THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

THE NIGHTINGALE.

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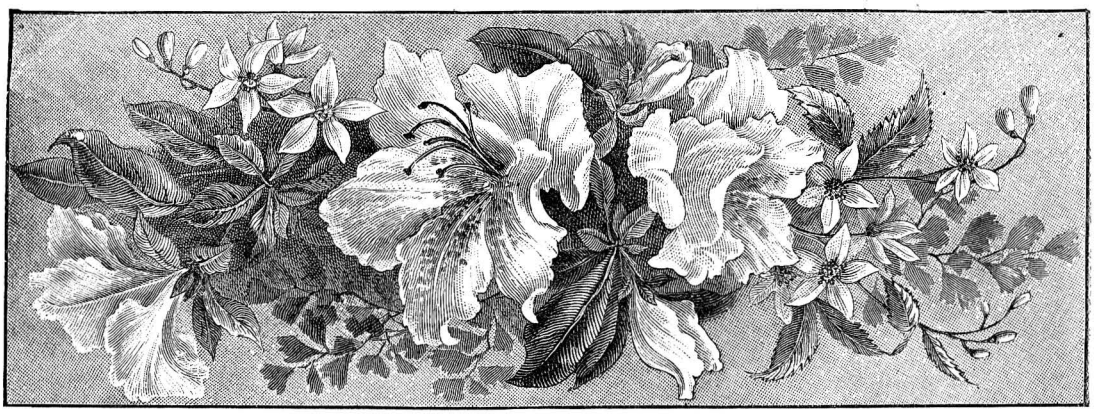


The Nightingale.

THEY wandered through the woods what time
The sound of busy life grew still,
And evening breeze and vesper chime
Came stealing faintly o'er the hill.
And one looked up with radiant eyes
That heavenward seemed her soul to bear,
And caught the glory of the skies,
And smiled to see the world so fair.

The other bent a patient face,
Where drooping lids fast held for aye
The sightless glance which might not trace
Those fleeting footsteps of the day.
Ah! not for her that rosy gleam
Athwart the portal of the west,
Nor sparkle of the running stream
Beneath the moorland's purple crest.

Nor mystic charm that shadows weave,
Nor all the joy of sunshine born;
She may not see the fading eve,
Nor laughing freshness of the morn.
She may not see—and here she sighs,
Thinking of lots more richly blest—
The straight young forms that mothers prize,
The faces that she loves the best.

Oh! it is hard to stand alone,
Environed thus in dreary night;
And feel that others thankless own
The great, the glorious gift of sight.
I marvel not her pulses stirred
With something of rebellious pain;
We are not strong enough to gird
Our grief in thoughts that ne'er complain.

But while she mused, a nightingale,
By evening's soft allurement wooed
With wondrous music to assail
The slumb'rous hours of solitude,
His joyance uttering sweetly sang
A heavenly lay to mortal ears;
And to the darkened eyes, there sprang
A sudden fount of grateful tears.

Thank God, although she might not read
The open page of Nature's book,—
Affection's yearning could not feed
With treasured smile or answering look,—
Although one sense for ever bound
Made blank and void the world of sight,
There yet remained the world of sound
To cheer the darkness of the night.

Friendship's expressive voice, and love's,
The children's laughter ringing free;
And mighty harmony which moves
The soul of man to ecstasy,
Whether it tremble from the string
In measured time and cadence clear,
Or fetterless from nature spring,—
'Tis music still, and hers to hear.

Then wherefore weep because bereft
By Wisdom of one priceless boon?
Is never good nor blessing left,
That human hearts despair so soon?
Through stilly night the answer came,
And faith revived, and love grew strong,
And hope's dulled ashes turned to flame,
Enkindled by that raptured song.

Sing on, sweet bird! and haply teach
With thy melodious heritage,
Some lessons far beyond the reach
Of mere philosopher or sage.
Oft shall thy ministry avail
To cheer the sad, and loose the chain
Of carebound thought. Dear nightingale,
The world is better for thy strain!

SYDNEY GREY.

CHAPTER XIX.—A FRIEND IN NEED.

The one thing that sustained Janey and helped her to bear up under this new calamity was the thought that at any cost to herself, the news of Charlie's flight must be kept from Alice. She must hear nothing of this last disaster until the blow could be softened by certain tidings of his hiding-place.

This was how she put the matter to herself when sense slowly came back to her, and the cold air blowing on her forehead roused her. He must be found, must be brought back, if Allie's happiness were not to be wrecked. Her anxiety, deep as it was, was not complicated by any dread on his account. She was nearly certain that Mr. Vivian for his son's sake and for the sake of an old family friendship would refrain from prosecuting Charlie; there would be no public scandal, neither was there any reason to dread a rash act on his part. His life was in no danger; he would not try to silence the voice of remorse by any attempt to end his existence. Janey told herself with a sad bitterness that he was too much of a coward not to shrink from pain—if he had been brave he would have remained to face the consequences of his guilt.

But though Charlie's personal safety did not depend on his return, she knew that Allie's peace of mind did. To Allie's pure and upright nature it would not seem any lessening of his sin to know that he was to go unpunished. The disgrace did not lie in the punishment but in the offence, and Janey knew that there would be torture for her in the thought that he had fled to evade the law's just claims on him. Nothing but his return, his full confession, would ever ease her pain. Therefore, for the sake of Allie's peace and for the sake of his own moral recovery, he must be found and brought back.

The necessity until this was accomplished of keeping up a brave show of unconcern before her friend braced Janey. It held her mind intent on that point, and saved her from too great brooding on other aspects of the question. The call for a constant watchfulness, for a schooling of her mobile face that usually so easily betrayed her, kept her energies wholesomely employed.

It was of course needful that Allie should know of the loss of Janey's situation. That misfortune, which shrank and dwindled into very small proportions before this larger one, could at best have been concealed for one night, for how else than by a confession was she to account for her new leisure?

Alice bore the blow very patiently, perhaps, in the face of other imagined troubles this one looked small in her eyes, too, and her sole aim and endeavour was to cheer and comfort Janey.

"It is no fault of yours," she said with a little touch of pride in her voice, as they sat at breakfast on the following morning. "Mrs. Collins thoroughly appreciated your help, Janey."

"Yes," said Janey making a poor little attempt at a jest; "but I'm glad her appreciation stopped short of carrying me off with her to Algiers."

"Did she—did she wish you to go?"

"Nothing would have induced me to go," said Janey evasively; "not even the thought of seeing Mary. Mary must take my girls as I took hers, she is so well now, that she will be quite able for the double charge."

"And you will very soon get other pupils here; with Mrs. Collins' recommendation that must be an easy matter."

"Oh, yes," said Janey as cheerfully as she could, "I dare say there is somebody else in London who wants a governess and who may be induced to give me a trial."

She knew, better than Alice, the value to set upon a recommendation—especially a written one, from a late employer, but she could not damp Allie's wistful hopes.

"Are you going to begin the search to-day? couldn't you take one day's rest, dear?"

"Oh, I had a whole day yesterday. It might demoralize me to take more, and some one else might step into the shoes that I covet."

The thought of sitting at home and resting was intolerable, and she was glad to have so solid an excuse to cloak her chief object in going out.

She talked on during breakfast, feeling it to be almost a relief to have this shielding topic behind which to hide her other cares. A little while ago how everwhelming this trouble would have seemed, and now how small it looked. She rose as soon as she could, and went upstairs to dress. The door of the parlour was open when she came down again, and Alice was watching there to kiss and bless her, to send her away with words of hope.

"I have some work to take back this afternoon," she said; "you remember it was promised to-day. Could you meet me at the shop at three o'clock, and—you will have good news for me then, you know, and we might come home together."

Janey pondered deeply a moment. Three o'clock, it would give her very little time, but she decided quickly.

"Yes," she said; "I don't know about good news, but I hope I may have some. I will meet you, Allie."

It was a further help to her resolution, for which she was thankful, to feel that she need not dread the recurrence of Charlie's name on Alice's lips. It had not been often there lately, it was kept for her prayers. The wound bled in secret but she bore herself with self-restrained quiescence.

On getting down into the street and away from the watchful eyes of love, Janey determined that she would take an omnibus; time was more precious than money, empty as was her purse. She entered one that in due time set her down in Kensington High Street, and thence she quickly made her way to Charlie's lodgings. The hope that she might still find him there—faint as it was—buoyed her up, and she clung to it until she heard from the maid who answered her knock that he had left the morning before.

"Called away sudden, on business—leastways, that's what he said," the maid answered her anxious inquiries rather shortly, "and not likely to come back, so Mr. Lake as shares the parlour told my aunt."

Not likely to come back! The words gave the listener a pang.

"May I go up to his room?" she asked rather hesitatingly. "I think he must have left a message—a note. My name is Warner, or possibly he may have written to his aunt, Miss Lindsell."

"There ain't no notes as I see," said the girl pertly, beginning to smell a mystery, "and what's left—and it's nothing but rubbidge—goes to the week's rent which he didn't pay up, not as a gentleman should."

"I don't wish to touch any of his things," said Janey, looking rather white; "but I should like to make sure that there is no message."

The girl stood grudgingly aside and let her pass, but she followed her close, edging herself behind her into the sitting-room. It was very untidy, and it bore many signs of late bachelor occupation; the remains of breakfast were still upon the table, a newspaper lay on the floor where it had fallen, pipe-racks adorned the walls, and whips and guns betokened a sporting taste on the part of one of the occupiers, but there was no sign of a letter or written message.

"The best things is Mr. Lake's," said the handmaid, who viewed Janey in the light of a spy with designs on the property. "As for letters, I hope you've convinced yourself, miss, that there ain't none? Mr. Lindsell were never one to write much, though a good many has wrote to him since he come here which he would rather hadn't written."

Janey shrank again; she had heard of duns—had their importunities made part of Charlie's bitter experiences in the far country? She went down again and out into the street, having ascertained that Mr. Lake was still likely to occupy the rooms Charlie had shared, and resolving to write to him; but what to do meanwhile—what step to take next?

The gaiety of the busy High Street, full of nurses and children, and people shopping in leisurely comfort from carriages, jarred upon her, and she turned aside for a moment and took the flagged path that leads to the parish church. It was open and empty as she thought, and she crept into a pew near the door and put her tired head down against the book-board. The silence, the softened light from the coloured windows had a subduing influence and calmed her insensibly. "If Allie were here she would pray," she thought; but Janey did not pray, for she found as yet no rest in God. Presently she knew that she was not alone, and that the organist had chosen this quiet morning hour for practice, for from an unseen corner behind a pillar the music now rolled out.

She sat still and listened; music had its spells for her; it was Bach's Matthew Passion that filled the silence, that great gift from the poet of sound which an ungrateful world allowed to slumber unheard for a hundred years. The perfect harmony, the noble dignity, the subtle beauty of that music held and thrilled her, and

she vibrated responsively to its call. She no longer asked herself haunting questions, the flats and sharps, the harsh discords interwoven with her life in the world outside were all forgotten. The great master put the whole of his beautiful child-like soul into this legacy which he has handed down to us, and in its truth and tenderness, its consummate musicianship, its mournful grandeur we have set forth for us as never painter of Italy rendered it, the awful mystery of the Cross and Passion.

"O Thou whose head was wounded," crept softly now between the aisles.

Every one who knows the Fatherland is familiar with the slow pathos of the air. Bach must have loved this old chorale well, for time after time, with ever varying harmonisation, it reappears in the Passion music.

Oh, what a dreary longing and yearning it woke in the listener's heart. "Would that I might rest my burden there!" was her bitter cry. "Oh, that I might find Him!"

But though she went out of the church sad and downcast, the moment's exaltation forgotten in a new depression, the night of darkness was near ending for her too, and soon the dawn would break and the day shine for her. For never yet was this heart's cry unanswered.

In the moments of this pause she had determined that it would be best to seek out Honoria Vivian and restore the money which she had carried with her in the faint hope of finding Charlie. There was now no longer any plea for concealment; he had made that impossible. The world within the bank if not the world without must know by now of his disgrace; restitution was too late, or if it were to be made at all it must be made in some other way.

The money ought properly to have been restored through Doctor Ellis, since it was he who had borrowed it, but she shrank from the revelation this would involve. Miss Vivian must have heard already—must hear in any case of Charlie's flight; the bitterness of this thought swallowed up the lesser bitterness of having to make a full explanation. But she had a lingering hope that Doctor Ellis might not hear of the matter at all. She had not, as she thought, betrayed herself to him, and it was possible, just possible, that rumour might pass him by.

"Honoria will not tell him," she thought, "she is a good woman and she is Allie's friend."

She remembered Honoria's address, though she had not gone with Alice to see her, and she made her way there as quickly as she could, though it was noon before she reached the close and crowded quarter where Honoria had made her home. It was very squalid, very dreary, and the faces that looked indifferently into hers had a dull apathy in them that gave an impression of hopelessness, depressing to her already overwrought mood.

"What is the use of striving or caring?" they seemed to say. "We gain nothing by it but a little additional pain. Better to live and die like a dog."

There was nothing to distinguish Honoria's house from those near it unless it were that the door was shut, and that a better attempt at cleanliness characterised it; but a surprise was awaiting Janey on the other side of the door, for when it was cautiously opened it was Miss Lemming's head, curls, cap, spectacles and all that appeared in the slit.

"Miss Janey!" she cried, making room enough for Janey's ingress, and taking her into a warm embrace. "Well, if it isn't good to see you here. This very day I said to myself 'I'll go to-morrow and see Miss Lindsell and Miss Janey,' and here you are!"

"And here you are," Janey answered smiling, "and that is much more wonderful to me. Have you come to stay?"

"While Mr. Augustus is away. Mr. Augustus has gone on confidential business for his firm, Miss Janey. They have that high a respect for him and trust in him that they couldn't send no other; and I'm here while he's gone and doesn't need his steaks cooked tender and his buttons sewed on."

"I am sure Miss Vivian must be glad to have you in this dreadful place."

"She said she would borry me," laughed the little woman, "and maybe when Mr. Augustus comes home he'll be agreeable to go on letting me be lent. For it's truly, as you say, Miss Janey, a dreadful place, and when you come to choose between a godly man like Mr. Augustus, who says his prayers night and morning and loves his neighbour, and gives his goods to the poor, and the sinful creatures here that can't hardly open their lips without swearing, and don't know right from wrong,—you haven't got any eyes if you don't know which way your duty lies."

"You will choose the unpleasant way," said Janey, with a smile. "Is Miss Vivian here? I want to speak to her."

"She's here for a wonder, for she's mostly out all day among the sick, and we're not to speak ready for visitors yet, with the white-washers not to be catched after the dinner-hour if you was to go down on your bended knees to them; but there's a poor young thing—no better than she should be—that she's taken in here to look after, and has laid on her own bed, and is with her at this minute. It ain't nothing catching, Miss Janey, or I wouldn't let you go. The right-hand room at the very top, my dear."

Janey climbed up as she was directed, a long flight of worn, dark and dirty stairs. At the top it was lighter, and the landing-passage and steps had been scrubbed white. She paused to take breath a moment, and then she noticed that the door of the room she had been directed to go to was open. A low sound of voices came out to her and she hesitated to enter.

From the point where she paused she could see the sick girl Miss Lemming had spoken of lying on the bed, her face worn and flushed with fever, and her eyes unnaturally bright, with a dreadful hungry eagerness in their depths. Honoria in her rough plain dress, was kneeling by the bed, her back to Janey, who saw nothing but the outline of that beautiful head with its

close-cut hair. She had the sick girl's hands in her own, holding them in a firm and tender clasp.

"Ah, but you haven't sinned as I have sinned; you are a lady, and you don't know what it is to be poor, and sick, and hungry; to be tempted when there's nothing else but sin between you and starvation. But God hates us for yielding, and He curses us and sends us to hell—that's what the preacher told us. I laughed and didn't mind then; but now, when I'm lying sick here, and perhaps going to die it's in my ears night and day." And with these distorted words ringing in her memory, she shuddered violently.

"And did he tell you nothing of the love of Jesus Christ?" said Honoria, with a sad thrill of indignation in her voice; "nothing of the infinite love that stooped to die for us—for you and me? Listen, Katie, you think that I do not know and cannot understand; but I have been more wicked than you. You were hungry, poor child, and cold, and in need and in misery, and the flesh is very weak; but I who had everything the world could give me, I sold myself willingly, deliberately, for a little more money and a little more power. I shut God's voice out of my heart; I would not listen, I coveted these things and meant to have them, even if they were to be had at the price of my soul's salvation Oh, in God's sight I have sunk far lower than you; but He would not let me go. He goes after us, lost sheep as we are, and brings us back. He sent me a great sorrow, Katie, and he opened my eyes and showed me the dark abyss by which I was walking, and by-and-by He led me up to the light. And you too, my poor child—you too. It is His voice that is calling you; will you not listen? Oh, be sure of this, His love never wearies, try it as we may. He died for us—He, the Son of God—could love be greater than that? Look to Him, Katie, lean on Him, He will not fail you; only put your hand out to Him and He will take it and lead you gently to Himself. You trust me, dear, I who can do so little for you, will you not trust Jesus Christ who can do all?"

The vibrating pleading voice had held Janey rooted to the spot, when it paused she crept noiselessly away, awed and shaken. Strange and mighty influence that one soul may have over another in those solemn moments when we dare to reveal ourselves. Janey had sometimes thought hardly of Honoria; had held her sacrifices to be exaggerated, her zeal overdone. All those unjust judgments reproached her now. What strange depths of tenderness she had surprised in this proud nature, what humility, what severity towards self. And the love of Christ had done this.

She turned into an empty room and leaned her head against a window-pane, seeing nothing of the outward squalor, hearing nothing of the clamour that never ceased.

But when Honoria found her there by-and-by, it was easier than she thought to pour out her burden of trouble. That deepened insight into another's needs, which is a gift of the new birth, helped Honoria to understand this sorrow too.

"I had heard nothing of it," she said, with deep concern. "I have not seen papa for two days. There is a poor girl here who has needed my care, but I will go to him at once."

"If only he would not—not do anything yet," Janey panted; "for Allie's sake."

"I am sure he has taken no steps; be comforted on that score, Janey."

"Here is your money back again, Honoria; I went to Doctor Ellis to borrow it. I could think of no one else."

"Couldn't you trust me, Janey?"

Janey hung her head.

"I didn't know you then," she said, "and now I have brought all my burden to you."

"Doctor Ellis asked the money for his own uses," said Honoria, with delicate tact, divining that this might be a sore point with the girl; "he lets me be his almoner sometimes. And you must let me be yours, Janey—you must keep this. There may be expenses, forgotten things to pay."

"No," said Janey firmly; "I cannot take it, indeed, I think now that we were weak, wrong to help and shield Charlie as we did. We made things too easy for him. He must feel now that the obligation lies on him. Oh, if we could only find him!"

"Have you no idea where he is?"

"None, except that a fancy has come to me that he may have gone to Norway—to his relations there. I remember he once spoke of it before. He used to keep a portrait of Astrid Arnesen on his mantelpiece; I was in his rooms this morning and it was not there. It is very little to go by, but still——"

"Yes," said Honoria, after a pause given to thinking. "It is quite likely he has gone there—very likely. Let me see, the steamer sails from Hull on Thursdays, he was in time to catch the last. We must telegraph to the office there, and get a list of the passengers."

"But he might not go under his own name!" Janey flushed and hung her head. Charlie as a fugitive might have fallen to the necessity of an assumed name.

"There is another way. I know some one in Bergen who could find out when the boat gets there. Later we can telegraph direct to his relations, but he could not reach them for some days. And there is Jim, my brother, I know his address; I heard from him this morning. He will do anything for Charlie; would you like me to ask him to help our search?"

"How much you are doing for us! Charlie might listen to him; he loves him more than any one else except Allie, and—one other, maybe."

"Then Jim must be enlisted immediately. Now, dear, go down and ask Miss Lemming to make you some coffee, she makes it excellently, while I get ready to go to papa."

"Honoria, what have you done with your hair?" asked Janey, when she turned to go. The question was a trivial one but she felt the need of relief from the long strain.

"Cut it off," said Honoria, smiling. "It took

too much time; one doesn't want to waste time over one's toilet here."

It was surely the least part of her sacrifice, but it touched Janey oddly.

"Your beautiful hair!" she said; "what did you do with it?"

"Burned it," said Honoria, this time laughing. "I never heard that the most sentimental of girls kept her own hair, Janey."

When Janey got at length to her trysting-place with Allie, there was no Allie there. She waited for a time, weary and wondering, and vaguely anxious, and then she went home. She was carrying none of the good news Allie had prophesied with her, for there had been no moment in the day for a visit to the Governesses' Agency.

But when she got upstairs and opened the door, she knew in an instant why Allie had forgotten the appointment and everything else. She looked up with a sad and tear-stained face, but she tried to summon a smile for Janey.

"Who told you?" cried the girl fiercely, kneeling down by her, and putting her arms round her as if to protect her.

"Mr. Vivian has been here," Allie whispered. "If you had told me—if you had trusted me, Janey, I think we might have found a way."

Janey bore this reproach in silence.

"He will not—punish him?"

"No," said Alice sadly, "he will do nothing, he will take no steps if Charlie stays away."

POUSSIN'S "ELIEZER AND REBEKAH."

WALKING one day among the ruins of ancient Rome with a visitor who wished to take away with him some precious fragment, Poussin exclaimed: "I will give you the finest antiquity you could desire!" Then stooping down and collecting amongst the grass a little sand and some broken cement, mingled with portions of porphyry reduced to powder, he said, "Signor, take this back with you, and say, 'This dust is ancient Rome!'" A story symbolic of the work of Poussin's life; seeking Rome in its ruins, he caught its spirit, and, embodying it by his art on canvas, he has given us "the finest antiquity we could desire." Imagine some of the petals which in Alma Tadema's "Roses of Heliogabalus" are seen descending in showers upon the guests, gathered into a vase, sealed hermetically, and after fifteen hundred years opened in a Roman villa. He who first caught the faint perfume still lingering within the vase would have lived for a moment among the ashes of classic Rome, and would have feebly, but truly experienced that which Poussin sought, and of all painters would seem to have most fully realised.

Other great men of this great age lived under the same influence, and it is ever present in their works, but so mixed with many other qualities that it is far from being their leading characteristic, as in Milton, for example. The peculiarity with Poussin is that the spirit of ancient Rome possesses and absorbs all his faculties, so that he has neither eyes, nor ears, nor heart for anything else. Arriving in Rome in 1624, with the exception of the two years during which Louis XIII. almost compelled him to come to Paris, he never left Monte Pincio until he died in 1665. He wished to be buried as he had lived, with the utmost simplicity; but the Romans felt that a man had passed from among them who, although by birth a Frenchman, was a truer Roman than any of their fellow-citizens, so they bore Poussin's ashes with much pomp to their church of St. Lorenzo in Lucina.

Poussin possessed one of those natures which, having passed through some troubles early in life, falls into a philosophic frame, and, like the sage of old, instinctively "flies storms." His clear, calm intellect no sooner understood its work than he gave himself to it with a persevering energy that knew no break to its peace, except the painful time during which he was forced to be the inmate of a palace, and to become painter to the king. He has left in one of his finest pictures, now at the Louvre, the impression this short experience of court life made upon him. Time is portrayed sustaining Truth in the heavens; below, on the earth, Envy, writhing in the toils of a serpent, and Discord, brandishing a dagger, look up furiously but impotently at the object of their hate. The clouds are dispersing, revealing a deep, blue sky. Poussin, simple, austere, soon fell into difficulties in the midst of his intriguing fellow-courtiers, and he fled, for the rest of his life, to dwell among the ruins of a bygone world beneath the deep, blue, peaceful Italian sky.

For in his early life he had known what it was to struggle with difficulties. Born in 1594, at Villers, a hamlet in Normandy, about three or four miles from the greater of the twin towns of the Andelys, his father conceived painting an occupation only fit for artizans and other toiling slaves, and in no wise becoming a gentleman. As it happened, a celebrated painter of the time, Quintin Varin, lived in the Andelys, and he, struck by the boy's talent, gave him some help. At eighteen years of age Nicolas Poussin secretly left home, and came to Paris, where he placed himself under a Flemish portrait painter, named Ferdinand Elle, and afterwards under George Lallemand, a tapestry-work designer. But, entering into close friendship with a young Poitevin gentleman, the latter generously shared with him his purse, and introduced him to Courtois, the king's mathematician, who was able to serve the young artist, for he possessed a collection of original drawings by Raphael and Giulio

Romano, which he allowed Poussin to copy. This seems to have been the inspiring influence which caused his genius to burst into life and take its special bent.

The young Poitevin took Poussin to his ancestral home, but his mother proved to have similar ideas to Poussin's father as to the nature of an artist's calling. She treated the young painter as a sort of lacquey. He accordingly went back to Paris, found a new patron in an Italian poet, and after a time went to Italy. However, he soon returned, probably for want of funds, and obtained a commission to paint a "Death of the Virgin" for the Jewellers' Company in Paris. At last circumstances proved more entirely propitious, and going again to Italy, he found a patron in Cardinal Barberini, a virtuoso of the time, and nephew to the reigning pope, Urban VIII.

When he thus finally settled in Rome, Poussin was thirty years of age, and it was no doubt in the first years of his residence that he became so deeply impressed with the genius of the place. Vigneul Marville, who knew him well, says that he often met Poussin among the ruins of ancient Rome, sometimes in the country, or on the banks of the Tiber, drawing whatever struck him; and occasionally carrying in his handkerchief stones, mosses, flowers, and other things which he wished to paint after nature. Felibien adds, "Poussin studied wherever he was. When he walked through the street he observed everybody's actions, and if he saw anything extraordinary, he at once took out his book and made a note of it. He avoided society as much as possible, withdrawing into the most solitary places in the Roman vineyards, where he could freely study the antique statues surrounded by interesting scenery." Accustomed in youth to a land like our own, to skies of which the faint blue was often covered with grey mists, how great a revelation of the stronger and grander side of art must it have been for him to study, in the midst of the Roman vineyards, the works of classic art enshrined in ruined temples or villas, whose remains stood sharply defined against a cloudless sky? Nothing more delightful to such a mind, with a natural sympathy for the grandly simple, and a natural repugnance to the vague and the obscure. Or at evening to wander along the banks of the Tiber, watching the barges slowly floating "through a marble wilderness," while the deep and solemn shadows changed day into night. What food for the calm contemplative spirit which, with the qualities just mentioned, go to make up the peculiar character of Poussin's intellect.

All great painters have had the poetic gift—one or two, as Michael Angelo, having prophetic spirit; but far more frequently their poetry has been in the philosophic vein, and amongst such Poussin stands out pre-eminent. Victor Cousin calls him "the philosopher of painting," and his pictures, "religious or moral lessons." Necessarily they have the philosophic temperament, there is in them all an undertone of melancholy. But it is the melancholy of Il Penseroso: "Calm Peace and Quiet." Poussin is indeed worthy to be mentioned with the author of "Lycidas." He who knows that most perfect of all elegies will understand the charm of Poussin.

All this must be borne in mind on looking at one of his works. He sees everything in the clear moonlight of antique philosophy. He goes to it on all occasions, even takes his ideas of the only true way to paint a picture from the Greek theory of music, according to which every subject must be treated in its own particular mode. If it were grave, serious, full of wisdom, the Doric must be used; if vehement and furious, the Phrygian; if melancholy and plaintive, the Lydian; if peculiarly sweet and touching, the Hypo-Lydian; and if jocund, the Ionic. In carrying out this rule, the first thing Poussin did was carefully to consider the dominant feeling the subject was calculated to inspire, and what phase of that feeling; then to take pains that not only the conception and the arrangement, but even the execution to the minutest detail, should be in harmony with that one particular phase of feeling. As Poussin, according to the judgment of high authority, excelled in composition, it would seem that either he was a man of great genius, or that his system was founded on truth.

The picture before us was painted to satisfy a patron who had seen a Guido sent to Cardinal Mazarin, in which the Virgin was represented in the midst of a number of female figures variously occupied. M. Pointel, the patron in question, wrote to ask Poussin to paint him a similar style of picture. The painter chose the subject of Eliezer at the well outside the city where his master's kindred dwelt, offering Rebekah the presents. That it is a thorough example of the rules he laid down for himself, and that his meaning may be learnt by their aid, seems to have been an accepted idea, for we read of a debate in 1668 between Lebrun and Philippe de Champagne on this very picture; and again in 1682, seven years after the death of the latter painter, their discussion was reproduced at a sitting of the French Academy in which Colbert presided. We have not the aid of "their explanation of the motives of the picture" or of "the judicious observations" they made thereon, but perhaps pursuing Poussin's rules we may extract something ourselves.

No one can read the narrative in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis without feeling that it is calculated to awaken trust in God and man, and that the particular aspect under which this sentiment is represented is trust in God and man, leading to happy and prosperous issues. Such a subject, according to Poussin, would require the Doric mode, of which the essential features are simplicity, strength, stability, and if the composition of the picture is considered it will be found to have just these characteristics. Eliezer is placed in the centre, and on either side are well-balanced groups of female figures. Eliezer having already received an assurance that his faith in the directing providence of God is answered, offers with confidence a present to the maiden who has shown him unhesitating hospitality. Rebekah looks with some innocent

[*After the painting by Nicolas Poussin in the Louvre.*

ELIEZER AND REBEKAH.

pleasure at the jewels, while the group behind her regard her good fortune with sympathy. But as in a musical work there must be just enough of discord to make the harmony of the whole more perfectly felt, so in the group behind Eliezer feelings of an opposite character are depicted, but within well-restrained limits. The foremost maiden, whose figure exactly balances in the composition that of Rebekah, looks on with curiosity at the offer Eliezer is making, and becomes so interested that she trusts entirely to her companion to see that the water she is pouring from her pitcher runs in the right direction. The girl behind carries her water-pot with such entire confidence in herself, that she allows her mind to be distracted by jealousy at the sight of the jewelry offered to Rebekah. The rest are so absorbed in their own affairs as not to have observed what is occurring: two companions with their arms round each other turn to joke with a third who is coming, laden with her water-pots, to the well. Two more are seated conversing, while one at the well is drawing up with confidence a pot of water. Thus beside Rebekah there are twelve female figures so arranged as to give the composition the utmost strength and convey the thought in a simple direct manner. That of the group in sympathy with Eliezer and Rebekah are disposed in an orderly manner, one common feeling uniting the three. The two farthest off, with their arms entwined, balance with the pair on the other side, but here it is unity in sympathy, there unity in indifference. The sympathetic group have for background the solid pillar on which rests a globe, and an amphitheatre on the rising ground in the rear, giving the idea of love resting on a firm and joyful foundation. On the other side the grouping is complex and the action mobile as that of a dance; another moment and all will be changed. The weight of the palatial buildings behind prevents, however, this feeling from going too far, and unity with the opposite half of the picture is maintained by the correspondence of the elevated portion of the buildings with the square pillar in the foreground, the two making a frame between which a long stretch of peaceful country is seen bathed in a glowing sunset. All, in fact, the rich landscape, the palatial buildings, the brilliant colours of the dresses, all combine to give the idea of Old Testament felicity as expressed in the words of Eliezer: "The Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great; and He hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and men and servants, and maidservants, and camels."

The original is a story from the golden age. There is not in it one jarring note. Every one exhibits the most beautiful faith in the goodness of God and in each other. In the fidelity Eliezer displays to his master there is no trait but what is perfectly disinterested. Abraham is one of the grandest figures in antiquity, but in this particular narrative the slave comes out even in a more noble light than his lord. His simple faith is as perfect as that of a child, and is immediately and manifestly answered. And such men give birth to faith in others: an atmosphere of trust and confidence attends them wherever they go. On this particular occasion Eliezer inspires every one with confidence immediately he addresses them. Rebekah believes in him at first sight, accepts his presents, and takes him to her father's house. Laban comes out to welcome him, and Bethuel and his wife no sooner hear Eliezer's message than they are convinced it is their duty to send their daughter with him, and Rebekah being consulted, declares herself ready to depart with him at once.

What a beautiful idea this story gives of the estimation in which service was held in primitive times. The servant then was only one remove from son or daughter. Solomon sums up Oriental wisdom on the subject when he says, "A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren." (Prov. xvii. 2.) This was the position of Eliezer; in fact, up to the birth of Ishmael he was the sole heir of all Abraham's wealth. (Gen. iii. 3.) But the births of two sons to his master, far from rendering him discontented and jealous, only increased his devotion. Primitive slavery, like every form of human servitude, was full of horrors, how could so lovely an idyll proceed from its midst? Faith is the true alchemy, turning all it touches into gold.

RICHARD HEATH.

THE ANGEL OF THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL.

BY THE REV. JOHN MONRO GIBSON, D.D.

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying, with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."—*Rev.* xiv. 6, 7.

IT is wise not to venture too much on details in attempting to interpret the Book of Revelation; but if we were to speculate in regard to a date for this prophecy, no century would have a better claim than the nineteenth. The first century is too early, manifestly; and from that time to the present there has been no such world-wide development of missionary enterprise as to correspond to the vision of "an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and

kindred, and tongue, and people." Now, however, we see the vision realized, and there are not wanting indications that a crisis is not far off, such as may, sooner than we think, verify the solemn words: "The hour of His judgment is come."

We would not lay too much stress on the word "another," especially as there are manuscripts which omit it. Still, inasmuch as it not only holds its place in the Authorized Version but has been retained in the Revised, we may fairly reckon it as part of the text; and a possible explanation of it is that the seer had in his mind the angel of the first century then flying in the midst of heaven among the peoples and kindreds of the then known world, and, accordingly, as he looked away into the distant future, he speaks, not of an angel, but of "*another angel*" flying in the midst of heaven.

The gospel angel of the nineteenth century is "another angel" in this further sense, that, whereas in the time of the first angel the tongue was mainly used in telling from shore to shore the story of salvation, the angel now flying in the midst of heaven is making effective use of the new power which has risen in the world in the interval between,—the mighty power of the press. To say that the apostle had any definite reference to the use of the press in the latter days for evangelistic purposes would be to introduce something very prosaic and artificial into a highly poetic and purely ideal conception; but this, at all events, may be said, that if a poet of the present day wished to represent in outward symbol this great development of evangelistic enterprise in our times, he could not do it more appropriately than in the very words of the aged seer of Patmos: "I saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

"*Flying in the midst of heaven*"—whence the angel has taken his departure the vision does not say. That he is bound to reach the uttermost parts of the earth with his message is made plain, but from what region he first set out there is nothing to mark. In this we have again a warning not to endeavour to tie the mighty wings of this prophecy to particular events that happen to impress us. The angel flying in the midst of heaven must be understood in the widest sense, as representing all efforts, by whomsoever made, to send abroad the gospel of salvation.

"*Having the everlasting gospel.*" This is, I believe, the only passage in which the word "everlasting" is applied to the gospel. The idea is frequently found in the Scriptures, in the Old Testament as well as the New; but the epithet is peculiar to this passage. Its special appropriateness will be seen when we remember that the vision is of a time far down the ages. No doubt there were those then who thought the gospel had already run its course. The Subject of the gospel Himself had long ago disappeared from sight. His apostles had fallen a prey to the fury of the persecutor, and John himself was helpless in his lonely place of banishment. He might see visions and dream dreams, but what could he do? He might write down what he saw or what he dreamed; but who would even read it? Who would ever hear of him again, or of the gospel, of which he was the last of the appointed witnesses? Little churches here and there throughout the Roman Empire had been founded; but already there were signs of declension and corruption even in them; and those who judged the whole movement of the first century by standards of ordinary probability, had very good reason to expect to see the end of it all in a generation at the longest. If for a time the angel of the first century had seemed to fly in the midst of heaven, already his wing was tired, and the gospel he carried seemed likely to be as fugitive as himself. But the lonely seer in his desert isle has other than earthly standards to be his guide; and so, undismayed by discouragement and apparent defeat, with faith as strong and hope as clear as ever, he prolongs his gaze across the centuries, and writes "the everlasting gospel." Think of that, ye who quail before the petty critics of the day who tell you for the thousandth time that the gospel is now at last falling behind the enlightenment of the age. There was a thousand times more cause for alarm then than now; and yet the lonely exile, banished from the world for the gospel's sake, boldly spoke of it as everlasting.

And have not all these intervening centuries, in face of all human probability, justified his word? There probably has not been a single generation from that time to this when there were not persons, professing to be "wise and prudent," who predicted that the old gospel was at last worn out, and must be replaced with something new; but here it is to-day, the same as ever, the old story of free and full salvation by a crucified and risen Saviour; and we may surely now be very confident that it is indeed the everlasting gospel, that it will survive all the criticism of all its critics, great and small, till time shall be no longer.

The *universality of the gospel* is the next great thought: "Having the everlasting gospel to proclaim unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people." This is very familiar to us now, and for this very reason it is difficult to realise what a marvel, what a miracle it is, first that this old disciple of Jesus should have said it, and then that it should at last come true. Men do not wonder at it, for the same reason that they do not wonder at the sun; but if they would think of it, such an utterance at such a time and in the circumstances is nothing less than sublime! To help you to realise this, let me ask you to suppose yourself transported back to that early period, with the opportunity of taking a trip to Patmos, and having some conversation with John the Divine. Put yourself in the position of an intelligent Roman or Athenian of the time, who during a short stay in the little island becomes acquainted with John.

You have heard of him as a harmless old

enthusiast, who is always talking of a young man from Nazareth whom he used to know, and who must evidently have exercised a very powerful influence on him, and on several others who call themselves his disciples. This young man had preached what he called a gospel, saying that it was first for his own countrymen the Jews, and next for the whole world. It turned out, however, that his own countrymen cared nothing for his gospel, and indeed put him to death as an impostor. Then the attempt was made by the help of a story that he had risen from the dead, to offer this gospel to the world at large, which resulted in a few knots of obscure people here and there being brought over by the enthusiasm of those who knew this young man and lived with him long enough to catch something of his spirit; but the civilized world as such paid no attention to what was said. And now the apostles, to whose enthusiasm these small successes were due, are either dead or done away with; and this old man may be considered as the last of them. You have a great respect for him, and admire his acknowledged goodness, but you have, of course, too much sense to put faith in his foolish fancies.

There he is coming, walking along the shore in the calm light of the morning. You give him a respectful salutation, and get into conversation with him. After an interchange of some commonplaces, he says to you, "My friend, I had a vision last night of an angel flying in the midst of heaven. It was not a vision of the present, nor of any time close at hand. I have, in fact, had a wonderful succession of visions, and the point I reached last night must be far down, perhaps many centuries; but when in vision I reached that distant point, I did see an angel flying with the very same gospel I have been speaking to you about: the gospel of salvation by my master Jesus, whom I call the Son of God, though you think Him only a young man of Nazareth. So I call it the everlasting gospel; and it is universal as well as everlasting, for he is carrying it to every nation and kindred and people and tongue."

What would your answer be? What could it be? Perhaps politeness might keep you from laughing outright at the good old man; but if you suppressed even a smile for the moment, you would have a good laugh over it when you were by yourself. "Well, well!" you would say to yourself, "human nature is very strange. Of all the mad notions I ever heard of, this is the maddest. Can not he see that the whole thing is coming to an end now, has virtually come to an end already? If he were in Athens or Antioch, or Corinth or Rome, and crowds were flocking to hear him, I could understand how his enthusiasm might carry him away; but alone here, on this desert and solitary island, with not a scrap of encouragement, not a sign of hope anywhere for the poor lost cause of which he is in all probability the very last representative, he must be simply crazy." You would not think his vision worthy of a moment's thought; and if you did, the only reflection would be—how safe he is to put it away so far in the future. Any man can prophesy with perfect safety, when the date he gives will not come till he himself and his prophecy shall have been utterly forgotten! Now tell me, my intelligent sceptical friend, is not that just what you would have thought, and perhaps have been bold enough to say, if you had been there and heard the old man tell of his vision of the angel?

And you would have been right, on the supposition that the master of John was Jesus of Nazareth and nothing more, that he died like any other man of Nazareth, and never rose again. On that supposition the vision was simply absurd. But now let eighteen hundred years elapse, and the time be reached when we can apply the test which the intelligent critic of that day could not apply. In how many various forms, aided by the marvels of the modern press, are the churches seeking to send the same gospel, of which the aged John thought so much, to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Take, for example, as representative of evangelising agencies, the report of the Religious Tract Society. It is quite a lesson in universal geography to go through the volume, for it takes a volume of some size to report in the briefest manner the doings of a single year. It starts with Western Europe, taking country after country, then passes to Eastern Europe in the same way, and thence to Asia, which it explores in all directions; it passes next into Africa, then to America, north and south, and on to Australia, New Zealand, and the islands of the sea, coming back to London whence it started, having in the course of its work throughout the year made the tour of the world. And this report is only one of many. The Bible Society's Report would produce the same impression, and hundreds, nay thousands, of such reports would have to be read before we could have before us in any fulness of detail the work of the Gospel-Angel of the nineteenth century.

Now how stands the question between the intelligent critic and the old apostle? Did we not say the intelligent critic had the best of it? We did, and we repeat it; distinctly and decidedly he had the best of it, on the supposition that Jesus of Nazareth died and did not rise again. It was not the argument of the intelligent critic which was wrong, it was his premise. It was his rejection of the supernatural which was wrong. Admit the claim of John that his Master was more than man, that he was indeed the Son of the living God, whom death could not destroy, and whose gospel all the power of the world could not overthrow; and all the rest follows easily, naturally, intelligibly, credibly, necessarily. And if you had lived then, you would have been quite willing to admit that the two things went necessarily together, so that the admission of the one amounted to the admission of the other.

Put yourself again back into the old days, and hear yourself saying, "My dear old friend, you and I will not be living centuries hence; but if we were, and you could show me anything at all corresponding at that late date to an angel flying in the midst of heaven with that gospel of yours, proclaiming it to all mankind, then I should most certainly believe that you are right in supposing your Master to be the Son of God."

It is certain you would have been quite willing

to say that then—it is just what Gamaliel said, and he was knowing enough, and certainly not given to too much faith in Jesus of Nazareth, "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow it."

It would have been the height of credulity, then, to suppose it possible that the vision of John should come true unless Jesus was Divine; and now that it has come true, it is amazing to think how the credulity of scepticism manages after all to stand the strain. So unreasoning and blind is the prejudice against the supernatural, that anything at all, however glaringly and manifestly absurd, will be believed rather than surrender it —another of the innumerable illustrations of the profound principle underlying the words of the Father of the Faithful to the man who thought that, if only some new evidence were given, his unbelieving brethren would be convinced: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

The *breadth of the gospel* is the last great feature which the vision sets before us. We have seen that it is a gospel of salvation. It is characteristically moral and spiritual. It has mainly to do with sin and righteousness and judgment. But in its large scope it is wide as the mind of man, and comprehensive as the works of God. God must ever be the centre of the new life to which men are summoned in this gospel. "Fear God, and give Him glory" is the leading note of the voice which accompanies its promulgation; but, before the voice has died away, we find that all nature is embraced within its mighty range: "Worship Him that made heaven and earth and sea, and the fountains of waters." The Author of the gospel is the Author of nature, and therefore it is for us who receive the gospel to take an intelligent interest in all by which He has revealed Himself, whether in heaven or earth or sea. The special mention of "fountains of waters" is touching and suggestive. It is a little bit of detail suggestive of all other details; and its selection is easily accounted for, when we think how much there was to render that part of nature in particular vocal to John with his Master's praise, to make it for him the very best emblem which all nature could furnish of the gospel itself.

One clause remains to be noticed: "*The hour of His judgment is come.*" This, as it were, anticipates what immediately follows: "And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, which hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." This is a time of terrible conflict, and nowhere is it more fiercely waged than in the press. Never was there a time when the Babylon of an ungodly and immoral press was more formidable and threatening. If the angel is flying with the everlasting gospel, the devil is no less energetic in his endeavour to make all nations drink of the cup of his abominations. It is a time of crisis indeed (the word translated judgment is this very word "crisis") —it is a time of crisis, and never was it more imperative on those who name the Name of Christ to be faithful to Him; and in no department of Christian activity is it more important that we should bestir ourselves than in the use of the press to the very utmost in our power for supplying that which is wholesome and pure, setting fountains of pure and living water flowing everywhere. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." It is a terrible conflict, but the right will win.[1]

[1] From a Sermon preached on behalf of the Religious Tract Society.

WORKHOUSE LIFE IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

IV.

CONTINUING our round at Marylebone, we come next to the dormitories. There were seventy-five beds in the first, a comb and brush bag hanging on each; and everything thoroughly clean and sweet, the beds and their coverings being also exposed to our view.

The matron said that all the paint and whitewash was house labour, and exceedingly well done it was.

On the men's side, the day room is apart from the dormitories, but wherever we went, we found the same air of cheerful comfort reigning.

We were admiring the bright pictures and engravings on the walls, which caused the matron to remark that when she and her husband (the master) came there thirty years ago, there was nothing on the bare whitewashed walls, and she well remembered the joy they both felt when Lady Radstock sent them some printed texts to hang up in the wards.

We next visited what had been the children's ward, but in which fifty able-bodied women slept now. Rather close quarters, but when the new building which is in course of erection is finished, these premises will be vacated.

We passed through what was formerly the children's garden railed off, one side for girls, and the other for boys, and into the day room where the able-bodied women were having their dinner. These are the people who give the most trouble.

Entering the men's imbecile ward, while they were at dinner, I was surprised to see them using knives and forks; they were, however, what are termed lunatic instruments. The paid officer in

charge had his little room at the end of the ward which he had made bright, and there he uses his spare moments in mechanical contrivances.

The next ward visited was that of the bed-ridden old women—both they and their surroundings were as clean as possible. One old woman was a great politician, and knew all about the questions of the day. She had formerly been a Scripture reader.

Another, who was as fragile as she could be, and extremely old, announced her intention of getting up and going out into the world again soon; while yet a third who had evidently enjoyed her meal, and was busily engaged folding up the little cloth which had been spread on the bed, on being spoken to by the matron repeated unceasingly: "Yer very kind to me; I'm very grateful ter ye, my dear."

Another old woman, ninety-eight years old, has been in her bed twelve years, and she has not even a scratch on her skin.

We left this ward with its pathetic sights and sounds behind us, and found ourselves in the oldest part of the whole building, and after mounting the narrow stairs, arrived at the lying-in-wards. A little babe had been born that morning. There was the weighing machine for the baby, and the wheeled chair in which when well enough the patient is taken into a second room well provided with carbonised bed and bedding. A midwife and nurse are in attendance on these patients, and the doctor visits them morning and evening.

I could not help thinking how cruel an heritage it is for a woman to bestow on her child, that of birth in a workhouse—but I comforted myself by the thought that at least a few so born had made their mark in the world.

A notice hangs up in this ward, giving the address of a lady from whom the women can seek advice and help on leaving the house. We peeped into the superintendent's quaint low ceilinged room, with a door opening on to a long stretch of leads, which made one believe oneself in a foreign southern city.

Our next visit was to the female imbecile ward—where the officer in charge was a bright, pleasant, trusty-looking girl. One could not help feeling surprised that she should have chosen such a branch of nursing, but she evidently understood it, and performed her duty well, for her patients were well cared for and quite comfortable. The day room of these patients opens on to a garden where they can sit in warm weather, and there are two padded rooms in case of violence or fits.

The superintendent has her room at the end of the ward from which she can see every one.

It was in this ward we saw the superior dress-maker I mentioned before; and here too was a poor blind child eaten up with disease who had lately been brought in, and was even now, I heard, much better.

The workshops are interesting, where the able-bodied men are occupied in tailoring, carpentering, book-binding, wood-chopping, etc., each trade working under supervision.

We came next to a small room occupied by what are known as *remand boys;* that is boys accused of begging in the streets or such like, and who are to appear before a magistrate in a week or ten days.

It is far better for them to be taken care of here than to be in prison herding with bad men. There were only three on this day, and a man had charge of them.

From this I begged the matron to be so kind as to use her latch-key and take us into the casual wards, which are quite apart from the workhouse and have a separate entrance.

There is a covered shed with seats in the yard where those wanting shelter can come in at four o'clock if they please and rest until the time for opening the wards, which is at six o'clock.

If a casual has not been seen in any other casual ward in the metropolis, he or she is kept two nights and a day and allowed to leave early in the morning.

The cells, for one person only, are clean and neat, provided with an electric bell, iron bedstead and bedding. There is a rather larger cell at the end of the passage, in case a mother and child should come in together.

For supper each casual receives a pint of gruel and six ounces of bread, after which a compulsory bath and then to bed. The water is changed for each person, the days of pea-soup baths for the poor creatures, such as the "Amateur Casual" had at Lambeth, are things of the past.

The clothes they arrive in, if wet, are dried and disinfected during the night. In the morning they are called at a quarter to seven, and receive for breakfast the same as they had for supper, gruel and bread. We saw for ourselves that both were good. Those who have to pass the day there are set to work, the women to house-cleaning or to shirt-making for the workhouse, but the superintendent said the latter was doubtful help. If incapable of either of these tasks, a woman is set to pick oakum, two pounds being the allowance for the women and four pounds for the men.

It is easy to see if the arrivals are used to this work, the untried hands are hours over their tasks, while the others get it done before the morning is over.

The dinner for the casuals is eight ounces of bread and rather less of cheese. Of course many grumble at the food, but the matron said they would most likely do that if they were fed every day on ham and chicken. We thought the store room much too small for the needs of this part of the house.

Of course everything has to be under lock and key, for among the casuals are often those of the lowest class who would not scruple to appropriate anything they saw about.

We felt very thankful that those of a better class, whom misfortune or accident had driven in, need not associate with the vicious ones as formerly. At all events each has a room to himself or herself, and can rest in peace. The superintendent of the casuals seemed very pleased that she had been allowed to add some tins of condensed milk to the stores for the babies, who are often brought in late at night when it is impossible to get fresh milk.

The last thing we saw was the ambulance

waggon standing in the yard ready for every emergency.

Two things impressed me greatly in going over this workhouse: the first was the large-hearted, tender sympathy shown—especially for the old and infirm—and the unceasing energy and supervision that must be exercised in order to keep everything as we found it. There was not a dirty corner in the place, and every face brightened as the matron appeared. I was extremely tired after the inspection, and yet she had been through every part of the house previous to our visit, and would do the same again in the evening!

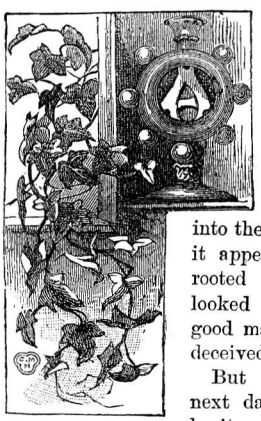
The second thing which impressed us is the great care the master has taken for the proper classification of the inmates. To use his own words, "a well classified workhouse is a necessity to enable the guardians to deal effectually with pauperism. It affords protection to the deserving, and is a deterrent to the undeserving."

Speaking of the workhouse for a whole year the master said that not a single ounce of ale, porter, gin, whisky, or brandy had been ordered by the medical officer, and except on Christmas Day no fermented or spirituous liquors had been consumed by the inmates.

One of the great advantages of removing the sick from the workhouse besides the direct benefit to the sick themselves, is the space secured for other purposes. It is now set apart for occupations suitable to old men inmates. Two hundred old men, for example, whose ages vary from sixty to sixty-six, work in the wood-shed. The amount of wood leaving the house is about thirty tons a week, and the revenue realised from this department during one year is 2,764*l*.

Thus the Marylebone institution may be taken to represent workhouse life under the most favourable conditions.

Talks about Texts.



"And because they had no root, they withered away."—*Matt.* xiii. 6.

LITTLE girl was once presented with a beautiful flower, which she carried home with great care, but instead of placing it in water, she stuck it into the mould in a flower-pot, making it appear as though it were actually rooted there. For a whole day it looked like a growing plant, and a good many of those who saw it were deceived by its appearance.

But alas! it was quite withered next day. No one could be deceived by it now. It lay in the pot a lifeless thing, and because it had no root, it withered away.

Perhaps we may say that she was a very foolish little girl to think that a flower could grow or keep alive for any length of time without a root; but it reminds me of a great many good resolutions which are made, and which, because they have no root, are, like the flower, soon withered and dead.

It would make us all happier I am quite sure, if we could feel that the blossoms of goodness in our hearts were really rooted, and that because they have roots they will not wither away.

We are all familiar with the beautiful parable from which our text is taken. It was one of the most striking which our Saviour spake, and we can well believe that long years after it would come back to the thoughts of His disciples to comfort and strengthen them.

He was speaking, as you know, of the seeds which the sower cast on various soils, "Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away."

Afterwards, when He was alone with His disciples, He explained to them more fully the heavenly meaning of His earthly story: "He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

If you have seen a plant taken out of the ground, you will have noticed that there is nearly as much of it hidden out of sight below as there is above the earth. Deep in the moist earth, the roots have pushed their way in search of nourishment, and very likely you may find that they have spread out in all directions, like so many delicate threads, so that from countless sources the sap, which is the life of the plant, is drawn from the ground to nourish it.

Our Lord desired that His disciples then and now should learn from the parable one most important lesson, namely, that to live as children of God in the world, they must be "rooted and grounded" in love.

Sometimes it happens that a flower or tree suddenly droops and dies in the garden. When the gardener seeks for the cause of the unexpected blight, he finds very probably that the roots had struck against a large stone, which prevented them from going down deep into the ground, and therefore "because they had no root they withered away." There must be the constant hidden growth of the unseen roots, if there is to be the growing and blossoming of the plant above ground.

This is just a picture of the human heart, planted in God's garden. There must be the hidden roots of love taking deeper hold from day to day, if there is to be the fair blossom of a good and useful life to refresh and bless the world by its presence.

But, alas! how conscious we are of those stony obstacles that hinder our spiritual growth. Oftentimes it seems as though our hearts themselves were the stones which stop the growth of love to God within us. Yet even to such God has said: "I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: that they may walk in My statutes, and keep Mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God."

How happy it ought to make us to know that we have not

to take away the stony heart ourselves. God graciously promises to do the part of the husbandman. We have only to look up to Him, believing in His love and in His willingness to bless us, and we shall have that new heart, without which we cannot be "rooted and grounded" in His love.

Our Saviour has given us another very beautiful picture which ought to comfort our hearts and strengthen our trust. He drew it on that last night when He walked out from Jerusalem to Gethsemane, just before His terrible sufferings in the garden and His arrest by the cruel soldiers: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. . . Every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. . . Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me."

Here we have a picture of the heart united to Christ by faith and drawing all its life from Him. "Abide in Me." Of course we know that to abide in a place we must first go to it. And if we are to abide in Jesus our Lord and Saviour, we must go to Him and tell Him that we desire to be united to Him, that we desire to be His, and to serve Him all our days. Not now and then, not on Sundays merely, but on every day "abiding" in Him.

And He graciously promises to abide in us. As a loving friend and protector and helper, He comes to "abide." How happy it ought to make us, and how eager we ought to be for His presence. May the Holy Spirit teach our hearts to cry out with joy: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"Unite my heart to fear Thy Name."—*Psalm* lxxxvi. 11.

TRAVELLING by railway not long since I got into a carriage in which were several passengers in animated conversation. We were all going to the same destination, and so far at all events we were agreed; but I had not been many moments in the company of my fellow-passengers when I discovered that they were by no means united in their opinions. I heard the most opposite views expressed, and some very angry words were spoken by those who did not like others to differ from them. I was quite glad when the train arrived at its destination and we all separated.

Very different was the sight of a family of boys and girls going off for an afternoon in the country. They had brought with them balls and hoops and skipping-ropes, and it only needed to look at their happy faces to see that they were a united family, and that they were going to enjoy their afternoon in the happiest spirit. Their mother, who accompanied them, seemed as full of eager pleasure at the prospect before them as the youngest of her children; yet I noticed that her lightest wish was obeyed. A look was quite enough to ensure instant obedience, for she ruled by love.

But what has all this to do with our text? I want you to see that people may be united in some things, and yet be very much opposed to one another in others, as were the first travellers of whom I have spoken, and that to have real union you must have real love.

The text which forms the subject of our "talk" to-day is part of a prayer of David's. He prayed that God would "unite" His heart to fear His Name. Our hearts contain a great many thoughts and feelings and desires, and it very often happens that, like the carriage in which were passengers holding the most opposite opinions, so our hearts are divided, and like a nursery full of foolish children all clamouring for their own way, there is a kind of warfare going on which makes us very unhappy.

David knew this, and prayed that every desire and thought of his heart might be united in the one loving purpose of fearing God's Name. Just as one discordant note will spoil the sweetest music, and one harsh, ungenerous word will mar the pleasantest conversation, so one rebellious thought will surely keep us from giving to God a "whole" heart. And David adds to his prayer a promise: "Unite my heart to fear Thy Name. I will praise Thee, O Lord, my God, with all my heart."

The fear spoken of in our text is just the loving anxiety not to offend which I noticed in those merry boys and girls in their conduct towards their mother. Her will was evidently their pleasure, and the least cloud of disapproval on her brow would have filled them with instant anxiety. We have in God's Holy Word all that He would have us to do. His will is summed up in one word—love.

> "This golden lesson, short and plain,
> Gives not the mind, or memory pain;
> And every conscience must approve
> This universal law of love."

Many years ago a man was sentenced to death for murder. The good and celebrated Dr. Doddridge believed him innocent, and used such influence on his behalf that he was respited. When the good doctor brought the condemned man this glad news, he threw himself at his feet, crying, "Every drop of my blood thanks you, sir, for you have had pity on every drop of it. You are my deliverer, and you have a right to me. If I live I am your property, and I will be a faithful servant."

And gratitude and praise must fill the hearts of all God's children who know what has been done for them by their loving Saviour. He laid down His life for guilty sinners like ourselves, and He claims our hearts that He may make us happy both here and hereafter. May we learn to say with all our hearts with David in the 103rd Psalm, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies."

SCRIPTURE CHARACTER.

NO. VI.

1. His native land was the same as that of Abraham.
2. He took a journey into a country of which Jeremiah says, "There shall be lamentation generally upon all the house-tops and in the streets thereof."
3. He entertained princes on two occasions.
4. He received a message from a heathen king.
5. He treated a faithful servant cruelly.
6. He received a very unexpected reproof.
7. He commanded the offering of forty-two sacrifices.
8. He expressed a wish, often quoted, but, probably, in his own case, unfulfilled.
9. He was offered honours which he never received.
10. His name is mentioned by the prophet Micah, by Peter, John, and Jude.
11. He was killed in battle.

L. T.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XIII.—P. 477.—SHEPHERD.—John x. 11.

S-amuel	1 Sam. xii. 24.
H-erod	Matt. ii. 7, 8.
E-sau	Gen. xxv. 32.
P-eter	Acts x. 26.
H-ezekiah	Isaiah xxxviii. 12.
E-lisha	2 Kings v. 26.
R-uth	Ruth ii. 13.
D-elilah	Judges xvi. 10.