than I am, and I suppose it will be all figures. You know, Allie, I was always a hopeless subject over arithmetic."

"But you will learn, dear boy. Remember how well you passed your army examinations. You are clever enough to learn anything," she said, with pride. "And—and you will like it?"

Her voice was very wistful and full of love. At least it was better than they might have expected, since their first fond dreams were shattered, but for all that it would be a changed life, and a hard life. From the large freedom of the army where enjoyment had been Charlie's chief consideration, to the confinement of a desk—to long hours of uncongenial work—she could foresee what a strain it would impose on nerves and temper. There were many things that he would miss and would find it hard to do without: liberty, ease, gay companionship, social excitements—was he brave and strong enough to renounce all these?

If Charlie had answered her question at once he would have said, "I shall hate and loathe it, and rebel against it every day I live;" but he was learning in some small degree to check the outrush of impulsive speech. To look at Allie's sweet patient face, to see her set in this changed world, bereft of the home she had sanctified with the tenderest and simplest pieties—cast among the struggling and toiling, she whose spring days, the days of energy and hope were over; and to see too, how she bore fortune's buffets, not with resignation only but cheerfulness and glad recognition of the good that was still left,—was surely a rebuke to young rebellion.

"I will do my best," said Charlie simply, and then he added, "They're going to give me a good screw—100*l.* a year. I'll be able to save on that, Allie, and you must draw on me, both of you."

He spoke as if 100*l.* were a vast fortune that would never come to an end—he who had spent more than twice that sum every year on his pleasures and thought himself rather hardly used not to have had double the amount in his power. But then, the 100*l.* was to be worked for and, young people, let it be whispered in your ear, there's a vast difference between the income that you earn and that which has been earned for you. The one goes twice as far in the spending and is twice as sweet in the receiving as the other.

"I've brought you a cheque," Charlie went on with a resumption of his boyish airs of authority, "I'm a banker now, you know. I insist on your taking it, Allie. I can afford it perfectly well; I'm in funds just now; Jim gave me a long price for poor old Selim."

It was in vain for Allie to protest that she could not take it—to entreat that he would keep it. He would listen to no denial.

"You can spend it on tea-drinkings, or on any rubbish you choose, but as for your working for your bread, Allie, it is not to be thought of; I won't allow it. What do you suppose they would think of it in Barford, your teaching sewing-classes and hemming other people's frills and flounces—or the Vivians—if it came to their ears, it might hurt my prospects in the bank." He spoke as if he were at least cashier already and likely to be promoted to a managership next week. "No, Allie, you must give it up and stay at home. As for you, Janey, I don't say you mayn't do a little teaching just to keep you out of mischief."

"Thank you for the permission," there was fun in Janey's dark eyes. "I'm glad you don't forbid it, Charlie, because I'm afraid I should have been reluctantly compelled to disobey your lordship. But as for Allie, you are quite right, Allie is meant to sit at home and make it look beautiful."

Was it any wonder that Allie's gentle heart was touched and grateful? that she was proud of her boy and thought him the bravest and most generous of men?

Charlie was very well pleased with himself too. He felt that he had been generous, and the knowledge made a glow at his heart, and really

he had behaved pretty well and like a gentleman, for it was not every fellow who could descend from the service of queen and country to "the peddling life of a clerk" and make so little ado about it.

He forgot the days of rebellion and bitter disgust, when he had grieved Allie by his silence and by his blunt rejection of her sympathy. He said nothing of the history of those days, of the anger that had crept into his thoughts of his grandfather, of the unrebuked discontent that had possessed his soul. He was perhaps a little ashamed now of the schemes and visions that had filled his mind; he was not brave then; he had been tempted, in his own phrase, to "chuck the whole thing up," to go and hide himself somewhere where he might claim a life of larger license, where no one knew him or his story. All this was changed now; and in the glow of Allie's admiration and his own content with himself, he remembered it only to be half ashamed, half amused over it. He was even prompted to make confession.

"If this piece of luck hadn't turned up," he said, "I might have been far enough away from you two by now. I had a notion of going back to Norway—you can live there like a prince on twopence a day, it's an Elysium for paupers."

"To Norway—to our cousins there?"

Allie spoke with some constraint. She had heard of the young cousin Astrid with that mingled feeling of doubt and jealousy that even the best of women may entertain when there is a hint of a possible rival. If Charlie came to care for this stranger—if he were to be taken from her by another woman—even Allie could not face the possibility with equanimity.

"Astrid is a very jolly girl, and awfully in earnest about everything. She's like you in that way, Allie; Vivian and she were great friends, and Jim never went in for frivolous or fast girls. I dare say Astrid wouldn't have turned me out, and the old man might have found me something to do—but all that's at an end, you know."

"Yes, it is all at an end"—his tone had been comfortingly disarming.

"You won't leave us; you will stay here?"

"I'm a clerk in Vivian's bank," he said with a laugh. "Even the magnificent salary of one hundred pounds a year won't stand trips to Norway. We must get Astrid over here instead."

The one drawback to the pleasantness of fortune's favours was that Charlie was not to live with Alice and Janey. He had already arranged to share lodgings with a fellow clerk, pointing out to them that this method of chumming was extremely economical and advantageous.

Somehow or other, by a curious logical process all his own, he proved that when two men dined together they only paid for one.

"Then it must be one with a Gargantuan appetite," said Janey with a laugh; but they did not try to persuade him.

"Of course, it wouldn't do for him to live here," they told each other. "Think of him having that poor old professor for a neighbour, or Mr. Augustus for a friend? It was all very well for two solitary women who had nothing to lose and might choose their acquaintances as they would—but not for Charlie. Of course, it wouldn't do. Mr. Vivian expected his clerks to live like gentlemen, and how could Charlie answer invitations to Grosvenor Square dating from Mrs. Jones's lodgings?"

But though these reasons were unanswerable and sound as reasons could be, each felt in her heart that it would have been good to have him there, to hear his foot on the stair in the morning, his blithe laugh, his jest—to spoil him with their kindness, to toil and slave and live for him. And instead they had to be content with an evening visit when he could spare an hour to give them.

"I'll look you up often," he said, as he rose to go, "it's only a penny on the top of the 'bus—no more hansoms for this young man. Let me know when the 'swarry' is coming off and I'll turn up in my best go-to-meeting clothes."

He went away gaily, and if he could have heard the praises that followed him his heart would have been more uplifted still. Perhaps he knew what thoughts and words of love were busy about his name as he sped along the lighted streets holding his head high, fronting fortune with a bold face. Perhaps he knew of the silent prayers that besieged Heaven for him; and if he did, was he the worse or the better for the knowledge?

The praise did not hurt him, few of us are stoic enough so be able to dispense with the sweet flattery of family pride in our achievements. We should never be afraid of giving honest praise—too many lives are starved for lack of its stimulus. To know that our little efforts are not passed by unregarded, that our feeble strivings and gropings towards the right have been lovingly recognised—is not this help towards new victory?

The upward way is rugged travelling for the best and the bravest. Let it be ours to deny our fellow climber no word of cheer that can help him on his way.

Charlie had left other matter for talk behind him besides that fertile subject of his virtues. He brought news of Honoria Vivian's approaching engagement, and told how upon the very night when Lord Reigate's formal proposals were to have been made and the matter finally settled, Mrs. Vivian was suddenly seized with a severe attack of illness.

"They say she is in a very critical state. Vivian came up to town yesterday."

"And Miss Vivian is really going to accept Lord Reigate," cried Janey, to whom this item of news was far more important than the other. "Allie, for once, you are wrong."

"She hasn't accepted him yet, Janey; perhaps she may change her mind. I hope the poor lady, her mother, will recover."

CHAPTER XII.—"SOCIETY."

JANIE'S tea-party was a success, possibly because tea-parties in that neighbourhood were somewhat rare events, and had not as yet got staled for anybody by too great frequence.

Everybody came except the professor who met Janie's proposal with a distinct refusal.

She brought back her confession of failure, "but," she added, "I'll win him round yet. Meanwhile, suppose you try, Alice?"

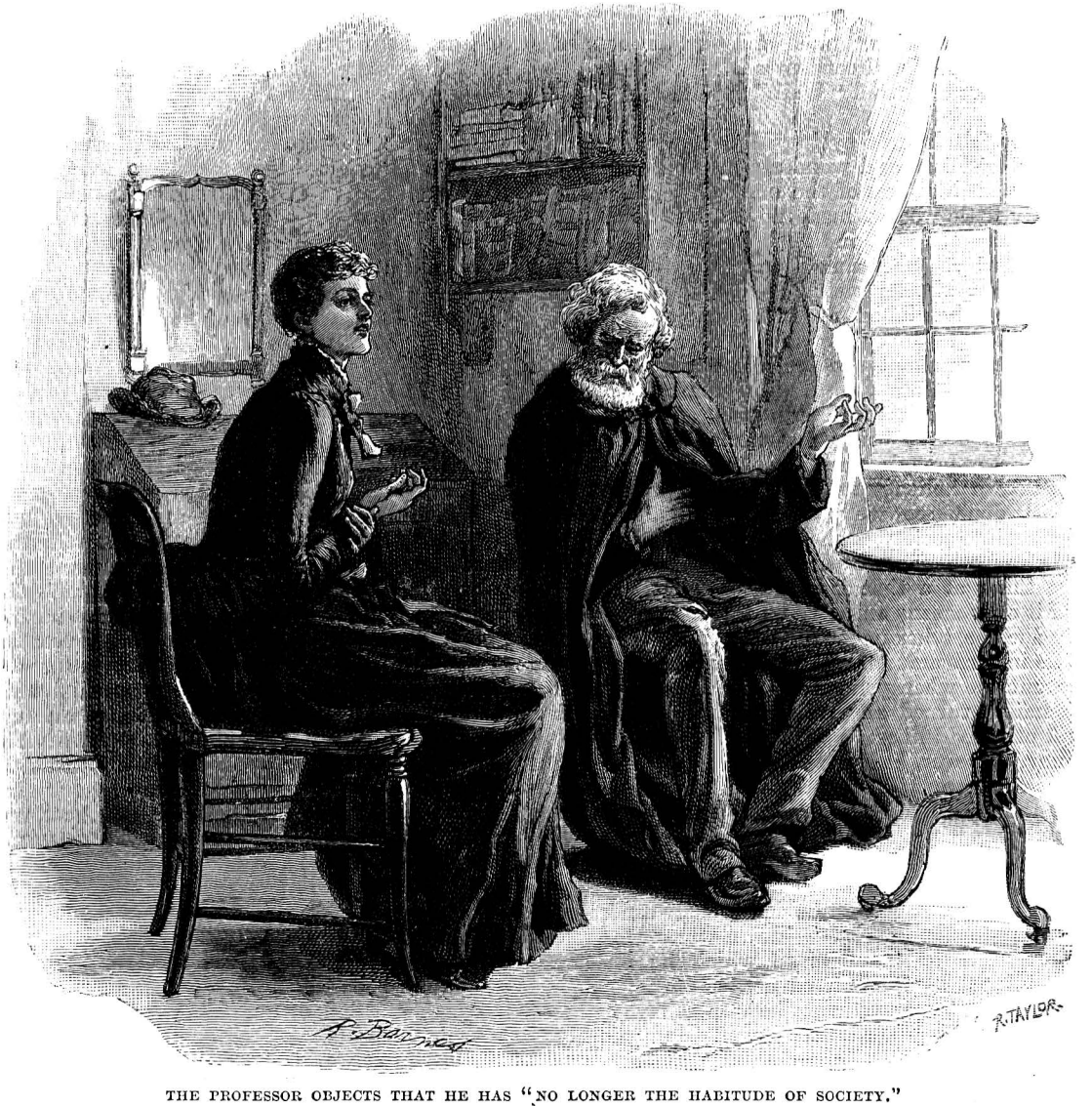
But Alice did not try. Her finer instinct divined the true reason of his refusal. To have known poverty teaches one so many secrets.

"Let us wait a little," she said, "it is best to go slowly."

"If we might only send him some tea," said Janey, "but I suppose his pride would rebel at that too. Oh, dear, what a thing it is to have such an unnecessary stock of self-respect."

Alice only smiled at this, for there was no one better furnished with that "chiefest bridle of all the vices," than Janey herself. She ought to have had more sympathy with the professor than she allowed herself to show, for the same spirit of prickly independence governed both. To take is for some natures a much more difficult virtue than to give.

The old foreigner answered Janey's knock with alacrity, and he ushered her into the poor room with the air of a courtier. Under his apparent sternness there lay a wonderful suavity. The shabby cloak, instead of concealing the absence of a shirt, seemed to be but a disguise covering hidden splendours. To Janey's young and nimble imagination it seemed as if the poverty-stricken room would, as in a fairy transformation scene, suddenly vanish and give place to a palace.



THE PROFESSOR OBJECTS THAT HE HAS "NO LONGER THE HABITUDE OF SOCIETY."

This lofty politeness was natural to him, though stress of circumstance had possibly accentuated it, lending it, as it were, a new need to manifest itself. It was the sole remnant of a former greatness in which it was impossible not to believe, in spite of the broken furniture and the sad straitness of which his surroundings spoke.

Janey understood now the unwilling awe which underlay Mrs. Jones's assumed contempt of her lodger, and indeed she found herself

tongue-tied and faltering when she came to invite this prince to tea and muffins.

He listened with a respect that made the rickety chair she sat on take the semblance of a throne.

"Mademoiselle is very good," he said, "I am very sensible of her graciousness, but she must excuse me, I have no longer the habitude of society."

"It is only Miss Lemming," faltered Janey. The little dressmaker's claims to being "society" had never seemed so small in her eyes. "We are not near good enough for him, oh, not near grand enough," she said half petulantly to Alice, "we must have our silver plate and our butler, and then perhaps he will condescend."

But Alice only said "Wait."

Janey felt herself eyeing Miss Lemming with a new criticism, and wondering how she would impress his highness of the one pair back. The homely little woman made no attempt to appear other than she was, and thus escaped the charge of vulgarity. She came leaning on the arm of her lodger, Mr. Augustus Steel, and carrying a cap carefully pinned up in tissue paper which she retired to Janey's room to put on. This air of smartness about the head lost a little of its force by the fact that Miss Lemming's bodice was negligently stabbed with pins.

"No, I didn't bring any work," she said, in answer to Janey's question. "I don't go out nor take a holiday not once in a twelvemonth, and I don't see why, when I've a chance of getting into society, I should spoil the treat for myself or other folk by dragging business into it. One thing at a time is my motty, Miss Warner, and it only means an extry half hour to-morry."

"She, too, takes us for society," thought Janey, with inward amusement, though perhaps it was accountable when you came to consider that Miss Lemming turned all her final o's into y's, and took other odd liberties with the English tongue. Janey, however, had the grace to feel very well disposed towards her guest as she ushered her into the room where Mr. Augustus was solemnly conversing with Alice.

Mr. Augustus was a clerk who had grown old in the service of his city firm, and had doubtless turned grey too, though he dexterously concealed this circumstance with a brown wig. He, too, had a code of manners to which he strictly adhered, priding himself on a species of ponderous gallantry towards what he would have called "the fair sex." He rose and bowed ceremoniously to Janie and to Miss Lemming, as if she had not tripped to the house on his arm, while he carried the cap now freed from its wrappings and seated jauntily on its owner's grey curls.

"We were conversing," he said, politely including the newcomers in his remarks, "on the attitude of the poor towards the rich."

"That is a big subject," said Janie, a little taken aback to be swept in a breath, as it were, into this exalted air. She glanced at Alice, whose face was moved and troubled.

"Mr. Augustus," said Alice, in answer to the look (everybody called him Mr. Augustus), "has been telling me some things about our neighbours, Janie."

"Merely a few trifling facts," said the gentleman, waving them aside with his hand, as if they were not worth further consideration. "A few facts that happened to come under my observation, as illustrating the rooted prejudice, the very unreasonable prejudice, I may say, of the working classes against the rich. It is our inherited and unworked for superiority that they resent."

It sounded a little as if Mr. Augustus made up these transcendent sentences at home and learned them off by heart for use on the first appropriate occasion, but they came, by-and-by, to know that it was the natural speech of the man. They learned quickly too, that it was a little foible of his to speak of himself always as, to use a modern distinction, belonging to the classes as opposed to the masses. It was a longer time, though not so much longer, before they found out with what a true, unobtrusive and Christian benevolence he shared an income, by no means elastic, with these poorer brethren of his, whom he might repudiate in word but never in deed.

So many tender and beautiful secrets are often sheathed behind a trick of manner—a mode of utterance—that we, in our hasty generalisations of each other, are apt to overlook.

The last to arrive was Mary Grainger, the young governess whose acquaintance Janie had newly made. She was only about twenty-four, but she looked much older, with a stoop in the shoulders and a hollowness in the cheeks that ought to have been round and plump, and a brightness in the great grey eyes that told their own story of overwork and underfeeding.

Here then were the elements of Janie's first tea-party, curiously mixed, and yet having one uniting bond in that they were all toilers and spinners for daily bread, even Mr. Augustus, behind that air of landed proprietorship which he wore, working with a rare fidelity and conscientiousness for his firm, and sometimes taking home extra clerking work to add by it to that little hoard which he distributed so generously.

It was he who mainly held the talk back from drifting into a too sombre key. To those who are in the thick of the battle, and to whom the prayer "Give us this day our daily bread" is something more than a mere form of words, it is the sterner realities of life that have the chief significance, and the art, the literature, and that worship of beautiful objects which some hold to be the main end of our being, have little part in their thoughts.

The winter was fast treading on the heels of autumn—the winter which has so many synonyms for the poor—not merrymaking, feasting, skating, but deprivation, care, want, starvation. To live, if only on the fringe of poverty, and to be poor one's self, is to have a new sense given to one.

No living in the west and taking exploring dips into less favoured regions will bestow it; one gains a surface impression—often a false one—but one misses the vital signs. These do not come to the top for every careless glance; any more than do the thousand solitary resignations and unrecorded heroisms that are woven into poverty's garment. Alice with her tender heart had pondered these things, and she found in Mr. Augustus

THE END OF A DREAM.

"There are dreams that earth cannot destroy,
Great dreams that are one with life's infinite joy."

a surprising mine of information—a treasure-house of statistics.

Nevertheless, it was well for them all that Mr. Augustus was a gentleman of varied tastes and a conscientious enlightenment, and that he could talk, after a ponderously light fashion, of topics of more general interest than, alas! this social problem is ever like to be. It did them all good to hear of a new book, or a picture, of which everybody was babbling, even though Mr. Augustus spoke like a pedant. As for Mary Grainger, she ate nothing, but she took a languid, half-wondering interest in the talk; they saw that she was very tired, and with the truest tact they let her alone. Janey slipped a cushion behind her chair and they let her rest, her eyes following each speaker in turn; it was such a great thing for the weary body and mind to rest, just to be still. To the over-wrought governess to rest by the fire, to do nothing, scarcely even to listen, just to be still and look into the kind faces about her was royal entertainment.

But, in spite of Mr. Augustus's efforts, the talk ebbed sometimes and came back to the world around them, nearer than Mudie's pages, nearer than Bond Street galleries. On one of these occasions, Miss Lemming added a fragment of history to the general store—the history of a child who had been found starving not a hundred yards from where they sat.

"Who found it?" asked Janie when the recital to which Miss Lemming's unstudied language gave an additional pathos was over.

Miss Lemming smiled, and the smile made her ugly, shrewd little face very pleasant to see.

"Ask Mr. Augustus," she said.

"I merely happened to be passing," said Mr. Augustus, as if his chancing to be in that quarter at all was the rarest accident, "and I, in fact, I heard a cry. I have, I may say, had few opportunities of studying humanity in its earliest stages; I may even have the prejudice of ignorance, but a helpless being has claims on even the most hardened."

"Yes!" cried Miss Lemming, who had an enormous respect and esteem for her lodger, and would not have interrupted his stately flow had she been able to keep her admiration within bounds, "and speaks of himself as a criminal, him that carried the little thing home wrapped in his own coat, and fed it hisself, and gave up his own bed to it, and couldn't have done it tenderer if he had been the father of twenty!"

Mr. Augustus looked for the moment quite sharply annoyed. His placid brow wrinkled and his cheek flushed.

"You exaggerate, my dear madam, you exaggerate strangely," he said; "common humanity, the merest decency demanded that the infant should be rescued from the perils of its position."

"Yes, yes!" cried Miss Lemming, not to be restrained since she had once broken bounds, "and who sent me out to borroy clothes for it, and went next day hisself for the best that money could buy?"

Nobody offering to solve this easy conundrum, Janey asked softly:

"Were the parents never found?"

"The parents were found," said Mr. Augustus, as if glad to get back to the level of ordinary people, and to descend from the pedestal where his enthusiastic friend had mounted him. "There were mitigating circumstances, doubtless, which may in part excuse, though they cannot justify their unnatural conduct, but they were very reprehensible people, very reprehensible, they refused to go into the house."

"And who kept them out of it?" cried Miss Lemming, with another of those bomb-like questions flung into the midst of the company. "And who found a home for that same blessed child as they weren't worthy to own, and pays for it every Saturday at three punctual to this very day?"

There was again a silence, and when Janey looked up she saw the helpless tears falling over Mary Grainger's cheeks.

The End of a Dream.

A BUDDING of blossoms,
a rustle of wings,
An exquisite sense of
invisible things,
A light in the heart like
the light of a star,
A beautiful mist that veils
sorrows that are,
A beautiful halo round fair
things that seem
So much more than
a dream!

A falling of leaves and a silence like frost,
And empty regret for the loved and the lost;
A darkness too potent for stars to shine through
When the thing that is base seems the thing
that is true,
When in dulness and darkness no glimmer or
gleam
Recalls our dead dream.

Then a light that is purer than stars or than
moon,
More tender than twilight, more radiant than
noon,
When we know there are dreams that earth
cannot destroy,
Great dreams that are one with life's infinite joy,
On which the new sunrise will shed its first beam
And transfigure our dream.

E. NESBIT.

Tommy Atkins at Home

TOMMY ATKINS, who may he be?

I am sure he can be nothing less than a deep and perplexing mystery to most people, unless they happen to meet with him in some book, whose contents throw some light upon the darkness which enshrouds him. Let me explain.

"Tommy Atkins" is a symbolic expression, denoting the rank and file of the British Army, and the derivation of the mystic term is as follows: In that solemn red-bound volume known as the "Queen's Regulations," are given specimen forms for the various "returns" connected with a soldier's duties, crimes, illnesses, and so forth; and "Thomas Atkins" happened to be the name chosen by the powerful mind which evolved these typical "forms." Little can this unknown genius have guessed that in the hour when he wrote the name, he was practically enriching his mother tongue with a new word. It might just as well have been "John Smith." I wonder it was not. However "Thomas Atkins" it was and is; and in the familiar parlance of an officer, "Tommy Atkins" has become the synomym of "a full private." Now the term seems to be gradually creeping out into the language of civil life.

The British public have of late been indulged, in the course of their reading, by some insight into the routine of barrack-life during the day. But what I now wish to write about is Tommy Atkins' life of an evening, when, being off duty, he may be considered to be "at home." And I will present him as seen in the Mission Hall and Soldiers' Home at Aldershot.

This Home was the forerunner, properly speaking, of all the Soldiers' Homes which are fast becoming a recognised need both at home and abroad. A little institute at Sandgate had been in existence for a short time; but it was Mrs. Daniell and her daughter who first carried out the true saying that "it takes a woman to make a home," by living themselves in the Mission Hall which they had built in the year 1863, and thus making a reality of the words which they then placed over the reading-room door, "The Soldiers' Home."

Of the influence of Christian ladies in such work as this, when wisely and suitably exercised, it would be impossible to speak too highly. Only those who have lived much amongst soldiers, and are really acquainted with their most peculiar and exceptional habits of thought and phases of feeling, can possibly estimate the power of this gracious and kindly influence.

The handsome building of which I speak stands just outside the East Cavalry gate, close to the Permanent Barracks, and within half-an-hour's walk of the most distant huts in the South Camp. The inhabitants of that somewhat penal settlement, the North Camp, must take rather more of a journey, being between two and three miles away. But men will often come that distance night after night, and make nothing of it.

A magnificent flag-staff from a single Vancouver pine stands in front of the house, holding aloft a Union Jack, across which run the words "Soldiers' Home," and is a conspicuous object for miles round. "The last thing I saw," the men have sometimes written on leaving for another station, "was the flag-staff in front of our dear old Home."

During the day a soldier is not often seen in the Home, unless it be a man on furlough, or on some special duty. As a rule, the men are not allowed out of barracks till tea is over. Then they begin to stream out, clean, smart, prepared for an evening's amusement or enjoyment; a little cane in hand, uniform spotlessly brushed, and the cap, if it be a cavalryman, gunner, or sapper, poised at the extremest angle which the laws of nature will permit, "just hanging on by three hairs," as I have heard it described.

Indeed, I have sometimes stood on one side of a tall and very smart soldier, and have only known by the sight of the chin-strap that he was wearing a cap at all. Ease rather than this extreme of elegance is consulted in the humbler Glengarry of the ordinary linesman.

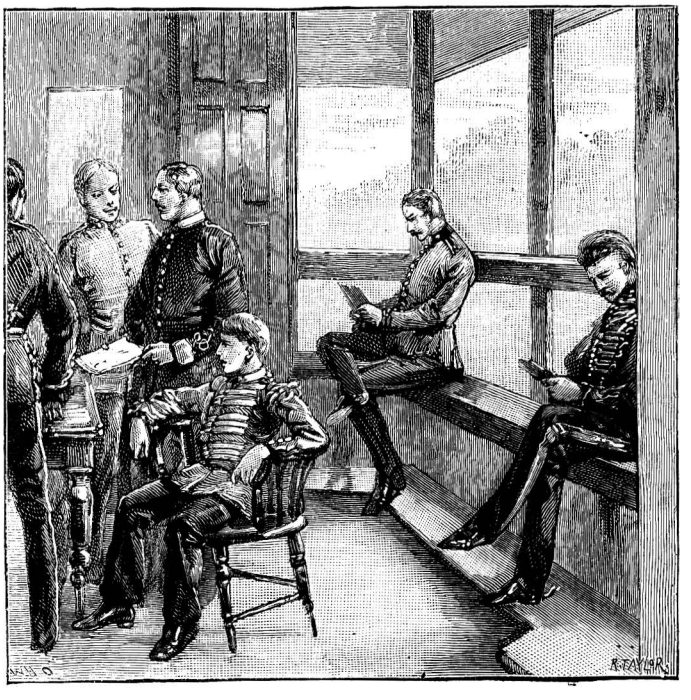
Of course many men take their evening's pleasure in scenes where no Christian or philanthropic mind could wish to follow them. Aldershot, like every other garrison town, swarms with public-houses and dancing-saloons of the lowest type, the ruin of the men in body and soul. Some soldiers never hardly go outside the camp, either staying in their own huts and troop-rooms, or going to the regimental canteen or to the recreation rooms and libraries which are now provided. But very many betake themselves night after night to the Home, or to one or other of the various Institutes which have been established by different imitators. Besides the regular attendants, there is a constant influx of fresh faces, brought by comrades and friends, or drifting in of their own accord.

People sometimes say: "I suppose you only get the well-conducted men?" If they could hear the stories of some of those who come, they would laugh at such an idea. The Home, as Mrs. Daniell often said, is for every man in camp who likes to use it, independent of creed or character; and she would sometimes add, "If you can find me the worst man in camp and bring him here, that is the man for whom the Hall was built." If we are to judge from what they say of themselves, that man must very often have found his way within those walls.

It is about six o'clock. Here come the men, dropping in, some by the door at the farther corner, which leads through the large well-furnished bar and coffee-room into a capital game-room. Others come in through the garden, porch, and vestibule with which the game-room also communicates. On the other side of this entrance is the lending library and an excellent reading-room. Opposite the porch, glass-doors lead into the beautiful Hall, gay with flags and coloured texts, and seating about five hundred. This is used for Sunday evening services and the larger week-night meetings and tea-parties. Through this, and also through the game-room, access is given to a broad staircase, leading up to the much-used class room, which holds about a hundred and fifty. Here the ordinary nightly meeting is held, to say nothing of the Mother's Meeting, Women's Missionary Working-party, Band of Hope, and other agencies for the good of the soldiers' families. These, however, are foreign to our present purpose. Behind this room, which with its pretty arched roof and ecclesiastical-looking window is almost like a little private chapel, there is the Boys' Room, and beyond again, above the bar and coffee-room, are the sleeping rooms, which are let to men on furlough or pass, as needed.

Such is the framework, as it were, of what is home and club in one to many a "Tommy Atkins." Let us now furnish it with the living material which gives it life and interest.

The evening is wearing on, and the house is getting fuller. Let us look round it, first into the reading-room. The deep window-seats at either end, cushioned round, are very favourite places. Two or three men sit in them now, book or paper in hand. A rifleman and a sapper are writing letters at the farther table. The very smallest of buglers lounges in as dignified an attitude as circumstances will allow in one of the deep easy chairs. He and another lad of about the same size are quietly chaffing under their breath with one of the older men who are sitting about the room. Behind them stands a sort of glorified stereoscope of gigantic proportions, round which there is often an admiring group, viewing the slides by either sunlight or moonlight, according to the taste of the beholder. The tables are well covered with books, magazines and papers. A wide padded settee runs along the wall; a good fire burns on the hearth; a brightly-coloured screen keeps off the draught from the door; a large cuckoo-clock ticks in the corner, its cheerful



THE READING-ROOM.

little voice sounding from time to time through the house. The walls are hung with pictures, amongst them fine engravings of the Queen and General Gordon, and a large photograph of Mrs. Daniell. For the most part this room is sacred

to the readers and writers, and is generally very quiet.

On the window-seat outside stands a large board, with a list, beautifully printed by an Engineer officer, containing the names of the regularly paying members of the Home, to which he diligently adds, week by week, taking the names from the members' book, which is kept in the library opposite.

Here, the gas is turned on brightly and a lady is sitting at the table. There is just space besides for the rows of book-shelves which line the three sides of the tiny room. The library is an excellent one, consisting of about 600 volumes.

Upon the little table lie the members' book, pledge-book, library register, a good large-type Bible, savings'-bank books, and little piles of the cards used for these sundry purposes. Inside the drawer are paper and envelopes, stamps, the little books and leaflets which are often asked for to enclose in letters, and various other small items.

For the most part a constant stream drifts in and out of this little room. Three "sweeps," as the dark-uniformed Rifle Brigade are familiarly called, stream in at the front-door, giving, as they pass the library, that peculiar lateral nod by which I think one would know a soldier in any place and in any disguise. Belts, caps, and sticks are taken off and hung up in the reading-room, and a word or two exchanged with its occupants. Then one of the three knocks at the open library door, gets himself inside, and begins silently diving into his pockets. If the lady has any experience, these premonitory symptoms lead her to pick out the saving's bank-book from the pile before her.

"You are going to put something in the bank?"

"Yes, Miss."

And out come the card and the money, which are duly received and registered. The sum varies greatly. Sometimes it is as much as two or more pounds, sometimes a few pence; sometimes a regular weekly sum appears on the card. Before this transaction is over, in comes a "red man" who has been studying the members' board outside, a source of pride and interest to many of the men.

"You've got a lot of marks on that for me, Sir," he says, with considerable satisfaction, to the officer, who is carrying it away to make up the week's entries.

"I'm thinking my month's up, Miss," he adds, stepping into the library.

The penny is duly paid, and the card given, followed by a little general talk, till two very young soldiers appear, bringing in their library books. These can be changed any night and are issued to any member without extra payment. These two are evidently very intelligent young fellows, not long enlisted, who say they have "plenty of time for reading," and are evidently making good use of it. They bring back a History of England and a book of travels, and after some discussion go away with Prescott's "Conquest of Mexico" and "The Voyage of the Sunbeam." A civilian member has by this time contrived to insert himself into the already well-filled room. The pleasant boys depart, promising to be at the meeting on Sunday night; and the new-comer shows two books, singularly inappropriate for the young family under eight years old, for whom he says he has chosen them. By a little tact these are exchanged for the one book which the rules allow to be taken out at a time, and a bright little story of about the calibre of "Jessica's First Prayer" is carried away.

All this time a young soldier, with a thin sad pale face walks at intervals to and fro past the library. This is a symptom which those who are accustomed to the work are not slow to recognise—the sign of a restless weary heart that fears and yet longs for personal help. If the way were clear and it were possible to make an occasion for talk, that would probably very soon follow. But it does not seem that there is to be any opening for quiet talk to-night. Here comes another infantry man, for a book. He turns promptly to the shelf where the religious works stand.

"Can I help you? I wonder what sort you would like. Are you one who loves the Lord?"

"I think I just do," with quiet warmth, and the bright unmistakable look of reality. "I have known Him about two years."

A suitable book is found, and the talk runs on about the difficulties of confessing Christ in the barrack-room, the necessity for absolute consistency of life and conversation, and the power of intercessory prayer.

Just then a young woman appears in the doorway. This is not so natural a sight. She explains, however, that she has come from her place of service at some distance to see her young man, a gunner in the "Royal 'Orse," who is lying sick in hospital. She had missed her train, and arrived too late to be admitted, could not make up her mind to go without seeing him, and wanted to stay the night. Another young man in the battery, evidently an officer's servant, though apparently quite a stranger in the Home, with nice kind feeling had brought her up to this "Cave of Adullum," and now stood waiting in the entry to see if she could be provided with a decent lodging. That could not be found in the house, as the sleeping accommodation is only for the men; but in a few minutes one of the servants was ready to see her round to one of Miss Daniell's Bible-women, who with true motherly kindness took her in hand, found her a respectable lodging, and comfortable supper and breakfast, and the next morning, her visit accomplished, saw her off by train to her place of service.

She was evidently very thankful to find kindness, and told her story gladly during her few minutes' waiting.

"I dare say you would like a little book to take to your young man, wouldn't you?"

"Indeed I would, ma'am."

One of the cupboards supplied a copy of that valuable little book, "Immediate Salvation."

"Do you ever think about these things?" asks the lady, a little doubtfully, for her appearance was not very prepossessing.

"Indeed, I do," said the girl with a sudden

flash of interest. Then added softly, "I found Him quite lately."

The coarse features softened in a moment, and she went away. The Bible-woman afterwards told how pleased she had been with the girl's evident sincerity and earnestness.

So the hour wears away till the second bell rings for the meeting at half-past seven.

All this time the piano has been cheerfully going in the game-room, sometimes really well played, at other times somewhat in the style of the young lady in "Nearer and Dearer," who was of such superior talent, that, whilst others needed to use both hands, she could play a tune with only one finger. The bagatelle-balls are clicking merrily, and the beloved pipes are evidently in full blast. The coffee-room and refreshment-bar have also their well-employed occupants; whilst upstairs the Boys' Room is given up to a Night-school, where scholars of all grades are taught by some of Miss Daniell's workers, or by officers of the garrison, who often give much-valued help in the higher branches of education needed for gaining a first-class certificate.

In many such cases men have been helped in the Night-school who say that otherwise they would certainly not have passed. In others those who were at the very bottom of the ladder have been laboriously lifted upon the first step, and after long patience and much perseverance have at last conquered the mysteries of reading. When one sees the amount of individual labour which this needs, the only wonder is that any man ever learns to read in the regimental schools, where, of course, it is simply impossible for them to be personally conducted through the inevitable drudgery. Poor fellows, they are often put to wonderful straits on their way through a chapter, even the more advanced amongst them, and sometimes display a striking amount of ingenuity.

"When I comes to a long word like that," said a big gunner, pointing to "Thessalonica," "I just says 'Manchester or Liverpool,' and passes on."

What ideas can such readers form as they stumble along their weary way? I remember hearing an extremely superior and intelligent young man glibly render Acts viii. 11, as follows:—"Of long time he had bewitched them with saucers."

The remainder of the class listened devoutly without a smile.

So it may be concluded that the labours of the Night-school are not unneeded, for it is remarkable in how many cases, even though they have passed through the Board schools, all that has been learned seems to be simply wiped out of the memory. The innocent pride of some of the scholars in their performances is quite delightful.

"Would you like to see the letter I've written to my father, Miss? A more beautiful letter was never written."

Then after it had been duly read, admired, and returned, the proud writer added shyly:

"Miss So-and-so has not seen it. I'm sure she'd like to read it. I wouldn't mind letting you have it to take up for her to see."

To my mind there is something very touching in the simple childlike confidence which is so sure of sympathy and interest in all their concerns.

THE BATTAHS OF SUMATRA.

A NEW CHAPTER IN MISSIONARY ANNALS.[1]

I.

ONE brilliant morning, some sixty years ago, two little boys were playing on a beach of sand, near Deli, on the eastern coast of the island of Sumatra. Their home was not on the coast, but amongst mountains in the interior whence they had come with their friends who had brought produce for sale. These boys were Battahs. While they were playing, a Malay

[1] The people call themselves Bataks, but proper nouns in the Eastern Archipelago so ending are generally pronounced by Europeans as if ending in *h*. There is much of vagueness and even contradiction in the statements about the Battahs in books and Encyclopædic articles. The writer has taken pains to consult all authorities at his command in the library of the British Museum, and elsewhere. Marsden's "History of Sumatra" (1st ed. 1783) stands foremost among them. Next in order of time comes John Leyden (M.D.) in his "Essay on the Languages and Literature of the Indo-Chinese Nations," published 1808, in the 10th vol. of the "Asiatic Researches." This essay, published in Calcutta, no doubt led to the despatch of missionaries from Serampore, and from the Baptist Missionary Society in 1819–20. I have been favoured with the loan of the "Periodical Accounts" of this Society for these and several succeeding years, and have found valuable information in them, as indicating the state of the people before much contact with Europeans, and specially, in a journal of Mr. Burton's, published in the "Accounts" for the year 1822. This was followed in the year 1824 by an excursion by Burton and Ward into the country, of which a report is given in No. xii. of the "Friend of India," published at Serampore. I have also read a volume, published by Blackwood, in 1826, written by Mr. John Anderson (a gentleman I knew at Penang), entitled "Mission to the East Coast of Sumatra" in 1823, a book, full of curious pictures and stories, which was reviewed with intimations of incredulity in No. lxvii of the "Quarterly Review." Another book, also by an old friend, J. H. Moor, entitled "Notices of the Indian Archipelago," Singapore, 1837, has been carefully examined by me. In 1855 appeared Madame Pfeiffer's, "A Lady's Second Journey Round the World," containing an account of her courageous visit to the Battahs. The more recent accounts of the people have been supplied to me by the Rev. A. Schreiber, D.D., of Barmen, who was for seven years a missionary amongst them, and is now Secretary of the Rhenish Missionary Society.

prahu (boat), which had not been observed by them, was paddled up to where they were, and two men jumped out, seized them, and dragged them to the boat and carried them off. The boys were sold as slaves to a European at Singapore. Soon after they accompanied their master on a voyage to Penang, and there, as he treated them unkindly, they fled from him. Eventually they found a home in my father's service, and were named Tim and Tom. Tim ran away again, but the other, though older than myself, became my companion and friend, and in the year 1839 he was publicly baptised. It is therefore but natural that I should be interested in the Battahs. The Encylopædia Britannica (vol. xxii. p. 640) may well speak of them "as one of the most interesting of all the savage or semi-savage peoples" in the world.

A considerable portion of the Battah race is now under the rule of the Dutch government. Differing as the various communities do in their physical and social characteristics, even in their natural condition, it is necessary to a true knowledge of the race that we should travel beyond those dwelling under this rule, and in the outer fringes of the Battah country, to the independent communities found in the original and central home of the race. The people appear to have naturally an inordinate dislike to occupying the districts contiguous to the sea, and at one time shrank from even the sight of the sea, believing it to be peopled with demoniacal spirits. To know therefore the real Battah, we must leave those of the tribe who have became familiar with it, and are settled near the boundary lines of their fatherland, and penetrate into the recesses of the regions which surround the great inland lake of Tobah.

And how shall we get there? The eastern and western coasts of Sumatra are very unlike. I have landed on the eastern side. It is flat, abounds in sluggish streams, and mud deposits, and has only one harbour of any importance, that of Deli. On the western coast there are several ports connected with established settlements, and the hills and plateaus of the interior are much nearer to the sea. The Battah country occupies the lofty regions beyond these lower elevations, some of the mountains rising to heights of six or seven thousand feet above the sea-level. It seems to begin in the south near the equator (the volcanoes of Sumatra are south of the equator), and to end in the north at a boundary line, not certainly known, adjoining the kingdom of Atcheen. The estimated population differs from one and a half million to half a million—Dr. Schreiber puts it at under one million. There are two ways of reaching the independent communities.

We might proceed, and for a considerable distance by water, from the seaport of Deli [1] on the east coast, or, as is much more generally done, from the west coast, by tracts well-defined through the magnificent forests of the island. We will land, in this case, in the celebrated bay of Tapanuli of which Marsden writes: "Navigators say that all the navies of Europe might ride there with perfect security in every weather." And the "weather" on that coast, washed by the Indian Ocean, is often as fierce and destructive as can be imagined. We shall probably anchor in the harbour of an island in the bay which has been from the beginning of European intercourse with Sumatra a trade station; and thence get across by boat to the town of Siboga on the mainland. Near this several streams enter the bay, and behind rises a terrace of hills—chosen by the missionaries of 1820 as a base of operations, and now one of the head-quarters of the Rhenish Missionary Society.

Starting thence we must push on till we reach the famous valley of Silindung—a stretch of picturesque country, some ten miles in length, having within its basin no less than one hundred and fifty villages, with an aggregate population of some 25,000 people. Beyond it lies the magnificent lake Tobah—seen from a distance by the missionaries Burton and Ward in 1824, whose rough estimate of its dimensions was singularly correct—having an area of about 1400 square miles, and thus nearly corresponding to that of the Zuyder Zee. It has a sandy shore, studded with picturesque islands (one of which in the centre, is three miles in circumference), and is backed by two lofty mountains, one of which, Palakir, is held in awe as the chief abode of evil spirits. The entire region is an elevated plateau, grassy, but almost treeless, broken by deep ravines, with a climate contrasting favourably with that of the coast and described by the missionaries as healthful and even bracing. One of the stations is 2000 feet above the sea level. In our journey from Siboga we have seen the towers of several Christian churches, and near to the lake we arrive at the station of Balige; but leaving this and moving eastwards, we finally reach the recently established mission of Sigumpar where, and in the regions beyond, we see the people, as far as they can be seen, in their pristine condition and their ancestral home.

In the days of Mr. Burton's excursion these characteristics were found in districts far nearer the western coast. He writes: "I feel great pleasure in having seen natives perfectly independent. These people have no idea of their inferiority to any people on earth, and their carriage and behaviour tell you so. They are very polite in their own way; they are good speakers, and know how to manage every point of an argument, so as to turn it to their own advantage to perfection. He is the most celebrated chief who possesses undaunted courage, and can make the best of a bad cause. During my whole journey I saw nothing like religion."

First, as to personal appearances. How shall I describe them? Savage in some of their habits and customs, as we shall hereafter show them to be, they are all decently attired. The cotton cloth they use is thick and coarse, but it is woven by themselves, and is dyed blue (with indigo) and also red and yellow, and sometimes with the colour mixed and in picturesque patterns, and with the addition of strings of beads imported

[1] Whence are exported the sturdy but agile ponies so well known and highly prized in the "Straits" and beyond them. They are called "Deli ponies," but they are really Battah ponies, reared in the uplands of the interior.

from other countries. I can distinctly recall the face and the voice of the Battah friend of my youth. The descriptions of travellers vary, doubtless, because the people, according to their diverse descent and surroundings, differ as much among themselves as they do from their neighbours. My friend probably came from the very heart of his race, and was therefore a fair type of its original characteristics. His was of its kind a comely face. In colour, a dusky yellow, with large black eyes; the cheekbones slightly prominent, the mouth straight and large, the nose flat, the lips thick, the forehead decidedly lofty, and his hair thick, coarse, and black. The Battahs generally who have not come under outside influence wear no head-dress; but he always wore on his head a cotton handkerchief, and its very colours I can recall: light yellow with spots of red. His look was that of an intelligent and amiable man: somewhat plaintive, but always ready for a smile. His manners were gentle, and his voice a sweet tenor. The description in the "Enc. Brit." (vol. xxii. p. 840), which may, I presume, be quoted as authoritative amid the divergent accounts of travellers, seems to accord with my recollections: "In many points the Battahs are quite different from the Malay type. The average stature of the men is about five feet four inches, of the women four feet eight inches. In general build they are thick-set, with broad shoulders and fairly muscular limbs. The colour of the skin ranges from dark-brown to a yellow tint, but the darkness apparently is quite independent of climatic influence or distinction of race. In marked contrast to the Malays are the large black long-shaped eyes beneath heavy black or dark brown eyebrows. The cheekbones are somewhat prominent but less so than among the Malays." [1]

Arrived amongst them we are at once struck with the signs of pastoral and mechanical industry. Marsden was wonderfully accurate when he described them as occupying "extensive plains between two ridges of hills on the borders of a great lake; where the soil is fertile and cultivation prevalent." On the other hand he could not be describing the real and original Battahs, when he says: "The men when not engaged in war, their favourite occupation, lead an idle, inactive life, passing the day in playing on a kind of flute, crowned with garlands of flowers. The women alone, beside the domestic duties, work in the rice plantations." So far is this from the truth as to the region we are supposed to be now visiting, that we shall find all the ordinary forms of industrial life. Here are fields of rice, and there of maize, and there again of sweet potatoes. All the agricultural processes follow each other with the seasons—ploughing and sowing, and planting, irrigation of the soil, and reaping of the harvests. Even in times of war there is a suspension of arms when the season arrives for sowing and reaping. The people rear fowls and pigs and buffaloes and horses. Time was when they fattened horses for their feasts, but now they find it of far greater advantage to feed and groom them for the foreign market. Enter the woods, and you see men gathering camphor in its liquid form by incisions into the stems of the young-camphor tree or in solid pieces by cutting down the old tree and emptying the fissures within it. The very word camphor is supposed to be derived from the Battah word *kapur*. The finest Benjamin or Benzoin, used in so many rituals as incense, is obtained by the people through incisions in the trunks of the producing tree. Inspect their villages and you will see the weaver at his loom, the blacksmith at his forge, the engraver with his tools, and the worker in ivory busy with his ring for the adornment of the arms of men. Swords and lances and bits for horses and the various and often elaborately carved cases for their weapons, and the many elegant and costly betel-nut boxes which they use, and even gunpowder, are manufactured by themselves. Nor are there signs of systematic industry only, but the men are provident and thrifty, and well-to-do people are met with everywhere.

[1] Burton remarks of one of the villages visited by him: "The inhabitants of this place, however, are a fine, tall, stout, good-looking people, much superior in appearance to the generality of Malays. They have nothing of the soft expression of the Malay countenance, but, on the contrary, a peculiarly fierce and independent look. They are well dressed with cotton cloth manufactured by the women, and ornamented with beads (English) which they obtain from Nattal."

Things New and Old.

CHRISTIAN JOY.—The Rev. Professor Elmslie speaking recently on Christian joy, said we needed to rid religion of all dulness and of all repulsive coldness and sternness. The perfection of Christian rejoicing and living is just—if we could but do it as Christ wanted it—to live truly and altogether in the world, but not of the world. He was not quite sure whether it was not the first symptom of the church's corruption when they put the crucifix upon the altar. The young, brave-hearted, rejoicing and conquering church did not do it. Is that the last word of the gospel—"Christ died?" No! That crucified Christ would mean the world's despair if that were His final form. What makes our triumph, our hope, our faith, our life, our rejoicing in the certainty of victory, is that crucified Christ risen, ascended, reigning; and that is the Christ they would find painted in the chancel of all the early Christian churches. The crucified, dead Christ came in later. But that risen, reigning Christ on the throne is "as a Lamb that had been slain." The marks of His death, His atonement, are there. It is the crucified, but the crucified triumphant Christ. If the church goes on doing as he thought it has begun to do, if its business is to become the Kingdom of God, to redeem and Christianise the state, and society, and labour, and the life, the real human life, of men, it will find that it has yet to repossess the living Christ, into whose hands all power is given in heaven and on earth. He thanked God that everywhere there were signs of the entrance into the church of a new life.

THE GLORIOUS RETURN.

A STORY OF THE VAUDOIS.

BY CRONA TEMPLE.

CHAPTER XI.

THE Vaudois troops (if the word 'troops" can be applied to the nine hundred followers of Henri Arnaud) crossed Lake Leman on the 18th of August, and at once pressed southwards through La Chablais and Faucigny

They were already on the enemy's ground, or rather in the dominions of the Duke of Savoy, but their own country lay beyond the huge shoulders of Mont Blanc and Mont Cenis; and they had many weary leagues to win before they could look upon their enterprise as fairly begun. They had no quarrel with the towns of Upper Savoy, all they asked was free passage, and to be allowed to purchase food. A demand not always granted.

At Boëge they met with the first resistance; and here Arnaud made his first stroke of generalship. He seized several gentlemen as hostages, and made one of them write letters to the Mayors of the towns of Vin, St. Joyre, and Cluse, to the effect that the Vaudois "had requested hostages to accompany them, to give an account of their conduct, which should be in all respects honest and regular; that they wished to pay for everything they demanded, and to go peaceably on their way." The mayors were advised "not to sound the tocsin, nor to alarm the country, and to withdraw their people if they were already under arms."

These letters, signed by all the hostages, names well known and honoured in Savoy, had excellent effect; and the little army pressed on up the valley of the Arve, to gain, i. possible, the Bridge of Salenches, before the news of their approach could give opportunity for it to be fortified against them.

Just as they came down the Maglan road, they saw a horseman galloping towards the town to give the alarm. Salenches being the chief town of Faucigny, there, if anywhere, their passage would be disputed, and it was of the utmost importance to make what speed they might, that the town might be taken unawares.

Within a hundred paces of the great wooden bridge they halted, putting themselves in their best battle-array. A regular army corps might have smiled to see their uneven ranks, their curious collection of weapons, their queer attempts at soldierly equipment. But a second glance at those lines of steadfast faces, a further thought of what those steady eyes, those firm lips, and eager looks must mean would have put an end to smiling. The nine hundred men drawn up before the Bridge of Sallenches were no fitting mark for scoffing—so much at least was certain.

The townsmen hoped to gain time by parleying. They sent deputies and messengers; and meanwhile were getting the guard under arms.

Arnaud divined the meaning of their delay. He looked carefully at the bridge, laden as it was with houses, and flanked by towers which in half-an-hour would be filled with soldiers. He looked along the ranks of his men. *He* could read the meaning of those steadfast faces!

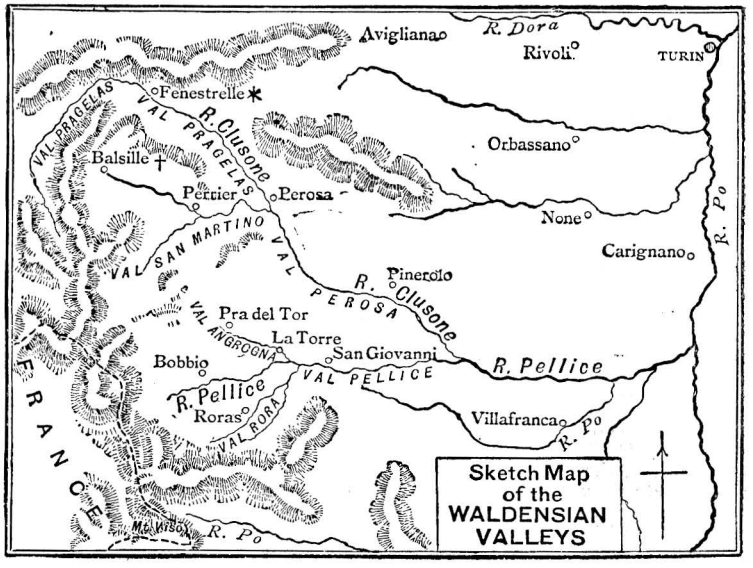
The word was given.

There was a rush forward. Swift and silent—the mountaineers had crossed the bridge. Salenches was won.

The passage of Salenches rather, for they dared not loiter in the town. They hurried on to Cablau, where, weary and hungry, and soaked with the heavy rain, they laid down to rest.

But they raised thankful hearts in gratitude to God that night.

The chronicler of their journey writes: "These poor people blessed God that they had marched so far successfully, without fighting or loss of men, over bridges and through defiles where a few courageous defenders could have done them irreparable injury, and they were grateful for a peaceful night after so much fatigue and anxiety. Rest was very necessary, for they were about to face difficulties of which the prospect might have shaken the courage of persons quite unfatigued, and free from anxiety; how much more men who for a number of days and nights had



known no rest or sleep but what they could enjoy during their brief halts, not to mention the mental disquietude which scarcely allowed them to close their eyes. Now they had reached the foot of the most gigantic of the Alps, whose heads are hoary with eternal snows, and whose precipitous sides are scored by a few perilous paths by which no traveller can come without danger. The Vaudois had to traverse the forests of the lower grounds, to clamber rocks surmounted with silver snows, hollowed out with dazzling glaciers and torrent waterfalls; they came not into this sublime scenery to admire the works of God, but to shun men and cities, to breathe free air—as did the chamois bounding on the heights above them, or the eagle that soared over their heads. They had to cross numerous spurs and ranges of the hills, lateral branches of the principal chain; to do this it was necessary to climb from the bottom of one valley, only to descend again into the next. Often they could find nothing to maintain them but milk and cheese, and the frozen water of the mountains. The rain frequently beat upon their backs, bent with fatigue; and their suffering feet slipped upon the stones, and in the stony ravines. Late at night they would perhaps reach shepherds' huts, barren and cold, where they would make fires by unroofing the hovels for fuel; a plan that warmed them indeed but exposed them to the fury of the elements. And this was their daily experience for eight days. But Arnaud, the zealous and renowned leader of the little troop, restored by his holy and excellent exhortations, the courage of those who followed him. He spared himself least of all. His foot took the most difficult path, his platter was the last to be filled. And in the morning and at the night-falling, he, in the name of his little flock, asked for them the strength and confidence of God."

Such were the first steps of the "Glorious Return."

A FAITHFUL NURSE.

THERE are some small bits of the every-day history which passes along side by side, so to say, with our own lives, that it does every one good to note and remember.

Minnie Matilda Murrell, a mere child of fifteen, recently received a testimonial, together with the sum of five pounds, from the "Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire," for saving the lives of three little children, aged respectively about five, three, and one year old, to whom she was nursemaid.

A young servant from the little fishing village of Leigh, near Southend, she had taken service in the family of a tailor at Dorking. Shortly before midnight on the tenth of last September, there occurred an explosion of gas in the house in which she was living.

Plenty of inflammable materials lay around, and the place was soon in a blaze. The family had all gone to bed. The babies had long been asleep. Most probably the tired little maid had dropped off also into her first sleep as she lay there in her bed beside the youngest child. But the noise of the explosion awoke her, and she jumped up to see what was the matter. There was no need to go far downstairs to learn. Rolling volumes of smoke with the dazzling tongues of flame told their tale fast enough. But still, as things were now, it was quite possible for her to make a dash and escape, she might be out of danger in a moment. But no! Flying upstairs again to the second-floor-room just quitted, even more quickly than she had left it, the girl snatched up the baby, and even in the midst of haste and danger, remembered, in a really wonderful way, the dictates of prudence, and wrapped the little creature in a blanket as protection from the smoke and scorching heat. Her charge thus shielded, down she flew again through the hot, blinding atmosphere. Most happily, half way on the road to safety the young nurse came upon the mother, who catching the infant in her arms forthwith ran the gauntlet of the flaming staircase with it, and was soon safe in the thronged street without.

But not so Minnie. There were two more little children, helpless, terrified little creatures, whom she had undertaken to take care of. And when the girl undertook that service it was evidently to her something more than a mere matter of work and wages.

She rushed back to that still occupied second-floor bedroom. With the strength and energy that God gives to those who work with Him, she caught up both the children together, and flew off with them.

To run down, and out of doors, by the usual way was her first intention. But that idea had to be abandoned. The flames had spread greatly; they were roaring and crackling away, far up the stairs by this time. One way of escape blocked up, Minnie sought another. She darted into a first-floor front room, flung up the window, and gently lowered the little ones by turns into the innumerable stretched-up eager arms below.

All safe! Thank God!

There remained only Minnie herself in the burning building now; and so, with only herself left to think about, at last Minnie lost hold on her brave common-sense and clear wits, and would have tumbled herself out headlong. But happily there were those there ready to care for her as she had cared for others. She was rescued from the window just in time; and spared, still to be nursemaid to the little children she had saved.

Such devotion needs no comment. Happy are all, both young and old, who bring this self-forgetful spirit into their duty. It is the best preparation for sudden trial or danger.

TALKS ABOUT TEXTS.

"Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God."—*St. Luke* xii. 8.

FREDERICK the Great of Prussia was a mighty monarch, but his heart was not right with God. He had much earthly wisdom, but, alas! he was a stranger to that heavenly wisdom which makes men truly happy and truly noble. He made light of God's word and God's people. His favourite books were those of men who scoffed at religion.

One day, when surrounded by his courtiers, he turned to one of his generals, brave Hans Joachim von Zeithen, and mocked at him for having attended the communion service. The courtiers laughed, but the valiant soldier rose to his feet, and thus addressed the King:

"Your majesty knows that in war I have never feared danger, but have risked my life for you and my country. But there is One above us who is greater than all; He is the Saviour and Redeemer who has dearly bought us with His precious blood. This holy One I can never allow to be mocked or insulted, for on Him reposes my faith, my comfort, my hope in life and death. If your majesty undermines this faith, you undermine at the same time, the welfare of your state. I saluto your majesty!"

Touched by the brave speech of his general, and rebuked by his dauntless spirit, the king gave him his hand, saying, "O happy Zeithen! how I wish I could only believe it. I have the greatest respect for you; this shall never happen again!" Adding, as he rose from the table, "Come with me into my cabinet."

They walked together into the king's chamber, and the door closed upon them, so that no one ever knew what passed between the monarch and the brave soldier of Jesus Christ; but of this we may be sure, that Hans Joachim von Zeithen witnessed a good confession, knowing that he was in the presence and the keeping of the King of kings, who said, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God."

Confessing Christ! How much it means. The youngest as well as the oldest disciple can do it, for it is just the telling out of our love and faith. We may confess Him in the nursery, in the schoolroom, in the playground, for in every place we may act as His disciples. We may confess Him by deed, as well as by words. We often pray that "we may show forth Thy praise not only with our lips, but in our lives." And that is but another way of confessing Him. It is given to very few to confess Him before kings, as did the brave Zeithen, but each of us in our own station can show by our lives that we love Him, and desire to serve Him.

Let me tell you how a schoolboy confessed Christ.

Some years ago a lad died, and after his death his parents received a letter from one whom they had never seen. He wrote: "I owe to your son what I can never express. He brought me to God, and yet he never knew it. A good many of us slept in the same room at school; there was a great deal of talking and noise; no one remembered to pray. I slept next your son, and often wondered why, when I was longer in going to sleep, I heard him rise from his bed, and go to the chair on which his clothes were laid. I found out why —it was to pray. So quietly and simply was this done that I felt it go to my heart. He taught me to think and pray!"

Thus, we may never know the effect of our actions, but if we live as His disciples, we must be always confessing our love and faith by our deeds. It was said of His first disciples that men "took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." True, we cannot be with Him as they were, to hear Him speak those wonderful words of life, but we may be with Him constantly by prayer, so that we, like those earlier disciples, may, wherever we go, make that confession of our love which will cause others to take knowledge of us, also, that we "have been with Jesus."

The true mark of a disciple of the Lord Jesus has always been confession of Him. In olden time, when cruel persecutors abounded, it often meant death to confess Christ. We have most of us heard of the cruel death of that aged saint, Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. Arrested by the emperor, he was brought to Rome, to suffer a terrible death, unless he consented to sacrifice to the gods, and openly curse Christ. Looking round on his persecutors, with calm and undismayed courage, he exclaimed: "Eighty and six years have I served Him. How can I blaspheme my King and my God?" And he met his death triumphantly, knowing that it was but the entrance into eternal bliss, with Him who said, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the son of man confess before the angels of God."

May we pray for grace to confess Him, by word and by deed, living out day by day the life of love, and faith, and prayer, knowing that the true disciples of our Lord are they who do His will, and thus confess Him as their Saviour. "Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven."

SCRIPTURE CHARACTER.

NO. V.

1. He was promoted to great honour. He knew what was right, but wished to follow it in his own way. He had good impulses which often prevailed for a time, but envy gained the mastery over him. He died when fighting against his enemies, but by his own hand.

2. At this man's threshing floor the destroying angel stayed his hand. He willingly offered of his possessions for the service of God.

3. A king of whom we only know that he remembered and wrote down the wise words of his mother.

4. One who had a Moabite mother, and whose father was a Bethlehemite. He became the grandfather of the second King of Israel.

5. The daughter of a king who resorted to deceit to save one whom she loved. She could not enter into his joy and rejoicing before the Lord on a later occasion; and because of her contemptuous words at that time a blessing was withheld from her.

6. He was the captain of the host, and, on the assassination of the king, became one of the rivals for the throne, and the victorious one. He built the town which became the capital of Israel; and walking in all the wickedness of his predecessors, he was said to be worse than all. In his son and grand-daughter his wickedness was perpetuated.

7. An ill-tempered and wicked man. His rude and ungrateful language would have resulted in his death had it not been for his wife's mediation. He died by a stroke from God's hand.

ANSWER TO A CITY OF SCRIPTURE.

NO. IV.—P. 288.—ASHDOD.

1. Neh. xiii. 24.
2. Isa. xx. 1; 2 Kings xviii. 17.
3. 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 6.
4. Amos i. 8; Zeph. ii. 4.
5. Amos iii. 9; 1 Sam. v. 1, 12.
6. Acts viii. 40.
7. 1 Sam. v. 1.
8. 1 Sam. v. 6.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. X.—P. 334.—LAZARUS, John xi. 14, 44.

L-ot	Gen. xix. 15, 16.
A-bigail	1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33.
Z-arephath	1 Kings xvii. 9, 22, 23.
A-braham	Gen. xxii. 9, 13.
R-abboni	John xx. 16.
U-zzah	2 Sam. vi. 6, 7.
S-imeon	Luke ii. 25–29.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE CHARACTER.

NO. IV.—P. 334.—JONATHAN.

(1) 1 Sam. xiii. 2, 3; x. 5; (2) xiii. 22; (3) xiv. 6; (4) 27; (5) 44, 45; (6) 49; xix. 12; (7) 1; (8) xx. 33; (9) xxiii. 17; (10) 2 Sam. ix. 3–7; (11) 1 Sam. xxxi. 2, 12.

ANSWER TO HIDDEN TEXT.

NO. I.—P. 384.

But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.—*Isaiah* lvii. 20.

There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.—*Isaiah* lvii. 21.