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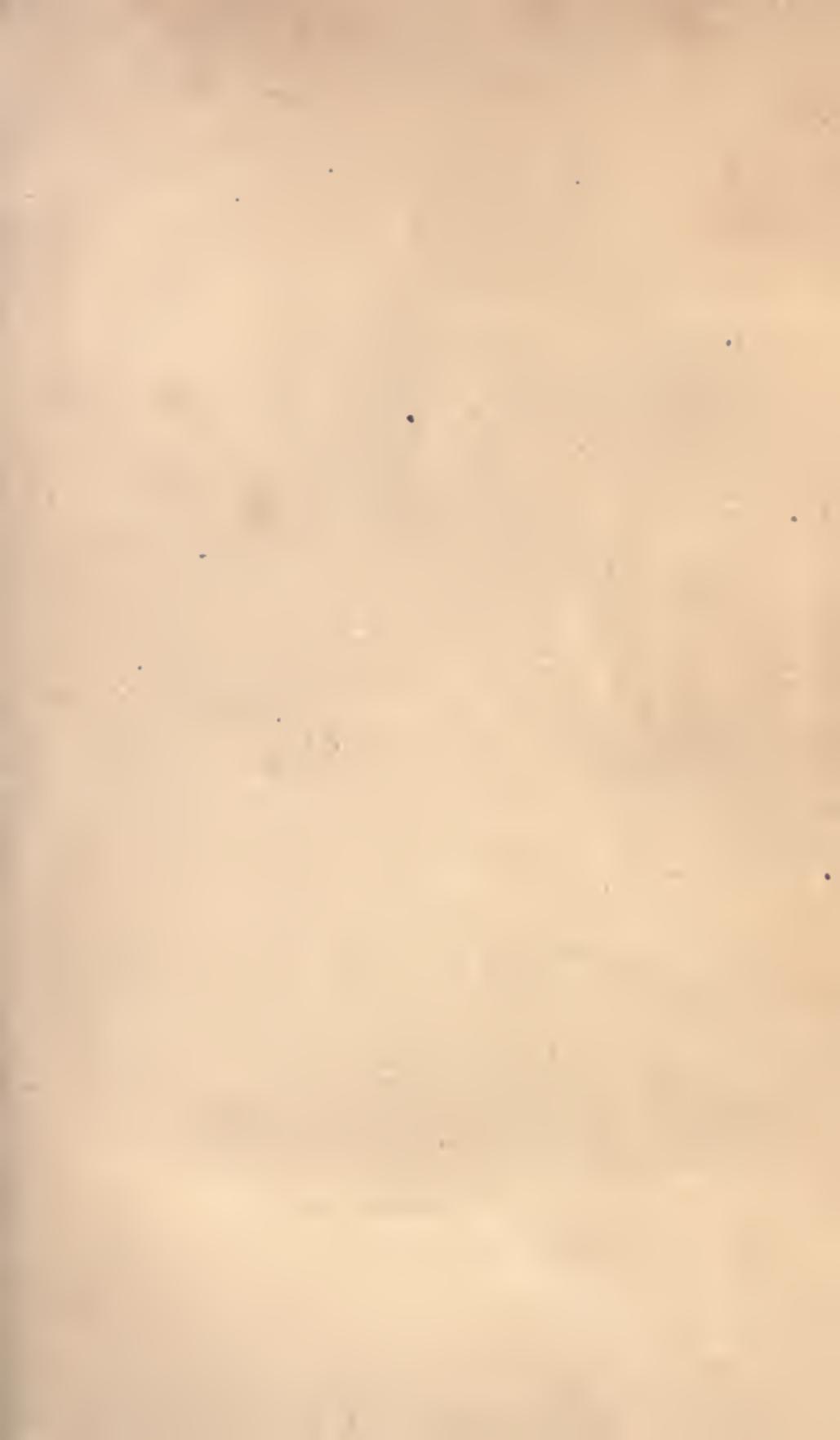
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EDDYSTONE LIGHTHOUSE. Isle of Wight Stories.

STORIES

DESCRIPTIVE OF

THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

“Oh! hold it holy—it will prove a bond
Of love and brotherhood, when all beside
Hath been dissolved—and tho' wide ocean roll
Between the children of one fatherland,
This shall be their communion—they shall send
Linked in one sacred feeling—at one hour,
In the same language—the same prayer to Heaven,
And each resembling each in plety,
Pray for the other's welfare.”

THE PRAYER BOOK.—*Southey.*

BY EMMA MAC ALLAN.

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M117s

TO

THE CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA,

These simple Stories

ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

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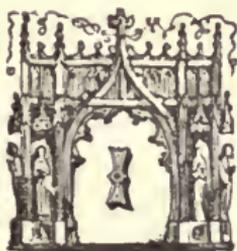
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EASTER GARLANDS.

“Bring flowers to the shrine where we kneel in prayer :
They are Nature’s offering, their place is there :
They speak of hope to the fainting heart ;
With a voice of promise they come and part ;
They sleep in dust through the wintry hours,
They break forth in glory—bring flowers, BRIGHT flowers.”
MRS. HEMANS.



AM going to tell my young readers a story which, I hope, will interest them. It is about two children who lived, not many years ago, in a tiny fisherman’s hut, situated near the lovely village of B——, beyond all question the most picturesque and beautiful in the Isle of Wight.

Agnes and Robert were the only grandchildren of good old David Landon, a man who was universally respected and beloved, both for his honesty and uprightness of character, and also for the unfailing kindness of his disposition. This boy and girl were the

children of old David's youngest daughter, whom God removed after a lingering illness, when Robert was about two years old. Soon afterwards their father also died; and before the brightness of another Christmas had dawned upon the world, the good fisherman laid his aged wife to rest beneath the whispering elm-trees in the quiet churchyard of B——.

Since that time, Agnes and her brother had lived quite alone with their grandfather, in the little cottage perched on the summit of a tall cliff overhanging the dark-blue sea. They were tolerably comfortable, and very cheerful and contented. At the period of which I write, Agnes was nearly twelve, and Robert only one year younger. Like all of us they had faults, but they earnestly endeavored to subdue them, which, alas! is far from being the ease with many who have, like them, been taught that ALL sin, even what we have perhaps allowed ourselves to look upon as very trivial in its nature, is yet grievous in the sight of a most holy God!

You will wonder by whom these children were so carefully instructed, as their grandfather was occupied from daybreak until seven in the evening, only resting for an hour at noon to partake of a slight repast, and to listen

to his darlings' recital of all that had taken place since he parted from them in the morning; but they enjoyed many advantages about which I will tell you.

They regularly attended the parish school at B——, where they were taught to read and write, and, what they had learned to value most of all, were permitted to be present at the week-day as well as the Sunday services. On Wednesday afternoons they were in the habit of assembling at the church to receive lessons in sacred music, from a kind lady who resided in the village, and thus they were enabled to unite their voices with the multitude of the "great congregation" in singing to the praise of God those same beautiful and glorious anthems which, from earliest childhood, have been familiar to us all.

Besides what I have already mentioned, Agnes and the other girls were taught to sew; and likewise received instruction in the various departments of household work, such as washing, ironing, and cooking, which knowledge served to render them useful for the present to their parents, and also tended greatly to fit them for the duties of a life of industry, when they should be of an age to seek employment away from home.

You will understand now why old David's dwelling should always be so neat, and his simple meals so carefully prepared; it was chiefly owing to the diligence and activity of his little granddaughter.

Their cottage was one of the half dozen scattered huts, which composed the tiny fishing hamlet of L——. It was situated about midway down the *Chine*, as the wild, rocky passes, opening on the sea, are sometimes called in the Isle of Wight. The walls were completely overgrown with ivy, which is found in great profusion throughout England, although we (in America) so seldom see it to perfection. At the back was a small kitchen garden, where Robert contrived to cultivate a few cabbages, turnips, and potatoes, together with a row of currant-bushes, and some of the fine gooseberries for which the British Isles are famed. There was also a strip of ground in front, quite gay with a variety of lovely flowers—roses, both pink and white; the fragrant, starry jessamine; the delicate myrtle, with its snowy petals; the pure, waxen laurestinus; the pale, rose-tinted sea-thrift; and the gorgeous scarlet fuschia, which in this mild climate flourishes luxuriantly in the open air.

One sunny afternoon, in the month of April,

the children took their accustomed station upon a lofty crag to watch for the appearance of their grandfather. That had been a pleasant morning! They had gone first to school, as usual, and afterwards to church; for it was Easter-Eve, and during all that Holy Week their ordinary lessons had been laid aside, and they had regularly attended Morning Service, and devoted all their school-hours to the study of the Catechism, and to learning hymns and collects, and those passages in the Bible which have reference to our Saviour's sufferings, and to the glory of His resurrection. The anniversary of that joyful day was now at hand, and their young hearts glowed with the warm, deep love of childhood at the thought, while "the peace which passeth understanding" shed its calm brightness upon each youthful brow.

Ere twenty minutes had elapsed the wished-for sail appeared in view, and Robert bounded down the cliff eager to secure the shining captives, which were to be distributed that afternoon among the principal families of B——, and the adjacent town. David, in the mean time, having moored his vessel in the quiet cove, slowly ascended the steep, winding footpath from the shore, and entered his tidy kitchen, where he found the bread and cheese,

and the large dish of baked potatoes already placed upon the table.

“Grandpa,” began Agnes, when grace had been reverently said, and all were seated at their frugal meal, “are you not going to B—— this afternoon?”

“Yes, to be sure, child,” was the reply, uttered in a rough but most good-natured tone; “do you young lambkins want to drive there in the cart?”

“No, thank you,” exclaimed both children in a breath; and Robert added, “We only wished to be quite sure you would not miss us, grandpa, if we were away, because we should like so very much to go to the Landslip, if you do not mind.”

“Pray, what do my runaways want to do in the Landslip?” demanded the old fisherman, with a smile which plainly showed that the young petitioners were tolerably sure of his consent to this, or any other scheme of harmless pleasure.

“I will tell you,” Agnes answered in a gentle voice; “you know, grandpa, that to-morrow will be Easter-Day. Lady Grace Seldon and Miss Howard were at the school this morning, and they asked us a great many questions about Lent, and why the Church so strictly

calls upon us to observe this, and the other solemn seasons appointed in the Prayer-book; and then Miss Howard spoke of Easter, and said how very happy we should be that it is so near; and just before they left, Lady Grace read aloud a most beautiful hymn, which she said she should like all of us to learn."

"That was very kind of Lady Grace, my darling," observed the old man, as he laid his hand fondly upon the child's bright curls; "only I do not quite see yet why this should take you to the Landslip; unless you have a fancy for studying your lessons up in some pigeon's nest among the cliffs."

"Well, grandpa," exclaimed Agnes, when both children had laughed merrily at old David's jest, "you must know that all the ladies are to be very busy for the rest of the day in decorating the church; it is quite full of evergreens already, but Miss Howard said there should be flowers too, and they think they can collect enough from the gardens and conservatories to fill a large basket for the chancel, and to twine around the railing and the base of the font; only Miss Howard said that it was a great privilege, in which ALL, even the very youngest, should be allowed to share; and then she turned to us, and said,

‘Many of you little ones have no flowers of your own, but I am sure your parents will not refuse to give you some for such a purpose.’”

“No, indeed,” exclaimed the old man, warmly; “take every one you can find in our garden, by all means; but go on, my pet.”

“I knew you would be pleased to let us have them,” replied the little girl; “but Mary Miller has thought of something we can do besides. This has been a very early spring, and there are already many wild-flowers to be found in sunny, sheltered places in the Land-slip.”

“Yes,” interrupted Robert eagerly; “there are daisies, and buttercups, and cowslips, and periwinkles, and violets, and cuckoo-flowers, and never so many others.”

“And,” resumed his sister, “Mary proposes that we should all go and gather our baskets full, and take them to the ladies; they will keep nicely in wet sand until to-morrow, just as the garden-flowers do.”

“Mary Miller is a thoughtful girl,” returned the fisherman; “but, children, it his high time we were away; make haste and get me all the prettiest blossoms you can find, and I will leave them for you at the church. Now, then, good-bye till seven.”

By three o'clock, Robert and his sister, having finished all their little duties, prepared to set out upon their expedition. Following the course of the sparkling streamlet that ran foaming and glittering through the chasm, they soon reached the head of the romantic Chine; and passing the solitary watch-tower, they paused one moment to look back upon the richly wooded gorge they had just quitted, and at the snow-white Culver cliffs which rose beyond, and then rapidly pursued their way across the breezy downs, and through a narrow lane, bordered by hedges of hawthorn and wild brambles, until they reached a low stile, which marked the entrance to the Landslip.

These landslips form one of the most singular and interesting features in the scenery of this enchanting isle. Several have occurred from time to time, at different points along the southern coast, and thus the UNDERCLIFF, so rich in varied and peculiar beauties, sprang into existence. I can scarcely explain to my young readers the exact nature of these wonderful phenomena; but they are strongly calculated to inspire us with feelings of reverence and awe towards the great and all-holy God, who created this earth on which we dwell, and all the countless worlds which we behold, and

whose unerring wisdom guides and sustains them in their course.

But an overwhelming sense of the Almighty's power is far from being the only emotion one experiences while exploring the strange, wild recesses of "East-End," as the tract of ground upon which the children had just entered is sometimes called; for although it is remarkable for its desolate and gloomy grandeur, yet an air of exquisite and luxuriant loveliness is imparted by the endless variety of underwood and wild-flowers, with here and there a graceful mountain-ash, springing from a cleft or crevice in some mighty, fallen cliff; while the ivy clothes with its drapery of living green many a huge, disjointed fragment of dark rock, amid which innumerable creepers twine their fantastic garlands; and above frowns the stupendous barrier of gray cliffs, from which the giant masses have been torn.

It is this desolate but most romantic tract, which separates the Luccombe Downs from B——. A winding pathway runs through the whole extent, and the view from certain points is truly grand. East-End is a favorite resort of tourists, and very many have climbed its rocky steeps, and gazed with rapt delight upon the glorious scene; but few or none have

thoroughly explored the hidden dells and wild sequestered nooks which Agnes and her brother knew so well.

Leaving the lower range of cliffs, which rise abruptly from the shore, the children crossed the visitor's footpath, and hastily began the difficult ascent which lay before them. Up they mounted, higher and higher yet, until they paused quite breathless beneath the shadow of the tall, gray chain, where the kite and raven made their home, and wheeled round and round in rapid flight, filling the air with their harsh, yet strangely musical notes.

Amid the countless lone recesses of the Landslip is one still wilder than the rest. It is a deep, secluded dell, almost entirely shut in by lofty rocks—some bare and rugged; others adorned with the rich, waving tracery of climbing plants. This is the usual meeting-place of the village children, and on the afternoon of which I speak numbers of little forms were clustered around the large, smooth stone that formed the centre-table of their sylvan bower, awaiting with impatience the arrival of their friends from L——, before proceeding to the business of the day.

A merry shout of welcome greeted them as they approached, for owing to their sweet,

unselfish tempers, Agnes and Robert were universal favorites. A few pleasant words were interchanged, and soon the young people were scattered among the sunny knolls, and in the glades and dingles, seeking for the bright treasures of the joyous spring.

Sweet and most highly prized those treasures were; and peals of ringing laughter mingled with the wild-bird's song, when one more precious than the rest was added to their store. At length the baskets were quite laden with the spoil, but still the youthful party wandered on, when suddenly a cry of pleasure broke from the lips of two little girls who had strayed to some distance from their companions, and reached a quiet, sheltered nook, watered by a clear, crystal stream; the children were kneeling on the emerald turf, eagerly bending over some plant which grew upon the margin of the rill.

“What is it, Nelly?” inquired Mary Miller; but there was no need of a reply. For, lo! the greensward of that fairy dell was literally gemmed with tufts of primroses, that loveliest of all England's wild-flowers, the pride and ornament of the dewy glade. One basket was filled entirely with the new-found treasure, and very fair did the soft, pale-yellow blos-

soms look, nestling beneath their broad, green leaves.

“Miss Howard will be surprised to find the primroses in bloom already,” remarked Agnes, while her dark eyes sparkled with delight at the thought of giving pleasure to one whom she so dearly loved.

“But it is growing late now,” observed Mary Miller; “should we not all think of returning home?”

The children agreed as to the wisdom of the proposition; and leaving the Landslip with reluctance, they walked together to the entrance of the village, and there, intrusting the precious baskets to the care of Mary and her sisters, who lived in a pretty cottage near the church, the young friends separated, with the hope of again meeting ere many hours should elapse.

Easter-Day rose bright and clear; and the joyous carol of the wild-birds, amid the leafy arches, touched a chord of sympathetic happiness in many a youthful heart. While yet the sweet, glad music of the church-bells was ringing on the morning breeze, the long train of school children, with Agnes and Robert in their midst, wound slowly along the shaded pathway, and entered beneath the low Nor-

man porch into the beautiful church. Very beautiful it was, in truth, on that calm, bright morning, as the rich sunlight streamed in through the painted windows, and fell with softened lustre upon the assembled throng, casting a flood of gem-like radiance around the lofty arches, and illumining the "darkly brilliant evergreens," together with the wreaths and garlands of fair, fragrant flowers—meet offering at the sacred shrine!

And then the full tones of the grand organ pealed through the aisles, and the pure, young voices of the children blended in sweet harmony with those of the elders of the congregation, in the high Easter strain of triumph:

"Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast.

"Not with the old leaven; neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness: but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

"Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him.

"For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin: but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Christ is risen from the dead: and become the first fruits of them that slept.

“For since by man came death: by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

“For as in Adam all die: even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

“Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost:

“As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.”

I have copied this beautiful anthem, in full, from the English Prayer-book, for my young friends in America; not that I fancy it is not already known to all who have enjoyed the privilege of being early admitted “into the fellowship of Christ’s religion;” but simply because I hope that by thus accustoming ourselves to observe the close similarity which exists between our ritual and that in use among our brethren in distant lands, we may all learn daily more perfectly to feel that we are indeed ONE with them; and to realize the blessed truth, from infancy familiar to our lips, that “the Holy Church throughout all the world” must ever be the same.

The early hours of that Easter-Day were not more peaceful than its close. When the Evening Service was concluded, Agnes and her brother accompanied their young companions

to the school-house, as was their usual custom; and immediately upon being dismissed, they hastened down the valley to meet their grandfather, whom they found seated on the mossed stone-wall, beneath the canopy of elm-trees, watching the graceful motions of two stately swans, as they floated on the surface of the shadowy pool which bordered the highway, or from time to time were almost lost to view amid the overhanging foliage, which fringed the sloping bank beyond.

“Children,” said old David, as his little ones drew near, “I have been thinking whether we might not walk across the downs to Wroxall; I heard yesterday that poor Johnny Allan is much worse, and perhaps there may be something we can do to help him.”

“Let us go at once, grandpa,” exclaimed Robert, springing from his seat; but Agnes said, in a tone of hesitation: “I should like very much to see poor Johnny, grandpa, but we walked so far yesterday that I feel quite tired. Might I not stay quietly in the churchyard until you come back?”

“By all means, if you please, my dear,” was the reply; “only we may, perhaps, be late, and if so, I will call for you at Mary Miller’s.”

With this understanding, David and his

grandson went their way. Left alone, Agnes waited until their forms had disappeared along the winding road, and then slowly retraced her steps towards the now almost-deserted church-yard. She was a singularly thoughtful child, and many were the hours which she had passed within these sacred precincts—sometimes entirely alone, or with only a book as a companion; at others, engaged in pleasant conversation with her darling brother, from whom she had never in her life been long separated.

Agnes did not on this afternoon wander among the tombstones, as was frequently her habit, but leaning for support against a pile of rocks, completely festooned with ivy and the wild clematis, she stood watching the declining sun, whose last rays seemed to shed a halo around the little church; while the lofty hills, which rose immediately in its rear, were bathed in the rich, golden glow, and a faint, rosy light was cast upon the distant sea.

“I thought I saw you follow this footpath,” observed a gentle voice; and, turning quickly, Agnes beheld Miss Howard by her side.

“I wished to thank you and your companions,” continued the lady, “for having so successfully aided in our work.”

“It pleased us to do it, ma’am,” replied the little girl, much gratified by her kind friend’s commendation.

“This has been a happy day, my child, has it not?” resumed Miss Howard, after a moment’s silence.

“Yes, very happy,” answered Agnes; “only —” the last word had been involuntarily uttered. She stopped, and seemed unwilling to proceed.

“Only what?” demanded her companion, kindly; “has any thing gone wrong with you, my dear?” Do not be afraid to tell me, for perhaps we may find means of bringing matters right.”

“O no, ma’am, nothing is amiss!” exclaimed Agnes, quickly. “I was only going to say,” she added, in a lower tone, “that I hope to be much happier before many Easters pass. Is it wrong to think of that, Miss Howard, now while I am so very young?”

They had wandered on while speaking, and had reached the most retired corner of the church-yard, where, overshadowed by the silvery foliage of a drooping willow, a monument of purest marble had been lately raised, in memory of one whose name was yet fondly cherished in the homes of B——, a sweet, en-

gaging child of tender years, the heiress of one of the most noble and influential families in the parish. The design was touching, from its extreme simplicity—a cross, surmounted by a snow-white dove, most exquisitely wrought. The idea had been taken from the writings of an English clergyman, with whose beautiful allegories all my readers will, I trust, be one day familiar.

“Lady Eveline Villiers was not so old as you are,” observed Miss Howard, as she reverently sprinkled a shower of pale, starry primroses upon the little grave; “and there are others here who, at a yet earlier age, were taken to their rest. No! we cannot think too often of the glory, and all-perfect blessedness of the Resurrection; and while earnestly striving, through God’s grace, to fulfil to the uttermost every duty required of us on earth, we are yet permitted to rejoice in the consciousness that our sojourn here will be but for a little season.”

“Very short, indeed, it may be,” rejoined Agnes, as she gazed thoughtfully upon the sculptured marble; “but I did not speak of dying then,” she added, with characteristic truthfulness, unwilling to convey a false impression to another’s mind.

“And of what then, dear child?” inquired Miss Howard, in a sympathizing tone.

Agnes hesitated, and the color mounted to her cheek; it was an effort to express her secret feelings, but she felt instinctively that she was in the presence of one by whom all her holiest aspirations would be understood.

“When I am older,” she began, while her voice trembled and her eyes filled with tears, “it will be different; I shall not always be obliged to leave the church.”

Miss Howard comprehended in an instant.

“That should, indeed, be our childhood’s earnest wish, my love,” she answered, in a voice of feeling. “You have already been made by Baptism a member of the Church. God grant that at no very distant day you may be admitted to the full enjoyment of all her highest privileges.”

Long did the lady and her young companion linger in the quiet church-yard. Neither felt inclined for further conversation; the heart of one was raised in earnest prayer, in behalf of the youthful beings to whose welfare so large a portion of her time and talents were devoted; and Agnes was musing on Miss Howard’s words.

“It may be very soon,” she whispered, when

at length they left the tombstone, and slowly winding up the hill, paused for an instant on its summit, to take one last look at the little church so tranquilly reposing in the valley, beneath the shelter of the purple, shadowy downs. A sweet smile brightened Miss Howard's face, as she fondly clasped the little hand she held in hers, and Agnes felt content, although no word was spoken.

Two years passed swiftly by; and then once more a cloudless Easter dawned. One fortnight only had elapsed since Agnes stood before the altar to renew her baptismal vow, in the solemn rite of Confirmation; and now she knelt between Miss Howard and her aged grandfather, to join in a yet holier service. She was happy then—quietly and serenely happy; the period to which she had so long and anxiously looked forward had arrived,—the day of her first Communion.

“I almost envied you this morning, Agnes,” observed Robert, after they had left the church, and walked some way in silence.

“May I say so to Miss Howard?” inquired Agnes, eagerly; “or should you rather speak, instead, to Mr. Mordaunt?”

Robert shook his head.

“I do not feel so always,” he answered,

sadly; "and I fear that Mr. Mordaunt would say I am too young."

"Mr. Mordaunt said to me," replied his sister, timidly, "that it is a great advantage to think of our Confirmation for at least a year beforehand, and by that time, Bertie, you will be as old as I am. I feel now as though that were my only wish," she added, laying her hand affectionately on his arm.

"I shall like to look forward to it, at all events," returned Robert; "and Agnes, it would please me to hear all that Mr. Mordaunt said to you and Mary Miller, and the others, when you were at the rectory, and to read the little books Miss Howard gave you. Only do not mention it just yet to any one but grandpa, please," he continued, hastily, as they reached the termination of their walk.

Nothing further passed that morning on the subject between Agnes and her brother; but in the course of a few weeks Robert, with his grandfather's approval, and to the great joy of Agnes, gained courage to converse freely with his kind friend, Mr. Mordaunt, and was by him admitted to the number of the candidates for Confirmation, for the ensuing year.

THE
LITTLE ZOOPHYTE GATHERERS.

“The briefer life,
The earlier immortality.”



ABOUT seven miles to the west of B——, there is a tract of country remarkable for its desolate and dreary aspect. It consists, for the most part, of bleak, solitary moors, sprinkled here and there with patches of wild brambles, heather, and the prickly-gorse, and interspersed with fragments of gray, fallen rocks, piled in an infinite variety of fantastic forms, which, by the aid of imagination, may be readily converted into shattered columns, pinnacles, and towers, to which indeed, in some instances, they bear a rude resemblance.

The character of the scenery is perpetually changing; for the LANDSLIPS, to which I have before alluded, are of frequent recurrence in this locality, and the firm foundations of the

mighty wall of cliffs that bounds the valley are gradually, but surely, becoming undermined. Among the deep sequestered gorges of the hills, an isolated farm-house or a tiny hamlet may be sometimes seen, all smiling with that peculiar gleam of true home-comfort, for which England and America are alike distinguished. There are also little fishing settlements along the shore; and, from time to time, an ancient ivy-mantled church, of simple but imposing aspect, meets the view; its lowly porch, surmounted by a stone cross, rudely carved; while from its hoary tower the soothing, solemn music of the chimes rings out to the hoarse murmur of the sea.

Near such a church as I have just described, are situated the remote but picturesque village of Blackgang and its adjacent chine, which latter forms the western termination of the Undercliff, or at least of its most interesting features. It is the chosen retreat of such visitors as delight in the gloomy and sublime in nature, rather than the beautiful. The contrast which this chine presents to that of Luccombe, so rich in glimpses of luxuriant loveliness, is striking in the extreme: here all is wild and savage grandeur; the tall, bare rocks stand black and grim, guarding the narrow

pass; and the very rivulet which trickles through the defile is not pure and sparkling like most mountain streams, but wears a sombre, yellowish hue, imparted doubtless by the iron-ore which abounds in the surrounding crags.

There are some pleasant homes, however, in this lonely spot; and very lovely do they look, standing in the midst of their neat and well-kept gardens, the bloom and fertility of which contrast so singularly with the encircling waste.

In a private drawing-room of the romantic little inn, three ladies were seated around a work-table, which stood in the recess of a deep bay-casement that overlooked the blue ocean, with its long line of rocky coast; while in the far distance was visible the bold outline of a magnificent range of chalk-cliffs, whose lofty pinnacles glittered like snow beneath the sparkling rays of a summer's sun.

"The snow-white cliffs of England, which I have so very often longed to see!" exclaimed the youngest of the party, a sweet and gentle-looking girl of about sixteen, as, with a half sigh, she laid aside her pencils, and stood beside the window, gazing thoughtfully upon the glorious panorama.

"Grace is home-sick already, I suspect," observed her sister Helen, laughing.

“I was only thinking of papa,” said Grace; “and wishing that he and all our dear friends at home were with us to share in the delight of this first visit to the shores of England.”

“I fancy that will scarcely be required, my love,” remarked Mrs. Melville; “at least, if all your epistles are to be like the one which you sent off this morning.”

“You know that I intend to keep a journal for papa,” said Grace; “and I fear many of my letters will be still longer than this first one; but even that is not quite like being with one’s friends, for writing can never take the place of conversation.”

“No, indeed; one feels the difference sadly. Still we should try to make the most of those blessings which are within our reach; and I did not expect you would feel lonely here in England, Grace.”

“I am not lonely, I assure you, dear mamma. How could I be with you and Helen, and surrounded, too, by so many in whom we take an interest?”

“The whole population here, I imagine,” interrupted Helen; “or, at all events, a large proportion. Do you know, mamma, that yesterday, in church, I quite realized the feeling which appears to afford you and Grace such

peculiar satisfaction ; it did seem as though we were brought nearer to our distant friends. Yes ; our Liturgy is undoubtedly a bond of union, and a strong one."

"I am truly glad to hear you say so, my love ; and when that which is now a mere transitory emotion shall have become a fixed and abiding principle of action, I think I can venture to affirm that you will find a vast increase of happiness in daily life."

The deep-toned bells of the old church were faintly heard.

"Eleven ! Can it be possible ?" exclaimed Mrs. Melville, looking at her watch. "My dear children, we must decide upon our excursion without delay."

"It is too late for Carisbuke, mamma," said Helen ; "let us go there to-morrow instead, and leave here by nine, so as to have plenty of time for wandering among the ruins."

"Yes, perhaps that will be best," replied her mother ; "but where, then, shall we go to-day ?"

"Indeed, I hardly know, mamma ; for there is so much of interest to be seen on every side, that one is really at a loss which way to turn. What should you say to a drive along the Undercliff, with no especial object in view, ex-

cept to explore wherever we may chance to wish?"

"That will do admirably well, I think; so Grace, my love, will you just ring the bell? I should like the carriage to be brought round immediately."

Generally speaking, Grace Melville would have been delighted at the prospect of such an expedition as the one proposed, but upon this occasion she had a fancy for a ramble on the shore; Helen and her mother being invalids, would not be able to participate in this amusement, and as it seemed probable that every day of their short sojourn in the village would be fully taken up with sight-seeing, she determined, should nothing prevent, to improve the present opportunity, perhaps the only one she should ever have.

"If you and Helen do not mind, mamma," she answered, "I believe I shall leave you to your own devices, just for once, and wander off among the cliffs. One loses so much pleasure in a carriage!"

"Well, my dear, I see no possible objection, except that Helen and I shall be sure to miss you sadly; but you had best consider for a moment. You know that we expect to leave for Devonshire next week, therefore you may

lose the opportunity of seeing something that you will afterwards regret."

"Only no one can tell me exactly what," returned Grace, laughing; "so, dear mamma, I am quite content to run the risk; and now I will give orders for the carriage, while you and Helen are putting on your bonnets."

"Do not forget to ask for a basket of sandwiches and cakes," said Helen, turning back, as she was about to leave the room.

"And Grace, dear, please say we should like tea at seven, with a roast chicken and a plate of muffins," added Mrs. Melville.

"I will attend to every thing, mamma," Grace answered, as the tidy maid-servant came into the room.

"Thank you, my love; do not fail to provide some luncheon for yourself, and pray be here punctually by half-past six; and, above all, be particularly careful how you venture among those frightful precipices."

Grace promised obedience; and then having given the necessary directions, she followed her mother and sister to their apartment.

The two elder ladies were soon equipped in readiness for their drive, and Grace having seen them comfortably established in the carriage, returned for her supply of luncheon, and

a sketch-book. She was naturally quick in all her movements, so before ten minutes had elapsed all preparations were complete, and she was on her way.

“Miss Melville!” exclaimed the good old landlady, as Grace passed her in the verandah, “can you really be going for a walk at this hour?”

With a look of surprise at the question, Grace replied in the affirmative.

“It is so very warm,” pursued Mrs. Morris; “I am sure you will find it too oppressive to go far.”

Grace could not repress a smile. It was August, to be sure, yet the heat was any thing but overpowering, according to her American ideas.

“You forget that I am accustomed to a much warmer climate,” she replied. “In my opinion this is only mild and pleasant weather. Indeed, I am not sure that a few degrees more of heat would not be quite acceptable.”

Poor Mrs. Morris, who was already overcome, or “greatly exhausted,” to use her own expression, drew back within the shadow of the porch, and watched, with unfeigned astonishment, while Grace tranquilly pursued her way along the sunny gravel-walk; and when

the slight form was quite lost to view, she turned, with languid steps, to superintend the operations in her dairy.

Grace, in the mean time, having crossed the down, soon found herself at the entrance of the chine. The winding pathway was not difficult at first, and she did not require to make use of the strong rope which had been placed as a support on either side; but the latter part was far less easy. Grace stopped to rest for a few moments before attempting to proceed; and then clinging with all her strength to the supporting rope, she slowly made her way down the steep rock-hewn steps, breasting the high winds that came sweeping up the chasm from the restless, agitated surface of the ocean.

It was a grand scene, when she had reached the shining, yellow sands, and looked out over the heaving billows and around upon the rugged, barren cliffs, which frowned along the coast. She had always had a passion for rock-scenery, and here there was ample room for the gratification of her taste. Upon a projecting platform, slightly elevated above the shore, stood a tiny cottage, plain and completely unadorned in its exterior, but deriving a certain charm from the singularity of its situation. In her eagerness to gain the beach, Grace had

scarcely noticed it in her descent; but now feeling very thirsty, she resolved upon applying there for a glass of water.

A small table stood in front of the house, containing a number of fossil remains and specimens of minerals, together with a basin of salt-water, in which were floating several of the rare and beautiful zoophytes, or marine animals, which abound in this locality. Over the door was an inscription, stating this to be the site of an "Aluminous Chalybeate Spring," which had been discovered some years previously by a celebrated physician. Grace was acquainted with the reputation of this spring, and she was also aware that large quantities of the water had been exported to the Crimea, where it had proved of great service to Miss Nightingale, in the prosecution of her invaluable labors among the sick and suffering.

A little girl, apparently some seven or eight years old, came out in reply to Grace's summons; and, on being asked for a glass of water, she speedily produced a tumbler filled with a deep yellowish fluid, which, however cold and pure it might be, was certainly not inviting to the eye.

"The mineral water, I suppose," said Grace, as she received it from her hand.

The child replied in the affirmative.

“I am a little afraid to try it, lest it should do me harm,” continued Grace; “for I am quite well, and do not stand in need of tonics. Might I not ask you for some of the ordinary water, such as you use yourselves?”

“There is no other here, Miss,” said the child. “We always use this, even for our tea, and it never injures any of us; and visitors, generally, consider it very strengthening.”

Still Grace was resolute. Having seen so much of illness from her childhood, she had gradually acquired an almost nervous dread of doing any thing which was likely to impair her naturally vigorous constitution. Very possibly a draught from these cool mineral springs might have a contrary effect, but it was an EXPERIMENT, at all events, and she had the good sense to avoid all such unnecessary risks. The appearance of the child, too, tended only to confirm her resolution, for she was very pale and fragile, bearing no trace whatever of the pure rose-bloom, which is so peculiarly characteristic of most English children.

But Grace still suffered painfully from thirst; and determined not to be discouraged, she made another effort.

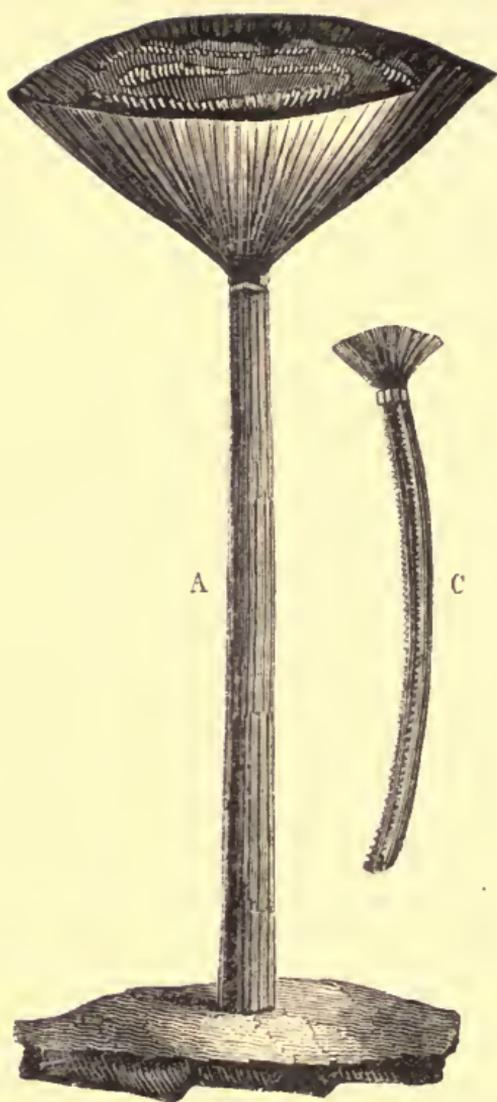
“I have been told that there is a waterfall

somewhere in this chine. Might I not fill a tumbler there, or is it iron-water like the well?"

"No, Miss, it is not iron-water," replied the little girl; "but it has not rained for several days, and I do not believe there will be enough to fill your glass; however, if you please, I will go and try," she added, in an obliging tone.

Grace followed, without precisely comprehending the last remark; but she was not left long in doubt, for upon turning an angle of the rock, she found herself in a gloomy hollow, shut in by towering crags, down the face of which streamed a tiny rill that fell, drop by drop, at intervals, into the stony basin below. Grace smiled, as she recalled Niagara and Trenton; and still more, when she compared this with the foaming cataract depicted in the guide-book: but, perhaps, it might really be so in winter, after heavy storms; and, at all events, she was not inclined to criticise, in the midst of the sublime works of God; so she merely thanked her little guide for having shown her "the waterfall." And then, as they stood once more before the cottage, she began examining the zoophytes, and asking questions relative to their nature and habits.

"This is a sea-anemone, if you please, Miss,"



SEA-ANEMONE.
Isle of Wight Stories.

said the child; "and," she continued, pointing to a beautiful creature, with a skin as smooth as velvet, and covered with bright crimson spots, "that is a strawberry-plant."

At this moment the "strawberry-plant," which had before been curled up into a small round ball, slowly unrolled itself, and displayed to Grace's eyes a rich and pleasing variety of design and coloring.

"They do so often of a morning, when I change their water," remarked little Maggie Wilson; "and some of them are a great deal prettier than this one."

"And where do you go to look for them?" inquired Grace.

"All along the shore, Miss," replied the child; "but the finest we get are from Rocken-End. I am going there this afternoon, with Ned and Johnny Dawson, and Mary, and Fanny, and Martha Blake."

"And is it very far from here?"

"No, Miss; it is not much more than a mile."

"Well, Maggie," resumed Grace, "I should like to go with you, if you do not mind, for I have a great curiosity to know more of zoophytes. I have never seen them before, except in an aquarium, which is a large glass

vessel, fitted up for their accommodation. It is now just half-past one—shall you be ready to set out by two?”

The child assured her that there would be nothing to prevent, as she expected her companions every moment; and having promised to return very shortly, Grace retraced her steps towards the inn, for the twofold purpose of indulging in a draught of water, and of adding a sponge-cake and some raspberry-tarts to her store, since there was no pastry-cook in the village. Then, after filling a smaller basket with ripe, delicious gooseberries, she once more left the house, this time well laden; and upon arriving at the cottage, she found the children grouped upon the platform, and the two little boys eager to relieve her of her burden, to which she smilingly assented, only reserving the precious sketch-book, which she carried carefully in her hand.

It was a happy party on the whole; for the slight feeling of constraint, which the presence of a lady and a stranger unavoidably occasioned, was soon totally dispelled by the genuine warmth and kindness of Grace's manner. She was naturally fond of children; and, of late, she had learned to feel a deep and almost painful interest in those who were passing

through that season fraught with "so many and great dangers," in the midst of which she had been mercifully preserved. It was now a year since she had been admitted into the full communion of the Christian Church. Life had thenceforth assumed, in her eyes, a far more serious and awful aspect; and short though her experience had been, Grace longed, with an earnestness too deep for words, that it were in her power to impart to others a perception as vivid as her own of the vast importance, one might well add the DIGNITY, of a child's existence.

How often while laboring, through God's grace, to prepare her heart for the solemn rite of Confirmation, and the high and holy Sacrament in which she would afterwards be allowed to join, had she mourned over those innumerable offences, all trivial, it might be, in the world's eye, but grievous, as she then in some measure realized, in the sight of Him, "before whom the very heavens are not clean." Pride and selfishness had beset her; indolence and vanity; disobedience to her earthly parents; and—saddest thought of all—irreverence towards that Almighty God, before whose throne the blessed angels fall in humblest adoration; coldness, too, and want of love for Him, that

gracious and compassionate Redeemer, who had deigned to receive her in the arms of mercy, while yet a feeble and unconscious infant, had marked her with that sacred sign, from which “the powers of darkness flee,” and had then most surely granted her the assistance and protection of his good Spirit, that so she might be enabled to conquer in the warfare, and “to continue His faithful soldier and servant unto her life’s end.”

Alas! how often had those glorious privileges been despised; that Holy Spirit grieved and resisted, and the bright purity of her baptismal innocence stained with unnumbered sins! Was it strange, that while looking back upon the past with such regret, Grace should ardently desire to save others from the sorrow which she herself experienced; that she should have learned to consider even young and tender children as not merely the pets and playthings of an hour, whose every whim might be indulged, and evil habits suffered for a while to grow unchecked, but as reasonable and accountable beings—the members of Christ’s Church, and the inheritors of His everlasting kingdom, towards which, with the first dawn of reason, they were pledged steadfastly to press on?

But Grace was timid, and it was very rarely that she ventured upon an allusion to the feelings which were ever uppermost in her mind. Perhaps that only made the effect of her example stronger; for, although we should never hesitate openly to avow the principles on which we act, yet silent and unconscious influence is, in most cases, more powerful than any words. Grace's little companions, on the present occasion, appeared all to be intelligent and well-bred children; it was impossible not to feel a warm interest in them, as members of the one great "household of faith;" and they, on their part, were charmed with the gentle gayety of the lady's manner, and quite entranced with the wonderful stories by which she beguiled the way.

Little Maggie never left her side, although she scarcely spoke, and seemed only desirous of remaining near her. She was very frail and delicate, and Grace became almost anxious as she watched the flush which deepened on her thin, white cheek, and the extreme languor visible in every motion; but the children all united in assuring her, that Maggie never had been ill from the time she was a baby, but was always pale and weak; and although much wearied by the long walks, in which she con-

stantly accompanied her school-fellows, yet she generally appeared to feel the better for them afterwards.

At length they reached the scene of their operations, whereupon all set about the work of collecting zoophytes with right good-will. Rocken-End is a long reef of rocks jutting out into the sea; it is entirely submerged at high water; but when, as on the present occasion, the tide is low, it is quite accessible to those who can manage to preserve their balance upon the slippery sea-weed, and who are not too particular about damp feet. Grace was fortunately provided with thick, substantial walking-boots, so she felt no fear, and engaged with ardor and spirit in the enterprise.

She had truly said, that she knew little of zoophytes and their mode of life; so now, as she detached the little creatures from the stones to which they clung, she did not fail to improve the opportunity of learning all she could with regard to this most singular class of created things, some of which appear at times, to an unpractised eye, to belong less properly to the animal than to the vegetable kingdom. The children were delighted to afford to their new friend all the satisfaction in their power, and thus Grace had the pleasure of feeling

that she had acquired a considerable amount of information with regard to a very curious and interesting branch of natural history.

There seem no bounds to the knowledge we may all of us lay up, merely by exercising our faculties of observation, and by not being ashamed to own our ignorance, and profit by the experience of those who may chance to be better informed on any one subject than we are ourselves.

After some time the small tin pails, which the children carried, were pronounced to be "quite full;" and Mary Blake declared that Mrs. Parker, a lady in the village, for whose extensive aquarium the various specimens that they had been collecting were designed, would, she was sure, be fully satisfied with the result of their expedition. A few were selected and put aside for Maggie's table, as she liked to tend them, and was besides frequently able to dispose of one or two to visitors; and when this had been accomplished, Grace called to the children to seat themselves in a circle upon the level sand, while she herself once more took possession of the baskets, which had been deposited for safe keeping in a hole among the rocks, and liberally distributed the contents. The children, to whom such delicacies were a

rarity, highly enjoyed the unaccustomed treat, while the sight of their happy faces was to Grace a source of yet greater pleasure. At the conclusion of their repast, all of the party, except little Maggie, felt obliged, although most unwillingly, to set out for home. They lived at some distance from the shore, and they should have to call at Mrs. Parker's, and their parents might be uneasy if they were not punctual.

"I, myself, have only half an hour to spare," said Grace; "for I promised MY mamma to return by half-past six; but I should like, if it were possible, to go out to the farthest point of the reef for a few minutes: the view from that high rock is splendid, and I have a great wish to put it into my sketch-book, for it would be pleasant to show it to all my friends in America; and it would make me think, besides, of the happy afternoon which we have passed together," she added, looking kindly round upon her young companions.

"Indeed we shall not forget it, Miss," exclaimed several of the children, in a breath; "but what sort of a book was it you spoke of?" demanded little Fanny Blake.

"My sketch-book, in which I make drawings of all the beautiful places that I . . ."

answered Grace. "This is my home," she continued, turning to the second leaf, whereon a large and handsome mansion was represented, standing in the midst of a plantation, and shaded on one side by a magnolia grove.

"How beautiful!" they exclaimed, with eager interest; "but where is it, Miss? in what part of America, I mean."

"In the State of South Carolina," replied Grace. "I dare say you have read about it in your geography."

"Yes, Miss, we have," said little Maggie; "but what is this?" she added, pointing to a church of small but exquisite proportions, surmounted by a slender, graceful spire.

"That is the church which we always attend," said Grace, as she gazed fondly on the picture. "I was baptized there," she continued, "and confirmed; and after that our kind old rector, who is also my uncle, intrusted me with the care of several children, to whom I was to teach the Catechism, and Collects, and many other things which he recommended. It gave me great pleasure to be able to assist him; and as my pupils were affectionate and docile, I soon learned to love them very dearly."

"And how old are the children, Miss?" inquired Johnny Dawson.

“I think they must be about your ages,” answered Grace; “the eldest little girl is just eleven, and the youngest between five and six.”

“That does not look at all like our churches,” observed Martha Blake, who had never been more than half a dozen miles beyond her native village.

“No; it is quite different from any in this neighborhood,” said Grace, “although it is built upon the model of a church in England, in Warwickshire, if I am not mistaken; but you know that the BUILDING does not signify; for all which have been consecrated by the Bishop, and set apart for the especial service of God, are alike holy, and we may feel equally at home in any one of them; for, throughout the world, we shall find the same prayers in which we have been taught to join; and,” she continued, pointing to a cross which crowned the tapering spire, “here is an emblem which is common to us both: can you tell me what verse in the Bible this recalls to mind?”

The children seemed perplexed for a moment; and then Mary asked whether it was not that passage of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, in which he speaks of there being but “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”

“Yes; you are quite right, my love;” said Grace. “In one Lord, the hopes of all of us are centred; to all must the sacred symbol of His sufferings suggest the same thoughts of infinite and unchanging love, and with that sign was each one among us sealed in Holy Baptism. The same warfare, you perceive, the same journey through the wilderness of this world, leading to the same bright and glorious kingdom, even the ‘inheritance of the saints in light.’”

“The Creed speaks of the communion of saints,” observed Mary, in a thoughtful tone.

“Yes,” resumed Grace; “‘the blessed company of all faithful people;’ all who are true members of the body of Christ, whether they belong to the Church on earth, or to the Church Triumphant.”

“But the members of the Church Triumphant will be quite ONE, will not they?” asked little Maggie; and she drew nearer to Grace, and looked with inquiring earnestness into her face.

Grace was really startled by the energy of her tone, and by the strange, beautiful light which illumined her pale and wasted, but most lovely features. It was evident that the child’s nature was peculiarly excitable, and although

the theme upon which they had been conversing was in itself most soothing and consolatory, yet in the little girl's weak state of health, continued and intense thought upon any subject might be injurious, and Grace felt it would be wisest not to pursue the conversation farther.

"All members of Christ's holy Church are one even now," she answered, gently, as she took the child's burning hand within her own, and imprinted a kiss upon her pallid brow; "but in heaven they will be always united, and learn to know and love each other more and more; but we shall not forget one another even here, I hope," she added, turning to the little circle, in whose welfare she took so warm and affectionate an interest.

"No, indeed, Miss; never," exclaimed several voices. Maggie's was not among them, but she still held Grace's hand with an almost convulsive pressure.

"I fear I have detained you quite too long, dear children," observed Grace; "but I really could not bear to say good-bye."

"Oh no, Miss; we can walk very fast," replied Ned Dawson, a sprightly boy of nine; "but have we not prevented you from drawing?"

“I think I may still allow myself ten minutes,” answered Grace; “and that will enable me to take the outline, which I can afterwards fill up at leisure; but I must beg you will be careful of Maggie, for she seems quite worn out.”

“May not I stay with you, dear lady?” inquired the child, timidly.

“I wish you might,” Grace answered; “but I should not like to make your parents anxious.”

“Oh, never fear, Miss!” exclaimed Ned, good-naturedly; “we will stop and tell her mother that she is quite safe.”

“Yes,” continued Fanny Blake; “and we will leave your baskets at the inn, if you will let us; we are obliged to pass it on our way to Mrs. Parker’s.”

Grace cordially thanked them for their kindness; and then having ascertained that there was no immediate danger to be apprehended from the tide, she stepped lightly out upon the reef, followed closely by her little favorite Maggie.

They were soon seated upon the highest point, and Grace having waved her handkerchief as a farewell signal to the little group upon the shore, set herself diligently to im-

prove the few hurried moments which yet remained at her command.

It was a wild, impressive scene, and one well calculated to inspire a far less enthusiastic person than Grace Melville. Towards the west the tall, dark rocks towered high in dreary grandeur, the outline of every jagged peak being clearly defined against the blue, transparent sky; but on turning eastward, the line of cliffs became for a short distance less abrupt, and the eye was free to range inland over a most singular tract, broken into deep, grassy hollows, interspersed with mounds and boulders, all spangled with innumerable wild-flowers, and watered by many a softly-murmuring streamlet—yet, despite these elements of smiling beauty, wearing even at that charmed hour an air of loneliness and melancholy indescribable, but not, therefore, the less keenly felt; the view was bounded by the purple hills; and to the east, along the shore, the rocks again arose in frowning majesty; while upon the highest of the hillocks, which were scattered over the surface of the plain, was perched a singularly constructed lighthouse, that formed a prominent feature in the landscape.

Grace's skilful pencil had ere long transferred the leading characteristics of the scenery

to the pages of her sketch-book, although no artist could invest them with the glow of warm, rich coloring, which at that moment lent a magic beauty to the whole. Maggie, seated on the rock beside her, watched with absorbing interest a process to her both new and wonderful. She had frequently, it is true, seen engravings of the different objects of note in the neighborhood; and she had even from time to time beheld artists on the shore engaged in the prosecution of their charming task, but, of course, she had never ventured to approach them. It was an unexpected privilege, the being thus allowed to trace the gradual progress of a work which she so much admired; and Grace, who perceived her evident delight, lingered, unwilling to abridge a pleasure which the child might never more enjoy.

But soon the slanting golden rays warned her that it was time they should proceed; and carefully replacing her pencils in the case, she turned to her young companion, saying,—“Come, Maggie, dear, we shall be very late; let us go by the nearest way to Blackgang—but we will not say good-bye to-night,” she added, quickly, observing that the child’s eyes were filled with tears. “Mamma hopes to remain several days longer in the village, and

you may be sure that I will try to see you at least once again."

The little girl sprang lightly from her seat, and in a cheerful tone began a reply to Grace's last remark, but ere the sentence was concluded she stopped short. An expression of intense pain crossed her features; her pallid cheeks became flushed with crimson, which in an instant faded suddenly away, and the next moment she would have fallen had not Grace caught her in her arms.

It was a long and death-like swoon. At first, indeed, Grace could scarcely persuade herself that life still remained; but she had experience of fainting, in the case of her elder sister, who was subject to repeated and severe attacks, and thus she was not taken wholly by surprise. After loosening the child's dress, and bathing her face and hands with water, the little sufferer revived, and in a faint whisper begged that the lady would not be frightened; she could walk quite well, for she felt better now; and as she spoke, she half-raised herself from the support of Grace's encircling arm, but sank back exhausted with the effort.

"Do not attempt to move just yet, my love," said Grace, in a soothing tone; "perhaps you

may feel stronger presently. Have you ever had an attack like this before?"

"Oh yes, Miss, several times," replied the child, "but I have never felt so ill as I do now." There was a pause, and then she added, calmly, but in a voice of awe: "Persons have often said that I looked sickly, and likely to die young, as both my brothers and my sister did."

Grace carefully restrained the slightest sign of agitation.

"I hope you are not really ill," she said; "you have been tired by your long walk: but we had best try to find some one who will carry you to the cottage, for the tide seems rising now, and it can hardly be quite safe to stay here longer."

As she spoke, Grace gently raised the child, and cautiously made her way along the slippery ledge. The poor little girl was too ill to make the least resistance; in fact, she seemed only half conscious of what was going on, but lay with her head resting on Grace's shoulder, colorless as a snow-flake, and almost as light. It was rather difficult to reach the shore, for the tide had risen considerably, and the stepping-stones were already under water; but Grace was strong, and in nowise afraid of ex-

posure, when in the way of duty ; so finding that it was impossible to keep her footing on the rocks, without the risk of falling with her precious burden, she immediately abandoned them, and plunged into the sea, through which she waded knee-deep to the beach.

It was no easy matter to gain the old lighthouse, for her limbs trembled, and she was well-nigh overcome by anxiety and fatigue ; but delay might be fatal, and she hastened on. Just as she had reached the foot of the hill, some one appeared in view, following the path which wound along its summit. Grace called aloud for aid, and the man, a respectable Irish laborer, instantly retraced his steps. His face expressed a momentary surprise as he drew near, and then he started back, exclaiming :

“Sure and it’s little Maggie Wilson ! Well, poor dear, I always thought she would not be here long ; but let me take her from you, ma’am,” he added, as he tenderly lifted the fainting child in his strong arms, and hurried onward in the direction of the cottage.

“Do you think that she is very ill ?” asked Grace, in a low voice, as she followed at an almost breathless speed.

“It was in the family,” the man replied ; “the three other children had died just as sud-

denly—disease of the heart,” he believed, “the doctor called it.”

Neither spoke again until they reached the chine. The mother herself appeared, as she saw them approaching, and Grace was struck, at the first glance, with the extraordinary resemblance between her and the little girl. There was the same fragile form, and the same delicacy of feature, but with a worn and haggard expression that painfully contrasted with the purity and repose which the child’s countenance exhibited. Grace felt, as she looked on her, that her days were few—soon, very soon, perchance, she would be laid to rest beside her children in the green church-yard, and the same words of peace and sacred trust would be breathed over their senseless clay; but would all be in reality the same?

Grace longed, with an inexpressible desire, to feel the like “assurance of hope” with regard to this new claimant upon her sympathy. But she might have set her mind at rest, for Margaret Wilson was an earnest and devoted Christian. Trials, such as it has been the lot of few to suffer, had been her portion, and they had cast a shade over a naturally joyous spirit, and marred a countenance which had once beamed with no ordinary beauty; but

now her warfare was about to close, and Margaret felt that to her the change would be a blessed one indeed. One sole anxiety darkened the brightness of the prospect: her drooping flower—the last surviving one of all her offspring—would be left solitary in her tender youth, without the care of parents, or of any near relation in the world.

At such times the fond mother often prayed, that if it were God's will, the helpless little one might be first removed beyond the power of sin and sorrow, feeling that she herself would be willing, gladly and thankfully, to endure the solitude which must then be hers during the brief remainder of her life, and that even on earth she could be happy, in the consciousness that her treasure was secure from harm. Such was the fervent prayer which God, in His mercy, had seen fit to grant. Alas! human nature is but weak, and poor Margaret could not restrain a cry of anguish as she gazed on the child's senseless form.

That mood, however, was of short duration; and having thanked the worthy laborer, and received from him a promise that the doctor should be sent immediately, and also that a kind-hearted neighbor should be requested to call and render her assistance, she began silently

to arrange the little bed, while Grace sat in a low easy-chair, holding the unconscious sufferer in her arms. In a few moments Mrs. Davis entered; she was evidently an experienced nurse, and set about making all the needful preparations with a remarkable degree of quiet energy, and freedom from all bustle and confusion.

“Poor thing! do not try to talk,” she said, upon observing that her friend’s voice trembled and her limbs shook, as she endeavored to give some account of all that had occurred. “You shall tell me about it by and by, when you are better, and now do not trouble about any thing, for I will set all to rights.”

With a sigh of relief the poor mother turned away. Grace rose; and having resigned her charge, she whispered a few words of consolation, and then glided gently from the room. It was really very late—full half an hour beyond the appointed time—and a sense of the nervous terror which her mother must have undergone almost banished for a while the recollection of the scene she had just quitted.

Upon arriving at the inn, however, she found that the carriage had not yet returned, so she had time to change her dress, and give directions that all should be in readiness to

serve tea at a moment's notice. It was not long before the sound of wheels was heard, followed soon after by the entrance of Mrs. Melville, who observed, with a smile, that the supper-table was a welcome sight. They would not be five minutes in taking off their bonnets, so Grace might ring and order the chicken to be brought up directly. She did so, and with an effort managed to speak cheerfully, for she was resolved not to mar the enjoyment of the social meal by an immediate relation of the day's events.

"And now, Gracie, for a history of your adventures," exclaimed Helen, as she helped herself to a large slice of fruit-cake, and handed her cup to be replenished by her sister.

"I will tell you presently," replied Grace, smiling; "but supposing you were to set me the example. I am especially curious to learn what can have happened to detain you nearly an hour beyond the time you mentioned."

"Then you were uneasy, my love?" said Mrs. Melville. "I was afraid you might be, although there was in reality no cause for apprehension."

"Excepting that poor Grace was sadly impatient for her tea, I have no doubt," interrupted Helen, with a merry laugh; "and,

really, I must own that my conscience reproached me during our homeward drive, for it was all my doing, Gracie; but to leave sweet Brading before the last moment was impossible, as I am sure you would have yourself acknowledged."

"Brading," repeated Grace, with an accent of surprise, "the scene of Legh Richmond's sweet story, 'The Young Cottager?' O Helen! you have not been there!"

"I told you, you would be sorry if you did not go with us," said Helen, in rather a triumphant tone. "It would have been a perfect day, Grace, if only you had been of the party; however, mamma and I are resolved that we will not consent to any more solitary rambles for the future; so I hope you have made the most of this one."

"Stay; we have not been quite so arbitrary," interposed Mrs. Melville; "but seriously, my dear, I cannot tell you all the interest you have missed. The drive along the Undercliff was more exquisitely lovely than any scene I have ever beheld either in imagination or in reality; and it was very grand, as well as beautiful, but of this, I hope, you will soon be able to judge for yourself.

"We went as far as Ventnor, where we had

intended passing several hours: I think that neighborhood must be as near perfection as any spot on earth, but it was impossible to enjoy it without you; so we determined upon leaving it until another day, and taking a long drive instead. By chance, we overheard the arrangements of some tourists, who were about to separate, and appointed BRADING as a place of meeting. The name was, of course, familiar, but we had both forgotten that it is in the Isle of Wight; however, we learned upon inquiry that it was about eight miles distant; so, as we could scarcely expect to have another opportunity of going so far in that direction, we were obliged to take advantage of this one; and I regret that you will most likely be forced to remain satisfied with our descriptions."

"Which will not, by any means, do justice to sweet Brading," observed Helen, "since even Legh Richmond's pen has failed. The scenery is not wild and romantic, Grace, but full of that quiet pastoral loveliness, which is always associated in one's mind with England. We went first to the cottage in which 'Little Jane's' short life was passed; it is one of the most humble in the village, and is inhabited by a very aged couple, whose minds, as well as their bodies, seem impaired by years. Thence

we proceeded to the church, which is large and beautiful, and of great antiquity; and having lingered for an hour to inspect the monuments of an old and noble race, we wandered out alone into the church-yard, where, after searching among the moss-grown tombstones, we at length discovered that which marks the resting-place of the 'Young Cottager;' and farther on, the marble slab on which are engraved those lines that made so powerful an impression on her mind. You remember the passage, Grace, of course?"

"Yes, indeed. How interesting your visit must have been!" replied Grace, as she vainly endeavored to concentrate her attention upon her sister's recital.

"You may well say so," continued Helen; "and afterwards we seated ourselves upon the steps of an old sun-dial, overlooking the fair valley and the blue misty hills. The rectory immediately adjoins the church-yard, and I could half fancy that I saw the group of children dispersed among the tombstones, deeply engaged in studying the epitaphs, and good Mr. Richmond upon the lawn in front of his abode, watching them with his calm, grave smile of earnestness and solicitude."

"Yes," resumed Mrs. Melville; "and then

the exquisite pathos of those few simple lines which are inscribed upon the grave of 'Little Jane.' Often as I had read and admired them before, I never until to-day fully understood the depth of tenderness they breathe :

'A child reposes underneath this sod,
A child to memory dear, and dear to God.'

At this point of the conversation, poor Grace could no longer restrain the emotions which had during the past hour been struggling for utterance. Her voice failed her when she tried to speak, and the tears flowed fast and freely.

"You must be completely wearied, dearest," exclaimed Helen, as she left her seat, and bent affectionately over her beloved and only sister; "indeed, I have noticed ever since we came in that you looked pale. Suppose you were to lie down on the sofa, and let me take your place and pour out tea."

"No, thank you, Helen, I am quite well, and you require rather more to be taken care of," answered Grace, with an attempt at playfulness.

"Has any thing happened to distress you, my love?" inquired Mrs. Melville, anxiously.

And then in simple, touching language, Grace began a narration of the scenes through which she had passed. The warm sympathy of her auditors was enlisted when she spoke of the sweet, gentle child who was at that moment lying at the point of death; and ringing the bell, Mrs. Melville at once despatched a servant to the chine, with directions to inquire for the little girl, and also to procure any thing which might be useful. In about half an hour the messenger returned. There was nothing wanted, she assured them; the doctor had just left, after declaring that his young patient could not be expected to live many hours; she was in great pain at present, but it was hoped that her sufferings would be shortly over.

As soon as they were left alone, Mrs. Melville and her daughters prepared to read the Evening Psalms and Lessons, in accordance with their usual habit; and then having united in some beautiful Church prayers, including that petition for a child who is considered dangerously ill, they separated for the night, in the hope of obtaining that repose of which all stood so much in need.

But Grace found sleep impossible. Hour after hour went by; and when, in the end, exhaustion prevailed and she sank into a troubled

slumber, it was only to awake with greater longings to find herself a watcher in the lonely cottage. At length she was blessed with a longer and more unbroken interval of forgetfulness, from which she awoke calm and refreshed. It was very early; the sun had not yet risen, but the eastern sky was piled with bright masses of gold and crimson clouds, and the morning star was "paleing" in the glorious dawn. Grace rose and dressed; she was resolved to proceed to the chine without delay. Her presence, she felt convinced, would not be considered an intrusion; and there was no fear that Mrs. Melville and Helen, who occupied the adjoining room, would be uneasy at her absence, for she frequently indulged in early rambles; so opening the window, which was but slightly raised above the ground, Grace sprang lightly down upon the level turf, and was soon beyond the pleasure-ground of the inn.

The door of the cottage in the chine was thrown wide open to admit the cooling breeze; and Margaret Wilson, who at once caught sight of her visitor, came forward with an eager greeting. She was, if possible, yet paler than when Grace had seen her last, but very serene, and almost unmoved in her demeanor. "She was so thankful," she said, "that Grace had

come; her darling had constantly spoken, in delirium, of the sweet young lady who had been so kind to her. It had been a fearful night," the mother added, while a slight shiver passed through her frame; "but the pain was over now, and it was believed that consciousness would not return."

Grace followed into the cottage, without attempting to reply. The child was extended upon her little couch, a faint flush just tinging her transparent cheek: so still and motionless she seemed, one might almost have fancied that the angel spirit had already taken flight to another and a happier sphere.

"She still lives," said Mrs. Davis, in a whisper, as she rose and signed to Grace to take her seat beside the bed.

"But she will never know even me again, in this world," exclaimed the poor mother, with a sudden gush of tears, as she sank upon the floor, and clasped one small hand tightly between both her own.

At that instant the sun burst forth with luzzling glory, and his warm rays streamed into the humble room, and fell full upon the face of the dying child. Slowly the soft blue eyes unclosed; the power of utterance was gone, but a smile of radiant beauty played

around her lips, and it was evident that she recognized the features of those who were now kneeling side by side. Soon the brilliancy of that smile was succeeded by an expression of deep and holy calm; the last lingering tint of rose faded from cheek and lip, and with a sigh so low as to be scarcely heard, the spirit passed into the land of everlasting life.

She was buried in the quiet church-yard on the afternoon of the ensuing Friday. Grace Melville was present at the solemn service; and when the last soothing rites of the Church had been performed, and the few mourners had dispersed in silence to their several homes, the young and gentle lady still remained to adorn the lowly tomb with flowers,—the crimson fuschia, drooping beneath its weight of pendent blossoms, at the foot of the little mound,—and the pure white rose, giving its sweet perfume to the breeze which wanders through that consecrated spot, and ever and anon casts a shower of stainless petals upon the adjoining grave, where rests

The Mother.

THE CHILDREN
OF
ST. CATHERINE'S CHANTRY.

“Voices low and gentle,
And timid glances shy,
That seem for aid parental
To sue all wistfully;
All pressing, longing to do right,
Yet fearing to be wrong;
In these, the pastor dares delight,
A lamb-like, Christ-like throng.”

CHRISTIAN YEAR.



WAS born in a sweet, secluded village in the south of England, and in that calm retirement the first bright years of childhood glided tranquilly away. Fairlight had been the home of my forefathers for several generations. It was a large, old-fashioned, gray stone hall, situated upon the verge of a gently sloping hill, overlooking a rich and varied prospect of meadows, and woodlands, and silvery-gushing streams; while at the rear extended, for miles and miles, a ridge of low, undulating, grassy downs,

forming a pleasing back-ground to the blooming loveliness of the parks and gardens, which completely surrounded my father's dwelling.

It was shortly after the celebration of my eighth birth-day—an event that was duly observed, a holiday being given to the children of the little school that had been principally founded and endowed by my dear mother, and a feast being provided for myself, and about a dozen young companions, in the beautiful summer-house which stood upon the borders of our tiny lake.

It was, if I remember rightly, within three months of this never to be forgotten birth-day, that my parents, for reasons on which it is unnecessary now to enter, determined upon a removal to the United States. It was to be a temporary residence, they said; at the end of two, or, at the most, three years, we were to return to England; but the allotted time passed on, and before another year had closed, my sweet mother was taken to her rest, and then the very thought of Fairlight became wholly insupportable to my father's mind. He had learned ere this to conceive a warm affection for his adopted country; and now it had become doubly dear from being the grave of her whose memory he so fondly cherished.

My boyish interests and associations were also in the Western world. Therefore, after many consultations, and not, I suspect, without a few misgivings, it was at length determined that the lands which had so long been ours should be disposed of, and suffered to pass into the hands of strangers; and that America was thenceforth to be our home. I was content with this decision, for we were surrounded by a large circle of valued and congenial friends, while our abode was the seat of comfort, elegance, and the refinement of a pure and cultivated taste, a gift which my father possessed in a very eminent degree.

So we continued to dwell upon the banks of the noble Hudson; and there my youth was passed in laborious study, and in preparations for the sacred calling, to which I had long prayed I might be permitted to devote my powers. That prayer was granted; and at the dawn of manhood, I was admitted to Holy Orders, in the American branch of the Church Catholic.

England and America were ONE; so my dear father often said, when playfully accused by others of having abandoned his ancestral home; and I, for my part, never engaged in the hallowed services of the Church without

inwardly acknowledging that his words were true. Still, as years rolled on, I found it more and more difficult to repress a yearning wish to gaze once more upon the long unvisited, although well-remembered scenes of my native land.

But there seemed no probability that my desire could be realized; for I never would consent, from motives of pleasure only, to desert the people committed to my care. How, indeed, could I conscientiously allow myself to contemplate any scheme which must involve even a temporary separation from the scene of my labors, while fully conscious that the exclusive devotion of my every thought and faculty was quite inadequate to a successful discharge of the all-important work which I had undertaken? Alas! an opportunity was ere long presented in an unlooked-for way, but it came in the guise of a most heavy trial.

Several of my mother's family had fallen victims to consumption, and she herself had always had a tendency towards that fatal malady, although her days had eventually been shortened by an infectious fever. I had been considered unusually strong; but it at length became evident that I had inherited the germ of the disease, and the physicians who

were immediately consulted, united in declaring that it would be highly imprudent for me to dream of continuing to reside in a climate where the winters are so trying, even to the hardy and robust. I should always possess a peculiar delicacy of constitution, they assured me; but, with due precaution, it might be nothing more.

So, yielding to the earnest solicitations of my father, I resigned, with heartfelt sorrow, the charge of the flock I so truly loved, and accepted a call to a remote parish in the sunny clime of Florida. Some months, however, must elapse before I could enter upon my duties in this new sphere of action, and I decided upon employing a portion of the intervening time in making a short tour through the most interesting parts of England and North Wales. It is an incident of this journey that I am desirous of recording for the amusement and instruction of my youthful readers.

It was on a warm September day, when the blue heavens were half-veiled with fleecy clouds, and the trees were just beginning to exhibit those faint, fair tints of gold and orange, which in England herald the approach of autumn, that I gazed for the first time upon the enchanting scenery of the Isle of Wight,

where I had arranged to pass the last week of my stay in Europe. How I revelled in the pure bright sunshine and the balmy air, and in the exquisite loveliness which everywhere surrounded me!—all the more enjoyable, perhaps, from the striking contrast they presented to the stormy glories of SNOWDONIA.

In the course of my journeyings through the island, I came, however, upon a district which, from its exceeding wildness, strongly reminded me of the less mountainous regions of the land I had so lately quitted; and wishing to explore the locality at leisure, I took up my abode for the night in the little village inn of C——, instead of going on that day to Newport, as I had originally intended.

Having done full justice to my landlady's good fare, I set sail upon a voyage of discovery, feeling very weary, and yet quite determined to leave no spot of note unvisited through any wilful indolence or neglect. The school attracted my attention as I was passing through the hamlet; so I stopped, and respectfully requested leave to enter. The "governess," a cheerful, kindly person, at once acceded to my desire, and I was shown every thing which seemed likely to interest or please a stranger. The pupils were not at that hour occupied with

their tasks, a circumstance I much regretted ; but I was conducted through the large, airy school-rooms, and allowed to inspect the various books from which they studied, together with the pretty engravings, all on religious subjects, and the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, in gilt frames, which formed the only decoration of the walls.

I was then ushered into a much smaller apartment, fitted up as an infant school ; and when my amiable conductress had explained to me the exact system of instruction here pursued, and had also afforded me much information relative to the attainments of her little scholars, we returned to the outer school-room, where I was shown a grand display of needle-work and copy-books. Of the merits of the former, I must own I am by no means competent to judge ; but as regards the latter, I was greatly struck with the clearness and freedom of the characters, and the extreme neatness which was apparent in the efforts of the very youngest.

“This may well do credit to a little girl just ten years old,” observed Mrs. Johnson, as she placed a writing-book before me on the table.

“It is certainly remarkable,” I replied, gazing with surprise upon the well-formed letters,

so bold, and yet so delicate; "a more legible handwriting I have never seen."

"Annie Withers is a nice child in all respects," resumed the teacher; "she is so gentle and loving in her disposition. Indeed, the five of that family are all sweet children; there are none of my pupils in whom I can place more entire confidence."

"And have they been long under your charge?" I asked.

"Only for about six months," she replied. "Their father is a respectable Berkshire farmer, who has but recently removed to the Isle of Wight. He and his wife are both industrious, contented people, and more excellent neighbors it would be hard to find."

"They would seem, judging from your account, to have brought up their children admirably well," I said.

"Yes, indeed," she answered, "although the children have had many advantages, besides those that their parents were able to afford them. This exercise of Annie's will give you some idea of the extent and accuracy of their Scriptural knowledge, for all have, in proportion, done as well. It was a task assigned to the whole school at Easter; they were desired to study the New Testament with care, and

write out all those passages which refer to the Resurrection of our Lord ; or, if they preferred, to indicate the chapter and verse from which the texts were taken.

“Annie’s was evidently the result of diligence and attention,” she continued, as, having for some time searched unsuccessfully amid the miscellaneous contents of a desk, she at length drew forth a slip of paper containing a list of references, and placed it in my hand. “Perhaps you will like to keep it, sir,” she added kindly, on perceiving that I was much pleased with the production ; “it may bring back the recollection of our little village ; and as you are a clergyman of the American Church, you may find pleasure in comparing the fruit of our labors in old England, with the great work that is now going forward in your own more distant portion of the same vineyard.”

“It will, indeed, be a source of more gratification than you can imagine,” I replied, as I cordially shook hands with the good teacher. “I have been wishing to visit your old church,” I continued ; “will you be so obliging as to tell me where I can procure the key ?”

“I can lend you one, sir,” she answered, smiling : “it looks sadly neglected now,” she added, with a sigh ; “but I am hoping still to

see the day when it will be restored, and frequent services again be held within the walls that now, alas! are silent throughout all the week."

Heartily did I re-echo Mrs. Johnson's wish, as I passed along the deserted-looking churchyard, and having, with some difficulty, turned the key in the rusty lock, entered within the mouldering, but still sacred temple. Everything bore the marks of great antiquity; but with a moderate degree of care as to the preservation, this would only have enhanced its charm. I had seen many English churches quite as old, but scarcely one which had inspired me with such melancholy feelings.

Long did I linger in the shadowy aisles, noting the green stains that defaced the supporting pillars, once so beautiful in their spotless white; and then turned to inspect more closely the sculptured decorations of the graceful arches, fast crumbling to decay. I shivered the while at the vault-like dampness of the place, for the stone floor was uncarpeted, and in some places broken and wet, as though exposed to the moisture of heavy dews. Last of all, I approached the altar: even there the same negligence was but too plainly visible; and with a saddened spirit I retraced my steps,

until I stood once more at the entrance beside the baptismal font.

I had completed my examination of this ancient relic, and was about to leave the church, when of a sudden my eye fell upon a narrow, dark flight of stone steps, which I had not before observed. I followed its intricate and winding course until I emerged upon the summit of the square, massive tower, and looked forth with a feeling of relief upon a pure, and peace-breathing, and most lovely landscape.

I had been seated for some time absorbed in dreamy meditation, gazing out over the silent sea, and watching the rooks, as they wheeled in fantastic circles around the ivied belfry tower, ere I remembered that it was growing late; that I had much to see, and but little time at my disposal: so I arose, and hastily began to descend the ruined staircase, not pausing to reflect that here, of all places, circumspection was requisite.

I soon experienced the ill effects of heedlessness, for my foot slipped upon one of the lower steps, and in the endeavor to prevent myself from falling, I instinctively seized hold of a heavy rope that hung from the roof, and was thereupon startled by a loud, ringing peal, which resounded through the lonely aisles,

and then died away, leaving a deeper stillness than before.

For an instant I was overpowered by consternation; and then the almost absurd nature of the incident flashed upon my mind, and I found it well-nigh impossible to restrain a burst of nervous laughter, as imagination pictured the groups of villagers crowding to the church, anxious to ascertain the cause of the unwonted sound, and the embarrassment which I, the thoughtless author of the confusion, would be likely to feel under these trying circumstances. But a timely recollection of the sanctity of the spot restored my self-possession; and grieved that I had been betrayed into even a momentary irreverence, I quietly took up my station in the outer porch, resolved to deliver as satisfactory an explanation as possible to my eager querists, when they should arrive.

To my great joy, however, no one appeared in view except the aged sexton—a calm, grave man, of venerable aspect, with a mild countenance and thin silvery locks. “He had seen a gentleman enter the church,” he said, “and had imagined that the sudden peal was owing to some accident. There was no occasion for me to be annoyed, for it was even doubtful whether any but himself had heard the bell,

or, at all events, would pay any attention to it; the children were engaged in their evening tasks; the laborers were abroad; and their wives, in all probability, too much engrossed with household duties to admit of their regarding any thing beyond." So I dismissed all fear lest I had been a disturber of the public peace, and entered into conversation with my gray-headed companion.

Christopher Matthews, for that was the old sexton's name, proved alike intelligent and agreeable. He had lived all his life at C——, he told me, and had only upon one occasion been absent from the island for a week. It was fourteen years since he had held the position he now occupied; and he had many histories, all full of warning and instruction, to relate concerning those whose ashes were reposing beneath the sombre, mournful yew-trees, which overshadowed this secluded burial-ground.

We were thus engaged, old Christopher having reached the most interesting passage of a simple, touching tale of village life, and I, listening to his words with deep attention, when the current of my ideas was diverted in an unexpected manner. A group of children had just turned a corner of the road, and were winding up the hill, in the direction of the

church, and although they were still distant, I could perceive that each one carried a small volume, which appeared to be a Prayer-book.

“Is there to be a celebration of Divine service here this afternoon?” I inquired, turning quickly to my companion, and rather abruptly breaking in upon the thread of his discourse.

“No, sir, not that I know of,” he answered, with evident surprise; “but what made you think of it just now?”

“Then where are THEY going?” I demanded, pointing to the little band, which was at that instant passing before the church-yard gate.

“Oh! I see, sir,” the old man answered, with a smile; “those are the Children of St. Catherine’s Chantry.”

“St. Catherine’s Chantry,” I rejoined; “can you mean the ruined chapel, or hermitage, which stands upon the hill above the village?”

“Yes, sir; you are doubtless well acquainted with the spot?”

“No; I arrived in C——, for the first time, this afternoon, and expect, God willing, to leave here again to-morrow. I have, however, read descriptions of the scenery, and quite intend visiting St. Catherine’s Downs ere night-fall. But what can these children have to do with the old oratory?”

“That I will tell you with pleasure,” he replied; “it is curious enough for such young things. But stay,” he continued, interrupting himself; “you can see them now, sir, on the lowest ridge of yonder hill; they will soon be out of sight, for the path winds down through that ravine.”

I followed the direction of his eye, and could plainly distinguish the little group of whom we had been speaking; the two eldest, a boy and a girl, apparently about eleven and twelve, were walking side by side, while the younger members of the party were dispersed in glad-some mirth over the grassy slope, and in the sunny hollows; I could just catch the silvery sound of their sweet, ringing laughter, and my heart grew light as I dwelt upon this lovely picture of child-like innocence and joy.

“It is now about six months,” resumed the sexton, “since the Withers family has been established in our hamlet.”

“Withers!” I once more interrupted; “do you mean the farmer’s family from Berkshire?”

“Yes, sir; if you are from that part of the country, you may know something of them?”

“No,” I replied; “but I learned somewhat

of their history from Mrs. Johnson:" and I recounted that part of my conversation with the governess.

"Mrs. Johnson has told you a great deal about the children," was his comment, "but I wonder to find that she has omitted what is, to my mind, the most interesting of all. You must know then, sir, that when the Withers first came here it was towards the close of Lent. Upon the very afternoon of their arrival, the two eldest stopped at my cottage to ascertain the hours of daily service. I had to tell them that there were morning prayers at eleven, on every Wednesday and Friday during Lent, but that there was no week-day service at other times except on special festivals.

"They soon learned to love their new abode, and I am sure no happier children can be found in England; but I must go on with my story. Throughout Holy Week we had daily prayers, and on no one occasion were any of the little strangers absent. One day when the congregation had dispersed, and Willie remained alone in the church-yard with his youngest sister, whom Annie had begged him to take charge of for an hour, while she went upon an errand for their mother, I approached the boy, of whom I was already growing to

be fond, and asked whether he and his sister Annie were beginning to be reconciled to their home at C——.

“‘We like the Isle of Wight, and we love you all here so much,’ he replied, as he raised his soft, dark-hazel eyes to mine: ‘this week it has seemed quite like Ferndale,’ he continued; ‘I never knew before it was possible to feel sorry that Easter is so near.’

“‘Because there will only be service after that on Sundays, I suppose, you mean.’”

As the aged narrator paused for breath, I said, “I have often felt disheartened, when my people did not appear to value the holy privileges which were vouchsafed to them; but, perhaps, as in this instance, they may have been a source of comfort to some of the tender lambs among us.”

“I think, very often, how much pleased Mr. Croswell, their former pastor at Ferndale, would be to know that his efforts were not thrown away,” continued Christopher; “but I have not yet finished what I had begun to tell you. A few weeks after Easter, when the days began to lengthen, and the weather to become mild and less uncertain, these children were observed, for three successive evenings, to pass along the road, bearing their small

Prayer-books in their hands, precisely as you have this moment seen them.

“At last I had the curiosity to inquire of my young friends the reason of this rather singular proceeding. With winning frankness the dear children at once told me all. ‘They had been so afraid lest they might, in time, forget what they had learned at Ferndale,’ Annie said, ‘Mr. Croswell had so constantly urged them, never, if they could possibly avoid it, to suffer any thing to interfere with the duty of attending public worship; and on the very day that they had called at the rectory to say farewell, he advised them, whenever they were prevented from joining in the public services, to make a point of reading the Psalms and Lessons for the day in private. They had family prayers, morning and evening, here; but the little ones were too young to sit up until nine o’clock, and she and Willie were often so tired as to be scarcely able to profit by them.’

“It was for this reason that they had resolved to go every afternoon, when it should be fine, to the old Chantry, and read a portion of the service there.”

“But why did they select St. Catherine’s Chantry?”

“Well, sir, I scarcely know; partly, I believe, because of its being so lonely and retired. Hardly any persons pass that way, and they can read aloud, and chant their beautiful anthems, without ever being overheard. One very still evening, it is true, I fancied, while standing at my garden-gate, that I could just distinguish the sweet notes of some sacred music floating on the breeze; but it was very faint, and I do not feel at all sure that I was not mistaken.”

“And do you never accompany them?” I asked; “surely your presence could not fail to be acceptable.”

“I think they always like to have me with them,” said old Christopher, with a quiet smile; “but the road is more steep, sir, than you would suppose; and I have, for many years, found it difficult to climb. Some of their school-fellows, however, go occasionally, but it does not come so naturally to them; and my little niece, Lucy Foster, is, I believe, the only one who perseveres. She is with her friends this evening, and is almost as regular as they are; but you know, sir, as a general rule, children require to be brought up to it, and then it does not seem strange to them in after life.”

“Very true,” I replied; and I inwardly formed a resolution of being even more particular than heretofore, in impressing upon the younger portion of my flock the necessity of cultivating devout habits in childhood, since none can aright estimate the unspeakable advantage which such a course will prove to us in later years. “And now, I must say good-bye to you, with many thanks for the interesting details you have given me,” I said, turning once more to the venerable sexton. “I am going to stroll slowly in the direction of the Chantry, as I presume there will be no danger now of disturbing your little friends.”

“None in the world, sir,” he answered, as he unfastened the gate, and stepped aside to let me pass. “I dare say you will find them sporting as merrily as young lambs upon the hill-side, for they seldom return home till twilight.”

A few minutes' walk from the church-yard brought me to the foot of the high downs; there was a narrow sheep-path leading among the hills, but the ascent was so gradual, that it was only when I paused, and looking back, beheld the sunlit valley lying far below, that I began to realize the height on which I stood. Towards the last, however, the rise became

more abrupt; and just at this point I contrived to miss the track, ever wandering higher, but still seeing no trace whatever of the ancient chantry.

At length I discerned the dim outline of some building, evidently in a ruinous condition, which, upon a nearer view, proved to be a dilapidated light-house. There was something picturesque in its appearance, owing chiefly, no doubt, to the peculiarly desolate and melancholy character of the scenery by which it was surrounded. I entered within the roofless walls, and stood listening with a sad and pensive pleasure to the mournful sighing of the autumn wind as it swept over the barren moor. Suddenly—with scarcely, as it seemed, a moment's notice—the wind died quite away; then it rose again, with more resistless power, rushing in fitful gusts across the waste, while still louder, and yet more loud, swelled its mysterious and wild minstrelsy. Then came a long, crashing peal of thunder, followed by a flash of lightning, so intensely keen, that instinctively I closed my eyes, and retreated into the darkest corner of the ruin.

A moment's reflection, however, convinced me that there would, in all likelihood, be less

danger in the open air, and I resolved upon making an attempt to regain the village. Had I been aware of the direction in which St. Catherine's Chantry lay, I should at once have hastened to the succor of the helpless children, who might, perchance, have been, like myself, overtaken by the fury of the gale; but I did not even know which way to turn; and while I was still looking down upon the valley, where the glory of a stormy sunset rested, heavy wreaths of mist came rolling up the mountain-side; black, lowering clouds gathered like a curtain over the face of the blue sky; and then the rain broke upon me with fierce, relentless force, until I was for a time fairly blinded by the violence of the tempest.

On and on I struggled, not knowing whither I was borne; now standing still to avoid being carried down the slope, and anon driven like a forest-leaf before the whirling blast. Of one thing, however, I felt certain, I was attaining a greater elevation, not as I had at first hoped, making my descent into the bosom of the sheltered vale. Finally, all involuntary progress was arrested by a rough stone wall, to which I clung in desperation, determined to await with patience until the war of the elements should in some measure subside. My very natural

feeling of curiosity to gain some notion of my whereabouts was not long in being gratified, for a flash of lightning soon revealed the scene, rendered for an instant distinctly visible in the lurid glare.

Beyond the wall already mentioned, stretched a treeless moor, as brown and uncultivated as imagination can conceive, in the midst of which rose up abruptly a steep and almost precipitous peak, crowned at its very summit by one of the most extraordinary edifices I have ever seen. I do not believe that I can describe it; for it will often happen that those objects which, when taken as a whole, combine to make the deepest and most indelible impression on the mind, are at the same time less accurately shadowed forth by memory in their minuter details.

The building itself was of gray stone—that at least I can remember—and I know, too, that it was lofty: composed of one single, slender-pointed tower, which, notwithstanding its slight proportions, conveyed the idea of durability and massive strength. There was a large aperture on the side nearest to me, which had once, in all probability, served the purpose of a window; it had a strange, goblin-like appearance now, and at first sight called

up some of those vague, nervous feelings that are apt to be suggested by the perusal of a German fairy-tale. But a more soothing train of thought succeeded. From that dark, lonely tower had once streamed forth the beacon-light which, to the mariner tossed on the bosom of the surging billows, had doubtless often shone as a bright star of hope, and pledge of peace and safety.

Low, solemn chants had also mingled of yore with the wild music of the midnight blast; and the voice of the solitary hermit-priest, the sole dweller on that isolated peak, had been continually raised in supplication for those who might chance to be exposed to all the perils and horrors of the mighty deep.

Perhaps it was some unconscious feeling of reverence for a spot thus consecrated by the prayers of Christians, in early days, which had induced the children to select this ancient oratory as the scene of their simple, but sublime devotions. At all events, I liked to think so, and it was pleasant to reflect that the place which had of old been hallowed was thus rendered sacred even now.

Taking advantage of a temporary cessation of the storm, I lost no time in scaling the high inclosure, and resolutely following on the up-

ward course ; after much hard labor, I finally attained the desired position, and stood triumphantly upon the top of St. Catherine's Hill, the loftiest point of land in the whole island, being just nine hundred feet above the level of the sea.

The tempest was evidently beginning to abate, although the heavens were still wrapt in gloom, and the wailing wind was yet heard at intervals. But a great change had surely taken place, either in the aspect of outward nature, or in the frame of my own mind. I was no longer oppressed with a sense of awe so profound as almost to deserve the name of terror ; softer emotions took possession of my soul, and the beautiful lines of Coleridge, descriptive of those thrilling strains which, from time to time burst from the spirits of the gale, recurred to my memory :

“ And now 'tis like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.”

At the same moment a pale, silvery streak brightened the edge of a dark mass of clouds, and soon the full, round moon beamed forth, shedding a mild and tender lustre over the

mountain solitude. It was not yet sufficiently settled to admit of my returning to the inn, so I determined to seek the refuge which was close at hand, and there to abide the issue of events; but upon nearing the entrance of the chantry, I fancied that I clearly heard the sound of a sweet, melodious voice, and pausing to listen I found that I was not mistaken. The tone was that of childhood, and the words those of the Second Collect appointed for the daily Evening Service, the form of which has been slightly altered in our American edition of the Prayer-book, but which, in its present version, seemed to me even more appropriate to the time and place.

“Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee, O Lord! and by Thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of Thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.” There was a low, responsive “Amen” breathed in several voices, and then followed an unbroken stillness.

I can scarcely imagine the effect which this extraordinary scene would have produced upon me, but for my previous knowledge of the circumstances I have narrated. As it was, the incident, although wholly unforeseen, was yet one for which I could account. These were,

beyond all doubt, the Children of St. Catherine's Chantry; and with a fear that my too sudden appearance might create alarm, I turned away, in order to reflect upon my further movements.

There was a calm, deep hush brooding over all the landscape; the stars were glittering in their azure vault, and the tremulous brightness of the moonbeams played upon the surface of the waters, and silvered even the gray chantry walls. Within the tower itself, however, no ray of light appeared to penetrate; all was enveloped in mysterious darkness, until at length, as the fair orb of night rode higher and higher in the heavens, a quivering radiance partially dispelled the gloom, revealing the faint outline of a lovely group.

The soft, pale light streamed full upon the central figure. It was that of a little maiden, seated upon the stone floor, with one arm resting for support against a projection that had once formed part of a staircase, winding round the interior of the tower; while the other entwined a cherub boy, seemingly some few years younger than the girl, whose face beamed with the mingled expression of a mother's tenderness and a sister's pride, as she bent over the fair head, shaded by its

clustering golden ringlets, which nestled on her bosom.

Around were scattered other forms, shadowy and indistinct, and the breathless silence that had at first excited my surprise, was now clearly explained; unquestionably, it was a dread lest the babe's tranquil sleep should be disturbed. There is a spell in the repose of infant innocence, of which all, even the most thoughtless, must, I am persuaded, own the power, and I felt as though I could not venture to dissolve the charm.

But the evening was already far advanced, for the storm had been of long duration, and I was quite aware that the shelter of a comfortable home would be more conducive to the health and well-being of us all than a protracted exposure to the chill night air, laden with heavy vapors. Therefore I approached the window, intending to announce myself as a protector to the children, and fully confident of my ability to conduct them to C—— in safety.

“Is not this St. Catherine's Chantry?” I inquired, speaking very gently, in order not to awaken apprehension; but I need not have been so scrupulous, for there is a fearless confidence in childhood, which, knowing little of

evil, has not yet learned to suspect its presence.

“Yes, sir, this is the chantry,” replied a boyish voice; and the speaker, rising from the furthest recess in which he had been ensconced, came forward slowly into the moonlight; “perhaps you have lost your way in the thunder-storm,” he continued. “Will you not come in and take a seat until the rain is over?”

“It is not raining now,” I said; “do you not see how brightly the moonbeams dance upon the water?”

“It was storming heavily when I last looked out,” he answered, “although even then there was a path of light upon the sea; but now that it is once more fine, and the wind less boisterous, our father will be able to come up for us, I know.”

“Are you afraid, then, to return to C—— alone?” I asked.

“No, not afraid,” the boy replied; “but his father would not like him to descend St. Catherine’s Hill after nightfall, more especially with his young sisters, and their infant charge. His parents had both warned him against making any such attempt, in case they should ever chance to be involved in such an adventure as had actually befallen them; a circumstance far

from improbable, as the event of a sudden storm in these regions is by no means uncommon.

“Do you think your parents would object to your returning home under my care?” I inquired; “it might save them from some anxiety on your account.”

“Oh! they will not be anxious,” said a low, girlish voice. “Mother has often said, that she would trust us anywhere with Willie.”

“Except to wander about the downs at night, I suppose you mean, Annie,” rejoined her brother, with a smile; and then turning to me, he added: “My father once slipped down, after dark, into a hollow of this very hill, when he was staying as a little boy at C——; and as he broke his arm, and suffered greatly for a long time afterwards, it is that, I dare say, that makes him so particular about us.”

“Yes, it could hardly be otherwise,” I answered; “and since I am quite a stranger in these parts, I should like to remain with you, if you have no objection, rather than run any risk of leading you into danger, or of falling into it myself, for that matter. Do you think your father will guide me to the village when he comes to seek you?”

“Oh! yes, sir, I am very sure he will,” said

Annie; "and I think we may expect him every moment now. Will you not come in and rest?" she added, moving aside so as to leave room for me to seat myself.

"Thank you," I replied; "it is so pleasant here, that I believe I will linger and enjoy the air. This is a singular spot," I continued: "old Christopher, the sexton, tells me that you come here very often."

"Yes, nearly every evening," answered Willie. "It is so quiet, and it seems almost like a church."

"And do you begin to love St. Catherine's Chantry as much as the little church at Ferrdale?" I inquired.

"Ferrdale!" he exclaimed, while his eyes sparkled at sound of the familiar name; "oh, no, that is impossible! But have you ever been there, sir, and do you know Mr. Crosswell?"

"No, I have never visited your Berkshire home," I replied; "but I can quite well understand how sorry you must have been to leave it. Old Christopher has given me a sketch of your story; and I was glad to hear that you so highly prized the blessings which you there enjoyed, and that although they are withdrawn for a season, you still endeavor to keep up the

habits which your excellent rector took such pains to inculcate."

"Yes, sir; we try not to forget what Mr. Croswell taught us," replied Willie, "and we like very much to come here and read the prayers; but it is much pleasanter to have a clergyman."

"That," I rejoined, "is a feeling into which I can fully enter; yet still, dear children, persevere, and be assured that a Divine blessing will rest upon your feeble efforts. You, Willie, and your eldest sister, have a peculiar responsibility," I continued, "for you have enjoyed the advantages resulting from a regular attendance upon public worship, at an age when you were fitted to appreciate them, and thus you have a great duty to discharge towards the little ones, who will not fail to be strongly influenced by your example."

"Yes," observed Annie; "Mr. Croswell told us that we should try to remember this whenever we are tempted to do wrong; and that is very often," she added, with a sigh.

"And, therefore, we must not trust in our own strength," I said; "for, as the Church Catechism expresses it, we 'cannot walk in God's commandments, nor serve Him, without His special grace, which we must learn at all

times to call for by diligent prayer;' but this, I hope and believe, you do not neglect. I am a clergyman; and should I be permitted to regain my distant home in safety, I will think particularly of you when I am performing the service in my little parish church, beneath the bright blue skies of Florida, for you know that 'we are all members one of another.'"

"And since you are a clergyman, will you say some of the Collects for us now?" pleaded the little boy, with a singular blending of timidity and earnestness.

It was with great satisfaction that I acceded to this request; and entering within the time-worn walls, I knelt, surrounded by the children, in that ancient chantry, and repeated several of those prayers in which we all found such delight. When the sacred duty was concluded, I resumed the conversation with my youthful friends, and was alike charmed with their intelligence and simplicity. As time passed, however, I became uneasy at the good farmer's non-appearance, and was just endeavoring to decide whether or not it would be prudent to wait any longer in the hope of his arrival, when all at once we heard the sound of voices; and Lucy Foster, a timid, gentle child, who had not until then ventured upon a

remark, declared that Uncle Christopher was of the party. I smiled rather incredulously at this announcement, but the next instant I heard the old man anxiously inquiring if the children were quite safe.

“Yes, they are quite safe,” I replied, as I advanced to meet him; “but how is it that you have gained strength and courage to ascend St. Catherine’s Hill at this late hour?”

“Oh! are you here, sir?” he exclaimed with joy; “I had hoped it might be so; and, perhaps, it was not right of me to come, for my good neighbor would have reached here long ago, if he had not been obliged to stop for me so often, when I was out of breath; but I felt unhappy about the children, and could not bear to let him go alone.”

“You see there was no occasion to be troubled, Uncle Christopher,” said the stout farmer, coming up to where we stood; “I told you we could trust to their staying quietly where they were. How now, my boys and girls,” he continued, in a cheerful tone, as we came near the hermitage, “are you ready to go home, or should you prefer staying here all night?”

“Mother has not been anxious, has she?” inquired Annie.

“No, to be sure not,” said her father; “but I dare say she will be as well pleased to have you back again: so now we will set out, if you please, sir,” he added, turning to address me.

Our progress down the slippery steep was slow, but fortunately accomplished without any accident. The farmer went first, carrying his infant boy, and leading his youngest daughter by the hand; Willie followed next, with Lucy Foster and his sister Annie; while I brought up the rear, with little Freddy and old Christopher on either side. In this way we reached the village; and when we arrived opposite the church, I was obliged to take leave of my interesting companions. The farewell was a sad one, as it seemed improbable that in this world we should ever meet again; but it was a great pleasure to have formed this friendship, for its memory is precious to me now, and I trust that in a future state our intercourse will be renewed.

I left C—— early upon the ensuing day, and after a short and pleasant drive arrived at Newport. My first visit was to the principal bookseller in the little town, of whom I purchased a Church Service, simply but neatly bound, ornamented with a cross and a gilt-clasp. This I inclosed in a parcel, directed to

the good old sexton, accompanied by a note, in which I requested him to present the volume, as a token of affectionate remembrance from an American clergyman, to

“The Children of St. Catherine’s Chantry.”

SAND DRAWINGS.

“Little deeds of kindness,
Little words of love,
Make our earth an Eden,
Like the heaven above.”



HE morning had been cold and comfortless. It was just such weather as one is often called upon to endure in England, throughout the proverbially gloomy season of November.

By twelve o'clock, however, the dull, leaden bank of clouds, which had for several days hung ominously over the landscape, began to exhibit a less hopeless aspect; the pouring rain subsided, by degrees, into a misty drizzle, which, in its turn, passed away: and when a streak of very pale blue sky was at length visible, little Ida Herbert, a merry child of six years old, who had been stationed for the last ten minutes beside the bow-casement, in the pleasant drawing-room of Whitethorn Lodge,

burst into a joyous laugh, and ran away to seek her elder sister, whom she found ever ready to participate in her pleasures.

“Edward and I shall be able to go to the woods with nurse this afternoon,” she exclaimed, dancing like a fairy of the sunbeam about the spacious chamber. “O Carrie! are you not delighted to see this lovely day at last, and are you not in a great hurry to have dinner over?”

“Yes, indeed; this glimpse of sunshine is most cheering, and I hope sincerely that you may enjoy your walk, my darling: provided that it still continues fair, and that mamma does not object,” replied Caroline, who wisely refrained from casting a shade over Ida’s joyful anticipations, by saying how extremely improbable she considered both contingencies. It is far better to trust that the good sense of children will enable them to bear a disappointment, than to damp their ardor upon all occasions by predicting difficulties, which may prove but visionary in the end.

“Will you not come with us, Carrie?” inquired little Ida, in a coaxing tone, as she twined one of her sister’s dark curls around her finger.

“No, I cannot this afternoon,” said Caroline.

“I ought to visit poor old Bridget Simpson, and Thomas Brown’s sick grandchild; you know it is now three days since we have heard news of either.”

“Yes, only I cannot spare you,” said the child; “I should like to keep you always to myself.”

“But I think you will be able to manage without me for two hours, and I do not expect to try your patience longer,” returned Caroline, laughing. “So now you shall come with me to the store-room, and help me pack my basket,” she continued, as she took a key from her work-box, and led the way up-stairs.

“What do you mean to take?” demanded Ida, looking round upon the well-filled shelves.

“Mamma said that I might have some rice and sugar, with a jar of currant-jelly, and any thing else that I thought best,” answered Caroline; “so now we will decide together. Here is a seed-cake, which looks nice and fresh, and there is the remainder of those sugar-biscuits that Gerald brought us from New York.”

“Oh! but Carrie, there is nothing that you like so much,” remonstrated the little girl.

“Yes,” rejoined her sister; “but I am the only one of the family who fancies them, and you know that I am strong and able to enjoy

all my meals with a good appetite; whereas Dame Bridget has been ill for many months, and is so weak that she can scarcely take any nourishment at all. Perhaps these little cakes, being so light and delicate, may tempt her, and she may be able to like them with her cup of tea.”

“Oh! I have thought of something she will be certain to enjoy,” cried Ida. “You remember the fine hot-house grapes which mamma gave me yesterday? I laid them aside until to-day, because it was too late to eat them; so now you will put them for me in the basket, will you not, dear sister?”

“I will, indeed, my love,” said Caroline; “and I am sure that you will feel rewarded for this trifling act of self-denial, by the reflection that what would have been merely an article of luxury to yourself may prove a real comfort to an infirm and aged fellow-creature; and while thus striving to relieve the sufferings of others, you will experience the truth and beauty of our Saviour’s precept, that ‘it is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

Ida seemed pensive for a moment at the conclusion of this sentence; and then upon hearing the bell, which summoned the whole family to their early dinner, she bounded gayly down

the staircase, and soon emerged from the pantry bearing the luscious fruit, which was duly deposited by her own hand at the top of the small, round Brighton basket—Caroline's inseparable companion on her various missions of love among the sick and destitute. The clouds once more gathered while they were seated at the table; but as both the children looked pale and languid, from want of the exercise to which they were accustomed, Mrs. Herbert was induced to yield to Ida's entreaties, and consent that they should try to secure a short walk in the interval between the showers: "only they must not go into the woods," she said, "and on no account were they to sit down in the open air." So, thankful for even this permission, Ida and Edward set forth upon a ramble with their nurse, and Caroline was not long in following their example.

It was miserably cheerless out of doors; the ground was saturated with the recent rain, and the yellow leaves which strewed the gravel-walk spoke sadly of the short-lived joys of summer. There was no inducement to prolong one's walk; and Caroline having satisfactorily accomplished her visits, both of which were in the immediate neighborhood, returned in

little more than an hour's time to Whitethorn. How bright and ruddy seemed the blazing fire; and how unusually comfortable and inviting was the cozy drawing-room, with its rich, warm crimson curtains and its easy-chairs! Caroline felt inclined to linger, for she was chilled and tired; but she resisted the temptation to indolence, which was one of her peculiar failings, and proceeded at once upstairs to divest herself of her wrappings, and to ascertain whether her mother had occasion for her services.

Mrs. Herbert, who was a confirmed invalid, had fallen asleep in an arm-chair beside the fire, in her own apartment. Caroline placed a screen so as to shield her from the draught; and then having gently drawn a light silk shawl around her shoulders, she again descended to the drawing-room, where, seating herself before her desk, she commenced a letter to an old and valued friend, who had formerly been her mother's governess. Before she had reached the second page of her epistle, the door was thrown wide open, and the two children ran into the room, with cheeks all rosy-red, from the effects of their walk in the chill, wintry air.

“It was not pleasant out of doors,” said Ida,

in reply to her sister's question as to the reason of their having returned so soon; "it was cold and wet, and we felt too tired to go farther, since nurse would not allow us to sit down and rest; so we begged her to bring us back that we might play at baby-house in the warm nursery, instead."

"I should think that much more agreeable," answered Caroline. "*I* was by no means sorry to find myself at home again; but I am glad I went out, notwithstanding. Dear little Mary Brown appeared so pleased to see me, and Dame Bridget was delighted with your present, Ida. She said that she would keep the fresh, cooling grapes to take at night, when she often lies awake, feeling feverish and thirsty."

"Well, I will put by a part of every thing nice that is given to me for her," rejoined Ida; "but Eddie will be waiting for me to begin our game," she added, as she crossed the room, and suddenly returning, said: "O Carrie! I forgot to show you these red berries that we found growing under a hedge by the road-side. Are they not very large and beautiful?"

"Yes, they are of a most brilliant color," replied Caroline, as she carefully took the heavy clusters from her sister's hand. "They

are the seed-cups of the golden lily," she continued; "I have often admired that very slender stem, supporting the brown shrivelled pod, all studded with rows of glowing coral: but what do you intend to do with them?"

"I think they will look beautiful in your moss-basket," answered Ida.

"Well then, dear, will you arrange them? Only be careful, please, not to injure that moss with pale-pink bells, for it is extremely fragile."

"But you will do it much better," pleaded Ida, "and then there will be no danger of harming any thing; it will not take you one minute, darling Carrie, and I shall be so much obliged to you."

"I suppose, then, I must try," answered Caroline, smiling; "so run away to Edward now, and you shall judge of my success at tea-time."

As soon as Ida had departed to the nursery, Caroline betook herself to the task which her little sister had imposed upon her. Time was just then more than usually precious, for she was desirous of concluding her letter before the mail should close, and also of finishing a book of travels, which it was necessary to send home early on the morrow. The one was an

important duty, but in the other case only her own gratification was involved; so Caroline resolved to make the sacrifice, and accordingly devoted more than twenty minutes to the manufacture of a tiny vase, composed of dark, glossy bay-leaves, and filled with the smallest and brightest of the berries, while the remainder were tastefully intermingled with the rare specimens of flowering mosses, which a friend had sent her from America. Having thus made provision for Ida's entertainment, Caroline resumed her interrupted letter; but there really seemed a spell upon her correspondence, for she had hardly written half a dozen lines before she was again disturbed.

This time the intruder was a noble-looking boy, between fifteen and sixteen years of age, attired in a midshipman's uniform, and from his striking resemblance to both Caroline and Ida, evidently a member of the family.

"Why, Gerald," exclaimed Caroline, as she laughingly drew an arm-chair to the fire, "I thought you were too good a sailor to be driven home by a slight shower of rain; did you not succeed in reaching Laurelton?"

"Yes, to be sure, I did," replied her brother, as he stood negligently leaning against the mantel-piece; "but Harry Ashurst is in Lon-

don, and so I hurried back to take you for a walk, as there is something about which I wish especially to talk with you."

"But it is so damp and chilly," began poor Caroline, in a tone of remonstrance; "and here there will be nobody to interrupt us, for mamma has fallen asleep in her own room, and the little ones are playing in the nursery."

"Yes, but I cannot explain this matter to you here," said Gerald, "it must be on the spot. Do come, Carrie, there's a jewel; it is as warm as summer, and the rain has ceased entirely. I dare say we shall have a lovely sunset. If you did but know how I weary of being in a house, after roving over the free blue ocean!" he added, in a tone of self-commiseration.

"Poor boy! I suppose I must take pity on you," observed Caroline, good-naturedly, as she replaced her writing implements, and locked the desk. "Though as regards the ocean, Gerald, I am pretty sure that if the truth were told, you are as much of a landsman as any one on board; and I even suspect you are occasionally a victim to that very troublesome complaint called sea-sickness, although, of course, dignity will not suffer you to own it."

Gerald only laughed, and begged his sister

would make haste, as the beauty of the afternoon would be quite over, if they lingered. Caroline did not precisely see wherein the beauty lay, but she assured her brother that she would not detain him longer than she could possibly avoid, and so left the room.

Poor Caroline! it was a greater effort for her to brave the mist and cold than Gerald could for an instant have conceived; but she had long and earnestly endeavored to accustom herself to make sacrifices in a cheerful spirit, for she had been early taught that a fretful and complaining disposition will mar the lustre of the brightest deeds, while a sweet and sunny temper will enhance the value of even the most trivial act of kindness. Then, too, came the recollection that her sailor brother would but be a passing guest. A few short weeks would again find him tossed upon the raging deep, hundreds of miles away from home and kindred; and how, then, could she bear the thought of having denied him any innocent request?

This feeling would, in itself, have been sufficient to decide her; but there was yet another and a holier consideration. That self-devotion, which is at all times inculcated upon those who do, in sincerity and truth, desire to be

followers of their blessed Lord, was upon that day more peculiarly enforced by the precepts and example of the Church. It was Friday, a season set apart for acts of self-denial, except when it falls upon the high festival of Christmas.

Caroline had for years striven to conform in this, as in all other particulars, to the teaching of the Prayer-book; and the effort, great at first, had by degrees become comparatively slight, while the advantage she derived from this observance could not fail to be apparent even to herself, as she perceived the increased facility with which she was enabled to give up her own ease and pleasure for the good of others. A system of this nature, long and resolutely persevered in, from no other motive than that of cultivating a principle of obedience, and as a means of strengthening the character, must of necessity render all personal sacrifices easy, when they are undertaken for a special object.

“And now which way shall we walk?” inquired Caroline, as they left the house. “To Mottistone Moor, and the old Druid monument?”

“No; to the Pearl and Rainbow Cliffs,” said Gerald.

“Less poetically known as Alum Bay,” responded Caroline, as she smiled at her young poet brother’s rather fanciful designation of a locality which well merited even his enthusiastic praise. “Come, let me hear your secret, Gerald,” she proceeded, after they had continued for some time on their way, without any mention being made of the desired topic.

But Gerald was not disposed to be communicative; at least on that subject, for upon all others he conversed so pleasantly, that Caroline was surprised to find she had actually enjoyed her walk. The afternoon had become singularly lovely; rather cold, it is true, but pure and bracing, with a fresh wind sweeping across the hills, and wild stormy lights brightening the surface of the ocean. It was a pleasure to ramble over the bleak, lonely downs; and when at length they paused upon the summit of a lofty chalk cliff, and stood gazing down a sheer precipice of some eighty feet upon the glorious ocean, just then so darkly and intensely blue, Caroline owned candidly that she was well repaid for the exertion of leaving home. After lingering a while to watch the myriads of sea-birds, as with shrill screams they darted from their caverned homes, deep in the recesses of the glittering

peaks, to skim over the crested waves, white as the silvery foam, amid which they were soon lost to sight, the brother and sister crossed a narrow neck of land, and then descending by a circuitous footpath to the shore, soon found themselves within the enchanted realm of Alum Bay.

The scenery of this locality is among the most peculiar in the Isle of Wight. Caroline and Gerald were seated in a sandy cove, bounded by a semicircular range of cliffs of every imaginable hue: deep crimson and pale rosy-pink; blue, brown, and gray; orange and purple; green, white, and gold; the whole blazing beneath the burning glow of an autumnal sunset,—such was the foreground of the picture; while in the distance rose the misty forms of a still more magnificent and extended range, which, partially illumined by the reflected glory of the “Rainbow” chain, gleamed with a soft pearly lustre as peculiar as it was exquisite.

“They would make some use of these things in America, Carrie,” observed Gerald, as he diligently employed himself in collecting a handful of small, detached lumps of sand; and then slowly crumbling them one by one, suffered the brilliant particles to fall in gay con-

fusion upon the surface of a pocket-handkerchief, which he had spread upon his knees in readiness to receive them.

“And so do we make use of them in England,” rejoined Caroline; “for these, in common with the other wondrous works of God, serve both to gladden our eyes and to rejoice our hearts: then who shall venture to affirm that they exist in vain?”

“This brown would do nicely for the shading of a house; and with that green, one might easily imitate the foliage of trees; and this soft gray—yes, that shall be for the walls of some old ruined castle,” proceeded Gerald in a musing tone, as without paying attention to his sister’s words, he tranquilly pursued his occupation.

“My dear sailor, have you taken leave of your senses?” demanded Caroline, in an accent of amusement.

“Have I not often heard you say that you would like to devise some pleasant and profitable occupation for the children?” inquired Gerald, without condescending to reply.

“For Edward and Ida, do you mean?” asked Caroline. “I think while they are still so young, mamma would prefer not to increase their tasks; and as regards their recreations, I

have never seen either of them at a loss for amusement during playtime."

"No, not for Ida and Edward, you may be sure," said Gerald; "four hours of study every day are quite enough for them at present, to say nothing of poor Ida's needlework. No, no, I was speaking of the VILLAGE children; they have leisure sufficient and to spare."

"Oh! that has long been one of my chief difficulties," exclaimed Caroline, in a manner from which all trace of lightness had completely vanished. "I know it must be bad for them to be so constantly idle out of school-hours, when they might be earning something for their parents, many of whom are so very poor that even the smallest increase of their means would be a great assistance; but it seems impossible to contrive any employment that will exactly suit. If you can advise or help me in this matter, Gerald, it will be a greater satisfaction than I can at all express."

"Set them to work at making sand drawings," replied Gerald, with composure.

"I suppose I must not laugh," said Caroline, "since most of your schemes prove to be good for something in the end; but I wish you would explain yourself more clearly."

"Why you see, Carrie," began Gerald more

seriously, "it will be an affair of time, and you must prepare your mind for a certain amount of failure and disappointment at the outset."

"Yes, that of course," replied Caroline, bending forward eagerly; "but pray go on, for I am all impatience."

"You are a good artist, Carrie," he continued; "and I have often heard mother say, that you excel in fancy-work of every sort; I know you have a large, well-filled portfolio at home; give me one of the sketches about which you do not care, and I will try to color it in sand."

"But how do you expect to make the sand adhere?" inquired Caroline, whose curiosity and interest were effectually aroused.

"By means of a very thin solution of gum-arabic; but, of course, this is to be only a rough experiment. The drawings will require to be specially made in reference to this purpose; and you will need long and patient practice to attain any thing approaching to perfection."

"Supposing we were to begin with Steephill Castle," suggested Caroline; "that, I imagine, we shall not find very difficult."

"Steephill Castle let it be," said Gerald;

“and here are abundant materials for this evening’s work. But come, sister, let us walk towards home, for it is growing late, and I do not wish mother to say that I have made you ill.”

“You have not yet told me how this grand project is to benefit the children,” remarked Caroline, as she rose and suffered her young brother to draw her arm within his own.

“Why you may employ them for a while in the collection of your materials; and that will be no light business, I assure you, for you should only use the cleanest and smoothest specimens, very unlike these pieces which I have just picked up at random; and you will need every possible variety of the softer tints as well. I should not wonder if there were as many as twenty different shades among these cliffs, and, for aught I can tell, a hundred more. It will be a nice amusement for the children to search for them among the rocks and on the beach; they will make up little parties, and enjoy it above all things—provided only that they have some definite aim in view. You might afterwards keep them busy in cleansing and preparing the sand, and in arranging every distinct color separately in little boxes; I will engage to make you fifty

out of pasteboard, before I am obliged to go away from home."

"But winter is coming on," objected Caroline; "the days are so short and cold already that one has little inclination to venture out."

"That is an obstacle, I admit," said Gerald thoughtfully. "Still there are frequently mild terms even in mid-winter," he added, in a brighter tone; "only do not be discouraged, and all will come right in the end. There is one way besides in which it will do immediate good: you can reward the children for their labor; that, you perceive, is only just and right, for they will have earned it honestly."

"Yes, they will be fairly entitled to a recompense," observed Caroline; "and under these circumstances there will be no fear of taking from their self-respect—a point about which I try always to be most particular."

"Well, then," continued Gerald, "if you can advance ten shillings, I will do the same; and that will make five dollars, or a pound, as one should say in England," he added, laughing at his own forgetfulness.

"No, indeed, dear Gerald! I cannot take your money," exclaimed Caroline, warmly; "you can have very little now, for I fear that you have expended nearly the whole of your

allowance upon those beautiful presents which you brought us on your last voyage."

"But this is my own private scheme—a pet project over which I have been dreaming so long. I shall consider it unkind if you do not let me bear my share of the expenses, more especially since I can do little in the way of work; besides, what is the use of having money unless it enables one to give pleasure? In this case it will, undoubtedly; for you know, Carrie, that even a single pound divided among so many, will go far towards providing trifling comforts that will be most acceptable at Christmas-time."

"Mamma always supplies the Christmas dinner," observed Caroline; "but, as I said before, the poverty of the cottagers about here is so great, that they would hail with gratitude the smallest addition to their scanty income. I am sure, too, the children will be glad to feel that they are able to assist their parents; but they cannot be always busied in collecting sand, so what do you intend shall be the next step?"

"Let them learn to color your sketches," replied Gerald; "it is a mere mechanical operation," he continued, in answer to his sister's look of consternation. "You will need

only practice to become quite an adept in the art; and I should advise you, as soon as may be, to prepare some drawings in a much neater form—on tinted card-board, for example: select any one object, such as a church, or castle, or a pretty cottage, and imitate the natural coloring with as great a degree of accuracy as possible; but do not attempt landscapes yet a while, for they are far more complicated, and it will be better to go on step by step, as in that way one is much more likely to improve.”

“And the children had best commence by copying my rough sketches, I suppose,” said Caroline.

“Precisely so,” rejoined her brother; “and you might arrange to meet them in the school-house on any days that you judge most convenient. You should lay the materials before them; explain the process in its minutest details, and, at first, provide them with sand drawings of your own, which they shall be required to imitate exactly. Some of the pupils will master the difficulty soon enough, while others will demand time and patience: but it seems odd for *me* to be preaching that virtue to you,” he added, with a smile.

“And,” inquired Caroline, “what use do

you intend to make of these productions after they shall be completed?"

"Your chief embarrassment will be in furnishing a sufficient number," returned Gerald. "We must both work very hard this month, so as to finish a few specimens; although they will, of course, be far inferior to your future efforts: still, the *novelty* will be sure to please, and I know that Mr. Green, the bookseller, will readily engage to take them off your hands upon condition of receiving half the profits."

"The subjects of the pictures should all be connected with the Isle of Wight?" said Caroline, in an inquiring tone.

"Yes; that will be the wisest plan decidedly; it will be certain to attract many tourists, who will like to procure them as a souvenir of their travels. Perhaps, too, it may be as well to indicate the precise locality; and Alum Bay Sands might be inserted in a pretty scroll, or any other fanciful design, for I would have you, by and by, take great pains to embellish your productions. An illuminated border, for instance, would set off the more sombre hues of the drawing to great advantage."

"Pray, how shall I find time for that?" demanded Caroline. "My dear Gerald, this is an extremely visionary scheme. Why, it would

absorb all the leisure I can command in a whole fortnight to execute one such border as you propose."

"I do not mean that all the burden of this undertaking shall fall upon your shoulders, Carrie. Many of your young lady friends will be delighted to assist you. There are Julia Ashurst, and Clara Percival, and Miss Morel; it will be a nice occupation for their winter evenings, as they all paint beautifully, and it might lead them by degrees to take a greater interest in the children. We will go to Laurleton to-morrow, should nothing happen to prevent, and have a talk with Julia Ashurst."

"Here we are, at home!" exclaimed Caroline, in an accent of vexation, "and there are still so many questions that I long to ask you."

"So you are sorry to return to the warm fireside?" rejoined her brother, with a smile; "but never mind, Carrie, for I dare say we shall have a fine chance of building our castles between this and bedtime."

Seldom was there seen a more cheerful group than that assembled around the social board at Whitethorn Lodge. Gerald, invariably the life of the party, was this evening more than usually gay and full of spirits. A succession of merry games occupied the two succeeding

hours, and when the children were dismissed at eight o'clock, Caroline and her brother drew the small, round table, with its softly shaded lamp, close to the sofa upon which Mrs. Herbert was reclining, and while employed in overlooking the contents of a huge portfolio, unfolded their new project to their mother's sympathizing ear.

Mrs. Herbert entered with the warmest interest into all their plans. There were many impediments in the way she said, but she had no doubt, that by dint of perseverance, they might be fairly overcome; it would be a great resource also to Ida, who would, probably, ere long be able to take an active part in the proceedings, as she had already evinced a wonderful facility for drawing. It would be an admirable thing, too, to have the village children brought more immediately under Caroline's own eye; for Mrs. Goodwin, the teacher, had remarked, only the last time she called, that there was no one in the parish who had the same influence over her pupils as Miss Herbert.

"Because I love them all so very dearly; that is the only reason I know of," answered Caroline. "But come, Gerald, I am curious to witness the success of your mysterious operations."

“You can hardly judge as yet,” observed Gerald, as he removed the screen which had concealed his work, and displayed to view a small but beautifully colored portion of a turret.

“How admirably well done!” cried Caroline, as she seized a paint-brush and a second drawing. “What can be wrong with this paper?” she exclaimed a moment afterwards; “the particles of sand will not adhere.”

“Try the effect of a drop or two of gum-arabic,” said Gerald, as he pointed to the vial which his sister had in her hurry overlooked.

“Oh! to be sure, I entirely forgot,” said Caroline, laughing; “see,” she continued, “it does nicely now, although my tree is not to be compared with your tower, Gerald.”

“Yes indeed, it is far better done,” replied Gerald in a decided tone; “and yet that green sand is so coarse as to be almost worthless, while your paper also is quite inferior to mine. But you really must buy some card-board immediately, Carrie, and then, whenever you can find leisure, reduce a number of these sketches to a smaller size.”

“But, my dear children,” observed Mrs. Herbert, “there is one point which you have not considered: what use can be made of those bright red and yellow tints, which are, in my

opinion, the most beautiful of all? You can only introduce the more sombre hues, such as green, and brown, and pale blue, and gray, into the style of work that you contemplate."

"I had not forgotten that, mamma," said Gerald; "of course we cannot paint our castles crimson, nor these English forests of a glowing purple; though you would not think the latter notion extravagant, could you but wander through the American autumnal woods: still, I have a plan for those as well; only, as it is not yet matured in my own mind, I had not intended naming it just now to you and Caroline. My idea was, simply to arrange the various specimens of sand in glass bottles of an ornamental kind; but *how*, I cannot yet exactly tell. I will think the matter over, and try experiments upon the voyage, and in the mean while, Carrie and the children are abundantly supplied with occupation."

"Yes, that is very certain," answered Caroline, "and I hope to prove to you, at your next home-coming, that we have all been wonderfully diligent."

"I give you fair warning that I shall expect a dozen pictures, exquisitely colored and enriched with splendid illuminations, to present to Mrs. Mortimer, in return for her beautiful

mosses," replied Gerald, mischievously, as having, with commendable neatness, restored all the articles they had been using to their proper places, he lighted a candle and bade his mother and sister good-night, declaring that the high wind on the cliffs had made him sleepy. Mrs. Herbert followed directly afterwards; and Caroline only waited to read a chapter from the New Testament, in order to banish, if possible, all thoughts of earth before she also retired to her peaceful slumbers.

It was a hard trial to this united family, when the beloved eldest son and brother was again called upon to leave them. This time it was hoped the separation would not much exceed a year, and Gerald had the satisfaction, before he said farewell to England, of feeling that his efforts had already been crowned with a more abundant success than he had ventured, in his most sanguine moments, to anticipate.

The children had entered with delight into his scheme, and were quite proud at the thought of being one day able to present their parents with a little sum of their own earning. The young ladies, upon whose skill he so largely counted, had cordially responded to his call, and also expressed their willingness to forward any plan which their friends at White-

thorn might approve ; while the labors of his darling sister had so wonderfully prospered, that she contemplated forming her class without delay, and there really seemed every probability that the occupation would, in due course of time, become as lucrative as it had already proved agreeable. Mr. Green had succeeded in disposing of six very small unornamented drawings, at the price of two shillings each. The children might reasonably be expected soon to do as well, and Gerald felt convinced that his sister's more ambitious attempts would meet with a proportionate reward.

It was on the morning of a spring-like day in February that Caroline Herbert entered the sunny school-room, where she had engaged to meet her drawing-class, for the first time. Twenty little boys and girls were assembled there in anxious expectation of her arrival, and as the exact method had been previously explained to them, no further instruction was at that moment requisite. Caroline, having seen each child comfortably established at a separate desk and provided with an easy copy, seated herself upon a high-backed chair, which occupied a raised platform in the centre of the room, and prepared to read aloud an entertaining story—having first pleasantly informed

the children that she should be quite ready to attend to any of them whenever they required her assistance.

The result of their hour's industry was satisfactory, upon the whole. Several of the pupils, it was evident, were by nature gifted with a correct eye, and a taste which only stood in need of cultivation. Others had displayed less facility in acquiring the art, but it was hoped that they would, by the aid of perseverance, become equally skilful in the end. One or two again had failed completely, but Caroline would not suffer even them to be discouraged. They had all been diligent, and done their best, she said; in the course of a few weeks, they would, she had no doubt, be quite surprised to note the progress they had made; and although some among them might surpass the rest, she sincerely trusted that this would cause no feeling of unkindness to exist on either side. *All* would be surely able to accomplish something; and where persons were working with one common object—namely, from a desire to improve the talents committed to their charge, and to promote the happiness and prosperity of those who were endeared to them by the ties of blood and kindred—there should be unity of action, combined with that

tender and loving sympathy which so effectually serves to cheer and lighten the hardest toils of life.

The children listened with attention and respect to the precepts of their beloved young teacher, and certain it is, that Caroline never had the least occasion to complain of dissensions or jealousies in the little circle over which she presided.

Time rolled away. It was already eighteen months since the commencement of the undertaking, and now the demand for sand drawings was so great, that the combined exertions of Caroline Herbert and several other ladies—together with the band of children, whose number had increased to thirty—were found quite inadequate to meet it. Nearly all the booksellers throughout the island were provided with specimens of the ingenious art, and the remuneration was so ample that the villagers of Whitethorn were enabled to surround themselves with many household comforts, to which they had before been strangers. Caroline labored unremittingly, and she was warmly seconded by Ida, who, notwithstanding her extreme youth, had proved an invaluable assistant. The twelve views, which Gerald had playfully demanded, were all complete, and

carefully packed in a small box, composed of the celebrated Mosaic ware from Tunbridge Wells—every thing was in a due state of preparation for the return of the young sailor, who was now almost hourly expected.

He came in the warm, bright days of early June. Joy once more reigned supreme in the sweet home of Whitethorn Lodge, and heartfelt were the greetings which the wanderer received from each one of the inhabitants of his native village. Directly after breakfast, on the morning that succeeded his arrival, Caroline related to her brother all those minute details connected with his favorite scheme, which it had not been possible to communicate by letter, and at the same time presented him with the choice collection intended for her American friend, every picture of which surpassed—in truth of coloring and delicacy of execution—any thing she had before achieved.

Gerald was equally astonished and delighted, but he would not for an instant take the slightest credit to himself. It was no hard matter to form plans, he said; the real difficulty was to meet with persons who were endowed with sufficient energy and resolution to carry them into effect. Caroline's success was almost

unexampled, but he also had endeavored not to be quite idle; and so saying, Gerald unrolled a parcel that he had been holding in his hand, and held up a pair of tiny bottles of cut glass, filled with a variety of the most brilliant sands, arranged in fanciful and graceful arabesques.

“The result of some hard work, Carrie,” he observed, in reply to his sister’s exclamation of pleasure and surprise. “They are the most troublesome affairs imaginable, and at one time I was vastly inclined to give the matter up; however I thought better of it, as you perceive. These vases are designed for little Ida; will you place them, for me, on her dressing-table?”

“Yes; that I will,” said Caroline as she lifted the pretty ornaments from the mantelpiece, and prepared to leave the room.

“Stay; here is a present for you, Carrie dear,” continued Gerald, as he pointed to a larger package that had lain unnoticed on the sofa.

Caroline eagerly removed the folds of silver paper in which it was enveloped, and the sight which then met her eyes rendered her, for several seconds, speechless with admiration and delight.

Within a framework of the more gorgeous coloring, such as had been contained in Ida's vases, were set two small and exquisitely finished pictures: the one representing the old gray parish church; the other, that beloved home to which the heart of the young exile had so often and so fondly turned, in distant lands.

"O Gerald!" exclaimed Caroline, as soon as her excitement could find vent in words, "I no longer marvel that you were willing to allow us all the credit of the sand drawings, since your own performances have so effectually eclipsed their merit; but pray explain to me the means by which you have done such wonders."

"That is a profound secret for the present," replied Gerald, with an air of mystery. "You have all as much upon your hands as you can well accomplish, without attempting any thing beyond; for I cannot tell you, Carrie, how much I admire *your* branch of industry, which is far better suited to a lady's hand than mine; but now do you and Ida come with me to the study, for there is something there that I should like to show you."

Both children were summoned from the nursery, and Mrs. Herbert entering at that

moment, they all proceeded together to the library, where upon the table were ranged two dozen volumes, nicely bound; they were all numbered, and upon the back of each was inscribed, in small gilt letters—"National School Library: Whitethorn, Isle of Wight."

"Dear Gerald!" began Caroline, "how kind you are; nothing that you could possibly have brought would have afforded me the same amount of pleasure."

"I felt certain of it, dearest sister; I had so often heard you sigh for a juvenile library, belonging to the parish, that I at once resolved upon applying the proceeds derived from the sale of a number of my sand bottles to this purpose, instead of purchasing for you a set of splendid engravings, for which I had a special fancy. These are yours and Ida's," he continued, looking with affection on the sweet countenance of his youngest sister, which was at that moment flushed and sparkling with animated interest, as she bent over a page, so much absorbed as to be almost unconscious of what was taking place around her.

"And mine too, Gerald," expostulated Master Edward, in an injured tone, as he threw aside a volume, with an air of disapprobation,

upon discovering that it contained no other picture than a frontispiece.

“Yes, yours too, Eddie, by all means,” returned Gerald, stooping to caress the child; “but you shall come with me to my own room presently, and we shall see if there is not something prettier in the trunk.”

“Well, then, I will wait up-stairs till you are ready, only please make haste,” cried Edward, as he darted joyfully from the room.

“What an admirable collection!” observed Mrs. Herbert; “my dear boy, how can you have contrived to choose so well?”

“These are the very works that of all others I should have selected,” continued Caroline, who had been attentively examining the titles.

Gerald smiled. “You think that a singular coincidence, no doubt, and are a little disposed to regard me as a magician, Carrie; so, for the sake of my reputation, I must let you into the secret. Upon the very day before leaving home, as I was searching in a closet, where I had stowed away some lumps of sand, I chanced to remark a slip of paper in your handwriting, which contained a list of children’s books that you were anxious to procure, and so I just took the liberty of copying it out.”

“I recollect that catalogue distinctly,” rejoined Caroline, “for I had dropped it in that cupboard by mistake, and had afterwards no small trouble in discovering its whereabouts. It still lies in my writing-desk, but I have scarcely had time even to think of it since then.”

“I took care to ascertain by letter that you had not procured the volumes,” replied Gerald; “and just before we sailed for home, I wrote to Mrs. Clarke, at London, inclosing the list, and requesting that she would have the parcel ready upon my arrival, so that I might call for it at her house as I passed through town.”

“I must say she has executed your commission faithfully,” remarked Mrs. Herbert.

“Yes, she has been most kind,” said Gerald; “but now I must run away, for it will not do to tax poor little Eddie’s patience any longer.”

The calm sunset glory of that evening found Caroline and Gerald once more amid the gorgeous scenery of the “Rainbow Cliffs.” They were both very silent and disposed to meditation, for their hearts were overflowing with gratitude and joy as they recalled their former conversation on this spot, and the unlooked-

for triumph with which God had blessed their simple but most earnest-minded endeavors to do good. They stood alone upon the margin of the slumbering sea, which lay in glassy stillness, reflecting the gold and purple clouds in its mysterious depths.

“Something has been accomplished since we were here last, Carrie,” observed Gerald, his voice breaking in after a long pause upon the profound hush of nature; “but, alas! how very much remains yet to be done.”

“Then let that thought stimulate us to renewed exertion, dearest brother,” rejoined Caroline, “for soon approach the shadows of that night wherein none may labor more.”

Gerald did not answer, and the youthful pair stood gazing forth with awe upon the glorious scene. They lingered until the last dying flush of day had faded from the radiant heavens, and the gentle solemnity of an English twilight spread its veil over the shadowy earth.

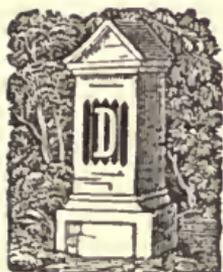
“Yon mantling cloud has hid from sight
The last faint pulse of quivering light,”

said Gerald, speaking in the words of a favorite poet.

“Yes,” resumed Caroline, continuing the train of thought expressed in the concluding stanzas of the same sweet strain, “and thus may our spirits’ light at length be merged in the full brightness of eternal love.”

A MOORLAND RAMBLE.

“The lark has her gay song begun ;
She leaves her grassy nest,
And soars till the UNRISEN SUN
Gleams on her speckled breast.
Now let me leave my restless bed,
And o’er the spangled uplands tread ;
* * * * *
Till on the mountain’s summit gray,
I sit me down, and mark the glorious dawn of day.”
HENRY KIRKE WHITE.



URING the greater part of my residence at B——, I was in the habit of indulging in long rambles among the lower ranges of the grand, solitary downs, and along the picturesque and rock-bound coast ; visiting every spot which natural beauty, or the spell of association with the far past rendered interesting, until at length each beetling cliff, and lowly farm-house, and ancient parish church became almost as well-known to me as to the native inhabitants of the district.

In all my wanderings, however, I had not once ventured upon an EARLY walk. The delicious purity and freshness of the dewy dawn were joys of whose existence I had no personal experience. I had been an invalid from childhood; and although equal at times to a considerable amount of exertion and fatigue, I was yet subject to repeated and severe attacks of illness, which rendered a certain degree of attention to my health quite indispensable.

It happened one morning towards the end of May, that I awoke at daybreak from a refreshing sleep, feeling so well and strong, and so free from the oppressive headache to which I was usually liable at that hour, that I was seized with a sudden and irresistible desire to watch the glories of the rising sun from the highest peak of the Dunnose, or Dark-Head Cliffs. I should have ample time, for the breakfast hour was late, owing to the pressing occupations of several members of the family, and also from kindly consideration for the comfort of their invalid guest; so, quickly springing out of bed, I wrote a hurried note explaining the reason of my unwonted absence at that hour, lest any of my friends should seek me in my chamber, and be alarmed at

my mysterious disappearance. I folded it and placed it on the dressing-table; and then slipping a couple of biscuits into my pocket, and taking a small Church Service in my hand, I softly unclosed the door, and gliding noiselessly down the wide staircase and across the hall, I soon emerged upon the sloping velvet lawn, and stood there gazing on the faint rosy flush which just began to tinge the eastern sky, and inhaling with delight the sweet perfume of the violets and lilies of the valley, which bloomed in rich profusion beneath the shelter of the tall range of wooded cliffs that formed the boundary of my friend's beautiful pleasure-ground. The view I thence commanded of the distant ocean was peculiarly magnificent; and I resolved, without further loss of time, to proceed to the enjoyment of my contemplated ramble along the summit of the overhanging crags.

Scarcely, however, had I reached the village, ere I began to fear that I should be disappointed of my promised pleasure. The tide just then chanced to be very low; therefore, of course, the aspect of the shore would be much less inviting; and I tried to determine in which direction I should bend my steps.

While still endeavoring to decide this per-

plexing question, I happened to raise my eyes towards the downs. They were looming grandly up into the amber sky through their silvery veil of mist, and I felt strongly tempted to explore their hitherto unseen recesses.

This noble chain rises to the height of full eight hundred feet; and although, to a person standing at its base, the ascent might appear gentle and easy in the extreme, yet I had been assured that it was in reality very steep, and at certain points even precipitous; nevertheless, I felt resolved to try, for there was something so strangely exhilarating in the fresh morning air that for the moment I hardly realized the possibility of exerting myself beyond my strength.

Having proceeded for a short distance along the high-road, I presently struck into a foot-path, which led across a grassy meadow to the very base of the hills.

Choosing a point which, to my inexperienced eye, seemed practicable, I vigorously began the ascent; but loss of breath, combined with an overpowering sense of giddiness, speedily compelled me to desist. Just as I had regained the level ground, an old country-woman passed that way. She looked surprised when I inquired whether there was no possibility of

reaching the summit of the hills; but replied, without a moment's hesitation, "Sure, yes, ma'am, well enough, if you go on to V——, and there take the road that leads up past the quarry; you will find it quite low, and easy-like, compared with this."

Thanking the good cottager for her information, I proceeded to act on her advice. The quarry of which she had spoken was not far distant; and upon reaching it, I acknowledged the wisdom of the counsel which had been afforded me. The ascent was less abrupt, and I saw it would be in my power to gain the summit of one of the lower peaks, whence I might attain, without much trouble, the connecting range, and pursue my walk at pleasure in the direction of St. Lawrence, or of B——. The path was safe, although rather slippery; so, clinging for support to the straggling gorse and fragments of rock which lay on either side, I at length realized the object of my wish, and stood upon the highest point, quite faint and breathless, but not a little gratified with the success of my undertaking.

Unfortunately I was just too late to catch the first glorious burst of sunshine on the mountain's brow, but the prospect upon which I gazed left small room for regret. Far, far, in

the valley at my feet, lay the pleasant little town of V——; its white dwellings, built upon a succession of terraces, rising upwards from the water's edge, and the tall spire of its beautiful church towering guardian-like above all. Beyond stretched the boundless ocean—its vast expanse unbroken save by one white sail, which glided dream-like on the far verge of the horizon; while the glad spring sunshine poured a flood of beauty over earth, and sea, and sky. I stood long contemplating this lovely scene, and listening to the thrilling gush of melody which burst almost simultaneously from the thousand dwellers of the moors. The aspect of these lofty downs was wholly unlike what I had pictured to myself: instead of the carpet of smooth emerald turf, which covered their steep sides, I beheld, to my surprise, a wild and most romantic moorland tract, apparently extending inland for many miles. It was a spot such as I had often read of, but never seen till then; and I straightway planned another expedition, when I should be able to explore this new-found region more at leisure.

Upon looking at my watch, I saw that full two hours yet remained at my disposal; and anxious to profit by them to the uttermost, I

turned inland, and commenced striking deep across the plain.

There was something strangely fascinating in the character of the scenery, to which the pure brightness of the morning lent a smile of gladness, despite its extreme loneliness and desolation. I have since then wandered often on those moors; in winter, when their brown expanse was draped with a light snowy mantle, as rare as it was short-lived in that genial clime; and on autumn days, when the whole undulating surface was dark with the rich purple bloom of the wild heather, the deep subdued coloring of which shed an air of soft, sad beauty over all the landscape.

But melancholy was unthought of in this merry month of May, when the long sweep of moorland was literally dazzling with the bright golden blossoms of the gorse, and the air seemed laden with its aromatic odor. I roamed on and on amid the flowery waste, until compelled by weariness to pause. A charming resting-place was close at hand: it was a tall rock, adorned with many-tinted lichens, near which sparkled a clear spring; and seating myself beneath its friendly shadow, I prepared to read the Morning Service of the Church. I felt peculiarly able at that moment to realize

the soothing and elevating power of our most beautiful Liturgy; and, in particular, I loved to think upon the countless multitudes throughout the world with whom I might ever join in spirit in these daily prayers, which, as it has been truly said, "form an indissoluble bond of union to those who, although separated by distance, are yet ONE in affection, and faith, and hope." A sense of calmness and repose stole over me, as having concluded with the prayer for Christ's Church Militant, I closed the book; and leaning back upon the mossed, gray rock, I fell into a deep and tranquil slumber.

Exhausted from fatigue and want of food, I slept quietly for several hours; and when I at length awoke, I found, to my dismay, that it was past noon. What anxiety must not my friends have suffered! In an instant I forgot my weakness; and springing from the rocky seat, I eagerly set out upon my homeward walk.

But now a new and unexpected difficulty presented itself. I was utterly at a loss which way to turn; I tried to remember from which side I had approached the rock, but my recollections were shadowy and indistinct. All around was one unbroken moorland waste, rich in unnumbered beauties, but with nothing

to afford the slightest indication of the course I should pursue; as to my ever-faithful guide, the ocean, of that I had long since lost sight.

When the first emotions of alarm, or, perhaps, I should more correctly say vexation, had subsided, I began to consider what had best be done. One thing, at all events, was certain: I must endeavor to recruit my strength. Most providentially the means for doing so were within my reach; and so, before proceeding further, I made a hasty, and I must own, enjoyable meal of my two hard biscuits, with the addition of a refreshing draught from the pure mountain-spring. When I had finished, I felt much revived, and more inclined than before to set out with spirit upon my travels.

I was by no means seriously uneasy; I believed the moors to be of comparatively small extent; and fancied that, by keeping steadily in any one direction, I should once more have the ocean as a way-mark. With a view of acting upon this assurance, I went resolutely onward; and, at the end of an hour's walk, I found myself approaching the verge of an extended line of cliffs, overlooking a rich and fertile country, while the blue ocean sparkled in the distance. I rejoiced sincerely at the

welcome sight; but my happiness was of short duration, for, far as eye could reach on either hand, the high, green hills rose almost perpendicularly from the valley, or stretched away in long, steep slopes as slippery as glass. It would be folly to dream of attempting the descent; and I went on and on, vainly seeking for some point which should present a less appalling aspect. At last I imagined this to be attained, and cautiously placed my foot upon the slope; but at the very outset I completely lost my balance, and should infallibly have been carried down the precipice but for the energy with which I grasped a projecting rock, which enabled me to regain, although not without difficulty, my former station.

But what now should I do? Was it not possible that for me, at least, the cliffs were quite unscalable except at that one point to which I had been directed in the morning; and if so, how was I to find my way there again? I had not the faintest notion of my whereabouts; the lovely scene on which I gazed was all unknown to me; it might, for aught I could tell to the contrary, be miles and miles from B——, by any other road than this upon which I had so rashly ventured; and at this thought, I for the first time fully

realized the perplexity in which I was involved. A flock of sheep tranquilly grazing on the mountain's side, apparently alarmed by the noise occasioned by some falling stone, bounded lightly down the precipitous cliff, and soon were out of sight, although the silvery music of the bells they bore could still be distinctly heard. How I sighed for the power with which they were gifted! but was not I, in reality, as secure from harm? Yes, of this blessed truth I felt assured; and I gazed with reverence and love into the deep-blue sky, and prayed fervently that I might be permitted to regain my home.

For now I could no longer conceal from myself the fact, that there was some reason for anxiety. The downs were wild, and not often visited; no one might chance to pass that way for days; and what if I should continue to roam vainly over them, unable to regain the quarry path? My friends possessed no clue by which to trace me through my wanderings, for in my hurried note I had merely stated my intention of walking towards Dunnose; and how could they, knowing as they did my state of health, imagine for an instant that I should have ventured upon so arduous an undertaking?

Perhaps the weakness and fatigue under which I labored may have caused me to exaggerate my danger: on a sudden, my morning's interview with the old cottager rushed across my memory, succeeded by a thrill of gratitude. I had seen her once before, and knew that she belonged to B——, and therefore, of course, was personally known to my friends. Doubtless, should inquiries be made among the villagers, she would not fail to relate the circumstances attendant upon our meeting, and thus the downs would be searched in every direction without loss of time.

Not a little cheered by this reflection, I speedily resolved to make a fresh experiment; I would once more turn inland, and courageously pursue my way in a straight line, in the hope of reaching the opposite extremity of the moors.

This I did accordingly; and, after walking for about two miles, I was rejoiced by observing a very narrow footpath, winding in an easterly direction. Unhesitatingly I followed in the course thus indicated, but great was my surprise when, at the end of half an hour, I came upon a broad track of cart-wheels, distinctly marked upon the turf. How any vehicle could possibly attain these heights, was a

mystery which I tried in vain to solve. One thing, at all events, was certain: there must be some manner of avoiding those formidable precipices, and with a feeling of relief I still went on.

I had not proceeded far before the sound of several voices met my ear. They were soft, clear, ringing tones, which awoke the echoes of the lonely moor; I listened intently to discover whence they came, and the next moment, upon rounding an abruptly-rising knoll, a pleasing picture was presented to my view.

Before me, in the centre of an open space of greensward, was placed the picturesque, old-fashioned cart, by means of which I had been guided to the spot. It was more than half filled with lumps of chalk, and at a little distance stood the patient donkey that had drawn it thither, seemingly well occupied with a bed of thistles. Towards the left the ground sank into a sort of hollow, whence the merry sounds which had at first attracted me, still issued. I went up gently, and looked over the verge; it was an extensive chalk-pit, not deep by any means, and really seeming as sheltered and inviting a nook as heart could wish—such, at least, was evidently the opinion of its present occupants.

The party consisted of a man of middle age and pleasing countenance, surrounded by a group of children, five in number, the eldest not exceeding thirteen years, the youngest between three and four. They were seated in a circle, apparently engaged in discussing the contents of a luncheon-basket, so that my presence was unobserved at first; but when I addressed the honest laborer, and civilly inquired the way to B——, he started to his feet, uttering an exclamation of surprise at the sight of a lady in that solitary spot.

“To B——, ma’am,” he replied, in answer to my question; “it is full two miles from here—at least by the nearest road which you could travel, for I think it would hardly do for you to try the path among the cliffs; it is difficult to find for those who do not know the country well, and a false step might easily carry one down a precipice.”

“Thank you; I am very willing to take the longer way,” I said, feeling most truly grateful to learn that I was within a dozen miles of B——; and I related to my new acquaintance the story of my misadventures.

“Rambling about, quite lost among the downs, since sunrise,” he exclaimed, rising as he spoke, and coming up to where I stood

“and I’ll engage now you feel quite tired-like, and ready to drop, ma’am,” he added, in a tone of kindness.

The children also scrambled from their retreat, and came clustering round us, eyeing the wearied stranger-lady with looks of curiosity and interest.

“Yes, I am indeed tired,” I replied, in answer to his observation; “but my chief trouble is about my friends, who must, I fear, have been seriously anxious on my account.”

“Might I ask at which house at B—— you are staying, ma’am?” he inquired.

A low murmur passed among the children as I gave the name.

“At ——,” rejoined their father quickly. “I was formerly the gardener there, and so I am well acquainted with the family. Several of my children, too, belonged in those days to the parish school; and you know, ma’am, what a kind interest the ladies take in the welfare of the little pupils.”

Before I had time to answer, the second boy, a fine active-looking child of twelve, respectfully requested leave to go at once by the shortest path to B——, and assure the ladies that their guest was safe, and would soon be with them.

“Yes, that will be best,” the father said; and then turning to me, he added, “if you will allow me, ma’am, to send my little girl to put you on the right track, I shall be much easier in my mind.”

I hastily interposed at this, observing that I could not bear to be the cause of so much inconvenience; but while I was yet speaking, the boy had set off at full speed across the heath; and the little maiden timidly, but eagerly assured me, that she should like, of all things, to go with me: “I often walk much farther,” she continued; “and we drove here in the cart this morning, so that I have had nothing to tire me to-day.”

“The cart,” I said, my attention being once more recalled to what had from the first so strongly excited my curiosity: “pray tell me how you can contrive to bring a cart up here among these hills?”

The explanation of a circumstance which had so much perplexed me proved extremely simple. At the distance of a few miles from the water the moors declined into a gentle slope, and gradually became almost level. “His home,” the man continued, “was in an inland hamlet, where he was in the employment of a wealthy farmer, who frequently de-

spatched his laborers to the moor in search of chalk, a substance much in use for the purpose of fertilizing the ground. This was," he assured me, "a great pleasure to the children, who were always permitted to accompany him whenever his expedition chanced to fall upon their holiday, as in the present instance."

I thanked the friendly peasant for this information; and then turning to his little daughter, I signified my readiness to go on at once, if she still felt inclined to bear me company. She smilingly assented to my proposal; but once more the laborer detained us, by saying in a respectful tone:

"I hope, ma'am, you will not think it a liberty if I offer you a piece of bread and cheese. You have something of a walk before you; and I know that after taking food, you would feel stronger, for, indeed, you look sadly pale and weak."

I gratefully accepted this kind offer; for, having eaten nothing all that day except my two hard biscuits, I stood much in need of some refreshment. Seating myself, therefore, in a grassy hollow, I was soon bountifully supplied with sweet, fresh, home-made bread, together with a slice of delicate white cheese,

and a small bunch of early radishes, the very best, I fancied, that were ever grown.

“They are Harry’s,” observed the peasant, in answer to my commendation; “he has been allowed to cultivate a border in the kitchen-garden, and he is proud enough of those radishes, I’ll engage.”

“He has reason to be so,” I replied; “but is Harry the boy who has so obligingly gone for me to B——?”

“Yes, ma’am, the very same; he is a good lad, is my Harry. One day last year I gave him the finest bush of gooseberries in the garden as a reward for industry; and would you believe that he scarcely tasted one himself, but kept the greater part to give to a sick neighbor, and the rest for his two younger sisters?”

I was much pleased with this narrative; for there are few traits of character more lovely to behold than unselfishness in early youth, and I had learned to know that it can never be attained without the aid of high religious principle. There was a certain tone pervading all the words and actions of the laborer’s family, which served to convince me that this was peculiarly with *them* a guiding influence.

After a few parting words I took my leave, and set out, accompanied by my little guide.

By the way I entered into conversation with the child, and her gentle and intelligent replies tended strongly to confirm my previous impressions. She appeared much attached to B——, her former home; and dwelt particularly upon the school, and the many proofs of affectionate interest, which the children were constantly accustomed to receive from the ladies of the parish, with most of whom I was intimately acquainted.

“Should you like to live again at B——?” I asked.

“I am quite happy where we are staying now,” she answered in a cheerful voice, “except that I can seldom see the ladies and my little playmates,” she added, while her bright face slightly clouded.

I was fortunately well qualified to give a full account of all her friends; for I often visited the parish school, and nearly all of the pupils were known to me, at least by name. The child listened with evident delight, and we were both surprised when we emerged upon the line of lofty cliffs, with the broad sea in view. Our walk thus far had seemed very short.

But I was weary, and obliged to rest; so we sat down upon a heathery knoll, overlooking

the magnificent expanse of waters. In the deep, unbroken stillness that prevailed, my ear was attracted by the low, faint murmur of a little streamlet, one of the innumerable springs which take their rise among these hills. I sat and watched it gliding from point to point of the precipitous rocks, and even winding downwards in its genial course to fertilize the bosom of the vale. The sight recalled to memory a sweet passage, descriptive of English pastoral scenery, which had often charmed me in America; and, half unconsciously, I repeated it aloud:

“Go up and watch the new-born rill
Just trickling from its mossy bed,
Streaking the heath-clad hill
With a bright emerald thread.”

“I know that hymn,” the child said quickly; and then coloring, she added, in confusion, “but I beg pardon, ma’am, for having been so rude as to interrupt you.”

“Never mind about that, my dear,” I answered; “but tell me where you learned that pretty poem. I suppose, though, it was at school.”

“Yes; and we used to learn a great many other hymns written by the same clergyman;

they were all beautiful, but I think sometimes that this one is almost my favorite."

"I am glad to see you like hymns," I replied; "but why has this in particular afforded you such pleasure?"

"I was always pleased with it," she answered, "especially with the first few verses, although it was some time before I understood them; but after we had learned the whole poem by heart, one of the ladies explained its meaning to us, and then I liked it more than ever."

"Suppose you were to repeat it to me now," I said; "and afterwards I should be glad to hear all that the lady told you."

With true respect and courtesy the girl did not stay to be entreated, but instantly acceding to my request, she recited in a sweet, clear voice the following stanzas:

"Go up and watch the new-born rill
Just trickling from its mossy bed,
Streaking the heath-clad hill
With a bright emerald thread.

"Canst thou her bold career foretell,
What rocks she shall o'erleap or rend,
How far in ocean's swell
Her freshening billows send?"

“Perchance that little brook shall flow
The bulwark of some mighty realm,
Bear navies to and fro
With monarchs at their helm.

“Or canst thou guess, how far away
Some sister nymph beside her urn
Reclining night and day,
Mid reeds and mountain fern,

“Nurses her store with thine to blend,
When many a moor and glen are past,
Then in the wide sea end
Their spotless lives at last.

“Even so the course of prayer who knows?
It springs in silence where it will,
Springs out of sight, and flows
At first a lonely rill.

“But streams shall meet it by and by
From thousand sympathetic hearts,
Together swelling high
Their chant of many parts.”

There was a moment's silence when she had concluded ; and then, fancying that I awaited her promised explanation, my little friend began, with simple reverence :

“Miss Edith told us that we should think of this in church, and try always to remember

when our beautiful prayers are offered up, that there are hundreds and thousands of our fellow-Christians throughout Europe whose voices are then also raised in the very same petitions. She spoke, too, of the Church in America, and in India, and Africa, and in all parts of the known world; and then asked us whether it was not pleasant to feel that, in the course of a few short hours, the same high sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving would ascend to God's eternal throne from all the nations of the earth."

"And," I inquired, "did you not agree with Miss Edith, that this is a very beautiful and consoling thought?"

"Yes, I did, indeed," the child said earnestly. "You know," she continued, simply, "it makes so many more for one to love."

"Yes," I replied; "when one is tempted to feel sad and lonely, it is a blessing to think of the vast assembly of Christ's holy Church to which we belong. You are too young to realize this fully now; but year by year, should your life be spared, you will enter into the truth of this doctrine more and more. It is this," I added, "which makes me so happy here in England away from many of my dearest friends; although here, too, there are some

whom I most fondly love. I am a member of the Church in America."

The little girl looked up with astonishment into my face, and then rapidly poured forth a flood of questions relating to the far Western land, from whose bright shores I came. It was delightful to gratify so intelligent an auditor; and we talked long of the new world, and its countless marvels; of its glorious mountains, waterfalls, and lakes; its waving fields of golden maize; the dazzling splendor of its autumnal forests; and the wondrous beauty of the deep-blue sky, which canopies the whole.

All was full of an absorbing interest to my young English listener; and not least did she love to hear of the little school in which I had so often labored, and of the dear children, who, although absent bodily, were ever present in my heart; more especially, when I could realize that we were, indeed, brought near in the sacred services of the Universal Church. I told her of their Christmas-tide festivities; how they participated with English children, both in the sad solemnities of Lent, and in the joy of Easter; and of the pleasant holiday treat which was always provided for them on the anniversary of the "Holy Innocents," that season which is so peculiarly calculated to

awaken warm emotions of love and self-devotion in the young. These, and a variety of other themes, furnished abundant food for conversation; and I cannot tell how long we might have lingered, had I not at length resolutely arisen from my seat, feeling quite rested and refreshed, and conscious that duty both towards my friends at B——, and towards the father of my little guide, called on me to proceed without delay. As we pursued our walk, I inquired of my companion whether she and her brother Harry could read writing easily; and on being informed that they could, I told her that I had employed some leisure hours in copying into a blank-book several of those sweet children's tales, which are almost always to be found in our American Church journals; and that if she could obtain leave to call on me during the week at B——, I should have great pleasure in giving her the manuscript as a token of remembrance. Never was offer more gratefully accepted; and the little girl promised to be with me on the following Saturday, should all be well.

We had now turned a projecting point, and nearly reached the termination of our wanderings. B——, in its radiant valley, lay beneath us; the calm, pure evening sunlight, falling

gloriously upon its peaceful homes, embosomed in rich masses of softly-shaded foliage, casting into bold relief its many beacon crags; brightening even the hoary walls of its old church, beside the sounding sea, whose dark, smooth surface was gemmed with isles of gold and silvery light, and partially illumining a pile of black and rugged rocks, surmounted by an antique wooden cross.

Welcome, thrice welcome, was the sight of my fair English home! And truly did I rejoice in being thus permitted to regain its tranquil shelter. The child led me from the highest chain of downs to one still lofty, but of slighter elevation. Here I affectionately said good-night; and after watching for a moment her rapid progress up the height, and admiring the exquisite effect of one rounded peak, whose summit was enveloped in a sheet of rosy mist, I pursued my way along a narrow sheep-path, still winding gradually downward, until at length I found myself beside a private gate, which led from the top of the wooded range, where I stood, into the garden of my friends. The whole family was awaiting me upon the lawn; and ere long I had changed my dress—rather soiled and travel-stained, I own—and was seated in the large,

airy dining-room, recounting my adventures, and enjoying the luxury of a most refreshing cup of tea, beneath the genial influence of which all traces of weariness were soon dispelled, and only pleasant ideas remained associated with the recollection of my Moorland Ramble.

A PARISH FESTIVAL.

“ Silent as sunbeams, and as sunbeams bright,
Thy years have glided—and we greet thee now,
In the soft glory of thy spirit’s light,
The bridal wreath upon thy vestal brow.”



It was the 25th of January, 1858, the marriage-day of the Princess Royal. Great was the excitement throughout all England, as the nuptial hour drew near; heartfelt and fervent the prayers breathed by a loyal and devoted people, in behalf of the young and tender maiden, who, in the first blush of womanhood, was called upon to quit the peaceful seclusion of her Island home, the fostering care of loving parents, and the long-tried affection of that noble nation of which she was the pride and flower, to venture alone into the midst of strangers—a dweller in a foreign land.

There was much of melancholy in the

thought; but England was called on to rejoice, and countless were the festivities to which the event gave rise, from the stately revels held in the mansions of the great, to the humble treat provided for the poor and lowly—for the inmates of the almshouse, nay, for the very beggars in the streets. All were alike actuated by one common impulse; and as the joyous strains of mirth swelled loud and high, there were few, perchance, who paused to muse upon the grief which even then must dwell within the hearts of those who, although gifted with all that rank and wealth had to bestow, were yet sorrowing upon the eve of a painful separation.

We were not without some festivities at H——: I say *we*, for although an American by birth and education, I had now been living for upwards of five years in England, in company with my father, whose gradually declining health necessitated his sojourn in some temperate clime. It was this cause which first brought us to the Isle of Wight, and which also induced us to prolong our stay. So, as there appeared no likelihood of our immediate return to my own loved native land, I had learned to identify myself completely for the time being with the inhabitants of the neigh-

borhood in which I had so long and happily resided.

The history of my own life is in nowise calculated to interest my readers; so I need only inform them that I am an elderly maiden lady, and that at the period of which I write we occupied a pretty cottage, all covered over with trailing wreaths of passion-flowers, and a profusion of white and crimson roses, which stood beside a rippling brooklet on the confines of H—— and the adjoining inland parish. Thus much for myself. I will now return to the more important theme that is to form the subject of my tale.

Very early—by six o’clock on Monday morning—I awoke to the consciousness that the long-anticipated day had come at last. It did not find me installed within my simple chamber at Rose Cottage, but occupying a large and pleasant bedroom at the Rectory of H——, where I had been on a fortnight’s visit during the temporary absence of my father. I rose, and drawing aside the curtains looked anxiously forth, to judge if the weather were likely to prove favorable to our wishes. It was very cold and gray, but at all events there appeared no prospect of a storm, and with this assurance I was forced to be content, and to return for

an hour to bed, less for the sake of repose than for the opportunity which would be thus afforded me of pondering at leisure the various duties that I should be required to fulfil.

It must be owned that my reflections were not entirely agreeable, for I had most unwisely allowed myself to undertake a far larger share of work than I felt at all capable of performing to my satisfaction. This is an error into which many persons are liable to fall, but it is one which all should conscientiously endeavor to avoid; for although it is certainly incumbent on us not to permit a moment of our time to pass by unimproved, yet we have no right deliberately to burden ourselves with an amount of labor which we are not equal to the task of discharging in a proper manner.

But I was bound by a voluntary promise to accomplish every thing which I had seen fit to mark out for myself, while snugly established in an arm-chair by the fireside on the preceding Saturday, with no more fatiguing demand upon my powers than that of initiating my little favorite, Lilly Merton, into the mysteries of knitting. My friends, who were already overwhelmed with business, had gratefully availed themselves of my proffered services—to disappoint them was impossible—so, with a firm re-

liance on the truth of the old proverb, "Where there is a will, there is a way," I set about considering the conflicting claims on my attention, and the means by which they could be most effectually reconciled.

First of all, there was the vase of flowers to ornament the school-room chimney-piece. I believe I have not yet told you, that the principal part of our celebration was to consist of a grand dinner provided in the school-house for more than a hundred of the parish children. It is rather strange I should have forgotten to mention it till now, since I had heard little during the past week beyond sundry discussions relating to roast beef and boiled beef, plum-puddings and currant-buns, until I was at length inclined to fancy that the quiet vicarage had of a sudden become transformed into a huge refectory, founded for the express purpose of supplying these national dainties to the United Kingdoms.

But I am wandering widely from my subject. The gathering and arranging of the flowers was the smallest part of my allotted duty, for I had also engaged to make up the tea, designed for an after-feast to the old women of the parish, into little parcels, and to visit a sick child at some distance, to whom kind Mrs.

Merton had promised a portion of the delicacies which she would be unable to enjoy in common with her young companions. Thus far my tasks were simple, and would have occasioned no perplexity, had it not been for a circumstance which must necessarily lead me in a totally opposite direction.

On the evening of Saturday, while assembled in the study, as was our wont at that hour, to beguile the lingering twilight with the charms of family and social intercourse, we were startled by a sudden ringing of the hall bell, followed by the entrance of an unexpected, but most welcome guest.

He was a young gentleman from Baltimore, the son of a clergyman of that city, with whom Mr. Merton had formed an intimate acquaintance during a short visit which he had made several years previously to America. Young Mr. Henry Weston declared himself unable to remain longer than three days at H——, as he was desirous of making a hurried tour through England before proceeding to the continent, where he purposed taking up his abode for the winter, either at Rome or Florence, with a view of prosecuting his studies as a painter, and also of becoming familiar with the innumerable gems of art which crowd the pal-

aces and galleries of classic Italy. Of course, my friends were particularly anxious to introduce our visitor to the chief scenes of attraction in their native isle. Tuesday was immediately set apart for an excursion to the Undercliff; but as the stranger's stay was very limited, it was important not to lose the intervening time, and accordingly, since neither Mr. Merton nor his wife could conveniently be absent from home upon the morning of the fête, I volunteered to guide my young compatriot to Carisbrooke—its gray old church dating from the Norman conquest, and its tall castled rock, which overhangs the village it in other days defended. Under ordinary circumstances this would have been only a delight, for I dearly loved to wander amid the lovely scenery by which this pleasant hamlet is surrounded; or, stationed on the ramparts of the castle, to look down upon the peaceful churchyard, while all rude sounds were hushed to silence, and the sweet, mellowed music of the chimes alone broke in upon my meditations: alas! upon this occasion there would be no leisure for the indulgence of that contemplative mood which so enhances the charm of every scene of beauty, but more especially of a ruin; in fact, there would be little time for

enjoyment in any form, for we were all to meet at the school-house by two, therefore it is not surprising that I should have felt somewhat disturbed, on pausing to review the varied occupations it would be needful to compress into a few short hours.

When the clock struck seven I began to dress, for it was the custom at the Rectory to have prayers at eight, and breakfast immediately after. Upon the conclusion of my toilette, I had still twenty minutes at command; so wrapping myself in a thick woollen shawl, I at once proceeded to the garden. The season this year had been unusually mild—the turf, instead of wearing the brown hue of winter, was still arrayed in its bright summer robe of emerald green; and although the trees were leafless, and even the dahlias and chrysanthemums had disappeared, a few pale autumn blossoms lingered on the sunny flower lawn, and beneath the sheltering hedge of “varnished holly.”

I had soon collected a most lovely bouquet, consisting of the snowy laurestinus, just then in all its prime, the periwinkle and the Christmas rose, intermingled with a few sprigs of gorse, whose half-folded petals, of the palest yellow, differed so widely from its former gold-

en glory: these, together with a variety of greens, were disposed in a china vase, and then I entered the dining-room with a lighter heart, from the consciousness that something, however slight, had been effected.

During breakfast we engaged in a general discussion of our plans for the coming day. There was to be luncheon at quarter past one—so Mrs. Merton told us—and she hoped that we would all be punctual, as we must allow ourselves sufficient leisure for superintending operations at the school-house before the children should arrive. We all promised obedience to her injunction, and hastily finishing my cup of coffee, I made an apology for leaving the table before the remainder of the party had finished their repast. My first care was to divide the tea, designed for the old ladies, into separate parcels, each one containing an ample allowance for five persons. As there were just forty expected to be present, precisely eight portions were required, and this done I deposited the little packages in a basket, together with a corresponding amount of nice loaf-sugar; and having received from Mrs. Merton an assurance that the carriage should be in readiness before eleven, I set out upon my visit to poor Susie Elwood's cottage.

This humble home—alike the abode of poverty and Christian worth—was situated in one of the most remote and secluded districts of the parish. It stood close beside a by-road, which was comparatively seldom travelled; and the few scattered houses that composed the tiny settlement were all of the same unpretending character as the one which Dame Elwood occupied. There was a little strip of garden-ground attached to each, which—being for the most part gay with the commoner sorts of English flowers in summer, and adorned even in winter with the crimson monthly-rose, and the scarlet berries of the holly—imparted at all seasons a “cheery” aspect to the place. The surroundings were of a truly rural character, with no touch of the sublime—nothing to be seen beyond a softly swelling pasture-land, varied by many a field of waving grain, with here and there a substantial looking farm-house, half hid by its goodly barns and hay-stacks, and a far-off glimpse of the blue, glittering sea.

Great as was the compassion I felt for Susie Elwood, I could never fail to compare these tranquil scenes, on which she gazed daily from her narrow casement, with the foul and dingy alleys of the crowded town, wherein so many languish, victims of a malady as fatal as was

hers, but with none of the alleviations by which her lingering illness had been solaced.

Upon knocking lightly at the cottage door, a faint voice called to me to enter. I recognized the tone as Susie's; and as there was no one in the kitchen except my old acquaintance, pussy, who was basking most luxuriously upon the hearth, I at once mounted the short flight of steps leading to the chamber overhead. The sweet child was lying, as I invariably found her, on the lowly couch to which she had for a weary lapse of time been constantly confined; while her delicate features, rendered thin and sharp by illness, wore an air of natural sorrow for the infirmity which was her appointed lot, combined with the more exalted sentiment of resignation to God's unerring will.

I have never beheld a countenance more exquisitely lovely; but it was bright with that mysterious beauty which, with the young and innocent, is frequently the harbinger of death; "the signet-ring of heaven," as one of our own poets has feelingly expressed it. She seemed extremely fragile. Her soft, dark eyes sparkling with such unnatural lustre; the clear whiteness of her cheek, just tinged with pink; above all, that quick and labored breathing, so unspeakably painful to the beholder, all

plainly showed that she was close upon the borders of the land of promise.

Susie's mother, who was also her indefatigable nurse, chanced to be absent at that moment upon some necessary errand; so I seated myself beside the bed, and entered into conversation with its gentle occupant.

"This is, you know, the Princess Royal's marriage-day," I observed, after having asked the usual questions relating to the invalid's own health.

"Yes; and it is my birth-day, too," the child answered with a smile. "I have just completed my thirteenth year."

"It is very sad to see you lying here so weak and suffering," I continued; "do you not feel it to be a heavy trial?"

"Yes, very heavy often," she replied; "but now—" the sentence remained uncompleted, for it was very rarely that she ventured to converse upon her private feelings; but I did not need to be informed of the thoughts which were passing in her heart, and as I reverently bent to kiss the wan and fevered brow, and held one small, transparent hand within my own, while the other tightly clasped a well-worn Bible, I was conscious of a thrilling sense of awe, as for the first time I fully compre-

hended how soon the glories of the unseen world would be revealed to that little child's enraptured sight.

I could have lingered for hours in that modest attic; so neat, and yet so simple, with its clean, though coarse white counterpane and pillow-cases, and the wine-glass, bearing its single fragrant rose-bud, which stood upon the sill. It was always a trial to leave this calm retreat, where no unhallowed breath of worldly care seemed to intrude, and I generally remained as long as the strength of the dying girl would permit her to bear the presence of a visitor. In this instance, however, I was compelled to hasten my departure, therefore I bade my little friend farewell; and having informed her what were the contents of the basket which had been sent to her by Mrs. Merton, and expressed a hope that Dame Elwood might be able to join the school-house party in the evening, I made the best of my way back to H——, where I arrived precisely as the hall clock struck eleven. Mrs. Weston and little Lilly Merton were waiting for me in the drawing-room; so we lost no time in seating ourselves in the pony-chaise, and driving off at a brisk pace towards Carisbrooke.

Passing by all other objects of attention,

we went directly to the old castle, one of the most picturesque remains of by-gone ages to be found in England, and interesting alike from its romantic beauty, and from the memorable historic associations which throng around its name. Our visit there was, of necessity, a hurried one, and the season of the year was unfortunately not the most favorable that could have been selected by a tourist; but, despite these disadvantages, the delight of the young stranger knew no bounds.

A high, cold wind rendered it unsafe to ascend the ramparts; so we consoled ourselves, for this disappointment, by climbing the steep, time-worn steps that lead to the old Saxon keep, and enjoying the extended view which this most elevated point commands; after which we visited the well that had in former days supplied the garrison with water, and thence proceeded to inspect a small concealed chapel, which had been recently discovered in the thickness of the walls. Last of all, we paused beneath the window by which the martyr-king of England, Charles the First, who was for some time confined within this stronghold, endeavored to escape from his imprisonment; and having lingered to call up the images this spot suggested, and descanted

with a mournful pleasure upon his melancholy and yet glorious end, we retraced our steps towards the spacious court, whence we set about exploring every nook and corner of the hoary pile.

Truly this proved, as I had feared, a work of time; and I began at length quite to despair of Mr. Henry, for he seemed never weary of wandering amid the grass-grown halls, and gazing upon the ivy-mantled towers and crumbling battlements; but it was the young artist's first experience of a ruin, so I felt bound to overlook any little want of consideration, which might have annoyed me under different circumstances.

"It was here that the Princess Elizabeth once dwelt," remarked my darling Lilly, who had always evinced a special affection for the memory of her royal namesake, whose sad captivity within these walls was terminated by an early death.

"Yes; and that just reminds me that I am peculiarly desirous of seeing her effigy in the church at Newport," observed Mr. Weston, suddenly awaking from the day-dream in which he had been lost.

"It will be very easy to gratify your wish, and I am sure you will be well repaid," I an-

swered, feeling secretly rejoiced to lure my young charge away from Carisbrooke on any terms; "only, in that case, we really must not stay here longer; and, I fear too, that we shall be obliged to content ourselves with a distant prospect of the village, for the chimes are playing even now, and we shall have barely ten minutes to inspect the monument."

Mr. Weston declared his willingness to depart at once; and, resuming our places in the chaise, we took the nearest road to Newport. This is a pleasant little country town, and we could readily have beguiled an hour in its quaint, narrow thoroughfares had time permitted. As it was, we preferred devoting the whole of our scanty leisure to the church; and only waiting to procure a guide, we passed into the sacred temple.

This edifice, which is of considerable antiquity, has of late been completely restored and modernized. The ashes of the youthful princess repose within the "Chancel Shade," and ere long we were standing beside her recumbent image. Often as I had previously contemplated this perfect work of art, the sight was one which never failed to inspire me with a renewed sense of pleasure. One single ray of pallid sunshine, which struggled through the

window, fell full upon the lovely face, revealing the exquisite symmetry of the delicately moulded features, and the purity and sweetness of the expression which beamed upon the brow.

There is something irresistibly touching in the attitude, at once so calm, and yet so full of grace. She is represented precisely as she was discovered by an attendant, after life had become extinct, reclining at full length, with her head resting upon a Bible, open at the beautiful passage—"Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" while her long flowing ringlets stream over the holy page.

"How fearful must have been the scenes of strife and bloodshed by which that pure and gentle spirit was encompassed!" observed the young artist in a whisper. "And yet," he continued, "in her child-like innocence and truth, she was a worthy daughter of the martyr-king, to whom she owed her birth."

"And think how blessed her release," I added, as I gazed upon the slumbering form. "How often throughout her brief and troubled warfare has she doubtless experienced the consolatory nature of those precious promises which soothed her in the hour of death."

“Her Majesty is about to have a stained-glass window placed above the monument, in order to soften the broad glare of light,” began our guide, breaking in with a loud voice upon the hallowed stillness.

We were all of us painfully impressed by the irreverence that could thus dispel the charm which breathed throughout the consecrated fane. Perhaps our silent and subdued demeanor may have shown the well-meaning, but thoughtless woman, how much we disapproved of any violation of that sanctity which must at all times pervade the Temple of the Most High, for her manner changed, and we were left to uninterrupted meditation, until the moment of departure had arrived. Turning back for one last look, as we were about to quit the chancel, I was for the first time struck by a resemblance, either fancied or real, between this high-born descendant of a royal race and the humble cottage maid, beside whose couch of sickness I had that morning stood. Different, indeed, their stations here on earth, although suffering and sorrow had been the lot of both; but in the smile of heavenly peace which beamed upon each placid countenance, I recognized them as alike the children of the King of kings, and joint-

heirs of that bright inheritance which was to be their blessed and eternal portion.

Luncheon was, as I had expected, nearly over when we reached the rectory; but after our pleasant expedition, we were not disposed to complain of any minor inconvenience, and only allowing ourselves time for a very slight refreshment, we all proceeded to the school-house. A short stroll brought us to the modest red-brick edifice, which was charmingly situated in the midst of a gently undulating country, commanding a delightful prospect of the distant hills. Although it was not near the hour appointed for the children to assemble, several groups were already scattered through the play-ground, not, as in general, occupied with the swings, the see-saws, the climbing-poles, and jumping-bars, and all the other contrivances which their kind Rector had caused to be provided for their healthful recreation, but conversing in low tones among themselves, and impatiently, as it appeared, counting the minutes which must yet elapse before the time of their anticipated treat.

Cordially responding to their salutations, we went on to the house, closing the door inexorably behind us, and leaving the poor children in the cold outer air to sigh for the

long wished-for moment of admission. Within, a bright fire was blazing in the ample grate, and the walls were beautifully adorned with evergreens, which also hung in thick garlands from the ceiling; the frames of the few colored prints were twined with wreaths of rosemary and myrtle; upon the chimney-piece were placed the sweet flowers, which I had arranged with so much care; while above the entrance, the word "WELCOME" might be seen, formed from the vivid scarlet berries of the holly, and surmounted by a canopy of dark, shining leaves. It gleamed like a parting smile from the fast-waning star of Christmas, and our hearts warmed at sight of the familiar emblems of that hallowed season.

After we had sufficiently admired these tasteful decorations—the fruit of some skill and perseverance on the part of Mr. Merton's only son and a number of his companions—we all diligently betook ourselves to the task before us. Mr. Weston joined heartily in the "fun," as he expressed it; and by his ready ingenuity in devising schemes and obviating difficulties, proved himself an equally willing and efficient aid. Six young girls, who had formerly been scholars, had volunteered their services in any branch of work which might be requisite.

Accordingly we all in common commenced operations, by dragging the long, heavy table into the centre of the room ; and having placed a smaller one at either end, together with several little stands in different corners, we spread a snow-white covering over all, and then drawing the rows of benches alongside, we laid a fresh, round roll before each seat. Next came the more perplexing business of sorting over and endeavoring to classify the rather motley collection of plates and goblets which each family had been requested to provide for its own members.

Notwithstanding these deficiencies, all wore an inviting aspect when our preparations were complete ; and as we had ere this been joined by a number of the neighboring gentry, and the play-ground was quite crowded with expectant youth, whom the schoolmaster had marshalled into a procession, the doors were at length flung back upon their hinges, and the children entered two by two, singing a pretty song as they advanced. All were arrayed with neatness, yet with extreme simplicity—the boys with hair smoothly brushed and clean white linen collars ; the girls in high-necked frocks of dark checked print. Happiness sparkled upon every face, and I

saw that they could scarcely restrain a more noisy demonstration of their merriment.

There was some bustle attendant upon the business of selecting places; and when this had in a degree subsided, the Rector arose and requested silence; then the parish clerk, who was present with an instrument of music, began a sacred air, and all standing up, a simple grace was chanted, after which the little guests resumed their seats, and *we elders* set about distributing the viands.

There was no lack of occupation for any of the party. Mr. Weston at once took possession of a huge joint of beef, which he was soon employed in carving; Mr. Merton, who had stationed himself at another table, was similarly engaged; while his two sweet children were happy in being *bearers* of the good fare which had been so bountifully provided. Some of the spectators were busied in serving out portions of turnips and potatoes, and others in kindly coming to the assistance of the very youngest, who were unable to manage the dainty cheer until it had been cut up into tiny morsels. One young lady, who had arrived very late, and chanced to find no work ready at that moment to her hand, was attempting to count the number of the children, but with-

out success, since the constant motion which was going on around confused her perception of even stationary objects. I could easily have told her what she desired to know, and so have saved her from all further trouble; but as she merely seemed amused by her frequent failures, I forbore, and soon the necessity of replenishing the children's plates diverted her attention from the subject, and I had the pleasure of seeing Alice Meredith as active as even her own wish could dictate.

When all had concluded the more substantial part of the repast, Mrs. Merton called aloud for the plum-puddings, and ere long they were brought in, smoking hot, each one decorated with a sprig of holly. This second course afforded even more satisfaction than its predecessor; and when an abundant portion had been served to all, Mr. Merton delivered a simple, but very beautiful address, in which he explained the nature of the event that we were met to celebrate. Having given a slight sketch of their history, he proposed the health of the Prince and Princess, whereupon he was answered by a universal outburst of applause; and I doubt much if the happiness of the Royal Lady was on that day more sincerely pledged in the red wine of the costly banquet, than in

those modest cans of nut-brown ale, a very small allowance of which had been furnished for each one of these loyal little subjects, in honor of the occasion. Then followed the sublime and soul-stirring anthem of Old England, in whose strains, at once so inspiring and so solemn, we all united with true and unaffected earnestness. Mr. Weston, who never remembered having heard the hymn before, was completely overpowered by enthusiasm; and at the words—

“God bless our native land!
May Heaven’s protecting hand
Still guard our shore!”

I am sure no English voice was more distinctly audible than his.

When the last thundering peal of “God save the Queen!” had died quite away, there ensued a second speech from Mr. Merton, in which he alluded to the kindness of those friends to whom the children were indebted for that day’s amusement, as well as for the blessings of education, and various other privileges which they enjoyed. He spoke, too, of there being so many in the parish who loved them, and took a sincere and affectionate interest alike in their temporal and their eternal welfare.

I hope that some among the listeners were moved with a real desire to become daily more deserving of the benefits which God had so freely bestowed upon them : certain it is, that many eyes were bright with tears at the close of their beloved Rector's exhortation.

But now the hour was waxing late; and the poor children's festival, that event to which they had so long and eagerly looked forward, was at an end. Short-lived, indeed, are all the pleasures of this lower world; but this thought should only inflame us with more ardent zeal in pressing onward towards the attainment of those joys, which are unchangeable as He from whom they spring. After having joined in a familiar hymn, the little ones dispersed. I watched them from the window for a moment, as they pursued their sportive gambols on the green; and then turned to bear a part in the arrangements for our tea-party, which were just commencing.

The six attendants had been dismissed into the inner school-room, in order to be feasted in their turn, so that we were obliged to set to work without them. One of the gentlemen had already replenished the fire and swept up the hearth; while we ladies employed ourselves in clearing away the remnants of the

dinner, laying aside the table-coverings, and striving by every means in our power to make the room appear as neat and comfortable as possible. Having placed a monster kettle of water on the hob to boil, and also arranged the cups and saucers on the table, we next paid our respects to a large chest, containing a goodly stock of tempting buns, which the baker had been ordered to supply for the evening. Sundry piled-up dishes were deposited upon the board; and then seating ourselves on a bench before the fire, we waited the arrival of our expected guests.

It was not long before they came; at first, in straggling groups of two and three, and then in larger numbers, until the room was filled with smiling matrons, all evidently prepared to enjoy the social meal to which they had been bidden. Dame Elwood was among the last who entered. I went forward to welcome her; and while engaged in taking off her cloak and hood, I remarked that we had scarcely imagined she would be able to leave home on account of Susie.

“I did not think of it myself,” she answered; “but the dear child was so entreatingly-like, and said so often how pleased she would be to hear my account of these grand

doings, that at last I had to come away to pacify her."

"I am sure you must need the relaxation," I observed; "and I can also understand quite well the amusement which poor Susie will derive to-morrow from all that you will have to tell her. Of course, she is not in the mean time left entirely alone?"

"Oh! no, ma'am; Lizzie Gray came in at dusk to say that she would gladly stay with Susie, if I wished to come to H——. It was this decided me, for Lizzie is the nicest girl in the whole parish, and I felt sure she would take the greatest care of my poor child."

"Yes, one may trust Lizzie Gray with perfect confidence," I replied; "and I doubt not her society will be of benefit to Susie."

"They were talking over the school-dinner when I left," rejoined the mother; "and I should not be surprised if some of the other girls were to call at our cottage by-and-by, for Susie was always good and gentle to her play-mates, and they all love her more than ever now."

Our conversation was at this point broken off by Mrs. Merton, who, after kindly greeting good Dame Elwood, presented her with one of the little packages of tea, I have already

mentioned, and requested that she would preside over the entertainment of her own especial friends. The dear old lady appeared to be a general centre of attraction; and I was rather curious to see how she would contrive to choose, from among so many claimants on her favor, without giving offence to any.

But harmony was evidently the watchword of that humble company. Instinctively the aged matrons seemed to divide themselves into just such parties as were most congenial to each other; and soon all were cosily established at different points of the long table, each distinct band being clustered around a pewter teapot, which shone bright as silver, sipping the fragrant beverage, and extolling the excellence of the currant-bunns; while, by degrees, any little feeling of constraint wore off, and the hum of cheerful voices gave token of their quiet happiness.

Since matters were going on so smoothly, we all felt convinced that the most acceptable act of kindness which we could render to our guests, would be to leave them to their own enjoyment; therefore, when grace had been pronounced, we withdrew to the other end of the apartment, only taking care, at intervals, to ascertain that the provision of bunns was not

exhausted, and that a sufficient quantity of boiling water was kept standing upon the fire in readiness for use.

The genial influences of tea and conversation seemed to expand all hearts; and Mr. Merton, perceiving that the moment was opportune, stood up, before his parishioners had left the table, and, in a few words, spoke of the rapid progress of their dear children, both in intellectual improvement, and in those infinitely higher and more important lessons, which, he most earnestly trusted, they would not fail to unite with him in striving to enforce. He concluded by saying, how great was the pleasure which that day's festivities had afforded him; and that he hoped we might none of us forget, that every harmless relaxation from the toils of life is provided for us by a gracious God, in order that we may become thereby more fitted for active labor in His service.

Sacred music followed, without intermission, until the brightening moonbeams, which glimmered amid the interwoven boughs of evergreens, warned us that it was time to separate. A short prayer was offered up by Mr. Merton; and then the assembly dispersed among the quiet lanes and by-roads that led to the many scattered hamlets which composed the large,

but thinly settled parish of H——. We remained behind for a few moments to set all to rights; and then returned to the sweet rectory, where a cheering fire and a well-laden supper-board smiled a welcome, which we were quite able to appreciate. Some glorious strains from Mozart closed the evening, for we were too much wearied by our unusual exertions to feel much inclined for social converse. By ten o'clock we retired to our pillows, reflecting, with great satisfaction, upon the success which had crowned this, the first entertainment of the sort that had ever taken place at H——; and praying that the heart of the young Princess might ever be as light, her happiness as pure and free from guile, as were those of her lowly countrymen, who had that day participated in our Parish Festival.

THE END.

LIVES OF THE BISHOPS.

BY THE REV. JOHN N. NORTON, A. M.,

Rector of the Church of the Ascension, Frankfort, Kentucky.

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"From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand"—

will be eager to read this timely and fitting tribute to one of the most attractive and beautiful characters of modern history.—*Louisville Journal*.

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LIFE OF GEORGE HERBERT

BY
GEORGE L. DUYCKINCK.

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The friends of our late excellent Bishop will be glad to welcome this interesting sketch of his life and labors. It is one of a series of books adapted to the young, embodying the lives of the Bishops of our country, and some of the more prominent English Bishops.—*Protestant Churchman*.

LIFE OF BISHOP WAINWRIGHT.

This is a continuation of the popular series, already so favorably received by the Church. The author has been enabled to enliven the earlier part of the memoir by some letters written in boyhood, and which will amuse children. The various letters of the Bishop to his children in after-life contain, in brief and affectionate simplicity, a world of wisdom. The interest increases as the story proceeds, and culminates in that brief and busy Episcopate which, in the immense amount of its labors, and the solemn suddenness of its close—the sharp recoil of nature against severe overwork—yet remains stamped so strongly and so warmly in the heart of the Church.

The exquisite line-engraving portrait of the Bishop, which embellishes the work, is one of the happiest likenesses of him that we have ever seen.—*Church Journal*.

Clergy and Parish List of the Protestant Episcopal Church IN THE UNITED STATES.

In addition to a general Clergy List, showing the Post-Office address of each clergyman, this work contains a Tabular List of the towns in each of the Dioceses in which there are Parishes, given alphabetically; and also the name of the Church, and of the Rector, with the number of families, and of communicants in each Parish, as far as can be ascertained. A convenient and desirable work.—*Calendar*.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Life of Bishop Claggett, of Maryland. By Rev.

JOHN N. NORTON, M.A.

The Life of Bishop Griswold. Second Edition. Enlarged. By the same Author.

The Life of Bishop White. By the same Author. Second Edition. Enlarged.

The above-mentioned books are published by the General Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union and Church Book Society, New York, 1859. And most choice books they are, too. Written or compiled by one of the soundest divines of the Church, and having also the merit of truth, and being most interesting narratives of the lives of honored and distinguished Bishops of the Church, we recommend them, as they were specially intended, to every Sunday-school of the Church.

The "Life of Bishop Claggett" was published by contributions from the Diocese of Maryland; has a very well executed steel engraving of the Bishop; is dedicated to the Hon. Ezekiel F. Chambers, of Chestertown, Maryland; and the preface asserts that "Rev. Ethan Allen, D.D., of Baltimore, has been engaged in good earnest in compiling and preparing a much larger work upon the 'Life and Times of Bishop Claggett.'"

The "Life of Bishop Griswold" is an exceedingly interesting volume, aside from its value as a biography of the late Bishop; because it sets forth, though briefly, a history of what was once called the *Eastern Diocese*, composed of the present dioceses of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. It has also a very beautifully executed steel engraving of the Bishop.

These books are characteristic specimens of the work and material of the Society which issues them, and which deserves the hearty co-operation of the Church in all its good works. Long may it flourish to send forth for children such works, unquestionable in character, and sanctifying in influence.—*Churchman*.

THE LIBRARIAN:

An Index of the Publications

OF THE

General Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union
and Church Book Society.

An excellent, and we think it will hereafter be regarded an indispensable, book of reference. It gives an alphabetical list of all the subjects treated of in the books issued by the Society, with reference to the volume in which each subject is considered. This is followed by a list of the names of the authors of the various books, so far as known; then a list of the illustrations; an alphabetical and numerical catalogue. The whole concludes with a list of the books of instruction published by the Society.—*Gospel Messenger*.

This book is much more than is indicated by its title. It contains an index of subjects in the various publications of the Society, and in what volume each may be found; a list of the authors and illustrations; an alphabetical and numerical catalogue of the Society's books, and also books of instruction and Sunday-school requisites in general. It is valuable for S. S. teachers and pastors; and every librarian of a parish or S. S. library ought to have it for constant reference.—*Calendar*.

A Wreath

FROM THE WOODS OF CAROLINA.

MESSRS. EDITORS—Among the many beautiful presents to gladden the hearts of our children at this happy season, I know of none having as strong a claim on an inhabitant of this State, and especially of this city, as the volume entitled “A Wreath from the Woods of Carolina.”

The design of the work and the literary matter are by a lady of this city, whose genius, manifest to all in this production, and evinced to her friends in several departments of the arts, not all the cares of a large family and a responsible position have been able to repress; while another lady of this city has furnished the colored drawings from which the beautiful flowers have been engraved.

The author has presented the fruit of her labors to the Church Book Society. It is therefore on her part an offering of piety, as well as of taste and talent, to swell the amount of the good and beautiful things of the season.

The Society have shown their sense of the value of the gift by the expense and pains which they have bestowed upon the volume. Its paper, type, and above all, exquisite representations of the flowers, make the book a treasure in its externals.

But, after all, the stories for the children constitute its chief attraction and merit. The style is singularly clear and animated; the spirit is the spirit of love and cheerful piety; the lessons are wise, yet admirably adapted to children; and the whole is suggestive of the brightness and fragrance and freshness of the woods themselves, in a charming morning of May.

Let all the friends of the young see that their little favorites have among their Christian treasures “A Wreath from the Woods of Carolina.” — *From the Raleigh (North Carolina) Standard.*

JUVENILE BOOKS.

“Juveniles” are the most taking books just now. The Rev. F. D. Harriman, agent of the Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union, has recently published some seven or eight, which the little folks, male and female, are much pleased with. The two largest are “Bessie Melville” and “Sidney Grey,” very neat 16mo volumes. The story of Bessie, though simple and unpretending, is charmingly entertaining; its excellent lessons are rendered so attractive that the most indolent and thoughtless can hardly fail to profit by them. The main object of the book is to show how prayer-book instructions may be practiced in the ordinary transactions of life—an object which, so far as I can pretend to judge, is successfully carried out. “Sidney Grey” is designed chiefly for boys. It contains incidents enough for a “sensation” novel; but they are not treated in the sensation style. Not but those most commonplace are invested with an interest which many a pretentious romance-writer of the present day would endeavor in vain to impart to his most elaborately got up “scenes.” “Mia and Charlie” is by the same author—a charming story, or rather series of stories, for the young. The account which the pretty little book gives of a week’s holiday at the Bydale Rectory is lively, entertaining, and instructive in no ordinary degree. It has caused many a bright, happy smile since the holidays commenced; and it is worth reading at any time. In this hurried chat I can only mention “The Boy Missionary,” “The Life of Bishop Wainwright,” “The Life of George Herbert,” “The Life of Bishop Ravenscroft,” and “The Tortoise-Shell Comb.” Each tiny “Life” is embellished with a handsome portrait.—*Newark Daily Advertiser.*

BOOK NOTICES.

BESSY MELVILLE;

Or, Prayer-Book Instructions Carried Out Into Life.

A SEQUEL TO "THE LITTLE EPISCOPALIAN."

BY M. A. C.

The title of this very handsome volume gives a good idea of its character. 'Bessy's' story, though simple and unpretending, is replete with that kind of instruction which it is essential that all Christian children should receive in one form or other; and what is more, its lessons are rendered so attractive that the most indolent and thoughtless of our little friends will find pleasure in learning them. The author possesses the rare faculty of combining the useful with the agreeable, and at the same time writes in pure, correct English, which is more than could be said of many pretentious novelists of the present day. The book is well printed, and tastefully bound in muslin.—*Philadelphia Daily News*.

MIA AND CHARLIE;

OR,

A WEEK'S HOLIDAY AT THE BYDALE RECTORY,

Is another illustrated, instructive book, from the same press. It is sufficient to say that it is worthy of both. Indeed, it has seldom been our privilege to examine a volume better calculated to coax children to be sensible, religious, and good. Boys and girls will be equally pleased with it, and we recommend it accordingly.—*Philadelphia Daily News*.

Sidney Grey. A Tale of School Life. By the author of "Mia and Charlie,"

Is a good, entertaining, useful book for boys. It contains sufficient incidents for a modern romance, but they are not of the "intense" kind. On the contrary, they are generally of ordinary character, such as are constantly occurring around us; but those most commonplace are invested with a degree of interest which is in itself a charm. "Sydney Grey," however, is no baby's book. Indeed, there are not many adults who would not find its teachings profitable. The style of the narrative is chaste, lively, and graphic, the typography is excellent, and the binding at once neat and substantial. Nor must we omit to tell the little folks that they will also be pleased with the illustrations in "Sydney Grey." There are no better safeguards against Popery than books of this kind.—*Philadelphia Daily News.*

The Boy Missionary. By MRS. JENNY MARSH PARKER.

This is another little volume which is destined to do much good, for it is so written that it will be read with avidity by those for whose benefit it is intended. The story of Davie Hall is full of wholesome encouragement, and can not fail to make an impression.

The Episcopal Church Book Society have also recently published "The Life of Bishop Wainwright," "The Life of George Herbert," "The Life of Bishop Ravenscroft," and "The Tortoise-Shell Comb," all of which are well suited for children. Each tiny "Life" is embellished with a fine portrait, and ought to find a place in the juvenile library of every Protestant family.—*Philadelphia Daily News.*

The Life of George Herbert.

BY GEORGE L. DUYCKINCK.

New York, 1858 : pp. 197.



WE have too long neglected to do our share in bringing this delightful little book to the notice of the lovers of holy George Herbert, among whom we may safely reckon a large number of the readers of the "Atlantic." It is based on the life by Izaak Walton, but contains much new matter, either out of Walton's reach or beyond the range of his sympathy.

Notices are given of Nicholas Ferrar and other friends of Herbert. There is a very agreeable sketch of Bemerton and its neighborhood, as it now is, and the neat illustrations are of the kind that really illustrate. The Brothers Duyckinck are well known for their unpretentious and valuable labors in the cause of good letters and American literary history, and this is precisely such a book as we should expect from the taste, scholarship, and purity of mind which distinguish both of them. It is much the best account of Herbert with which we are acquainted.—*Atlantic Monthly.*

Life of Bishop Bowen.

BY THE REV. J. N. NORTON.

THE memoir of this Boston boy (son of a New England Congregationalist preacher, who afterwards took orders in the Church and died in South Carolina, where his more celebrated son afterwards became Bishop) is not marked by any very striking incident, but breathes everywhere the quiet firmness, the affectionate nature, the sober and steady principles, the meek and humble spirit of its subject. His warm friendship for Bishop Hobart led to a long continued correspondence, some specimens of which are inserted in this memoir.—*Church Journal*.

These biographies of the Bishops are all interesting.—*Southern Churchman*.

Another and very interesting addition to the several memoirs of our Bishops which Mr. Norton has been diligently preparing and sending through the press. The peculiar energy displayed by the subject of this memoir, while, a child of eight years, he crossed the river from John's Island to Charleston in a boat, and, by his earnest pleading, obtained the services of a physician for his dying father, continued to mark him through life, united to the tenderness and ready sympathy which formed so important an element of his piety and his usefulness.—*Protestant Churchman*.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

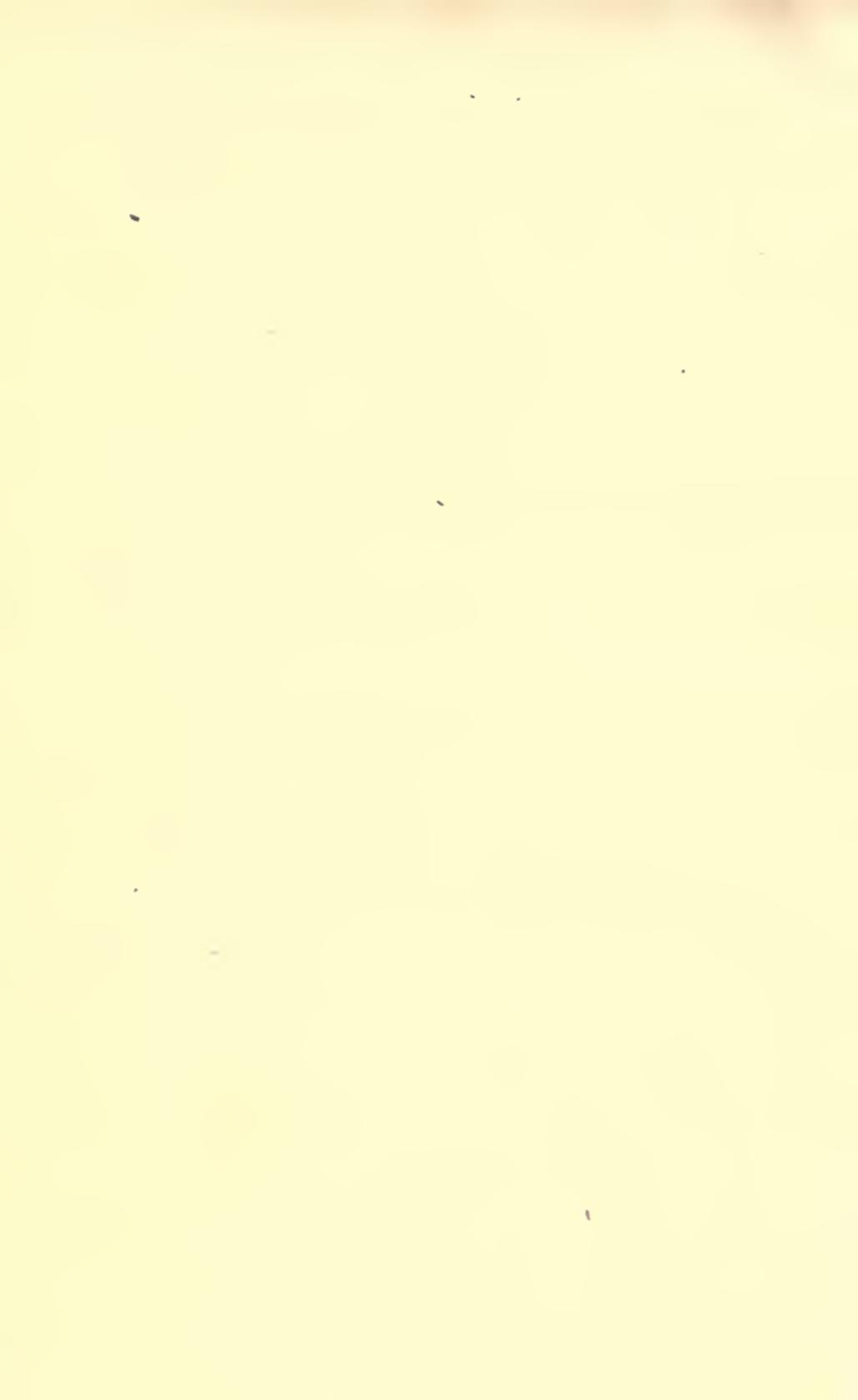
A most perfect character, well drawn out, and shown in various colors, conspiring to complete the picture of a righteous man.—The volume is one of the most attractive of the series.—Mr. Norton is determined that Bishops shall be remembered, and no good of them be lost.—*Banner of the Cross.*

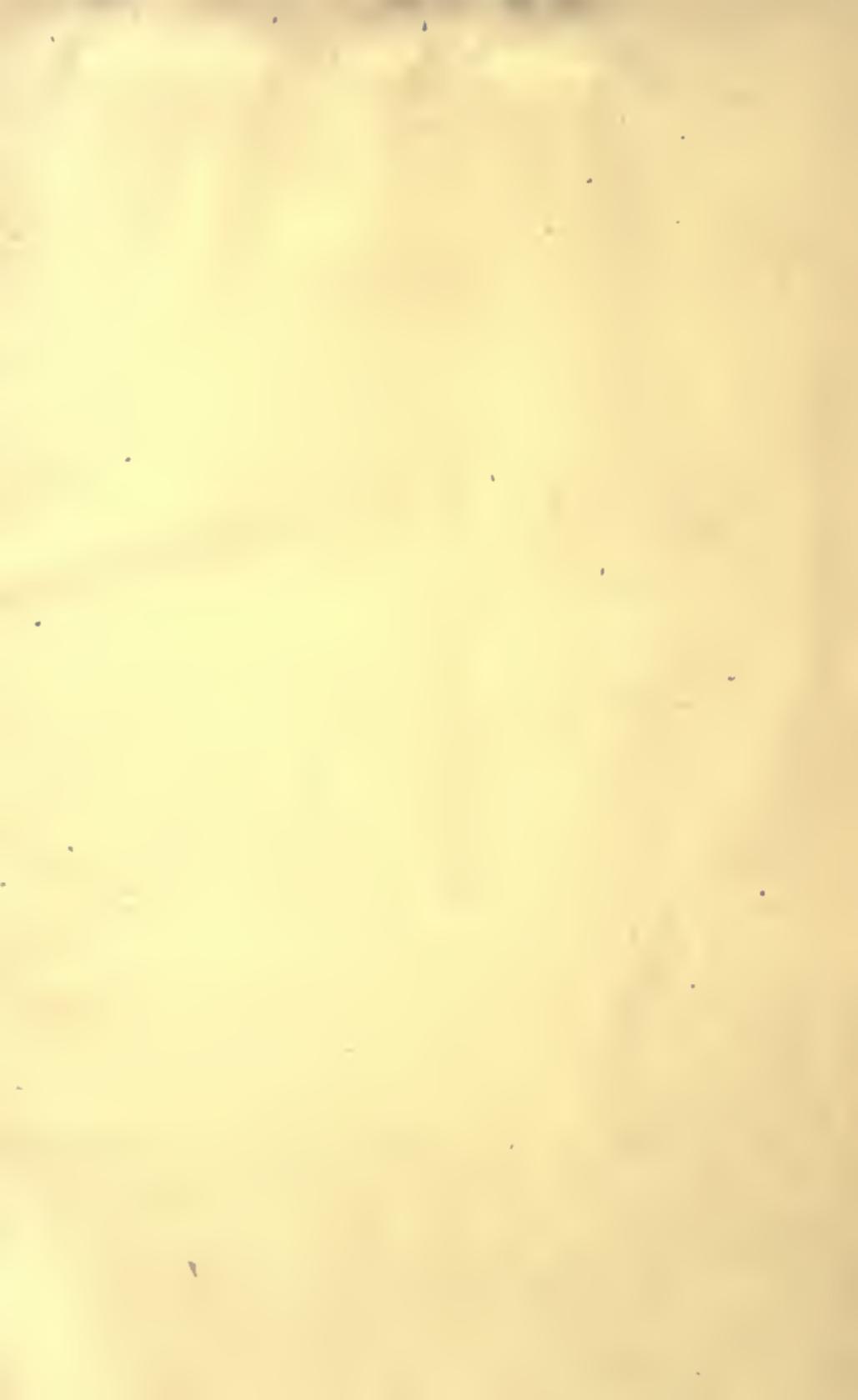
A person might be induced to read the life of this Bishop, not only because of its literary source, but because of the resemblance in the portrait attached to the energetic Bishop Philander Chase. Mr. Norton has worked into this memoir much general information in the history of the Church during the life-time of Bishop Bowen, and some valuable thoughts on incidental subjects.—*Calendar.*

This is an interesting and truthful sketch of one whose memory is warmly cherished in our diocese, and whose character and attainments were such as to make him one of the men of mark in our Church. The material for the biography has been well worked up by Mr. Norton, and the interest of the volume is much increased by the introduction of some graphic reminiscences by the Rev. Paul Trapier, and extracts from some of the Bishop's own letters when travelling in Europe.

The quiet dignity, mild benevolence, and general conservativeness of the Bishop's character are properly delineated, and justice is done to the earnestness of his Episcopate and the tender faithfulness of his pastoral intercourse.—*Southern Episcopalian.*







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