

THE SUNDAY AT HOME

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

OF ALL DEGREES.

CHAPTER XX.—AT THE PARSONAGE.



“MUST I TELL HIM?” ASKED THE FUGITIVE.

JANEY'S guesses were right, Charlie had gone to Norway.

In his first recoil from the position in which he found himself he had thought only of flight—how best to widen the distance between himself and the disgrace that was sure to overtake him. To have lent oneself to one base act makes the next not only easier but almost inevitable. In this sense, how truly as has been said we each make a

“moral tradition” for ourselves which we are feign to follow.

On the night when Janey had held out hopes of rescue, he had had a hint that the sword he dreaded was about to descend. Lake, his fellow clerk and lodger, who could not fail to know something of Charlie's position, and probably guessed what he was not told, had overheard a chance question not meant for his ears in the bank

that day, which caused him to advise Charlie to "lie by for a bit." Lake was good-natured, and, considering how he had eaten Charlie's dinners and dipped into his purse, he was quick now to take alarm.

Lake went out to dine that night, possibly to leave Charlie a clear field, possibly to save himself from knowledge that might be inconvenient, and Charlie used the chance thus given him. He did not like the price he had to pay for safety, but yet he paid it.

So one day in the late autumn when snow was already beginning to drift in warning flakes and all the summer guests had fled, Charlie lifted the latch and walked into the kitchen of the parsonage by the fjord.

Astrid, her sleeves rolled up over her round arms, and an apron covering her dress, was engaged in baking. She looked up as he entered, and for a moment in her surprise she said nothing, then the colour deepened in her cheeks with the pulsations of her heart.

"Charlie!" she cried, "why have you come back?"

"I'm alone, Astrid," he said moodily, guessing perhaps, the source of her agitation. "There's nothing the matter with any one, except me."

"And what is the matter with you?" she questioned, wiping the flour from her hands and coming nearer him.

"Everything."

Astrid looked at him earnestly. She knew too little of the world to judge accurately the signs she read in his face, but she saw that he looked ill, jarred and miserable.

She put her hand in his.

"I am glad you came to us, Charlie," she said simply, "if you are ill I will nurse you till you are well again; if you are worried about anything you must go to grandfather. He helps everybody."

Charlie smiled a little forlornly. He had not settled with himself how much or how little he should tell, or in what way he should account for his presence in Norway a month after he had quitted it. He told himself only that here he would be safe—that here he could adjust his thoughts and gain some self-control—that here, under this kind roof, he should escape the lash of that rigorous judgment which had made his last interview with Janey something of a torture. But he had not calculated that even in Astrid's simple trust there might be a sting. He had thought that he should not tell her, but when he met the glance of her serious blue eyes filled with grave concern and kindness a better prompting came to him.

"Astrid," he said, "I ought, perhaps, not to be here at all. When I tell you why I have come you may not wish me to stay. I have done something very wrong."

She still kept her hand in his and waited, though her face grew a shade graver.

"That is no reason why you should not stay," she said.

"Oh," said Charlie, finding his task more difficult than he had supposed. "You can never understand—how could you unless you knew my

life and the temptations?" He began to take refuge once more in the excuses he had taught himself to find sufficient.

"We do wrong things here, too. I suppose that would help one to understand."

He looked at her with a half melancholy smile.

"Take away your hand, Astrid," he said, "listen first, and then, if you care to own me——"

"No, I will hold it still, you are my cousin, you are——"

"Vivian's friend?" said he, supplying the blank. "I'm not so sure that he would care to give me that name now. I was in his father's bank, you know; he got me the post, good old Jim, a year ago, but I've forfeited it."

He was telling his story grimly now; the hand she did not hold clenched, his head held doggedly. "I got into a mess; debts and company I couldn't afford. Some of our fellows at Aldershot turned up again." Then catching a new sort of pain in her eyes, he said with an effort: "Not Vivian, he did what he could for me, helped me and warned me; he would have pulled me out again this time, but he was away. Allie helped me too, poor Allie"—his voice was husky—"but it was all no good. I took money, do you understand, Astrid?—took it from the bank."

He seemed to understand it for the first time himself now that he heard his own voice telling it, and what a shameful, mean, and pitiful story it sounded. Would she turn upon him and call him a thief as Janey had done?

She only looked at him with a deepening of her sorrowful expression, and she did not let go his hand.

"You took it; yes, I think I understand. One cannot tell how weak one is till temptation comes; but you are sorry?"

"Sorry!" he said scornfully, "it has blighted my life."

"But you will make amends?"

"There is no making amends," he said gloomily, "when a man does what I've done there is no hope left for him."

"Will they—will they put you in prison?" Her face blanched at the thought. "Was that why you came?"

"To save myself," he said with a new edge of self-scorn. "Indeed, I think it was; it might not have come to the prison—Jim would have prevented that—but there was the disgrace."

"You must go back," said Astrid very quietly, much as if she were telling him to go into the next room. "You will go back and tell Mr. Vivian you are sorry."

"And tell him that I am sorry," he repeated in an amazement that in spite of his gloom was tinged with humour.

"Yes," she said simply, "you know we are told to be first reconciled to our brother whom we have injured, and at the same time go to God for pardon."

"Is that what you would do?" he asked, feeling a new tide of shame before this implied trust in his desire to atone.

"Yes; and it is what you will do."

"And then," he asked, "when I have made my peace—supposing Mr. Vivian were likely to

do anything but kick me out of his doors—what next?"

"Then you might go away somewhere and begin again a new life, Charlie, in the old one's stead; and you will pay the money back again, you will not have any peace till you do that."

How easy it all sounded, how easy and simple. To go home and confess and be pardoned, and then to start afresh in some new and better path. But not so easy as this is the homeward journey from the far country, not so lightly may a man free himself from the yoke he has imposed on his own neck.

Perhaps some intuition of this came to Astrid as she looked at him, and saw that her words did nothing to lift the cloud from his brow. She never swerved in thought for a moment from what she held to be the only possible course for him, but she had pity on the weakness that made it hard.

"Come into the other room and rest, Charlie," she said, "there is no one there; grandfather went out on business to Vangsnaes this morning, and Gudrund and Solweg are at the farm. I am keeping house all alone. What a good thing it was that I was at home."

"If you hadn't been, what should I have done? Gone over to Olsen's, I suppose; perhaps you would like me to go there now?"

"The hotel is shut," she said simply. "Nobody lives in it in winter. And where else should you be if not here with us who are your friends?"

"But your grandfather, Astrid—"

"Grandpapa is good," she said; "if you did not know that before, you will find it out now."

"Must I tell him?" he asked. He had thrown himself into a seat before the stove and was gazing moodily into the little red heart of fire behind the grating. "I suppose even you, Astrid, though you can't have much to accuse yourself of, must be aware that it isn't very pleasant for a fellow to go round confessing to his own dirty actions. But I suppose if I don't tell, your conscience will make it a duty for you to do so."

She flushed hotly under the sting of his words, but she subdued her voice to perfect gentleness.

"Should you wish it?" she said, "would it make you happier to keep silence? I do not think there can be any real happiness for us unless we are quite open—even about our faults. And grandfather might help you, he might think of some better way than I can do. He has lived so long that he is very wise, and all the people here come to him when they are in any trouble."

The only way that Charlie would have found good at that moment was the way of concealment. Why blacken himself needlessly in other men's eyes? He owed no duty to this old man, whose very unworldliness and inexperience would make him judge and condemn with a terrible clearness. In a moment of stirred feeling he had told Astrid, but was there any call for his confession to go further? Why had he left home, cut himself adrift from all the friendships and associations there but that he might turn a new page, and bury the past with its history of failure?

"He, too, will be for sending me back to England," he thought; "he will make it difficult with his impossible standard and its claims for me to get work here, as I might easily enough have got it."

So the train of his thought ran on while Astrid stood by him, the hot colour not yet faded from her cheek.

"Then you won't tell him?" he said at last, "you won't think it your duty to give him an outline of my beautiful story? I know that it would sound better from your lips than from mine, but I'd rather be spared even your version of it, Astrid."

She looked at him with new depths of sorrow in her blue eyes, but she spoke with a touch of grave reserve.

"I will tell him nothing; you may rest assured of that. I will keep silence. What good would it do you if I were to make confession for you?"

"None whatever; I am at one with you there."

"Ah, you will tell him yourself," she said, with struggling revival of her faith in him, "but do not fear, Charlie, till then I will do nothing to make it more difficult for you."

"You're a good little girl, Astrid," he said rather moved. "And look here, I can't go away just yet. I don't know what I may do in a day or two, but you must keep me till I can arrange something."

"I am going to get your room ready," she said, moving away, as if this were answer sufficient. "You will find paper and ink on that little table by the window if you should wish to write any letters."

Charlie smiled to himself over this transparent hint, this push Astrid tried to give him with her gentle hands back into the path of duty. Of course he ought to write and that at once. At the remembrance of Allie, of her grieved, hurt wonder at his silence, of the sharper anguish when she knew its reason, he hung his head in shame. He even drew the paper and pen towards him, but he could not begin.

That "moral tradition" already alluded to had made it a kind of law for him to turn away from everything that was not quite easy or pleasant, and to ignore as far as might be all obligations that carried hardship with them; and the laws which we make for ourselves thinking them but green withes which we can break at any moment, come by their use to have the strength of iron fetters.

He did not write, and when the old minister came home at night from that long passage across the waters, Charlie accounted for his unexpected presence there by saying that he was out of work and had come over for a rest.

He said it awkwardly enough, for he could not wear the garment of deceit with any gracefulness yet—it was a Nessus shirt, indeed, galling him perpetually; but it was easier to bear this inward discomfort than to front the shame of open confession.

But the old man's kindly welcome covered all Charlie's deficiencies.

"You couldn't do us a greater kindness than by coming to us," he said. "All our visitors

have left us, and we were beginning to think of going to sleep like the bears for the winter, but you will wake us up. And we can manage to amuse you, I think; there's a chance of mackerel or cod fishing while the fjords are open, and if the cold weather sets in soon, as it threatens, you will get some sledging."

"Oh, I shall do very well, sir," said Charlie hastily, embarrassed before all these devices for his entertainment.

"There may even be a chance of a shot at Bruin," he went on, rubbing his hands, and full of hospitable plans. "I hear rumour of a bear having been seen at Laerdal, Astrid."

"A bear, grandfather? That is a rare visitor nowadays."

"Not altogether unknown, however. There was one shot last winter; you can see his paws nailed to Brügelmann's barn door. But it isn't as it was in my young days," he went on with cheerful garrulity, "when we used to have nightly scares from the wolves, and had to set a watch and burn fires to protect the sheep and goats. My earliest recollection is of waking in a fright at the howling of a starving band that had borne down upon us from the woods. My father, who farmed the land here before me, waged war against them for years, but the curious thing was the suddenness of their disappearance."

"Didn't you kill them all?" asked Charlie, finding it difficult to maintain the talk.

The old man shook his head.

"That wasn't easy. We couldn't manage many guns among us in those days, and though the farmers combined, there was no getting rid of the brutes. But suddenly in the middle of one winter they disappeared, and they have not visited us since."

But in spite of all the kind plans for his amusement, Charlie could not be said to enjoy his visit. The taste of it was spoiled for him. Astrid never reproached him even by her looks; she spent herself for him, cooking dainty dishes, in which she had a fine skill; playing and singing to him in the evenings when he desired it, but her laugh was not quite so ready as before, her trust in him had been shaken.

To outward appearance Charlie was pretty much what he represented himself to be: in need of rest and quiet. He lounged about the farm, fished idly—for the waters were still open—visited at the homesteads and cottages where he had made friends, and tried to tell himself that he was having a very jolly time of it, but the hollow pretence never for a moment deceived him.

His inward discontent was growing, though he scarcely knew it. This family life, with its fine simplicity, its kindly charities, its happy trust and faith, was making its claims on him, urging him to confession as no reproaches could have done. In its slowly altering condition his mind began to dwell less on the continued possibility of concealment than on the consequences of openness. He was bracing himself to face these. The tide was beginning to turn, falteringly, hesitatingly as yet, but at least there was a backward movement, and there was hope that the flood of baseness would not wholly overwhelm him.

One day he had gone with young Olsen, whom the winter set free from the bustle of guests, to a little promontory where he had picnicked with Astrid and Vivian in the warm summer days. He remembered it all very well; it was on his first visit in the ripe glory of June, and they had gone at Astrid's wish to gather the treasures that starred the grass under the trees.

The scene was changed now, but scarcely less beautiful. The oaks were bare, but the ground was a mosaic of gold and scarlet with the fading splendour of bracken and bilberry, and the sky above the snow-covered mountain tops was dyed a deeper blue. A beautiful world, if one could only bring a happy heart to it.

They were sitting on the crown of the promontory with the sea at their feet, and all that gay and vivid colouring spread before them. They had come to a halt upon a great pile of stones gathered there in long past times for some purpose not clearly known. Many theories busied themselves with the signification and use of the great blocks, and antiquaries had come to strife over them. Ola had his theory too, and he propounded it too now.

"In old times," he said, "when men sinned."

"Don't they sin now, Ola?"

"Yes, but they are shut up in prison at Vik when they do. In old times they were punished differently; they had to do penance. For every sin a man committed he had to fetch a stone from across the water there—five miles of rowing, it meant, and to carry it up here."

"So each of these stones represents a sin?" Charlie looked down at the spreading mound with its hollow heart where some greedy seeker had dug for treasure.

"Yes; and when it was more than just a little sin, when it was something greater, such as theft or murder, he had to bring a stone for every day of the year. There are three heaps," he ended, with a kind of literal simplicity. "I suppose there would have been a great many more if this kind of penance had gone on."

"The world would have been a desert," said Charlie shortly. "I must be getting across, Olsen, it's close on the parsonage dinner hour."

When he went up the little path between the leafless trees that led to the house, he met the old priest wearing a rather troubled look on his kindly face.

"I have a message," he said—"a telegram, the first that I have ever received. It is from England."

Charlie's pulses stood still, he could not utter a word.

"From a lady who says that your aunt, Miss Lindsell, is a little anxious, and would like to know if you are here."

Charlie's eyes dropped in shame before the question in those other eyes.

"I—I came off in a hurry," he stammered, "and I neglected to write to her. We don't live together, you know."

"You will write to her now?"

"Yes," said Charlie with a miserable, shameful consciousness that he had been offered another chance of openness and had refused it.

RECENT DISCOVERIES AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

BY THE REV GEORGE T. STOKES, D.D.

IV.

EGYPT was the land of mystery among the ancients, and, as my last paper showed, the ancient pagan Copts clung with intense devotion to their mysterious faith. The human soul can never be satisfied with the mere dry husks of a hard narrow rationalism, and even the most assertive unbeliever will often be found the slave of the wildest superstitions. Man longs for a revelation from the other world, and, if the true revelation be rejected, the soul will invent for itself pretended revelations, and often falls into such a sad state that it is found willing to believe any miracle provided it is not recorded in the Bible. The Coptic character had good substance in it; it was firm and tenacious. When the Copts accepted Christianity, they became, therefore, enthusiastic Christians, and were specially devoted to Biblical studies. The manuscripts which have been recovered within the last half century have therefore furnished, as we might naturally have expected, vast quantities of Biblical texts in the various dialects and languages spoken in Egypt; while again when we turn to the Ecclesiastical history of Eusebius, we have in his pages the explanation of these discoveries, as we find that the Egyptian Christians depicted by him were ardent students of Holy Scripture.

In his Seventh Book which he draws largely from the Egyptian writers of the third century, we see some curious scenes, presenting features very similar to modern life. The Egyptians devoted much attention to the Book of Revelation. It suited their mental tone, which delighted in imagery and symbolism. From the study of that book some of the Christians had derived prophetic views very similar to those adopted by the late Dr. Cumming, which did not meet with the approval of the Patriarch or Bishop of Alexandria. He esteemed the notions too carnal which the people of the Fayûm province had imbibed—the very same district, by the bye, as that whence now have come our vast stores of manuscripts—and so he went and held a three days' disputation with the people and their bishop, succeeding at last in changing their views into what he considered a more spiritual and orthodox direction.¹ This passion for biblical study has left its mark on the manuscript discoveries which have come to light. It led them

to multiply manuscripts dealing with biblical topics, and among them the most celebrated has been the Fayûm gospel-fragment as it has been commonly called.

The Greek documents discovered by the Archduke Rainer amid the Fayûm sands, and now lodged at Vienna, have been committed for examination to an eminent scholar called Wessely, or, as we would call him in English, Wesley. He discovered among them a manuscript of the third century containing a fragmentary account of our Lord's last Supper, and the events connected with it. This Greek text was in itself of great interest. The earliest Greek texts we at present possess, and our great authorities for New Testament criticism, are the Alexandrian manuscript in the British Museum, the Vatican manuscript in Rome, and the Codex Sinaiticus found by Tischendorf at Mount Sinai. None of these is older than the fourth, or perhaps even the fifth century, so that a Greek fragment of gospel history dating from the early part of the third century was a valuable find. But when Wessely came to look into the document, he found grave differences from the received text in it. He called, therefore, to his aid a well-known Roman Catholic scholar and divine named Bickell, who also examined the document. It is a very brief one, and yet in their hands it has become the subject of some intensely interesting conclusions.

Let us first see what the fragment says: "Now after eating, according to custom, you shall all be offended this night, according to the Scripture; I shall smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. Peter said, Though all, yet not I. He said to him, The cock will crow (not the word in the gospels, but a phrase we might translate 'cry cuckoo') twice, and thou shalt previously deny Me thrice." Some persons would at once conclude that this passage was simply an extract from one of the four Evangelists, but, when closely looked into, it presents several important differences: it is briefer, more fragmentary, less connected than the gospel narratives. It is deficient in literary style, and two important words in it, the one for "cock," and another for "crow," are quite different from the usual Greek text.

The question then naturally arose whence came this fragment. It could scarcely have been a quotation from memory, else it would have been more flowing and rhythmical. Sermons of popular preachers were reported in the third century by shorthand writers just as in our own day. But then reporters always make the orators they report speak correct and grammatical language, though they do not in reality do so. This document could scarcely have been a paraphrase

¹ This discussion took place at Arsinoë in the Fayûm. Mr. Flinders Petrie has just published a new work "Hawara Biahmu and Arsinoë," which describes this spot. I am bound to notice that he takes in this work a view concerning Lake Moeris, which differs somewhat from that which I have derived from the "Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology."

of Scripture, for what purpose could such a paraphrase have fulfilled? The early Church was not like our modern Christendom, torn and rent by divisions to such an extent that Scripture paraphrases were necessary because the diverging churches could not agree upon a common version. Bickell offered the suggestion that this Fayûm manuscript was a fragment from one of those early attempts at gospel-writing to which St. Luke refers in his opening words, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us." And notwithstanding much criticism, Bickell and Wessely still adhere to their conclusion that we have in the Fayûm fragment a genuine first century record, written before the year 60 A.D., and describing one of the closing scenes of our blessed Master's life. The document which has come down to us was copied in the third century, as the character of its writing shows, found its way into some library and survived amid its ruins to modern times. Now a person unacquainted with libraries, and with the extraordinary manner in which documents written on the most flimsy materials sustain the lapse of ages, might well object, that surely these first attempts at gospel history were all superseded by the canonical gospels, and must have perished by the year 200 A.D.

Without pledging myself to Bickell's views, I may just say that my own personal experience proves that chance and loose documents have a marvellous tenacity of existence, even in our northern climate, where damp is so terrible an enemy to them. I am myself the official keeper and librarian of a very celebrated English library which was transferred to Dublin two hundred years ago, through the liberality of a great Oxford scholar, Dr. Narcissus Marsh, Archbishop of Dublin. This library, now called Marsh's Library, was the property of the famous Bishop Stillingfleet, was used by the great Greek critic Bentley, and is described by him on Stillingfleet's monument in Worcester Cathedral as almost unequalled in the world. The other day I was looking through an old account book belonging to this library, when I found among its pages a loose document two hundred and ten years old, written on the thinnest of papers. It had no literary importance. It was merely a list of tithe-payers—a parochial terrier as it would be technically called—in the parish of Finglas, outside Dublin, which was held in 1680 by Dr. William King, at that time Chancellor of St. Patrick's Cathedral, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, and one of the profoundest philosophical writers of his own or any other time. I copied it as a curiosity and published it, and now it may survive another two hundred years in its original condition to illustrate how documents of the first century, written on stout papyrus, might have quite easily survived to the third.

But I could give even more ancient examples from the same libraries of Marsh and Stillingfleet. Dr. Stillingfleet was evidently a great buyer of libraries, and he must have had numerous opportunities of gratifying his taste in consequence of the confusions and confiscations of the great

Civil War. We are not surprised then to find that his former collection now possesses portions of the libraries owned by Casaubon and Archbishop Laud. Casaubon was the greatest Greek scholar of his age, and was pensioned by King James I., and kept at Hampton Court Palace to write replies to the great Roman Catholic controversialists of that day. Casaubon dealt specially with the annals of Cardinal Baronius, and in the copy of Baronius we possess, there is not only the autograph of Casaubon, but also dispersed among the volumes considerable quantities of Casaubon's original manuscripts, some of them loose, others pasted in, all of them written on very thin and poor paper. Yet they have survived well-nigh three hundred years, and are as clear and legible as the day they were written.

Marsh's library also possesses Archbishop Laud's own copy of Bellarmine's works. These volumes were regarded as the great reply of the Papal See to the attacks of the Protestants in the time of Queen Elizabeth. Laud's copy of Cardinal Bellarmine contains vast quantities of manuscript annotations, not so clear, indeed, as Casaubon's writing, because Laud wrote a much more minute hand, and the paper on which Bellarmine's works were printed was much inferior to that used by Baronius.

The perpetuity and long life of documents is perhaps still more vividly shown by the fact that I have in this library several instances of writing in lead more than two hundred years old, the notes thus written by Dean Swift on a copy of Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion" being still quite legible; so that there is no inherent improbability in the idea that many of the earlier attempts at writing Gospel history may have survived in their original form till the age of Origen, that is, the first half of the third century, and even till much later.

Bickell has discovered among these Fayûm manuscripts another interesting document, in a small portion of a third century liturgy. Hitherto, the oldest liturgical manuscript has dated back only to the fifth century, but the Fayûm document comes from a much earlier period, as has been concluded on two grounds, the palæographical and the doctrinal. In the first place the character of the writing belongs to the third century, not to the following ages. This is an aspect of the question which ordinary students must be content to leave entirely to the experts, as a special training is absolutely necessary to make a man a competent judge of the age and character of manuscripts, their writing, contractions and material. But this liturgical fragment from Egypt has another aspect, concerning which any well-instructed Christian can form an opinion. Its doctrine clearly bespeaks its age. The words of the fragment are very brief, and seem to relate to the feast of the Epiphany, united as it still is in the Coptic and Eastern Church, with the Commemoration of John the Baptist.

The words of the fragment run thus: "He that was born in Bethlehem, and reared up in Nazareth, who dwelt in Galilee, we have seen His sign from heaven. When the star appeared, the shepherds watching in the field were

astonished. Falling on their knees, they said, 'Glory be to the Father, Alleluia; glory be to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.' And then, on the other side was the sentence: "St. John the Baptist is chosen, who has preached to all the world repentance for the remission of our sins." These words offer a curious but instructive clue to their date. The Great Council of Nice, whence the Nicene Creed gets its name, was held in the year 325, in order to deal with the Arian heresy, which denied the essential deity of our Saviour. That doctrine, broadly speaking, may be described as coming into existence about the year 300.

This liturgical fragment found by Bickell must have existed before the Arian heresy and the year 300, because that, after the controversies connected with Arianism, neither the Arians nor the orthodox would have used the expressions contained in it. The Arians would not have used the doxology contained therein, because it ascribes equal and the same glory to the Son and Holy Ghost as to the Father. The orthodox would not have used this doxology because an Alleluia is inserted after the Father's Name and thus seems to imply a distinction in essence from the other two persons of the Holy Trinity. The document thus brought to light offers the earliest notice of the Feast of Epiphany, which combined, according to the usage of the ancient Eastern Church, the commemoration of our Lord's birth with that of His baptism, a combination which can still be traced in the services of the Church of England for the Epiphany Festival.

The Coptic Church of the present day lays the greatest stress upon the Feast of Epiphany, and marks it by a special ceremony. They call Epiphany the Feast of the Tank, because they fill a large vessel full of water and bless it with an elaborate ritual in remembrance of the Baptism of Christ. The Coptic Church is indeed marvellous in its tenacious conservatism. Whatever it once grasps, it preserves sharp and clear, but dead, like a fly in a piece of amber. The head of St. Mark used to play an important part in the ordinations of the Patriarch of Alexandria till the relic was stolen. The patriarch elect of Alexandria is to this present day brought in chains to his ordination because a patriarch, elected in the second century, fled into the desert and had to be conducted back in fetters. Circumcision and other Jewish customs are still practised, bringing us back to the state of things depicted in St. Paul's writings and in the Acts of the Apostles.

Perhaps the most striking instance of this intensely conservative spirit of the Copts never changing a rite, a custom, or a fashion, can be drawn from a comparison of their history with that of the Celtic Church in Ireland. A series of articles which have been appearing in this magazine on ancient Irish art has shown some of the curiosities of Celtic Christian art existing in the Royal Irish Academy, in Trinity College, and in other libraries and museums in Dublin. Some of the most ancient of these are the book satchels or cases in which valuable manuscripts were preserved, and in some cases so seldom

opened that the manuscripts have been glued by age into one solid mass. These book satchels are in some instances as old as the sixth and seventh century. At any rate they are often mentioned in the writings of that period. These satchels were imported from Egypt by the Egyptian monks who came preaching the gospel among the islands of the west. Is it not a marvellous instance of the persistence of a type or fashion that, while this fashion has long since died out in Ireland, we find precisely the same kind of book satchels still used among the Copts? Mr. Curzon's "Monasteries of the Levant," depicts the common kind of satchel in daily use among the monks of Nitria, while, again, the more valuable and ancient manuscripts are still enclosed by the modern Copts in cases ornamented with silver plates and jewels exactly like those containing the more highly-prized Irish documents. The ancient Copts about the year 400, taught the Celts the use of book satchels, some few of which have survived to our times. The modern Copts still make and use book satchels of precisely the same fashion. Is it any wonder that we lay much stress on the historic testimony of a Church and people so tenacious as the Copts are of the impressions they once receive?

We must, however, turn our attention to another branch of the same Coptic Church whence have come the most curious confirmations and illustrations of Christian history and doctrine. Abyssinia is a country which ever has been and still is shrouded in mystery. The Queen of Sheba is said to have come from that land and its sovereigns claim through her a descent from King Solomon. The Ethiopian eunuch, converted by St. Philip the evangelist, is described by some ancient writers as the earliest preacher of the Gospel among the inhabitants of that country. He was treasurer of Candace Queen of the Ethiopians, and we find an interesting illustration of the accuracy of the Acts in the fact that, while no sovereign of that name appears in the lists of the Abyssinian princes of that time, the name Candace seems, like the name Pharaoh in Egypt, to have been the ordinary title of the queens of the kingdom of Meroe, a division of the region of Ethiopia embraced within two branches of the Nile. This fact is attested by two witnesses, Strabo and Pliny—unexceptionable in character, for they were both pagans, and unexceptionable in point of time, for Strabo died about A.D. 25, that is, before our Lord began His public ministry, and Pliny in A.D. 79, at the destruction of Pompeii, where he lost his life in a heroic effort to afford succour to the perishing people.

In the Sixth Book of his Natural History, Pliny tells us that "a woman named Candace reigned over Meroe, and hence that name has now for many years passed upon the queens of that country." Even had we not this notice in the Acts thus wondrously attested, we might conclude from other sources that a certain amount of light emanating from Judaism had penetrated these dark regions and that even before Apostolic days, "Ethiopia was beginning to stretch out her hands unto God." Let us dwell on this point

for a little. Jewish inscriptions centuries older than the Christian era have been found at Aden. A Jewish colony was settled in Southern Arabia from the days of the Babylonish captivity and Nebuchadnezzar. That colony attained great power about the year 500 of the Christian era, and persecuted the Christians of that neighbourhood with such violence, that the sufferings of the Homerite martyrs as they are called, hold now an eminent and most authentic place among the blood-stained triumphs of Christ's servants.

The records of that persecution and of the struggles and sufferings of the Christians against their Jewish persecutors in that distant region, have come to light only of late years. Within the last twenty years vast quantities of manuscripts have been discovered illustrating an epoch which reproduced all the troubles which the church suffered in the time of Polycarp. The Jews were then, as in St. Paul's days, the real instigators of the attacks upon Christianity. At Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth, as afterwards at Jerusalem, Jewish hostility was the great inciting cause of apostolic persecution. So it was in Polycarp's case at Smyrna in the second century, and so was it in Southern Arabia. It is not, however, for the purpose of raking up the remembrance of Jewish hostility, which was afterwards so terribly avenged in the frightful and un-Christ-like persecutions the Jews suffered at Christian hands, that I have recorded these circumstances.¹ But I have done so, in order to illustrate the minute accuracy of the Acts of the Apostles. Gibbon in the 42nd and 50th chapter of his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," has given a brief sketch of the Jewish kingdoms of Southern Arabia and their hostility to Christianity, but it is only the discoveries of this century which have clearly set before Christendom the history of this obscure period.

I am not, however, so much concerned with these persecutions. The Church of Christ has again and again passed through similar experiences and been the better for them. My interest in them is this:—they show that the Jewish nation had large, powerful and flourishing colonies in Southern Arabia long prior to the Christian era. It is no wonder then that the author of the Acts should enumerate the Jews of Arabia "Cretes, and Arabians" among the various nationalities who crowded to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Pentecost, and that the same writer should introduce a Jewish proselyte of Ethiopia as one of the earliest triumphs won by the simple preaching of the cross of Jesus Christ.

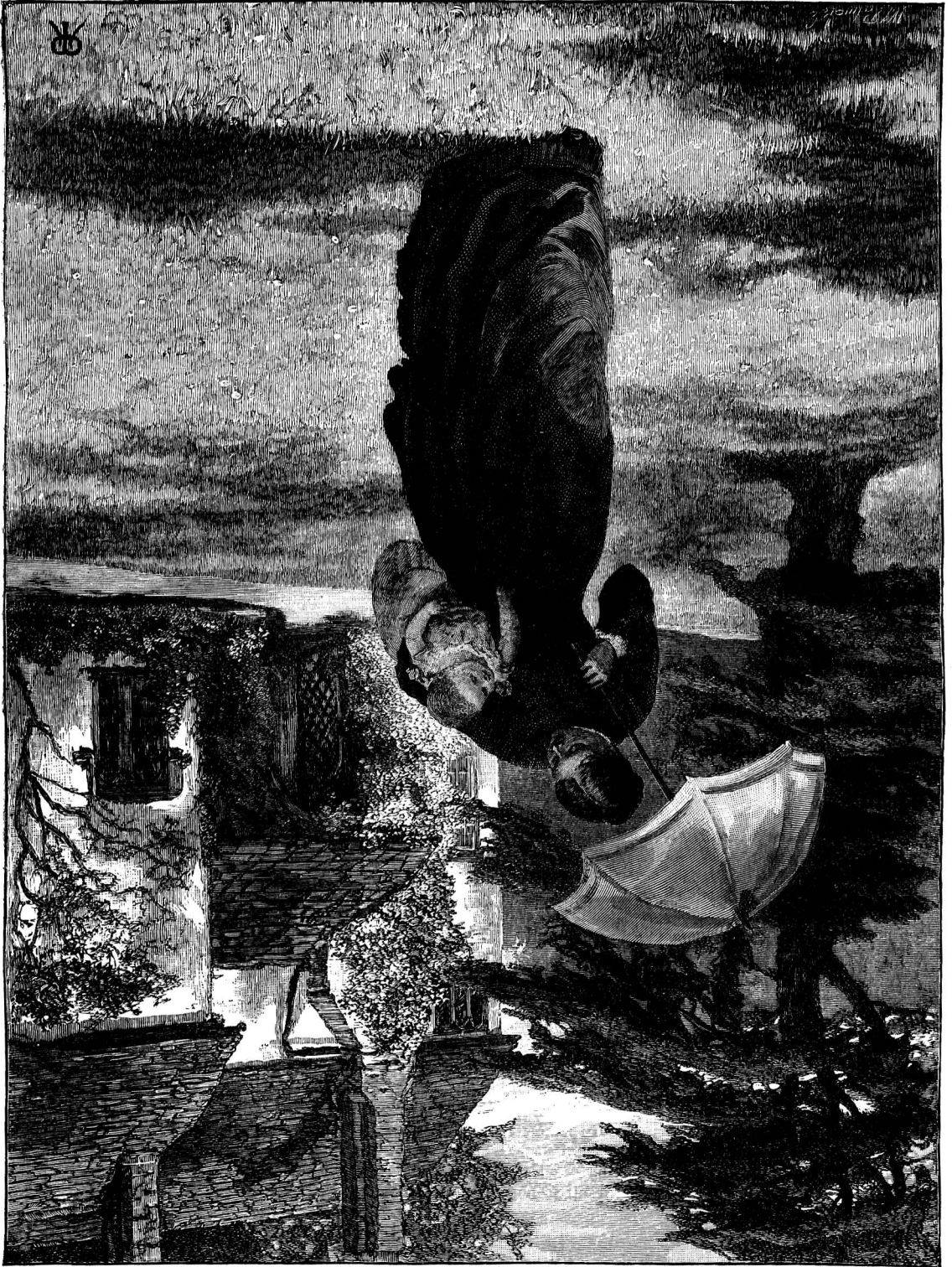
It is fashionable with some modern schools of unbelief to reckon the Acts of the Apostles as a work compiled in the second century. Paley long ago in his "Horæ Paulinæ" amply demonstrated, not by the methods of subjective criticism, but by the solid appeal to fact, and the evidence of St. Paul's undoubted Epistles, that this was impossible. The progress of investigation and

discovery has only strengthened and developed this argument. Inscriptions have come to light testifying to the intimate and accurate local knowledge the writer of the Acts possessed on such questions as the polity and government of cities like Ephesus, Philippi, and Corinth at the exact time when St. Paul lived and acted. And then we turn to this remote and distant corner of the earth, Arabia and Ethiopia, and there we find Pliny and Strabo, and manuscripts which this century alone has brought to light, witnessing that the book of the Acts of the Apostles is most accurate in its representation of the religious state of these regions. A man who could have been so wondrously accurate in his forgeries concerning countries so widely separated, as the writer of the Acts must have been, would have been a greater miracle than the greatest miracle which his pen records.

I have been led to a considerable distance from my more immediate subject in the history of the Abyssinian church, by the consideration of this interesting and little known topic, the Jewish kingdoms of Southern Arabia. Let us now briefly return to it and sketch it as a preliminary to the description of the wonders Abyssinia has revealed to us. The conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch may have exercised considerable influence on Eastern Africa, but no church was formed, and without a church organisation the work of individual effort and conversion is soon absorbed in the surrounding mass of Paganism. About the year 300 of the Christian era, Abyssinia became the subject of a wonderful work through the instrumentality of a layman named Frumentius. His story was a strange and romantic one, and his example has been adduced by Bishop Burnet in his "Commentary on the Thirty-nine Articles," to show that laymen may lawfully preach the gospel in cases of necessity. A Syrian merchant travelled towards India, accompanied by his two sons, Edesius and Frumentius. They were captured at a port on the African coast, where all were murdered save the two boys. They found favour in the eyes of the sovereign, and rose to great power, which they exercised in favour of Christianity, which seems to have already prevailed in a sporadic shape, a few congregations here and there professing it, gathered out of the Roman merchants who had penetrated these distant shores in search of gain. After a time they sought permission from the sovereign to return to their own country for a visit, upon which Frumentius was consecrated by the great Athanasius of Alexandria as first bishop of the Ethiopians, since which time the primate of Abyssinia acknowledges the supremacy of the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria, and receives consecration at his hands.

This connection with Alexandria has had numerous and important results. Early Christian documents were carried into Abyssinia, and simply slept there, as in a safe hiding-place, till the time came when their testimony was required, and the voice of Divine Providence called them forth to be witnesses to the faith of the gospel. Some brief notices of these waifs and strays of early Christianity will supply ample matter for our next paper.

¹ See the articles in Smith and Wace's "Dictionary of Christian Biography," on Elesbaan, Ethiopian Church, and Josephus Dunaanus.



In The Sunshine.

"LIVE in the sunshine," the skylark is singing,
Giving a voice to the glad summer day;
Out of the azure his clear notes are ringing—
"Live in the sunshine, and sing while you may."

Clover and daisy-moons, high in the meadows,
Breathe the same secret of living aright,
Lifting their bright heads afar from the shadows—
"Live in the sunshine and grow in the light."

So sings the brooklet, the hillside adorning,
Flashing and sparkling with beauty aglow—
"Live in the sunshine and filled with the morning
Carry its brightness wherever you go!"

God of the sunshine, its Maker and Giver,
Who to Thine own art a sun and a shield,
Teach us, we pray Thee, by song-bird and river,
Help us to live as the flowers of the field.

Give us a heart to be trusting and cheerful,
When in the shadows Thy love hath allowed;
And should our weak faith be downcast and fearful,
Doubting Thy mercy when under the cloud—

Light of the wide world, arise for our healing,
Scatter our gloom with the sunbeams of grace;
Shine on us, Lord, and Thy glory revealing,
Make us to dwell in the light of Thy face!

MARY ROWLES JARVIS.

THE PEACE OF MÜNSTER.

WE give a reproduction as frontispiece of this part of the central portion of Gerard Terborch's great picture, the ratification of the Peace of Münster. It is the work of a remarkable man. It commemorates one of the greatest events in the history of the world. The painter has chosen to immortalize, so far as his admirable skill can do it, the triumph of Holland over Spain, of Protestantism over Popery, of those who battled manfully for liberty over those who strove to keep both body and soul fast bound in the chains of an irresponsible despotism.

And first a word or two about the painter and the picture. Gerard Terborch, or more correctly Terborch, was born in 1608 at Zwolle, the town in Holland near which for many years Thomas à Kempis lived and prayed and wrote. In early life he travelled widely, visiting Spain, France and England. He appears to have lived for some time at Haarlem, but he finally fixed his home at Deventer, a pleasant and prosperous town situated on the border of the provinces of Overijssel and Guelders, to the east of the Zuyder Zee. In the Town Hall hangs a painting by Terborch, representing the sixteen magistrates of the town and their four secretaries. It is a fine example of a kind of picture frequently painted by the great Dutch artists of the seventeenth century, viz. a group of portraits representing public men in the discharge of their municipal duties. Not only are these paintings valuable as pictures of past social and political customs, but, as in the case of those executed by Rembrandt, Frans Hals and Terborch, they rank among the world's masterpieces of portraiture. But most of Terborch's works belong to the *genre* class, that is, they are representations of the men and women, interiors, dresses, habits, etc. of his day. He excelled in the wonderful finish and naturalness

of his work. A portrait of the artist by himself hangs in the great gallery at the Hague. It is thus described: "He wears a most majestic wig, the curls of which shade a long and melancholy visage; over his shoulders is flung a dark cloak which falls as far as the knees in heavy folds; black knots are tied below the knees, beneath the long grey stockings; he wears high-heeled shoes, square-toed, with large black rosettes on the instep." Terborch's pictures are comparatively rare, and as a rule very costly. The National Gallery possesses two—the Guitarr Lesson, for which the late Sir Robert Peel paid £946; and the one partly reproduced in our illustration which was presented to the nation by Sir Richard Wallace in 1871. When purchased in 1868 by the late Marquis of Hertford it cost 8,800*l.*, or at the rate of 24*l.* per square inch. He bequeathed it to Sir Richard Wallace.

In the opinion of the best judges this painting ranks among the very finest of the Dutch School. It is painted on copper, and measures only twenty-two and a half inches in width by seventeen and a half inches in height. Yet it is crowded with figures and even a casual glance shows that they are the faces and forms of living men executed with consummate skill. It is well worth a visit to the National Gallery to study this one painting. It depicts the representatives of Philip iv. of Spain and the delegates of the Dutch United Provinces assembled at Münster on May 15th, 1648, to ratify and confirm by oath the treaty of peace between Spain and Holland which had been signed the 30th of the preceding January. The instant chosen is the recitation of the oath. The six Dutch delegates are holding up their right hands with two fingers closed. The Spanish representatives, two in number, have placed their right hands upon an open copy of



THE PEACE OF MÜNSTER.

Principal Group of TERBURG'S Picture in the National Gallery.

MUSEUM & CHILWORTH COLLECTION

the Gospels. One Dutch man, and one Spaniard, holds each a copy of the document, which he follows as it is being recited.

Around these two central and all important groups are ranged representative men who watch the proceedings with eager and intent interest. And well they might, for they were witnessing the last and culminating act of a tragic drama that for nearly one hundred years had filled a large space on the stage of the world. And every visitor to the National Gallery who looks upon the picture and in whose heart dwells the love of freedom and religious liberty should scan well and closely those faces, so that he may get a clear perception of the manner of man who furnished under God the brain and heart and strength that broke the power of Spain.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the historical importance of the event thus depicted. Eighty years before, what is now known as Belgium and Holland were merely one of the many provinces of Spain. The abdication of Charles V. had left the people of Holland and Belgium at the mercy of his son, Philip II., a man in whose merciless hands lay the temporal destiny of millions of human beings. Narrow-minded, bigoted, sensual, cruel, the abject slave of the Papacy, he was as unfitted to rule others as he was incapable of controlling himself. In the mysterious providence of God this monster was allowed for a generation to curse the nations over whom he ruled.

But in Holland he found more than his match. Under the leadership of William the Silent, the sturdy sailors and peasantry and burghers of Holland, at the cost of awful suffering, countless, lives and millions upon millions of treasures wrested, partly from Philip of Spain and completely from his successors, religious and political freedom. Spain ceased to be a power in northern Europe. The United Provinces became a vigorous republic, capable at home, energetic and colonising abroad, very influential in the development of both England and the United States.

The first stage of the struggle began with the entrance into Holland of the infamous Alva in 1567, and closed forty-two years later, in 1609, when Spain and Holland agreed to a truce for twelve years. During that period, William of Orange laid down his life for his country, the awful massacres at Antwerp and Haarlem occurred, the Dutch triumphantly baffled the Spaniards at Alkmaar and Leyden, the United Provinces were consolidated into a powerful government, and the Spanish galleys and armadas were swept from the sea.

The truce lasted from 1609 to 1621, and then the awful Thirty Years' War blazed forth, in which Holland, England, France, Germany, and Sweden were all engaged. It closed in 1648, and the pride of Spain was humbled in the dust. After a vain conflict of over eighty years, that which Philip II. had sworn should never come to pass had to be. Spain had to recognise the United Provinces as a free and independent power. Terburg's picture represents what was on the part of Spain the complete surrender of everything for which she had poured forth blood and treasure for the greater part of a century.

Nowhere in history is the lesson more clearly taught that men who believe in an open Bible, a free access to God without the intervention of a priest, a living, loving, ever-present and all-powerful Redeemer who died that those who believe on Him may live, are able, by God's help, to defy numbers, to resist tyranny, and to win a free home and an unfettered conscience.

R. LOVETT.

BIBLE NOTES AND QUERIES.

"R. O. F." requests an explanation of Daniel x. 13, 20. "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come." Our correspondent adds: "This seems totally opposed to the idea of heaven as a kingdom of peace."

THE Key to the wonderful vision recorded in this chapter is to be found in the date given in the first verse. "In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia." Daniel, now a very old man, was still in Babylon; but multitudes of his countrymen, by permission of Cyrus, had returned to Jerusalem, and with mingled joy and sorrow had laid the foundations of the temple. The prophet could not but have heard of their proceedings, and would keenly sympathise in their emotions. Especially would this sympathy be aroused when tidings came that the work was hindered by "the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin." In fact, its progress was arrested "all the days of Cyrus king of Persia" (Ezra iv. 5). Daniel, unable himself, from the infirmities of age, to take part with his brethren, was greatly troubled—"mourning three full weeks." Then in a vision came the angel to him, clothed in terrible splendour, yet with words of encouragement and love. Daniel in his sorrow, had earnestly prayed; the vision is an answer to his prayer (verse 12). Yet the answer had been delayed for three weeks, or twenty-one days, as we have seen. The cause of God's own people had seemed in dispute. Persia and Judah had been in conflict, and the issue had been undecided. This in the vision is represented as the strife of spiritual and invisible forces. "The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days." The guardian angel of Persia and the guardian angel of Israel measured their strength against each other. "But, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me"—Michael, the warrior angel, captain of the host of God—(see Rev. xii. 7); and so the victory was won. The next words must, we think, be taken as in the margin of the Revised Version. "I (the guardian angel) was not needed (any more for the conflict) with the kings of Persia, and I am come to make thee understand," etc., as a messenger from the great battle-field. Then, after the aged prophet had well-nigh fainted amid the splendours of the vision, and had been revived again to listen, further words respecting this mighty conflict are spoken. "I," says the guardian angel, "will return to fight with the prince of Persia," for the battle is not yet over; nay, it shall be renewed: "and when I am gone forth," to this contest—"lo, the prince of Grecia shall come"—again, as it were, the guardian angel, or representative of the Grecian power.

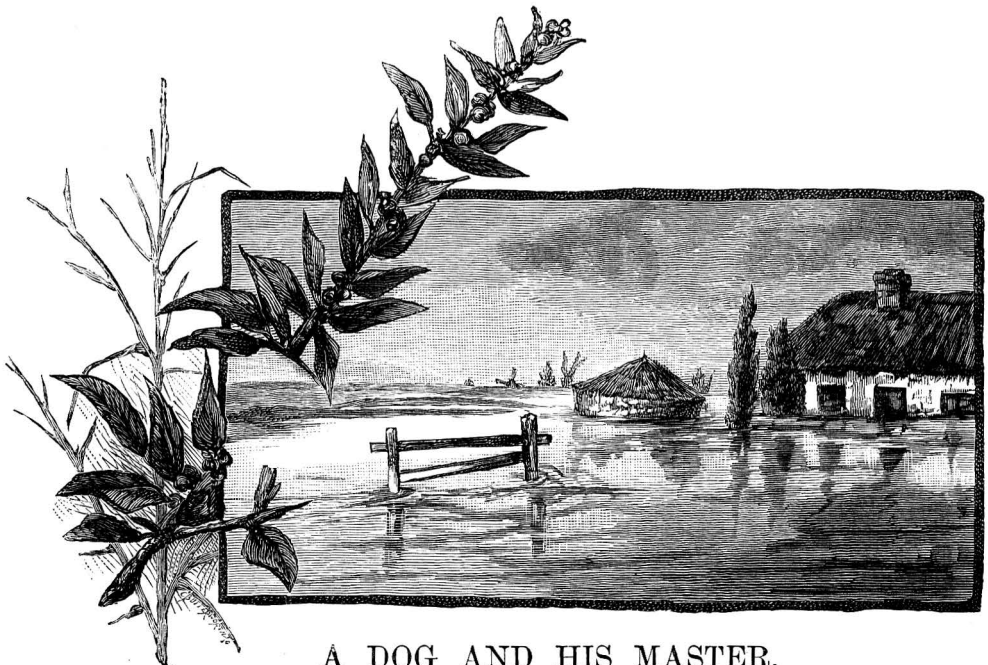
The meaning is that in these attacks upon God's people, first by Persia, then by Greece, there was more than a mere earthly struggle. Invisible powers—the forces of good and evil—were stirring for the mastery. Whether "the prince of

Persia," "and the prince of Grecia," are merely personifications, or whether there were actually existing beings who carried on the contest in the spiritual realm, we cannot tell. We only know that, so long as the world-powers and the armies of righteousness are arrayed against each other, there is "war in heaven," as in the passage from the Apocalypse just quoted. "Michael and his angels" go forth to war with "the dragon and his angels." We on earth mark only the external circumstances of the conflict, but "heaven," that is, the spiritual and unseen universe, is really the scene of strife. Or, as Ewald says, "There are actual celestial powers which correspond to the powers and kingdoms of earth: there is a purely spiritual and heavenly history which corresponds to the history of earth and men; behind all that is visible is that invisible and higher Power which is at once necessary to, and the connecting link of, all human things."

"E. S.", Bickley, writes: "In the Revised Version the word 'saint' is in several instances translated as 'holy one.' Is it represented by a distinct Hebrew word in the original, and has it any separate meaning? The passages referred to are, Deut. xxxiii. 2; 1 Sam. ii. 9; Job. v. 1; xv. 15; Psa. lxxxix. 5, 7; cvi. 16 (margin); Dan. viii. 13; Hos. xi. 12; Zech. xiv. 5; Jude 14."

THE Hebrew word for "holy" is often found, both in the singular and plural forms, without a substantive expressed; the general sense and connection of each passage showing what is to be supplied. Thus the reference in many cases is to GOD Himself—"the Holy [One]" occasionally in the plural, according to the Hebrew fashion of denoting supreme greatness, "the Holy [Ones]" (Prov. ix. 10; xxx. 3; Hos. xi. 12). The "Holy of Holies," again, is a familiar designation of the innermost sanctuary. "Holy [persons]" are generally expressed in our versions by one word—

"saints;" but when beings higher than man are intended, "holy [ones]" is the more natural expression. The Hebrew word in all these cases is the same (*qadôsh*, plural, *q'dôshim*) In the interesting series of passages quoted by our correspondent, the connection seems often to intimate super-human beings, as in Deut. xxxiii. 2, "He came with ten thousands of holy [ones]," or angels; so Acts vii. 53, Gal. iii. 19. The word "saints" (Authorised Version) in this passage may show that the translators of 1611 understood human beings to be intended; but this is a little uncertain, as "saints" had then a more extended meaning. So in Psalm lxxxix. 5, 7, "the congregation of the saints" is shown by the parallelism to be "in the heavens." In Daniel viii. 13, the "saints" that spoke to each other were evidently angels. In Zechariah ix. 5, "all the saints" who shall come with Jehovah at His appearing constitute His angelic train (compare Jude 14). The passages from Job, cited by our correspondent (v. 1; xv. 15) are also understood by the best interpreters to refer to the angels, and the rendering "holy ones" is, therefore, again preferred by the revisers. In 1 Sam. ii. 9, a different Hebrew word is used (*chasid*), properly meaning "pious," or "godly;" and it is to be doubted whether the revisers' "holy ones" is there the best translation. They have retained the word "saints" where holy *men* were evidently intended, as in Psa. xvi. 3, xxxiv. 9, with some other passages, for the plural of *qadôsh*, and in many more (always in the Psalms, except the passages above cited), for the plural of *chasid*. In the important passage, Psa. xvi. 10, *chasid* is used for "holy," also in Deut. xxxiii. 8; Psa. lxxxvi. 2; lxxxix. 19 (R.V. "saints"); cxlv. 17. In all other cases in the Old Testament, "holy" represents the Hebrew *qadôsh*, or some other form of the same word, the root meaning of which is *separation*.



A DOG AND HIS MASTER.

"I DON'T think it is good for a boy to have such hard things to bear as I have; I don't, really." There were tears in Charlie Havers' eyes as he sat on the edge of his bed, pulling at the lace of his boot, pulling so hard that the lace broke—but it was better to let the lace break than the tears fall, he thought.

His mother sat by his side, and though her face was sad there were no tears in her eyes, perhaps because she had cried all she could.

"I know, my son, things are very hard to bear"—she put her arm round the boy's neck—"but God does send trials for our good, and He knows what is best."

"I don't think it is for our good," the boy said passionately. "I know it is not for my good. I feel ever so much worse since we have been poor, and I have had to go to a horrid common school, and we have had to be in this poky house, and never have enough of anything."

"Oh, my son, there are so many people worse off than we are!"

"Yes, I know, but that does not make it any easier, it makes it worse. Don't kiss me, mother dearest, I feel too bad."

His mother answered by drawing his head on her shoulder and kissing away the tears that by this time had escaped from the boy's eyes.

"It is horrid to feel so bad, mother," he went on, more quietly, "but ever since we came here, and things have been so mean and horrid, I have felt quite different, just as if I was some other boy. Before, when we lived in Vernon Square, I never felt angry with people I met in the street, and now I feel I should like to kick them all. And till I had got to wear my clothes on and on, I never minded being shabby, I suppose because I never was. And till father lost his money I never felt proud of being one of the richest boys at school, and now I feel proud of having been rich once, and just look down on all the poor boys. I know it is horrid, but I cannot help it, it just comes into my heart and burns me. I have always mean thoughts about things, and I feel as bad as anything. So I am sure it is not good for boys to have a hard life."

"It depends upon what one's ideas of good are," his mother said slowly, "whose opinion one values."

"I don't understand you, mother."

"No, dear, I think it is difficult to explain; but let me try. What I mean is, whether we go by God's ideas of goodness and nobleness, or men's ideas."

"But I cannot think like that, mother; I try and do right and then the thoughts come, and instead of getting better I get worse—till I feel as low and mean as a cur."

His mother smiled. "Now that is just what I mean. You know that boy Billy Jones, who passes this house every day with that mongrel dog of his. I don't think that dog has a very easy time of it, he looks as hungry as a hunter, and, poor little creature! he is as thin as he can possibly be. I don't suppose other dogs admire him much; but does that make him snappish, do you think?"

Charlie laughed. "I don't suppose it does, mother, I believe he is downright proud of himself."

"Do you think he would change places with Lady Hale's pug?"

"I should think not, indeed. Why that pug is an over-fed little pampered beast that cannot do anything because it is too fat."

"It is a very handsome little dog."

"Yes, I know."

"And very well bred, and a very valuable dog."

"Yes."

"And Billy's little dog is a poor shabby, ill-fed cur, and yet you think he would not change places with that pug."

"Oh, I dare say he would change places for the food and that kind of thing; but you should see how that dog watches poor Billy; he will wait for hours on the same spot if Bill tells him to stay for him, and he will do any kind of trick just to be patted by Bill's hand."

"Then Billy makes a good master?"

"Certainly that little cur thinks there is no master as good, and I believe Billy would not part with Rough for any amount of money, though he does knock him about sometimes."

Charlie's boots were off by this time, and his mother said no more to him then, nor did they begin the conversation

again for some little time. Several things took place which occupied their minds. The village where Mr. and Mrs. Havers had gone to live when they lost their money and became poor, was one of the low-lying places that suffered so much during the floods. There had been a great deal of rain, and the little river that ran through the village began to swell, and streams trickled from its banks where streams had never been before; and one day while the rain fell in torrents, people began to notice a rushing sound that they had never heard before, and suddenly the water could be seen coming in at the doors of the houses. It was swept back perhaps for a time—a few hours—but by the time that every one was beginning to be accustomed to that roaring noise, heard through the pattering rain, the ground seemed to open its mouth and send up waves of rushing water. Into the houses it swept, till the chairs, where the children had been sitting a few minutes before, were floating in the rooms on the muddy waters. The pig-sties were filled, and the struggling pigs borne off with the fluttering chickens, whose outspread wings were soon damped and held firm in the cruel water. Where there had been a road there was now a river, and in the low-lying parts of the village it was as if there had never been grass or fields with hay-ricks and beasts in them. And the water rushed on. Strong men in boats were trying to save the people and furniture from the flooded cottages, and on the higher ground a crowd of people were standing watching their efforts, and offering such assistance as they were able to give. Charlie and his mother were there. The sullen look in the boy's face had gone, and he stood with eager eyes holding a rope in his hand. Billy was there too, with his dog Rough at his heels, and among the crowd was Lady Hales with the little pug in her arms. All were watching the boats as they came through the thick water towards the dry ground; and as the dripping people were landed some friendly hand took them to the shelter of their own dry homes, while others carried what articles of clothing and furniture they had been able to save into dry quarters. Sometimes, as the boats came away, a turn of the sweeping water would take them against a gate-post that stood drearily out of the wreckage, or a log of wood, swept down from the higher ground, would make the watchers on the bank cry out in fear to warn the boatmen of the danger. Out of one of the houses were brought three or four children, who were placed in the boat, while the mother with the baby came after them, her arms filled with clothes and blankets she had brought from the dry rooms. The children were clinging together, and before the tears of fright were dry on their cheeks, were smiling and trying to catch at sticks and straws that swept past the boat. One tiny thing of about two stood up and made little grabs with her fat hand at the water, till a careful elder sister dragged her back, and held her in spite of her struggles to be free. All would have been well had the sister continued her care, but as her mother got into the boat she stood up to receive some of her bundles, and the younger child, seeing a flower float past them, leant forward, and a lurch of the boat sent her into the surging water.

There was a cry from the bank and a shriek from the mother, as the little creature was swept down with the floating hay and sticks. Its little spotted pinafore had spread itself on the water, and the child was carried along, sometimes face upwards, sometimes rolled over in the muddy river! Every mother's heart on the high ground seemed to stop, and a groan broke out from the crowd. Then there was a sharp little whistle—

"Go it, Rough, old man! Seize it! Good dog!"

And Billy Jones stood out holding up his arm as if in preparation to throw some imaginary article into the stream. A rough-haired half-starved looking terrier stood beside

him, looking with keen brown eyes into his face. His stubby tail was raised in expectation and quivered at his master's voice. Then a sharp look towards the water, a shake of his rough coat, and the mongrel cur ran quickly towards the bank, looking back into the boy's face from time to time, till he seemed to catch the inspiration, and was in the water heading towards the floating child. The pinafore had caught upon a stake in mid-water, and the child was somewhat raised as it was dragged back from the on-flowing stream. The dog was near it, shaking off the straw and hay that impeded his swimming. If he can get at the child now, a short swim would land them, and the boat is making its way through the débris towards the spot! But the force of the water has torn the child away from the post, and the little thing is hurled down for a few yards till she is stopped again by bits of broken wood and boughs. The dog turns, and before the child can be carried on has seized her little frock in his mouth. Then came the struggle of reaching the bank. It seemed as if both child and dog must be swept down with the current, but a few struggles more brought them nearer to the high ground, and Billy Jones was standing up to his waist in water, and as they came within arm's length, caught hold of them both and drew them to the dry land. There was a cheer as he did so, and the drowning child was laid on the ground, and when life was restored, was given into the arms of her sobbing mother. The dog lay on the ground, its rough hair matted and dirty with mud, and the thin ribs of the animal could be seen as it heaved in its exhaustion. Its eyes were closed, and when the child had been given to its mother, the people came back to crowd round it, and "Bravo little fellow!" "Good noble creature!" all were saying.

One hand patted his head, another stroked his back, and Lady Hales had put down her little pug and with tears in her eyes knelt beside the little mongrel. But the dog took no notice of any one and lay panting with closed eyes, till the hand of his master touched him, and the stumpy tail moved and beat the ground feebly. The boy lifted him in his arms, and opening his coat, laid the dripping little animal in his bosom, and with a rough salutation to the bystanders, strode away.

"Three cheers for the dog and his master!" rose from all lips, and Charlie Havers felt his eyes fill with tears and his arm clasped his mother more tightly.

As they moved homeward Mrs. Havers looked down at the boy with a smile.

"Tell me, Charlie," she said, "which would you rather be, that beautiful little pug dog or Rough?"

"Oh, mother! can you ask?" Charlie exclaimed. "Why, Rough, a hundred times!"

"And yet that pug is the most valuable dog; a dog-fancier would give a large sum of money for it, and he would not give more than a few shillings, if that, for Rough."

"But Rough's master would not part with him."

"No, and I do not think Rough would part from his master; and yet, look how thin the dog is, and what a stumpy tail he has, and how ragged his coat too."

"I don't suppose the pug can help being fat and sleek, mother," Charlie said thoughtfully.

"No, my son, he is happy in his way and is valuable as a dog, but I think that Rough is something more, that perhaps would never have come out if he had been sleek and fat and had all he wanted."

Charlie was silent for a little time and then he said—

"Mother, I know what you meant by asking me if I would change with that pug if I were Rough. You would ask me if I would change with my old self now."

His mother pressed his hand, and he went on—

"I would not, mother, now. I might have been fatter

and my coat might have been better"—here they both laughed—"but I should never have known how nice it was to work for you, and I shall not mind now if the boys think me poor, for it is not the worst thing in the world to be poor, is it, mother?"

"I think not, my boy: it cannot do people any harm at any rate, for the Master we serve became poor for our sakes that we might be rich—but, as I told you before, it depends so much on what we think of poverty and riches, and our happiness depends upon whether we wish to live in comfort and ease from outside things, or to live a life of following our Master, waiting and watching for Him and doing all He teaches and tells us."

"And after all, mother," Charlie said brightly, "when one comes to think of it, Rough has much the jolliest life, and must be much the happiest."

"I do not think there is any doubt of that, my boy," his mother said, with a smile like sunshine; and they walked home quickly together in order that they might take the soup that they were going to have for dinner, to one of the poor people who were unable to get back to their own house that night.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XIV.

Who, through her daughter, gained her base desire?
Who burned his mother's idol up with fire?
The first man born after the flood was dried?
His name who buried Christ when crucified?
Where dwelt the judge who could not cease to pray
For those he taught the good and holy way?

These five initials spell a woman's name,
Who out of Egypt into Canaan came;
While, with the final letters, may be spelt
The name of one with whom this stranger dwelt.

L. T.

SCRIPTURE CHARACTERS.

NO. VII.

1. Both of them were very handsome.
2. Both of them spent their early life in obscurity.
3. No account is given of the birth or childhood of either.
4. Both were called to fill high positions.
5. Both were great warriors.
6. Both of them spared the lives of their enemies.
7. Both were reproved, by a prophet, for sin.
8. Both of them built an altar unto the Lord.
9. Of both of them it is said that the Spirit of the Lord came upon him.
10. Both of them sought the help of a good man.
11. Yet these two persons were very different characters; one was rejected by God, and the other established and exalted.

L. T.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XII.—p. 464.

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|----------|-------|-------|-------|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| 1. E | p | h | e | s | u | S | . . . | { Acts xix. 27; 1 Cor. xv. |
| 2. M | o | t | H | . . . | 32; Rev. ii. 1. | | | |
| 3. M | u | l | E | . . . | Matt. vi. 20. | | | |
| 4. A | s | P | . . . | 2 Sam. xviii. 9. | | | | |
| 5. N | i | e | v | e | H | . . . | Rom. iii. 13. | |
| 6. U | n | s | t | a | b | l | e | Jonah i. 2; Matt. xii. 41. |
| 7. E | n | d | o | R | . . . | Gen. xlix. 4. | | |
| 8. L | a | D | . . . | 1 Sam. xxviii. 7. | | | | |
| | | | | | | John vi. 9. | | |
| Emmanuel | . . . | . . . | . . . | Isa. vii. 14; Matt. i. 23. | | | | |
| Shepherd | . . . | . . . | . . . | John x. 11, 14, 16. | | | | |

Monthly Religious Record.

MUCH was said at the recent Sunday School Convention on international organisation. It was in itself evidence of the growing intercourse between the nations. This interchange has already had a perceptible influence on our social life; it has affected the common thought; it is modifying religious action. The criticism that accounts itself "travelled" now makes itself heard in all directions. If there are some drawbacks, surely what is strongest and best, and most divine in the churches, has now its call to new activities. So thought those who gathered from America and the Continent to consult with their brethren of Great Britain on the work of the Sunday-schools.

A preliminary Convention—if we may so call it—was held on board the *Bothnia*, which brought nearly two hundred and fifty Sunday-school representatives from the United States and the dominion of Canada. During the voyage daily meetings of a varied character were held. At Liverpool they were welcomed with enthusiasm. In London the delegates from all parts were received at the Mansion House.

At the first session of the Convention proper, held in the Memorial Hall, Lord Kinnaird, as president of the Sunday School Union, delivered the address of welcome. He was followed by Mr. F. F. Besley. Dr. John Hall, of New York, gave the first response. He was succeeded by the Rev. Dr. Cuyler, of Brooklyn, who urged that they "could only save the world by saving the children." Count Bernstorff followed, and bore testimony as to what he had seen of the value of Sunday-schools, even in their beginnings, in the different countries of Europe. "Sunday-schools worked out two great principles of religious life. The first was the Sunday. The brethren in England and the United States were defending their Sunday, and he hoped they would continue to do so. On the Continent of Europe they were trying to conquer a Sunday; they wanted to get a Sunday, and the Sunday-schools were doing a great deal in that direction, because they gave the Christian regular occupation for the Sunday, and taught the children early to love the Sunday. The other principle was that of voluntary work. In Germany, and also in other parts of the world, they had been used to leave their religious and political duties to be done by those who were called to it. The political duties they left to the government of the country, and the religious duties they left to the pastors and church government. The religious work required training, and the Sunday-school was most excellent training for it, and many of those who went as teachers to the Sunday-schools went on and did other religious work afterwards." M. Sautter, in responding for France, said that the new laws on education, by which the entrance of the school was positively prohibited to the ministers of every church, and to any kind of religious instruction, even if the parents should expressly demand it, had increased the need of Sunday-schools. The prospect was dreadful should the church fail in its work, but all denominations were working hard for the improvement of the Sunday-schools. Mr. King, of Nova Scotia, afterwards spoke on behalf of the Colonies.

The three subsequent sessions were held in the City Temple. It is impossible within these limits to trace the course of the debates. But we may quote Mr. F. T. Hartley's statement as to the present position of Sunday-schools in Great Britain: "In 1785, five years after Raikes opened his first school, the number of Sunday-scholars in England and Wales were computed at 250,000. In 1818 the first Parliamentary return gave the number as 477,225; in 1883 the second Parliamentary return reported 1,548,890. In 1851 the census returns gave the numbers as 2,407,642; and in 1889, according to a recent estimate, it was 5,733,325. These figures showed for England and Wales a proportion of 20-29 per cent. of the population, or rather more than one in five. The number of scholars had never increased so rapidly as since the passing of the Education Act. The number of Sunday scholars in England and Wales now exceeded by 1,000,000 the number of day scholars. Wales,

taken alone, showed an attendance at Sunday-schools of thirty per cent., while London showed only twelve per cent. This deficiency had been pointed out to the churches of London. In 1851 the percentage of attendance was 5.95 per cent., so that if it was now 12 per cent., it had more than doubled since that time, but it was still far below the other portions of England and Wales. There were now in Scottish Sunday-schools 651,975 scholars, or about sixteen per cent. of the population, whereas in 1851 the proportion was but slightly over ten per cent. As to Ireland, no information could be obtained as to the Roman Catholic Sunday-schools. The number of scholars in Protestant Sunday-schools was 310,099. Altogether the number of scholars in the United Kingdom was 6,695,399; and if the 704,286 teachers were doing all they should do for the scholars entrusted to their care, a glorious work was being effected."

The continental statistics presented by Mr. Edwards have also an interest. There are in Austria, including Bohemia, Hungary, and Moravia, 140 schools; in Belgium, 62; Denmark, 300; France, 1,200; Germany, 3,231; Holland, 1,471; Italy, 200; Norway, 250; Portugal, 30; Russia, 23; Spain, 100; Sweden, 3,340; Switzerland, 1,162; giving a total for all the continent of 11,509 schools, 55,511 teachers, and 1,007,423 scholars.

From the United States, Mr. E. Payson Porter said they had 10,000,000 connected with their Sunday-schools. The percentage was much larger in some States than in others. Twenty-three years ago there was hardly a sprinkling of adults in the Christian Episcopal Church Schools in Philadelphia. There were now 187,000 scholars in that city, of which 45,971 were adult scholars. Adding 16,937 teachers, they had 62,908 adults in the Philadelphian schools.

Mr. B. F. Jacobs, of Chicago, said they had come to believe in America that the Sunday-school was a necessity, for the Bible had gone out of nearly all their public schools. If it had not gone out of the public schools of Great Britain they might watch the process that was going on. He was not unmindful of the fact that there were many servants of God that were in the habit of preaching expository sermons. But in the pulpit in America there was little of the preaching of the word of God, there was not much teaching of it in prayer meetings, and they were living in a day when family worship was neglected. In one of their great Conventions they spent an hour and a half in discussing how they should use the Bible in family worship, and when they asked those who were able to rise and testify that their family worship was a success, the number was few. What then remained? Was not the Sunday-school the place where all Christians came together to study the word of God? Therefore, how wonderfully important was this school. Mr. Jacobs was careful to limit his remarks to the country with which he was best acquainted, but every year on this side of the water also the need of more definite instruction becomes increasingly apparent.

The Mildmay Park Conference has now for thirty-three years in succession brought together Christians of various denominations for communion and prayer. This year it was as usual largely attended. The *Christian*, in its full report, mentions what it regards "as a very hopeful feature of the numerous summer conventions," that "the department for considering active work is bearing an increasing proportion to the time given to a merely receptive hearing of doctrinal teaching." But it is perhaps a fortunate circumstance that the Mildmay Conference follows so long an array of anniversaries concerned with practical questions, for the spring of all true progress must be sought in the inner life, and the great verities which minister strength. Sir Arthur Blackwood presided. The leading subject for consideration this year was worded as follows:—"With Christ: (1) In Death and Resurrection; (2) In Service and Suffering; (3) In Glory Here and Hereafter." All the addresses bore on these several themes. Prominent amongst them was one by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, full of practical and pithy

suggestions. He closed with a characteristic parable:—"There came once into a certain country a great Prince. But he came incognito; he was not known or recognised. There came a day when most of the people gathered round him, and, as there was something peculiar about his manner, they began to scoff at him; pelted him with mud, and hooted him through the streets. At last they set him up in the pillory, and when he was there they emptied all their garbage upon him, and insulted him in every possible manner. But there was one among them, of a nobler breed, who recognised his Prince. One day when he was in the pillory and the populace was pelting him, this one wiped that royal face; when there was something more vile than usual coming he put himself in the way and took the foul missile upon himself; and he spoke good words of cheer to the suffering Prince. You know the parable, so I may pass on and utter my closing word. It came to pass that the Prince went home again. One day when his father was on the throne, the Prince was there, and amidst the multitude was that man who had befriended the Prince in the time of his shame and scoffing. The attendants stood around the throne, and right royal creatures they were, arrayed in all their splendour. Let me drop the parable again. It was God Himself on the throne. When He saw the man come who had stood side by side with His own Son in the day of scorning and scoffing, He said: 'Stand by, seraphim and cherubim! Make way for him who shared with My Son His humiliation.' And God sat the man down upon His throne with Him. 'As thou hast suffered with Him, thou shalt reign with Him.'"

Mildmay has, however, its organisations and its continual round of varied work. Thus, from its "Retrospect" we learn that the Deaconess' House last year was occupied by about fifty deaconesses; most of them, as well as about twenty-five more in the branch houses in the south and east of London, are employed in parochial work. Over twenty deaconesses have also been working in other parts of England, one among soldiers' wives in Malta, one superintending the Dublin Prison Gate Mission, six in Palestine, and two among Jews at home. No fewer than seventy nurses and nursing sisters make the Nursing Home their resting-place in the intervals between their cases. All of these have received thorough hospital training, and are in perpetual demand for nursing in private families, their services having been secured in 549 cases during last year. One, who lives at the Home, and works permanently among the sick poor of the district, paid 2000 visits during the same period. Several institutions at home and abroad are also supplied, and fourteen probationers are still under training. Then, too, there is the Mildmay Memorial Hospital, which has received 189 in-patients, while in the hospital at Bethnal Green 392 in-patients and 5,941 new out-patients were treated. In all, the Medical Mission reports 12,000 attendances, and about 7,300 visits by doctors and deaconesses to the sick in their own homes. There are also orphanages and refuges, and many other good works in constant progress. The income for the year reached 27,498l., of which, we are informed, fully half was contributed by those actually engaged in the work.

The discussion on missionary methods is prolonged by letters from the missionaries abroad. Thus, the Rev. G. H. Rouse, of Calcutta, contributes several facts of interest. "The number of actual baptised converts from the colleges," he says, "has not been large, but it has been larger than many think. And converts must be weighed as well as counted. One wintry afternoon a lad was converted in a small chapel; only one soul saved, but that lad was C. H. Spurgeon, and that one conversion meant the conversion of thousands. So in regard to the College converts, their number is not large, but their influence is great. One of them, Narayan Sheshadri, has been the means of bringing a thousand heathens into the Christian community. Others have become missionaries, teachers, magistrates, merchants, and many of them have nobly served Christ in the positions in which He has placed them, and have exerted a wide influence on those around. The indirect influence for good which the college work produces is also very great. It is said also that mission college students are the bitterest opponents of street preaching. No doubt they sometimes are, because the truth, when not received into the heart, often makes the man more bitter than he was before. In South India there has recently been a marked increase of oppo-

sition. If the missionary societies give up their educational work, there is no Christian agency to take its place, and the result would be that while India is now awakening from its sleep of ages, and the question is whether it will become Christian or infidel, the whole higher education of the country would be non-Christian or distinctively anti-Christian. Could the result be anything but disastrous?"

MR. MEREDITH TOWNSEND discusses in the *Contemporary Review* the question of "Cheap Missionaries." His conclusion is thus summed: "A missionary is not made more efficient by being scarified every day with the squalid troubles of extreme poverty; and the notion that his low position will bring him closer to the native is the merest delusion. The white missionary is not separated from the India by his means, but by his colour, and the difference implied by a thousand years of differing civilisations which the word colour implies. He is a European; those to whom he preaches are Asiatics: in presence of that distinction all others are not only trivial but imperceptible. The effect of the cheap missionary on the native mind will be precisely that of the dear missionary, except that as an unmarried man he will be regarded with infinitely more suspicion and distrust." Mr. Townsend would reorganise the missionary system, in India at any rate, on the lines of the Civil Service—letting the bulk of the missionaries be native, and leaving to Europeans the business of making, inspiring, and guiding native Christian evangelists. The latter, he thinks, could do the same work as the cheap European missionaries much more cheaply, and infinitely better. There are, in round numbers, seven hundred Protestant missionaries in India. Mr. Townsend proposes to give each one hundred native preachers, at fifteen pounds a year, thus providing an evangelising force of 70,000 men. But this is not much more than another way of pleading for an efficient native agency, which is one of the recognized aims of all missionary societies. The question remains, are the native teachers as yet forthcoming in sufficient numbers, men of intelligence and piety, tried and to be trusted? As has been many times said, when this point is reached, we come to the solution of many of our difficulties.

SIR PHILIP CUNLIFFE OWEN, K.C.B., is well known as a chief director and administrator of the various institutes and exhibitions, which have attracted so much national and international attention for the last thirty years and more. He comes before us in rather a new and unexpected light as an active member of the committee of that excellent institution "The Mission to Seamen," of which the Earl of Aberdeen is president, and Commander Dawson, R.N., is secretary. In moving the adoption of the report at the last annual meeting, when the Archbishop of York presided, Sir Philip said, "he claimed to be an old salt, having spent some five years of his early life on board ship. He had had the honour of being elected a member of the committee, and perhaps one reason was because he was very much interested, not only in the seafaring population, but also took a warm personal interest in the cause of temperance. Having had some experience in those days of the evil of intemperance among sailors, and knowing how terribly they are tempted, he had set an example of total abstinence, and in the evening of life wished to do his utmost for the benefit of those among whom he was thrown in his early days." Useful work is done by the Thames Church Mission, and the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, and by other local agencies, but this society takes charge of the welfare of seamen everywhere, abroad or at home, as far as its means allow. There are more than half-a-million of British merchant seamen, fishermen, boatmen, lighthouse-keepers, almost all of whom are dependent, when afloat on voluntary, or religious ministrations. There are nearer forty than thirty thousand British merchant vessels, some with large crews, not one of them carrying a chaplain. Sir Philip Owen said that if the British public knew how much good was done by the labours of pious and philanthropic men, this society would have £100,000 instead of less than £28,000 for its Christian work throughout the world for our merchant seamen. Every week sixty-three seamen and five fishermen, on an average, meet with sudden death in the prime of life.

CARDINAL MANNING, in a recent pastoral, stated that while in 1850 there were but forty-six Roman Catholic churches in his diocese, there are now one hundred and twenty-three.