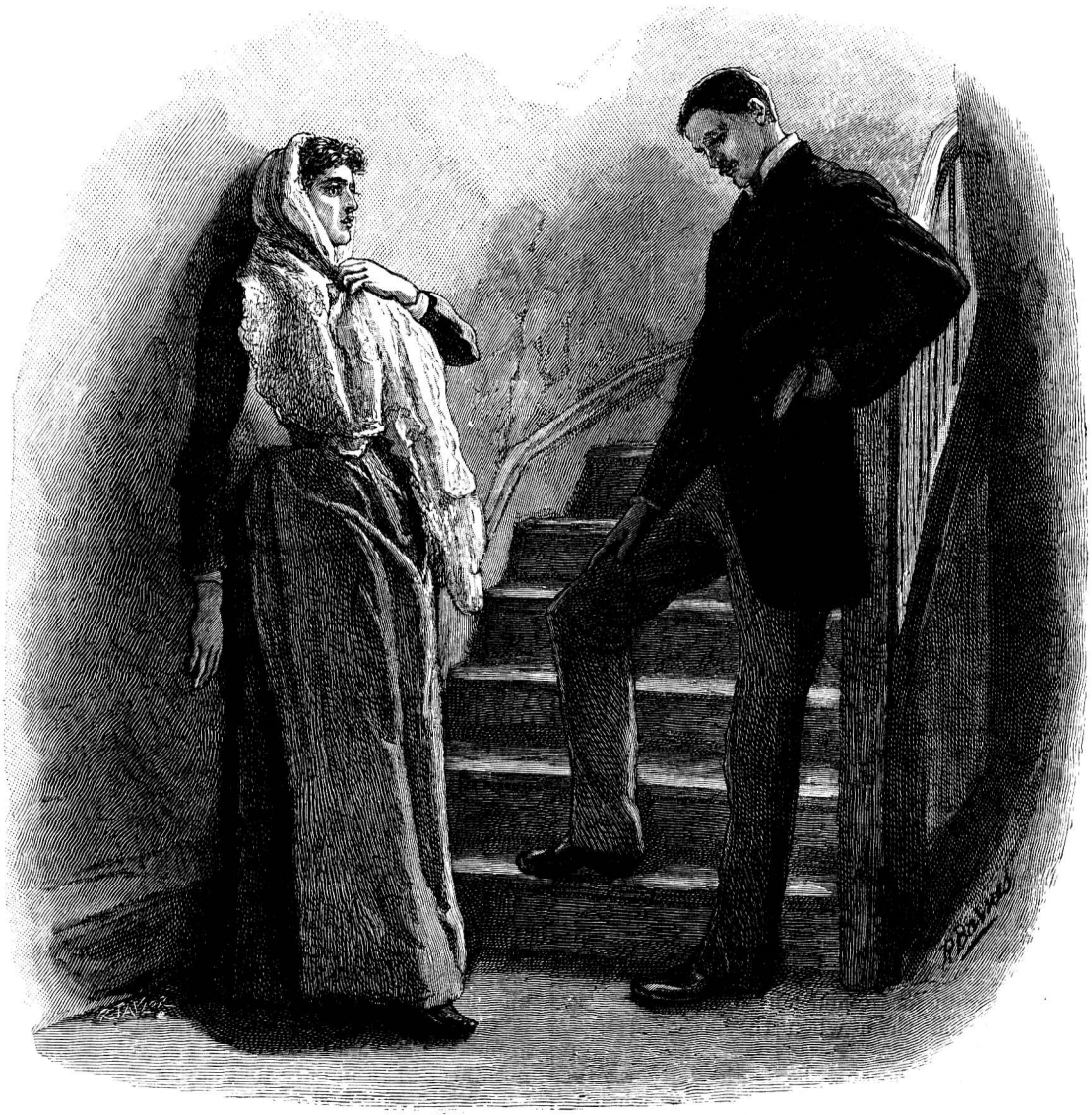
THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

OF ALL DEGREES

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

CHAPTER XVI.—AFTER A YEAR.



CHARLIE CAN'T LIVE ON THAT MISERABLE SCREW FROM THE BANK: NO FELLOW COULD.

A WHOLE year had gone by since our pair of friends had set out from Barford to face life in its new and changed conditions.

A year of experiences; some of them disheartening, others of them cheering, ups and downs such as come to all; but at the end of it Alice could look back and give thanks for all its mercies.

It depends so much, after all, upon the eyes with which one looks, how much or how little

one is able to see in what are called the providences of life. You and I, for instance, might not have thought that it called for much gratitude to be able to occupy dingy lodgings in the middle of a big, ugly city, far from everything that is pleasant or good to look upon; to have to sew or teach though your head ached and your eyes smarted; to go out in all weathers, though you would rather have stayed at home; to have no new dresses, or good things to eat, or books to read, or music to listen to, and no society except that of a few humble folk, quite as poor as yourself, and perhaps less refined. We should scarcely choose this for our lot if the choice were left to us.

But even the valley of humiliation was, as we know, to those who went on pilgrimage, "a green valley, beautified with lilies, in whose meadows the air was pleasant, and where"—though it might be difficult of realization to one who lived in Mrs. Jones's lodgings—"a man shall be free from the noise and from the hurryings of this life," and where, too, "in former times men have met with angels."

Alice had been reading this immortal prose-poem aloud one Sunday night in autumn, and she had shut the book and folded her hands in her lap, and was looking before her into the gathering dusk with a rather pensive expression; and Janey, glancing up from her chair on the other side of the hearth, thought that if there were any angels to be met with nowadays, and she was not sure that there were any, one of them at least, and the best of them, must take the guise of Allie.

Janey, you see, did not love to walk in the valley; she had longings, which are quite natural, and healthy, and proper to every girl, for the mountain tops and the sunlight. And one would like, if one could, to arrange that most of the sunny bits should come to boy and girl pilgrims when they are young; it is such a great inheritance to have had a happy youth.

Not that Janey was exactly unhappy; she only wanted a little more.

"It is wretched not to have money," she said, apparently in response to her own meditations, because there was nothing in the passage just read about money; "I believe if I live much longer here, Allie, I shall turn socialist. And I shall begin by attacking Mr. Vivian's bank."

Alice looked up rather startled. She was thinking at the moment of Mr. Vivian's bank, too, or, rather, of one young clerk who had a stool there, and who —— What did that pause in her thoughts mean, and why did she always resolutely forbid them when they reached this stage?

"Perhaps it is because he is the only really rich person I know that I feel dangerous when I think about him," Janey went on more lightly, aware that she had touched a vibrating chord. "He is so disgustingly rich, and I don't see what good it does him or anybody else to have so much money. Captain Vivian helps him to spend it, I dare say; but he spends it all on himself."

"Captain Vivian took Charlie with him as his guest to Norway; you forget that."

"He went to please himself, and he took Charlie because he was going to Charlie's relations, and he couldn't decently go there again alone. And I think, on the whole," she added significantly, "it was scarcely a friendly thing to do to take poor Charlie there when you consider ——"

"I think it is best to leave that point unconsidered," said Alice, looking up with a pained expression in her eyes, but speaking with gentle firmness. "You forget that Captain Vivian and Charlie are fast friends, and that they understand each other."

"Then I wish," began Janey impulsively, but she suddenly bit her lip. "There is Miss Vivian"—she took up another grievance—"living in the slums of South London as if she had been born to them—among the off-scourings of the poor, compared with which our society here is refined and brilliant."

"Do you find nothing noble in that?"

"I am not made for such high things," she answered with melancholy bitterness. "I think if I had been she, I should not have rushed away from the duties that lay nearest me, to find others where I could do very doubtful service at the best. She will make a martyr of herself down there, and suffer a daily torture; she will loathe it—she who was brought up in softness and luxury—and what good will she do? She is too far off from the people to reach them; try as she will, she can't make herself one of them. They will not trust her; they will only hate her because she has had better chances than they; or they will think she is patronising them and resent it. And what of her father left alone at home—is there no mission to the rich? If I had been she I should have stayed at home and given other people my money to spend. We could do very well with some of it. There is the professor who would have died of starvation if it hadn't been for that good creature, Mr. Augustus; and there are others ——"

Janey was doing her best to make the valley a sadder place of pilgrimage for both of them; while she talked the lilies ceased to blow, and the air was heavy and laden with hint of coming storm.

Allie might count her blessings and give thanks for them, but Janey had no eyes for the silver that lined the cloud.

They were gathering thick, those clouds; some of them were bound up in the well thumbed account book which harboured so many anxieties between its boards; one of them—the biggest of all—loomed gloomily upon their horizon, but of it they never spoke, though each dreaded its approach; and another of which as yet Allie knew nothing had risen only that day.

So that Janey had reason perhaps for bitterness, if bitterness can ever be allowed to be reasonable.

"Come here, Janey," Alice said.

Janey hesitated, but the loving tone drew her, and she went, though reluctantly. "I won't tell her," she was saying to herself—"not yet, not yet——"

"I have something to tell you," Allie said as

if in answer to Janey's thought, "perhaps I ought to have told you before, but—but it seemed too sacred."

Then while Janey knelt beside her, Alice sketched for her Honoria's spiritual history.

"You see," she said quietly, "we cannot judge for another; we should need to know every secret of a human heart as only God can know it before we could venture to prescribe for its healing, or to say that this or that medicine was wrong. But if you will go with me some day and see her, I think you will own that she has found her place and her work."

"I will go," the girl said, quickly responsive and keen in her contrition, "I had no right to judge."

No, Janey had no right, because she had not known the throes and pangs of anguish that precede the new birth. She still groped among the dark enigmas of life and shunned the light in which Allie walked serene.

While they were talking together, a step for which they had both been secretly listening, half hoping, half dreading to recognise it—was heard upon the stair. Janey jumped up and said with a great show of unconcern and carelessness—

"It is Charlie, he didn't promise to come, so he will expect to be made much of for his condescension."

She put her hands on Allie's shoulders and bending gave her a light kiss, but the lips that met hers trembled.

Then Janey set the door wide and Allie rose and they both waited. The step came slowly, slowly nearer. Oh, how heavily it dragged, and where was all its early blitheness? and where was Charlie's challenge—that merry note that had made their music only a year before? When he came into the room you could see that he had travelled a long way in those twelve months, a long way from his better self. His face was more strictly handsome, possibly, but it was harder, keener, and a look of habitual discontent and something that might be anxiety had settled there. One sees the change often on the faces of lads who have left sheltered homes and live alone in London; knowledge has come to them—knowledge of the world, as they call it, which always means knowledge of its eviler side, and the old boyish frankness is gone. They can look no longer in their mother's eyes with the early innocence, and they live in fear that certain transactions may reach their father's ears.

Charlie had neither father nor mother—only Alice—but his eyes dropped before the love and tenderness and purity in hers. She went to meet him, she was more demonstrative, perhaps, than in the earlier days, more eager to show him how welcome he was. She was almost sharp with Janey who had given Charlie a cold little hand to shake.

"Aren't you glad to see him, our boy who comes so seldom?"

"He might give me a few more opportunities to practise my gladness," said Janey. "Yours are such angel's visits, Charlie, that you give us time to forget you between whiles."

"No, not to forget him," cried Allie. "Don't believe her, Charlie, we could never do that."

"Janey is comparing me with the doctor, I know," he answered, trying to throw off a nameless gloom that he seemed to have brought with him, "and unfavourably to me, of course. Your man of pills and powders lives round the corner, and when he's tired of his own society he can exchange it for yours; but really, Allie, if you will live at such an unconscionable distance from everybody else——"

"Yes, it is an unconscionable distance from Kensington and of course it is impossible for a young gentleman of fashion to live anywhere else but at the west-end."

Charlie flushed, and the colour mounted into Allie's cheeks too, but she tried to smile.

"We will not quarrel about the past," she said, "if you have been long in coming that is only a reason the more for our being glad to have you now. Janey, won't you get our boy something to eat?"

"I've had dinner—everything—all I want," he said, "our landlady insists on our dining early on Sundays, and there's nothing like a square meal in the middle of the day to take away your appetite for the rest of it."

Janey who had risen sat down again.

"Very well then, since you won't eat we shall expect you to talk. You have given us no account of your travels yet."

Janey's tone was not encouraging to a narrator. She had a secret cause of displeasure against Charlie, and she made the very common and natural mistake of supposing that if she imparted a certain flavour of bitterness to her words his penitence would be spurred.

But Charlie only looked sulky and miserable.

"There is nothing to tell," he said, "the weather was wretched, it rained most of the time. Old Arnesen and Astrid were very kind and we did the usual things—rowing, fishing, climbing, and so on, when there was a chance. There's nothing to make a story of; Vivian left me to go and join a fellow in Finland for fishing."

Charlie's tone had gathered dejection as he jerked out these brief items, and Allie with her tender heart thought she knew the cause. She tried at once to lift the talk to a less dangerous region.

"Then we were much better off than you in the way of weather, at least," she said, "Janey and I had a perfect week at Barford, and everybody was so kind." She proceeded to give him all the little scraps of village news she had carefully hoarded for his benefit—how Battle House had had a new wing added to it to accommodate the tenant's big family, and how the vicar's sister had married a neighbouring clergyman and Mr. Durrant was left alone.

"Vivian told me," said Charlie, trying to simulate an interest he did not feel. All that simple life of the village with its small duties, its rustic pleasures, how far off it looked!

"What will old Durrant do? He must get some one to look after him, or he will blunder into some mess. He can't keep shape by himself."

"I should have said that was a danger to which young men were peculiarly liable," said Janey with the same veiled sharpness. "Don't you trouble about the dear old vicar, Charlie. He is the trust and stay of every one who knows him, and that's of more solid worth than being an authority on the latest fashion in clothes, or the newest society gossip."

"That's a hit at me, I suppose," he said, trying to hide some irritated feeling under a laugh. "It's a little hard, isn't it, Allie, to be snubbed for wearing your Sunday best when you come to visit two ladies?"

"Janey likes to have her little jest," said Alice looking up with a patient but rather pained smile. "Of course we know, dear, that you must dress like a gentleman. Mr. Vivian expects it, and it is only right."

"Well, I can't afford to go about quite as out at elbows as her hero. As you say, Allie, I can't forget that I'm a gentleman, and the son of a gentleman, though it's my ill-luck to be nothing grander than a bank clerk."

Janey rose from her corner by the table, and began to make some preparations for a meal. There was a smouldering fire in her dark eyes, and a look of repression about her mouth that told their own tale.

"You will at least have some tea, Charlie?" she said as she began to set the cups. She could not trust herself to share the talk any longer; it had its risks for her, and she felt that the way of safety lay in silence.

She went herself to make the tea, running down to Mrs. Jones's dingy premises in the lower regions, and lingering purposely over the task. When she could make no possible excuse for further delay, she went slowly up again. As she entered the room Charlie withdrew his hand from Allie's, and there was a look of stirred feeling on both faces.

The talk could not regain any of its lost liveliness, and very shortly after the meal Charlie rose to go. As he was saying good-bye he stole a look at Janey which she interpreted rightly, and she left the room before him.

She was waiting for him in the draughty passage near the open door, her head bare, but a little shawl drawn round her throat. She waited in silence, looking at him unsmilingly.

"Janey," he began with a voice that was more like a groan, "I'm a scoundrel."

"Yes," she assented in a hard voice, "I know it, and I'm glad you begin to know it too. I should put it even stronger, and say you were a heartless scoundrel."

"I know you despise me; you don't hide it."

"No, I don't hide it. I have hoped that you might see it, and that it might make you think. You called yourself a gentleman a little while ago. Do you think it the part of a gentleman —I do not say of an honest man, because you have forfeited the right to that title—do you think it the part of a gentleman to take money from a helpless woman to spend on follies and luxuries, on worse things than these, for all that I know?"

"I meant to pay it back—only the luck has been against me," he said, growing a little sullen under her lash. "My grandfather had no right to bring me up as if I was to have a fortune, and then leave me without sixpence. It was a mean and an unjust thing to do. Is it my fault if I've been extravagant? I was brought up to it; I was never checked in it."

"Ah!" said Janey dryly, "that's the devil's argument. I've heard it before."

"Well, I can't live on the miserable screw I draw from the bank, and that's the short and the long of it. No fellow could."

There flashed across Janey's mind the remembrance of the night on which he had come to tell them of his good luck; how gay he was over it, how hopeful. The salary seemed so large then; he was going to save the half of it, to wear old clothes, to renounce cigars.

The recollection gave a new incisiveness to her words.

"Perhaps you can't. There are two of us here, and we have to live on a great deal less —you know why. But then, we are only women."

Charlie hid his face, her words had gone home.

"Well, I deserve it, I suppose," he said miserably, "but if you would believe me—you won't, so it's no use—I meant to pay it back."

"By gambling! That was a nice remedy. We shouldn't care to have it back from such a source."

"I do as other fellows do, but what is the use of explaining—you are so hard."

A little pang went through Janey: his tone was so forlorn—and he was her old playmate.

"I am afraid I am," she said gravely. "It makes me hard to see her suffer so. She never thinks of anything but you—night or day, day or night. She lives in fear, and that spoils life for me."

"Then you forgive me, Janey!"

"If it were any use," said the girl with a smile that was very sad. "I suppose you want absolution beforehand—you have something more to confess, Charlie. Were you—were you telling Allie?"

"No," he said hoarsely, "I tried, but I couldn't —it was like committing murder. I must have some more money, Janey. It is for the last time; I swear it. It is for the last time, but if you would save me from disgrace and utter ruin you must help me once more."

She looked up at him with a face blanched into a kind of withered paleness, her great eyes dilated with fear and horror.

"We have none—none left," she said, her dry lips could scarcely form the words, "and—I lost my situation to-day."

THE STORY OF A FAMOUS HYMN.

BY THE REV. JOHN KELLY, AUTHOR OF "LOUISA OF PRUSSIA," AND OTHER SKETCHES.

ONE of the most famous hymns in the German language begins with the words :—

Jesus Christ, my confidence.[1]

Seven out of the ten verses of which it is composed in the original have been translated into English by Miss Catherine Winkworth. One of her versions has found its way into collections for public worship in our own country, and made the hymn known to English lovers of sacred song.

The first verse, in her best known rendering, is—

Jesus, my Redeemer, lives;
Christ, my trust, is dead no more!
In the strength this knowledge gives,
Shall not all my fears be o'er,
Though the sight of death be fraught
Still with many an anxious thought?[2]

The writer of the original was Louisa Henrietta, eldest daughter of Frederic Henry, the reigning Prince of Nassau and Orange, the grandson of Admiral Coligny. She was born at the Hague, in November, 1627. In December, 1646, she married Frederic William, Elector of Brandenburg, afterwards called the Great. A son was born at Cleve, in 1648, who died in the autumn of the following year when the Electress was on her way to Brandenburg with her husband.

The death extinguished for a long time the hope of the continuance of the Electoral house, and of the house of Hohenzollern. The bereaved mother spent some quiet months during the winter following in Tangermünde, in Altmark, where she probably poured out her heart in this hymn.

The thoughts of the hymn correspond to her daily prayer, the original copy of which is preserved in Berlin. The prayer is: "Let us, O most faithful Father, think at all times of the moment on which eternity hangs, that it may not come upon us as a snare, but may rather find us ready to follow Thee joyfully and with assured confidence when Thou knockest through temporal death. . . . And lastly, when the day of my life shall be ended, and I shall pay the debt of nature, be Thou, my faithful, well-beloved Father, a constant refreshment to my weary soul in the pains of death; raise me up by the consolation of Thy Holy Spirit, and quicken me with the water of eternal life, which is the precious, shed blood of Thy Son, my Redeemer, that I may give my soul to Thee again, into Thy hands, in undoubting hope of a future joyful resurrection, and may close my mouth with the sweet name of Jesus."

[1] Jesus meine Zuversicht.

[2] "Lyra Germanica"—Miss Winkworth gives another version in the exact metre of the original, with the music, in her "Chorale Book for England."

In the course of her life the notes of the hymn often recur. We trace the "confidence" and "the strong hand of faith" when she says, in those wild times:—

"If the Lord Jesus were still upon earth, I would humble myself still more, would hang on Him still more than the Canaanitish woman. What I cannot do, however, in a bodily manner, and with gestures, I will do in spirit and in the heart, in the assured confidence that He, in the state of glory, is such an High Priest and faithful Saviour that He can have compassion and can help."

And how her spirit rose above "the lusts of earth," her words in time of suffering show. "How bitter is death! flesh and blood shrink from it. But I draw near the haven of heavenly rest. Already I see the pinnacles and towers of the heavenly city."

This hymn seems to have been present to the mind of her husband, the great Elector, when he was on his death-bed. When the Court preacher, Cochius, had prayed, the Elector said: "As a bird in a hollow tree, so do I hide my soul in the wounds of Jesus." When the chaplain repeated to him the words: "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," the Elector added: "Of whom I am chief."

With his failing powers, he exclaimed: "When shall I come there and behold the face of God? Come, Lord Jesus—ah! come Lord Jesus, I am ready." And then, in a weaker voice, he repeated the words of Luther's translation of the passage which is rendered in the Authorised English version: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."[1] With this testimony on his lips he passed away.

The hymn has won its way to the hearts of all ranks in Germany, and has been found very helpful in time of trial. Several striking incidents showing this are recorded by Dean Koch in his great "History of Church Song and Church Music of the Christian and particularly of the German Protestant Church."[2]

One day Queen Louisa, "the good angel of Prussia," during the Napoleonic ascendancy at the beginning of this century, was standing before the portrait of her predecessor on the throne, the Electress Louisa Henrietta, in the gallery at Charlottenburg, and said "The precious hymn, 'Jesus Christ, my confidence,' has acquired the full rights of citizenship in every Christian family. There is a wonderfully animating power

[1] Luther's translation is, "And will one day awaken me from the earth."

[2] Vol. viii. The present writer would acknowledge his obligation to Dean Koch's history.

in it. It sounds from century to century through all times and changes. Often as we hear it in church, at death-beds, beside coffins and graves, it is always new in the consolation and peace it contains and imparts. It could only well up from a heart as pure, true, and fit as hers." Then, after a short silence, she sat down at the piano and with her sweet voice sang "Jesus Christ, my confidence."

A remarkable instance of the use made of the hymn by a soldier in time of extreme peril is given. After the disastrous battle of Jena, in the year 1806, when the Prussian army retreated across the Saale, a trumpeter from Langensalza was cut off from his squadron, and pursued by several mounted French soldiers. Although hunted almost to death, the brave trumpeter would not give himself up to the enemy, but pressed forward to the banks of the Saale, placing all his hope of escape on an attempt to swim the river. He came, however, to the brink of a steep precipice, at the base of which the river rushed, the opposite shore being flat and sandy. There was no time to choose; his pursuers were at his heels. Boldly deciding, he lifted up his heart to God, pressed his spurs into the flanks of his horse, and rider and steed plunged into the depths. A loud shout of astonishment and terror was uttered by the pursuers. They halted at the edge of the precipice, and looked down at the trumpeter, who raised himself from the waters. His horse had been killed, but he reached the level bank of the river. Without thinking of his further safety, his first impulse was to thank God for his wonderful deliverance. He knelt down on the sand, drew his trumpet from his back, and blew the chorale, "Jesus Christ, my confidence," upon it.

The French soldiers who had come up to the brink of the precipice and witnessed and heard all that the trumpeter did, were so much impressed that they dropped their already uplifted carbines and bowed themselves involuntarily, as if they recognised in what had occurred a marvellous interposition of providence.

Meanwhile, other French soldiers came up who did not display the same feelings. As the last notes of the sacred tune died away, a fatal shot, fired by one of these late comers, sent the praying soul of the trumpeter into the presence of God.

A more recent instance occurred during the war between the Carlists and Republicans in Spain in the year 1874. The Carlist general, Gamandi, had made prisoners of a band of Republican free lances. It was not usual to give quarter in such cases. In order not to be troubled with them on his retreat, General Gamandi gave orders for his captives to be shot forthwith. A priest was sent to minister consolation to them. Among the Carlists there was a German officer who was very highly esteemed by them. When he heard what was about to be done, he resolved to take a walk in order not to witness the execution of the bloody order. It so happened, however, that his way led him past the place where the prisoners were. He saw how the priest blessed the kneeling men. A man in the prime of life embraced his boy, who was not more than fourteen years old; a greybeard, much affected, looked upon them while he muttered his prayers. All of a sudden one of the prisoners was heard singing the German hymn, "Jesus Christ, my confidence." All heads were turned towards the singer. The German officer could not shake off the impression made upon him by hearing these noble strains in a foreign land. He hastened to the General, and begged the life of his fellow-countryman. He had a hard struggle with the General, whose only son had recently been put to death by the Republican free lances. The German officer reminded the General of his fatherly grief which he might, perhaps, avert from another heart by this act of grace. His intercession prevailed. His countryman was set free.

In times of famine, as well as in times of war, the hymn has played an important part. In the years 1867–68, when there was great scarcity in Eastern Prussia, the sick and starving people sang the hymn in the streets as a prayer for help. In a letter from Goldapp, written at the time, a woman says: "I cannot hear the hymn 'Jesus Christ, my confidence,' sung any more without tears coming into my eyes. By day it is bad enough, but to be startled from one's work by it in the evening, in the howling storm, is too dreadful."

The hymn has had a reconciling effect in domestic life. A remarkable instance of this was recorded in the "Evangelical Church Times" (German) in 1847. An East Frisian peasant woman, called Baumgarten, had a heavy cross to bear in the intemperance of her husband. She sighed over it, and prayed to God about it, but never said a hard word. One day the husband had to drive some military stores to a distance at two o'clock in the morning, but at eleven o'clock the night before he was still sitting in the public-house. His wife sought strength by prayer, and went to him, and forthwith the wildest jubilation broke out. His companions said: "She shall not go away until she has sung a song with her beautiful voice." In vain she begged to be excused. Then she took a step backward and began:

'Jesus Christ, my confidence,
And my Saviour, now doth live.'

The uplifted glasses were at once put down; and when she had done singing, her husband went home with her without saying much. He was pricked in his heart. As it was ordered by God, in the morning in the escort of the transport there was a pious dragoon, who was a member of a Temperance Society. With him the carter made friends, and he was soon wholly won by the patience and love of his wife.

This hymn has been a comfort to many on their death-beds. The missionary Ziegenbalg, who preached the gospel with much success in India, and translated the New Testament into the Malabar language, when he was dying in Tranquebar, on the 23rd of February, 1719, said to his friends

who surrounded his bed: "I have fought a good fight." Thereupon he testified: "Yes, I shall persevere in this conflict through Christ, that I may receive a glorious crown." He repeated the words of Christ joyfully: "Father, I will that where I am there may my servants be," and desired the hymn "Jesus Christ, my confidence" to be sung. This was done with a musical accompaniment. "The words seemed to diffuse a heavenly light through the night of death for the dying man; and he intimated that it was as clear to him as if the sun were shining upon his face. Soon afterwards he fell asleep."

The hymn has been much used also as a funeral hymn. The naturalist, G. H. von Schubert—the friend of the philosopher Schelling—says in his book: "Altes und neues aus dem Reiche Gottes" (Old things and New out of the kingdom of God), "This hymn was sung when my father was buried. It was my mother's funeral hymn; and was also sung when my sainted wife was laid in her grave. It is therefore a favourite hymn of mine, and I have often sung it with tears of love and longing."

The celebrated physician and philanthropist, the friend and medical attendant of Queen Louisa of Prussia, Dr. Hufeland, when he died in Berlin in the year 1838, begged that it might be sung at his grave. This was done by the vast concourse of people that attended the funeral with a most impressive effect.

The theologian Hengstenberg, of Berlin, narrates that, during the revolution of 1848, amid the thunder of the firing and the tumult of the people, the tune of the hymn was played on the bells of one of the towers. A few days afterward it sounded forth again when the dead were borne to their graves in one hundred and eighty-seven coffins, accompanied by twenty thousand citizens, armed and unarmed.

During the last Franco-German war it was always sung at the graves of the fallen. It is said to have been beyond measure impressive on the 19th of August 1870, when those who fell at the battle of Gravelotte were buried, and the regimental bands played the old tune of the hymn of hope of the House of Brandenburg.

We venture to close this article with a new rendering into English verse of the hymn. We give the piece without the omission or abridgment of any verses, and have adhered pretty closely to the sense of the original. Double rhymes have not been reproduced.

Jesus Christ, my confidence,
  And my Saviour, now doth live,
This I know, and shall not this,
  To my heart contentment give?
Solemn thoughts doth death's long night
Ever in my mind excite.

Jesus Christ my Saviour lives,
  I shall also life behold,
Be where my Redeemer dwells,
  Should not then my heart be bold?
Christ our Head will ne'er forsake,
But His members home will take.

By the bond of hope am I
  Far too closely with Him bound,
My strong hand of faith on Him,
  Firmly holding will be found.
Death can never sever me,
From Him to eternity.

I am flesh, and therefore must
  Ashes be again one day;
I confess it, yet will He
  Raise me up that so I may
Unto all eternity
With Himself in glory be!

By this skin, as I believe,
  Shall I then encompassed be,
In my body God Himself
  Shall be looked upon me.
And in this, my flesh, shall I
Jesus ever see on high.

Then the light of these mine eyes
  Will my blessed Saviour know,
I myself with ardent love
  Shall to Jesus ever glow;
Weakness that clings to me here
There no longer shall appear.

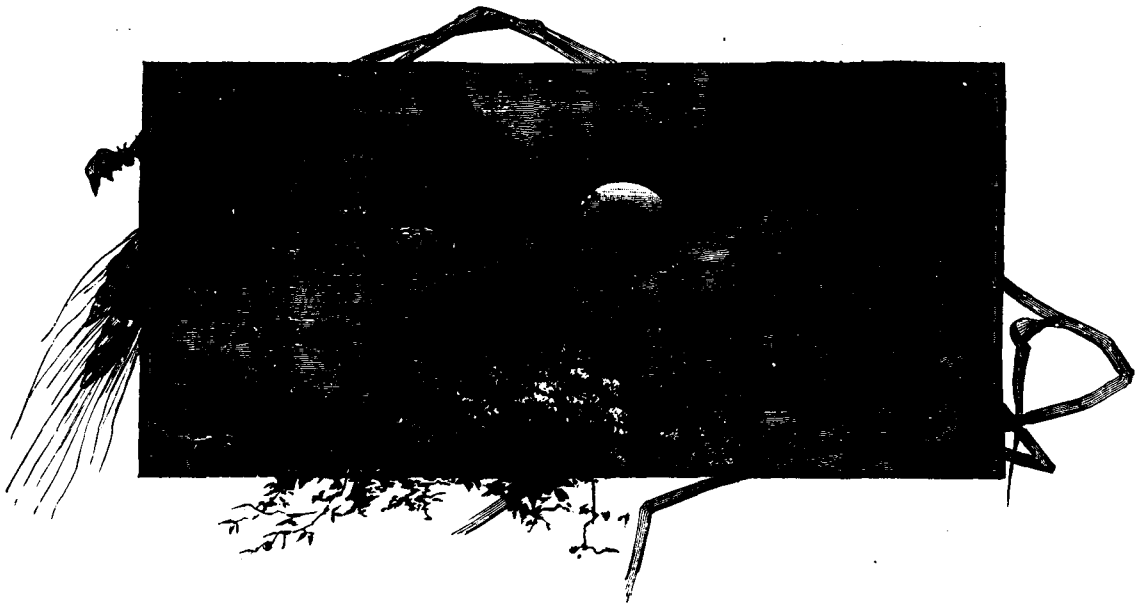
Fresh and glorious shall be there
  What here sickens, prays and sighs,
Earthly shall I here be sown,
  Heavenly shall I there arise.
Natural I pass away—
Spiritual live for aye.

Be consoled and sing for joy,
  Jesus, members, bears you all!
Give not place to sorrow now,
  Die ye, Christ again will call
When the trump of God shall sound
Through all graves the wide earth round.

Of the gloomy grave make sport,
  Laugh at death, and hell deride,
For ye through the air shall rise
  To your loving Saviour's side.
Then beneath your feet shall be
Trouble and infirmity.

Only that your spirit rise,
  All the hosts of earth above,
And to Him whom you would join,
  Now yield up yourselves in love,
On the things above your heart
Set where you would have your part.[1]

[1] The text of the hymn used for the purpose of this translation is that given in Dr. Stromberger's "Geistliche Lieder evangelischer Frauen des 16. 17. 18. Jahrhunderts," Giessen, 1854.—"Spiritual Songs by Protestant Women of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries."



Like as a Father.

O HEART of love, so strong, so great,
In whom all Fatherhood is found,
Who for each wandering child doth wait
With love that hath nor depth nor bound,
Thy mercy follows all who roam,
And bids the vilest welcome home.

The prodigal, far off, estranged
From home and happiness and Thee,
Is compassed by Thy love unchanged,
That grieves his misery to see.
Though loud his sins for judgment call,
Thy patience still outweighs them all.

The famished sigh, the bitter tear,
The first steps on the upward road;
Each trembling hope and craven fear
Are known to Thee, thou Father-God.
At home, at rest, Thou canst not stay
While one child seeks Thee on the way.

The ring, the robe, the kiss of peace,
The bliss of sonship all restored,
The trust that bids misgiving cease,
The affluence of Thy festal board:
With these Thou dost to all make known,
The glad home-coming of Thine own!

O when shall all Thy sons arise
And leave the shameful husks of sin,
From stranger shores and alien skies
To Thy sweet welcome entering in?
When shall Thine ingrate children come
To share once more Thy rest and home?

Thou knowest, Lord; Thy mindfulness
While life endures can ne'er remove;
No guilt can break Thy power to bless,
No need exhaust Thine heart of love.
O soon may all Thy lost ones be
At home, our Father-God, in Thee!

MARY ROWLES JARVIS.

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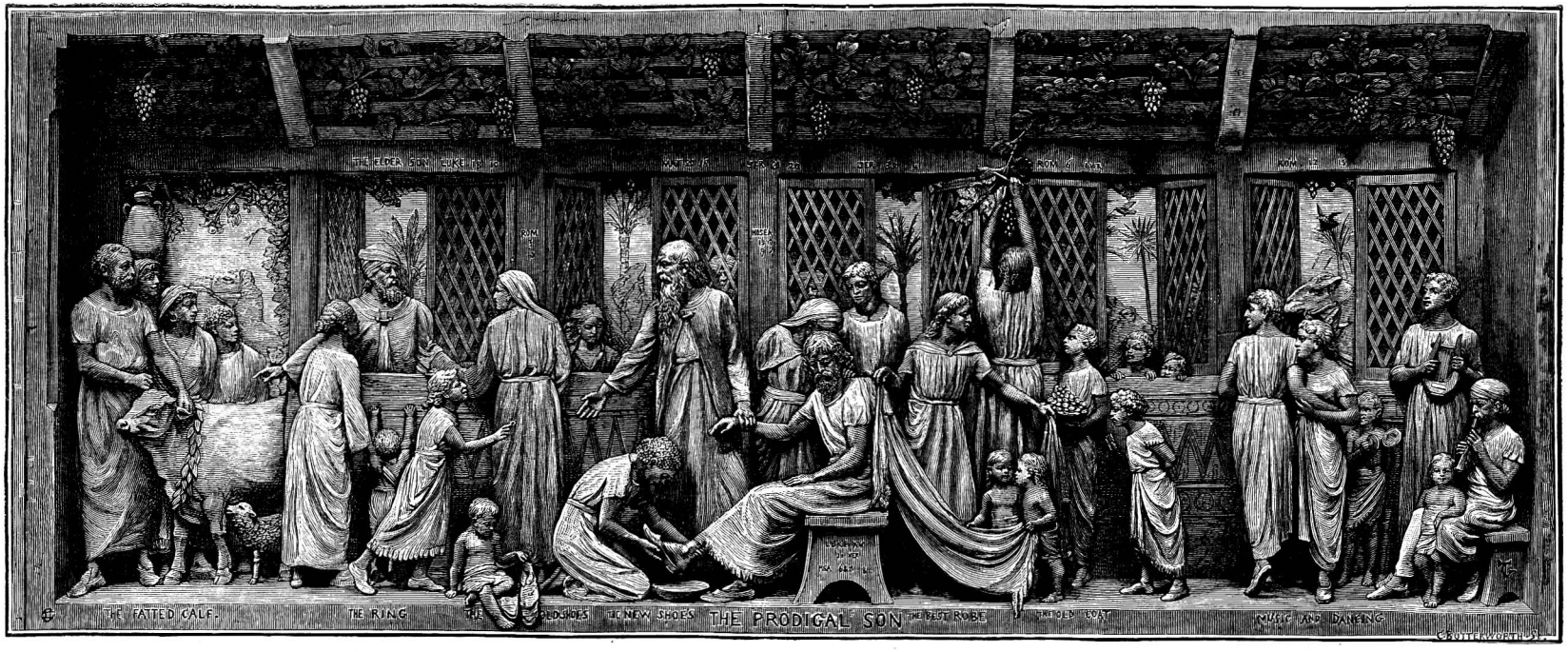


But the Father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

St. Luke xv. 22.

By permission of Messrs. Doulton.]

[*From the Terra Cotta by George Tinworth, exhibited at the Society of British Artists.*

THE BATTAHS OF SUMATRA.

A NEW CHAPTER IN MISSIONARY ANNALS.

III.

RAJAH OF MUNTO PANEI, A CANNIBAL CHIEF.[1]

DURING the years of my companionship with the Battah friend of my youth he was under the full spell of the superstitions of his race. I sometimes met in the hut, within our grounds, occupied by him, a short man much darker than himself, who was evidently regarded by him as a sorcerer or wizard, in whose judgment and "occult powers" he had unbounded confidence. I remember my friend becoming lame, and his telling me that this man had discovered that it was through a malignant charm, and that he had found the bones of a fowl buried at the door of my friend's hut; that these bones were impregnated with subtle virulence, and that by his constantly passing over them he had become lame. The man undertook to counteract the influence and discover the enemy who had buried the fowl, but I recollect that my friend continued lame to the end of our days of intercourse. I also remember that he told me that this man was in constant communication with spirits, and that if I was willing to approach these spirits and gain their favour, the man would guide me at night into a jungle, light a fire, perform certain incantations, and that these spirits would so breathe upon me that no sword or bullet could ever penetrate my flesh. My friend became a Mohammedan after I left him, and eventually, as I have stated, a Christian, but probably to the last he never altogether escaped from the appalling superstitions of his people.[1]

The general prevalence of belief in the human control over unseen spiritual existences can only be accounted for by the positive possession by certain men of extraordinary and occult energies. In no tribe of our race are beliefs in unseen spirits and the possible control of them by gifted men, more general than among the Battahs; and this control, apart from all interposition, whether sought or not, of Divine power. Nor does there exist any definite idea of personal immortality. Burton, as we have seen, declares: "During my whole journey, I saw nothing like religion." Anderson also could find no traces of adoration or petition towards any fetish or other supposed deity, and states: "Their only mode of worship is beating the drum." In Marsden's days carved images of a horse's head were sometimes called "Battah gods," but they were really the usual standards of war, consisting of a pole with a horse's head cut out at the top from which hung down a long tail of horse's hair. Some, again, have regarded as idols certain rude representations of human heads and arms at the top of sticks covered with real or imitated human hair; these are occasionally found over the doors of houses and at the entrance gates of the villages. Again, oaths are administered among the graves of the village ancestors, and offerings of food presented on the appearance of signs that the graves have been disturbed.

In the 1887 Report of the Rhenish Missionary Society, it is stated that two months before a bough had broken and dropped from the "sacred

[1] We are indebted for several of our engravings to illustrations drawn by a Chinese artist, in John Anderson's "Mission to the East Coast of Sumatra" (1823). The figures in this first engraving represent: (1) Battah fiddle; (2) kalapan or sword; (3) opium pipe; (4) lamp to light it; (5) handkerchief; (6) box with chunam, &c.; (7) pigdanay or spitting pot; (8) knives, used for cutting human flesh, &c.; (9) pillow for reclining upon after smoking opium.

[1] See the volumes of "The Society for Psychical Research."

tree" (I suppose a variety of the religious tree of India—the pepal), which stands in the midst of a village which is named, under which the recognised ancestor of the community is buried. Then all the people said, "The ancestor wants a victim;" the chief thereupon had the grave opened, and a victim "brought." The victim is not specified, nor is it stated that there was any slaughter; but the missionary evidently regarded the transaction as seriously wrong, for he adds: "I spoke about that evil deed, in which all took part, except the 'elder Daniel' (the native teacher) and his Christians, but they would not listen, nor say they were sorry, so I excluded them from the community, and the chief besides lost his place; then he came with his people and declared his repentance, but I told him that he should not be received again until by his deeds he had proved his repentance."

Great efficacy is ascribed to he offering of slaughtered animals. When these are buffaloes, cows, or goats, the best pieces often are placed for a time on the ancestral graves, with special ceremonies, including a peculiar dance, and invocations made to their spirits, and afterwards the pieces presented are consumed by those who offered them. All this looks like belief in personal immortality, but if the people are questioned the replies show only a dim sense of a kind of immortalised mass of humanity, without individual identity, reminding us of the deified humanity of the Positive Philosophy.

Authorities have been quoted to show that the people are without any religion; and yet as in reference to the question of immortality there seem to exist facts which to some degree contradict so absolute a statement. Even Burton himself says, "At the first village we entered we found the people performing some act of religious worship in the open air before the *balli* or town-hall. I believe their object was to inquire of their deity the proper time and best mode to make an attack upon an enemy. Their offering was a young plantain tree with a chicken tied to the longest leaf, and an old piece of wood, about a yard long, with some gewgaw tied to its head. Over these they were beating several gongs and drums. After continuing these for some time, the man who fills the double office of doctor and soothsayer, or priest, pretends to discover from one of their books on war which will be the most successful mode of annoying the enemy."

Certainly there are no temples, no idols, no priests, no rites of intelligent worship; and yet, could we get at the heart of the chief leaders in such ceremonies as have been described, we should find vestiges of a practically defunct religious faith. Undoubtedly, if the men do not now, they will tell you that their fathers believed in a mighty unseen being who had to do with the creation of the world, and strange to say with him are connected two other beings holding, however, a very subordinate place to him. Their names are still preserved—*Batara-guru*, *Sori-pada*, and *Mangala-bulan*—in which may be recognised Sanscrit and Malay roots. These beings, if now at all realised, are regarded as in effect superior human beings like those in their tribe who have attained important rank as chiefs. The first of them is in their estimation very far ahead of the other two in power and position. He rules in heaven, the second in the air between heaven and earth, and the third on earth. No doubt there are traces of the notion of a supreme divinity, and at the same time of this divinity in a triad form; but the whole idea is a mere theory, and practically a dead letter.

A BATTAH WARRIOR.

Not so the belief in the evil and other spirits. It is almost impossible to get any clear statement as to who they are or whence they emanate. Some of them appear to be regarded as representing departed heroes, but though in these respects the floating notions are but as shadows, there is stern and terrible reality about the influence which the belief exerts. And here again, strangely enough, we have three orders of being: the superior, the middle, and the inferior: occupying, as stated by those who speak with authority, three different floors of one house, spirits above the earth, upon the earth, and under the earth. Such is the deep and powerful and constant and universal conviction about the presence and activity of those spirits, almost all of whom are regarded as malignant, that the people live under a reign of terror, and are continually driven in self-defence to deeds of horrible savageness.

In the absence of any realisation of a supreme deity, this belief becomes an organised system with its accepted officials; there are two orders of such officials, the *Datu* and the *Sibaso*.[1]

Let us look at the *Datu*. He is the professed

[1] *Datu* is a well-known Malay word, but its meaning varies with different circumstances and in different places. It may simply mean, as on the East coast of Sumatra, a man of authority and influence, but with the Battahs of the West coast it seems to be limited to a particular class of these who deal with evil spirits. *Sibaso* has it seems nothing to do with the Malay word *baso*, to wash or bathe; and even the renowned Battah scholar, Dr. Van der Tuck, cannot translate it. I presume Si is the common prefix to proper nouns.

master of all the arts belonging to magic and sorcery and fortune telling and the curing of disease. Often he is this, as descended from famous men of his profession, or through special and well remunerated teaching from long-established and celebrated professors of these arts. From them he not only receives instruction as to the various methods of manipulation, but books of direction, which, if ancient, are written on bambu and bark of trees, and if modern on paper. (The Battah literature seems to consist chiefly of such books, but it also contains songs and legends and fables.) If he be a renowned man, he may in grave emergencies be sent for from a great distance, but unlike the magicians of other races who take care to be well paid before they begin their operations, he is at any rate, as it respects the cure of disease, not paid unless his services prove successful. Is the birth of a child expected, he is summoned to perform certain enchantments by which a strong and healthy and prosperous life shall be secured for the unborn infant. If already born, he must study the day of birth in the light of his books, and say whether it was a lucky day or not. On the other hand, are there signs of unrest and displeasure among ancestral or other surrounding spirits (as in the case of the fallen bough which has been cited), he is called for by the entire community affected, and must settle what is to be done, and if victims are to be offered he slays and presents them. At the funerals of magnates and at village festivals and sometimes before the tilling of fields, he officiates. Is there to be a battle, each side sends for a famous *Datu* who shall settle the time and method of conflict. But especially is it when disease is present and death is threatened that all his arts are called into requisition.

There is no doubt that these men, possessed of knowledge accumulated through many generations are acquainted with the medicinal properties of the numerous plants about them and use this knowledge with effect. It is certain that they are familiar with certain terrible poisons, and also the antidotes for them. But the universal belief is that every kind of disease, physical or mental, is the work of some evil spirit, and according to the kind of disease and the inferred character of the spirit are the materials and methods adopted by the *Datu*. The designation which seems best to describe the man in his chief functions is Exorcist.

The *Sibaso* is a person of much humbler rank, and receives but small recompense for what he may effect. Every village has in it one or more men or women who act in this capacity. They do not seem to profess any knowledge of the arts and materials presented in the books on Magic, but to depend on communications made to them in moments of rhapsodic inspiration. Like the *Datu*, however, they are consulted as to proceedings at a festivity, or means of recovery for the sick. Call for the *Sibaso* and he appears on the scene with a drum, and begins to dance in rhythm with the sounds he makes upon it. His dancing and drumming increase in vehemence, till at last he is worked to the excitement of frenzy. Now he is regarded as possessed of a spirit. Every ear is intent on catching his impassioned utterances. Whatever he declares or prescribes, comes as the prompting of the spirit within him. The knowledge and authority with which he speaks is superhuman. The sound of the drum gathers the entire village around him. One and another and another is irresistibly thrilled into sympathy

A BATTAH FROM THE GREAT LAKE.

with him, and rushes to his side dancing as wildly as himself to the beat of his drum. So powerful is the contagion of the raging excitement, that sometimes even the Christian converts lose all self-control and dash into the scene, dance like madmen, and becoming similarly frantic, echo the wild rhapsodies of the chief actor. Soothsayer seems to be practically the nearest equivalent to his designation.

It is easy to imagine the puerilities which characterise the utterances of both classes of professed dealers with the spirit world. Unfortunately these are also full of cruelty. The methods prescribed for the cure of the sick are often nothing less than prolonged torture for the wretched sufferer, rousing him it may be out of a merciful unconsciousness into smarting pain or violent agitation, and changing what would have been a sleep into death to the agony of a desperate and mortal struggle. And again, when the slaughter of victims is directed, it is often so prescribed as to multiply the torments attending their destruction.

Nor is this all. Extraordinary as is the settled conviction, that human beings, without any Divine aid, can control the dire operations of invisible demons and even crush them in their power and compel their flight—still more extraordinary and far more terrifying is the conviction that the same beings can entice and concentrate the fury of evil spirits on their fellow men. Pay the *Datu* well and he will by his power over malignant spirits, inflict calamities and miseries on your enemy. One instance will suffice. A missionary in the report for 1887, referring to a native preacher called Laban, writes: "Laban's father was years ago cursed by a priest for having stolen rice.

Shortly afterwards he was seized with a dreadful disease, and for many years dragged on a miserable existence in the fields. He often said to Laban: 'My boy, whatever you suffer, do not steal; it is dreadful to die as I am dying.' Laban himself lost two fine boys in 1885, and last year his sister hung herself because she had been driven away by her husband on account of disease. Laban took care of her two children though he is very poor." How full of horror and terror must life be when actually a series of dread calamities proceeding from father to children and children's children are traced to the curse of a man!

BATTAH WOMAN.

Dark, however, as this picture is, yet blacker colours must be added. In our first chapter we saw that the Battah was comparatively comely in appearance, dwelling in fixed homesteads, industrious in his habits, cultivating the natural affinities, observant of the proprieties of domestic life, treating woman better than his surrounding neighbours, superior, too, as to truthfulness and honesty, affectionate to his children, hospitable to strangers, desiring firm government and peaceful times, with a copious written language and an ancient literature of his own, and yet the Battah is a cannibal. Or, to return to my "Cannibal Friend" (Chapter iii. "Betel-nut Island"), he was naturally amiable, obedient, patient, and affectionate;[1] but he had tasted human flesh and relished it. No doubt there has been exaggeration on the subject,[2] but the evidence is certain that he has a craving for human flesh and eagerly avails himself of every ostensible excuse or pretext for indulging it. He is abundantly supplied not only with vegetable but with animal food, and he probably always was ashamed of his propensity, and yet human flesh was the choicest meal that he could partake. Of course the Dutch government forbids it on the direst penalties, but missionaries tell us that even those who are under this rule by their own choice, and accept its authority as wise and good, have been known to confess that but for the restraints of the government they sometimes, at least, would gladly revert to a cannibal feast.

Marsden quotes from the accounts of the earliest travellers, statements which show that the people have been known to be cannibals from the very commencement of European acquaintanceship with them. Moor, in his "Notices of the Indian Archipelago" (page 114, &c.), supplies abundant and appalling evidence on the subject. John Anderson's book, "Mission to the East Coast of Sumatra," is full of very shocking details, accompanied by portraits of the most notorious of the man-eaters.

It is a rule that every prisoner of war is to be eaten. Anderson met a man who had become a hired soldier for the purpose of eating human flesh; it is also a rule that any man guilty of any crime for which the recognised penalty is death (such as adultery or robbery with violence), shall be killed and eaten. Because of these quasi legal enactments Marsden declares not only that "they do not eat human flesh as a means of satisfying the cravings of nature owing to a deficiency of other food," but adds, "nor is it sought after as a gluttonous delicacy as it would seem among the New Zealanders."[1] "They eat it," he says, "as a species of ceremony," to show, in reference to one class of their victims, their detestation of crime, and, as to the other, the completeness of their revenge on their conquered enemies. He is certainly right in saying of the first that they may escape by paying a heavy fine, and of the second that they may escape by ransom or exchange. In accordance with this idea the Battah custom has been called "cannibalism by law."

In the "Asiatic Researches" will be found a paper of John Leyden, M.D., which contains substantially the same account of Battahs feeding on their aged relatives, as is given by me in "Betel Nut Island," p. 29.[2]

[1] Let me refer the reader to the letter thrilling with tender emotion which he will find in "Betel-nut Island," p. 33. How I teased him about his lame foot and his cannibalism, and yet he was always ready with smiles and sweetmeats for "Baba Johnny."

[2] I was misled by Madame Pfeiffer ("A Lady's Second Journey Round the World," 1855) to some exaggeration in my book (p. 28) as to the number of Europeans murdered and eaten by the Battahs.

[1] But compare this remark with his own description of this "species of ceremony," Ed. 1783, p. 302, ending with the exclamation, "To such a depth of depravity may man be plunged when neither religion nor philosophy enlightens his steps!"

[2] He states that "when a man becomes infirm and weary of the world, he is said to invite his own children to eat him in the season when salt and limes are cheapest. He then ascends a tree, round which his friends and offspring assemble, and as they shake the tree, join in a funeral dirge, the import of which is 'The season is come, the fruit is ripe, and it must descend.' The victim descends, and those that are nearest and dearest to him, deprive him of life and devour his remains in a solemn banquet." (He then refers to a similar practice among ancient nations mentioned by Herodotus). Dr. Leyden's paper was written while he was at Penang on sick leave. The account has all the appearance of truth. It is so minutely circumstantial and so shockingly harmonises with what we have seen of the people as closely bound together by family relationship. No doubt at Penang he would hear the story from Battahs themselves and Malays who knew them well, and indeed he remarks: "This

But there is one form of the revolting practice which is reported by the missionaries as still to be found among the independent Battahs which is nearly as astonishing. It is said that somtimes as the result of the gambling mania a man not only loses all he has, but is overwhelmed with debt which neither he nor his relations can ever discharge. The debtor is then kept in ward for some twelve months, during which interest so accumulates as, it may be, to double the debt, and then when it is clear that the money cannot be raised, he is actually fed for slaughter, and finally eaten at one of the festivals of the community to which the winner of the stakes belongs!

A BATTAH COTTAGE.

My readers may naturally exclaim with horror: Such enormities belong to the past; it cannot be that, with all the civilising influences which must now have reached every nook and corner of Sumatra, cannibal feasts ever take place among this extraordinary people. I will therefore conclude my chapter with the translation of a statement by a missionary in the Report of the Rhenish Missionary Society for 1887.

"About five weeks ago I went again to Si-Gumpar in order to save a girl, about twenty years of age, whom the people had taken prisoner, and had tied to the stake, in order to kill her a few days later on occasion of a festival. [In another document, a second missionary says of this missionary: "In Si-Gumpar he saved a girl from the most dreadful death (she was to have been eaten), and brought her back to Parsenbilan, which deed opened to him many hearts in Si-Gumpar."] The poor girl had stood in the open air for two days and a night when I heard of the case. Immediately I sent to Balige for Ompu-batu-tahan, a Christian chief. He came, and I sent him to prevent the murder, if possible, and he succeeded in delivering her, after promising a buffalo and 160 marks. The poor creature had already had her two ears cut off, and a piece cut out of her cheek, and it was high time to rescue her, for the people had the firebrands to commit the fearful deed. After I had nursed the girl for a week we took her to her parents at Parsenbilan, who paid back the 160 marks."

Can we wonder that as Burton, the first missionary who went among the people, saw them in the midst of all their pristine savageness, he should write: "One is ready to exclaim, Is there really any power by which these tigers may be transformed to lambs—these vultures to doves?"

JOHN T. BEIGHTON.

account is certainly more likely to excite incredulity than the account of Marsden, but it is the account of some of the Battahs themselves, as well as that of the Malays in their vicinity."

It has been observed that the race is divided into three sections by distinct dialects, and also that they dwell in separate communities, so that what may be true in one part of the country may not be true of another. May not this circumstance, and also that the account belongs to a period now long past [1808], when the people scarcely felt anything of outside influence, explain the absence of its confirmation by more recent authorities?

Things New and Old.

WILLIAM BURNS.—It was at Newchwang that William Burns spent his last days. At the lower part of the town, not far from a temple, there is the house he lived in, already considerably changed and tenanted by people who never heard his name: they were merely two little rooms in a Chinese house, for he had adopted many of the Chinese habits as well as dress, and could live on eggs and Chinese scones that to any one else have the flavour and consistency of putty. The families change rapidly at these ports, ten years effecting more than forty would at home; but there are a few that preserve the pleasant traditions of the man, his earnestness and holiness, his genial ways and bright smile. He did not lay much stress upon his costume, though they tell that long habit had rendered it natural, and that his face had wonderfully caught the Chinese expression. He used to say that he was content if it allowed him to pass among men without notice. He was revising his translation of the "Pilgrim's Progress," and would slip into a quiet corner of a tea-house, sip the tea and listen eagerly to the conversation. As soon as he heard a new colloquial phrase he was content, and would withdraw rejoicing, and the first greeting that his friends had would be, 'I have got a new phrase,' as he repeated it in high glee. There is no personality, apparently, so marked as his among the Christian missionaries. Men spoke of him everywhere with regard and admiration, and the impression he made upon Chinese whom he did not win to Christianity seems to have been profound. It was mainly the impression of a noble and unselfish character, of a pure and single-minded and intensely earnest man.—*Dr. Fleming Stevenson's Letters.*

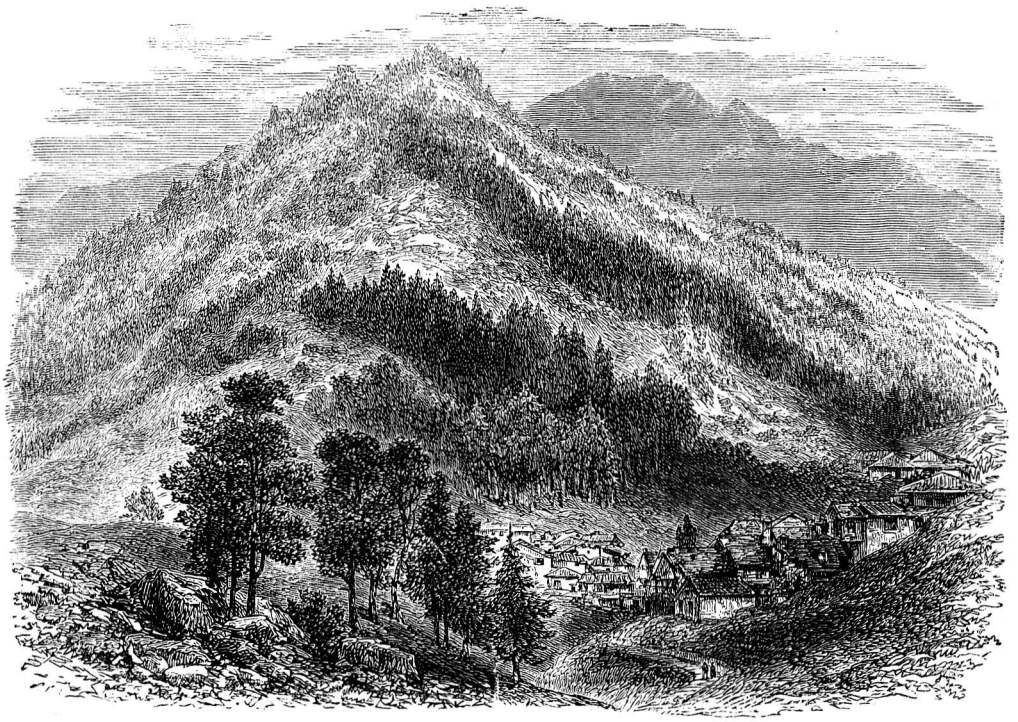
THE SAINTLY SELF.—Self dies hard. Perhaps the subtlest self of all is the saintly self—the self that asserts itself in denying itself, and fosters a subtle, spiritual pride in the emphatic profession of humility. I meet with dear Christian souls who seem calmly to take it for granted that they are living on a higher plane than their less enlightened fellow-Christians. "We are living the higher Christian life, and we have such wonderful times up here on the mountain-top; we are so sorry for your poor dear half-enlightened souls, who are still on the wilderness side of Jordan, and have not yet entered the promised land, with which we are now quite familiar." There is a deal of dying to be done still by those who cherish these lofty thoughts of their own attainments. The holiest man will ever be the man who thinks least of his own holiness.—*Rev. W. H. Aitken.*

THE GLORIOUS RETURN.

A STORY OF THE VAUDOIS.

BY CRONA TEMPLE.

CHAPTER XV.



THE ROCK OF BALSILLE.

THE two women could give Arnaud very full and important information as to the whereabouts of the enemy. Madeleine, who knew every yard of the ground, could explain just where a passage was possible, exactly where the best hope lay of forcing or outflanking the Savoy guard. In their hurried escape at daybreak they had seen the spot chosen for the defence of the pass, and they could guess at the number of men entrenched behind the giant boulders, and the means they had taken to render the natural defences of the place impregnable.

The Vaudois halted about three or four miles from the crest of the gorge, well on the Prali side, and out of sight of the Duke's men. There was not one amongst them all but knew the enormous importance of the next few hours. If they were repulsed and beaten back the Marquis de Larrey, who was in command of the French troops beyond the Doire, or the Marquis de Parelle who held the valley of St. Martino, would be on their track, and they must die on the threshold of their own land, like rats caught in a trap. There was no time for much calculation. Arnaud drew his men together, and briefly told them what they must do.

"Beyond the pass is the vale of Lucerna, Angrona, and the homes we love. The pass is held by two, perhaps three, or even four hundred troops. We must force it, or die. God, who hath helped us thus far, will not forsake us now. Ask His aid, Vaudois, not with your lips only, but with your lifted hearts. His strength is with us, as He hath indeed shewn us from the moment we left the wood at Nyon. For my part, I can trust Him to give us victory even here. What say you, Vaudois?"

There was a hoarse murmur, a sound more significant than articulate words. The haggard hungry faces were alight with a living faith, an ardent hope.

"Lead on," said one in whom they trusted, Montoux, the second in command to Arnaud. "Lead on! a blow struck swiftly needs not to be struck twice. Two hundred or four, what matters it? since they must be encountered; and so lead on."

Then Henri Botta stepped to the front, leading Madeleine.

"My wife well knows these hills; here she was reared, and her father's farm stretched yonder up towards Mount Cornan. She crossed the pass this morning at the sunrising, and saw where the enemy lies to bar our path. There is a way, a toilsome and dangerous way truly, but still one that can be trodden by Vaudois' feet, and it will lead us out beyond the crown of the defile, beyond the garrison that holds it against us."

"It is really so," said Madeleine, speaking out simply before them all. "The path is scarcely more than a track for wild goats, but it will serve."

"Aye, it will serve," said Arnaud. "Gaspard Botta, do thou go with thy mother in advance. And as for this maiden ——"

"She stays at my side, an' it please thee," interrupted the foster-mother quickly. "She is my comfort, my charge, my daughter that is to be—Rénée Janavel of Rora."

The name was enough. Some few who had looked grave at the idea of trusting at so important a crisis to a woman's guidance, turned eagerly to look at this girl, the descendant of the old chief Janavel, the man who was waiting even now at Geneva to hear how they had fared. She had something of his bearing too, the same high brow and lofty carriage of the head; ah, yes, it was only fitting that one of the name of Janavel should lead again the warriors of the valleys.

Long afterwards the story was told in Vaudois' homes of how the Pass of Guliano was won; of how the mountaineers crept along the dangerous ways, winning foothold and advancement where it was hard to believe that armed men could go; and always before them was Madeleine Botta, hale and noble in her age and homely dignity; and at her side, with hand held ever out to aid her foster-mother, and eye watchful for each sign of danger, trod the grandchild of their hero, Rénée Janavel. And over and over the tale was repeated how the enemy broke and fled, leaving behind them provision, ammunition, and baggage, a welcome store for the men who came empty and poor in all things save belief in their cause and faith in their God.

Before the sun set the Savoy Guard were fugitives on the mountain side, and the Vaudois stood shoulder to shoulder on the Col di St. Guliano gazing down on the Lucerna valley, the very heart of their fatherland, the goal of their dearest hopes.

There was a renewed strength in Henri Botta's face and mien as he led his wife into the rear, and brought her food from the Savoy stores, and water to bathe her bruised and bleeding feet. And as he tended her and Rénée he turned to kiss the forehead of his adopted child with fervent love and pride.

"God has indeed blessed me, since my old eyes behold once more not only Piedmont but you," he said, turning from one to the other, as if he found it hard to believe that they were there in very flesh and blood.

"I have dreamed of you, often—of you and of the old house at Rora; as I have dreamed sometimes of God's angels and of the fields of Heaven. This then is true," he laid his knotted hand on Madeleine's. "I verily behold thee! and the other dream, the Heavenly one, is yet to be realised."

Rénée was crying softly, for very joy and weariness; it was sweet to feel that the lonely struggle was over at last, that she and her mother, Madeleine, were encircled with friendly care, and held safe in loving companionship. The long months and years of hiding and terror were past—the waiting-time had ended in content.

And yet the Vaudois had but entered the borders of their Canaan, the victory was yet to be gained, the "Return" was yet to be accomplished.

Arnaud knew that this was so, and his look, though as firm of faith as ever, was grave to sadness as he gazed down on Lucerna from the Col di St. Guliano.

He knew that hitherto his men had conquered by the wild dash of their onslaught, by the sudden and unexpected way they attacked the French and Savoy troops. This could not continue.

No reinforcements could come from the wasted Vaudois villages, no ammunition could be reckoned on save what they could wrench from the enemy, unless it were the stones from the hillside which might be used instead of bullets; and as for food they must trust to the half-ripe corn in the fields, and to the produce of such farms as dotted the glens and slopes.

Every day would raise fresh difficulties for them—every mile of ground must be gained by battle, and held by costly strife; and as the struggle swept here and there through the valleys how were the wounded to be tended, or the dead to have Christian burial?

It was no wonder that Arnaud's brow was lined with anxious thought, as his glance swept the country lying before the entrance to the pass.

There was stern work in front of his men, and he knew it.

The next day the Vaudois took Bobbio without much difficulty, and they attacked the large town of Villaro in the midst of the Lucerna valley. This latter place was defended by veteran troops, and the Duke's general succeeded in thronging into it a large body of reinforcements: and then what Arnaud had foreseen occurred.

The Vaudois were beaten back, and obliged to disperse, scattering themselves over the Vandalin range, the very ground where Henri Botta and his sons had retreated before that terrible storm of death and fanaticism in 1686. The papal forces had triumphed then, the mountaineers were driven like autumn leaves before a gale. Was this to be their fate again, now, after such high hopes and glorious imaginings?

Their chronicler writes: "The defeat at Villaro changed their tactics; henceforth they attacked rarely, and then only convoys, advanced posts, and detached columns. They entrenched themselves in mountainous retreats difficult of access, in natural fortresses easy of defence, while their detachments scoured the country to obtain provisions. It was on the declivities of their mountains, in the centre of their verdant pastures, once covered with their flocks but now solitary, that they prepared to sell their lives as dearly as might be; decided, as they were, to die in their heritage on their widowed and desolate soil, or to wring from their prince an honourable peace, and freedom to worship their God."

But during these trial days they had what they lacked in 1686. Arnaud was their leader, their comforter, their minister.

With a courage that never flagged, and a simple faith that was as strong as the sunlight, he preached to them the old enthusiastic trust in the power and the grace of the Almighty God.

These critical days lasted throughout September, and on the 22nd of October two thousand French troops crossed the frontier to unite with the Duke's forces, and once more "sweep the valleys clean of heresy." Then Arnaud called a council, and asked each man if he had any plan to propose, any refuge or resource to indicate. But for the most part, they recognised the dire necessity of the case, without being able to advise a remedy.

"We can conquer the villages, we can force the passes," they said sadly, "but we cannot hold possession of the Valleys—we, so poor a remnant, so helpless a company."

"Neither so poor nor so helpless as those with less righteousness in their cause," said Gaspard Botta. But he was a young man, and modest, as became his years, therefore his words were almost unheard in the conclave.

It was the leader, Arnaud, who decided on what was to be done.

At best it was but a forlorn hope.

Northwards, just within the frontiers of the Vaudois Valleys is Balsille, a village on the Germanasque stream: here Arnaud determined to make a stand. It was a natural fortress, and strong enough, he thought, to be held—at least throughout the winter.

It is a wonderful citadel, this rock of Balsille: a lofty hill broken into terraces, with fountains of water, and a peak commanding the country for miles around, where sentinels might give timely warning of the advance of the foe. Here they were savagely attacked by the whole strength of the French troops; but the soldiers beat against the place in vain, for the mountaineers had seized every corner of vantage, and had strengthened by earthworks and entrenchments the almost precipitous cliff.