

true spiritual compass, showing us the direct road to the knowledge of him who is the Life Eternal.

We had quite a large congregation all the afternoon sitting round us and listening attentively to the message of God's love. I had put the 'Gleaner' in my pocket, thinking that perhaps I should be glad to read some of it during the day. The opportunity for reading it never came, but I showed our village friends the pictures in it. These enabled one to point out that the same gospel message is needed for all races and climes, and that the same loving Saviour is manifesting his mighty power in saving men from sin in all parts of the world. They wished to know whether Japan was an island close to England, and I think, grasped the idea, that one is the land of the rising sun, and the other rather the land of the sunset. But strange as it may seem, the best text I got from the 'Gleaner' was the wolf's head in the advertisement on the back of it. This delighted the young people present, and I spoke to them of our great enemy in his character of a ravenous beast seeking whom he may devour. This lesson was emphasized by the fact that earlier in the week a wolf had come down from the mountains two weeks in succession to attack the flocks, but had been driven off by the barking of the dogs and the shouting of the shepherds. This naturally gave the opportunity of speaking further about the Good Shepherd, who 'gave his life for the sheep,' and was 'manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.' Persians, even in humble life, are very fond of poetry, and one of their best known poets says that 'it is better to cut off the wolf's head in the first instance, and not wait till he has ravaged the flock,' (cf. our proverb about shutting the stable door after the steed is stolen). When I quoted the lines they were evidently familiar to the people, and this helped to emphasize another side of truth connected with 'the wolf.'

A Vision at a Billiard Table.

(By John F. Lawis.)

Papa, said little Minnie Page, as she crept upon her father's knee and rested her head upon his bosom, 'me doesn't love God all me should like to do.' 'Why does my little pet say that?' replied her father bending down and kissing her cheek. 'Cause he doesn't give me a good papa every day; only some days,' said the child. 'Whatever has put such a notion into your head, my baby girl?' said her father, with a troubled look upon his face. 'Some days you's very good, and comes home to Minnie fore she goes to bed, and then me loves God for sending you home to me; but sometimes you doesn't come home, and it makes Minnie cry to go to bed 'out papa's kiss.' 'But you ought to love God always, Minnie, because he doesn't keep your papa from coming home.' 'Doesn't God give us all good things?' said the child. 'Yes, Minnie.' 'And isn't it a good thing to have a good papa come home to kiss Minnie and love her fore she goes to bed?' 'Papa does love his little one, whether he comes home to her or not,' said James Page, with a choking sensation in his throat. 'But if God would send papa home every night, me would love him all day long for it, said the little prattler. 'I think my little one is tired and wants to go to bed now; so papa will give her a sweet kiss because he is here to-night, and then you must love God to-morrow for it.'

Away ran the little one to her mamma with a merry laugh, and James Page, left

alone, felt most uneasy. He rose from his chair and stood gazing out of the window, with his hands thrust into his trousers pockets, and his eyes fixed on nothing in particular. His little four-year-old baby had struck a chord that jarred unpleasantly upon his inner ear; and gave voice to a conscience upon which the searing process was just commencing.

He was not a profligate, by any means. He had been trained in a religious home; had sittings, which he and his wife frequently occupied, in the Methodist chapel not far from his own house. He was respectably connected and outwardly moral; but he had become connected with a club which numbered among its members several who were in his own line of business, and with whom he was well acquainted. The day after the conversation with his child he was very much agitated. He lacked the power of application, and could not concentrate his mind upon his business. The little plaintive face with its sorrowful look was ever before him whichever way he turned, and the words, 'It makes Minnie cry to go to bed 'out papa's kiss,' were ringing in his ears all day long. He put his fingers in his ears and tried to stop the sounds from entering, but they seemed to him more distinct than ever. He knew not what to do. At last, growing desperate, he rushed off to his club, and hoped that there he might shut out the vision and the words—at least for a time.

At the door his ears were greeted by the hilarious shouts of his gay companions, many of whom were further gone in moral degeneracy than himself, and his entrance was hailed with applause. He was a general favorite among them, and a place was soon found for him at the billiard-table, and his friends regarded him as settled for the evening. But no: he could not settle. From the other end of the board the white ball transformed itself into a pale, pleading face, and above the rude jests and coarse laughter of his companions, he heard distinctly his baby's words, 'It makes Minnie cry to go to bed 'out papa's kiss.' He struggled resolutely but he had 'no luck,' he declared again and again. His hand trembled and he missed his stroke just when the game depended upon it. It was no use, and in despair he threw down his cue, and, to the astonishment of his friends, grasped his hat and fled from the room. They were struck dumb with astonishment as they watched his retreating form, and heard the street door clash behind him as he went out.

Once in the open air he felt like saying to himself, 'I will never enter that place again'; but he hesitated to say the words, not being sure whether his resolution had reached that point or not, and, if it had, he knew not whether he had strength to keep it. A little child was leading him, though he knew it not, and another hand unseen was guiding the little child. He felt himself irresistibly drawn, as by an invisible cord, towards his home, and the nearer he approached it, the more intense became the anguish of his mind. Entering unseen by the front door, he noiselessly ascended the stairs and crept into the room where his little one was sleeping. The gas was turned low, but looking upon the sweet face, he could discern in the dim light that an unwiped tear stood upon her little cheek, and that tear witnessed to a kiss longed for but not received. This little dewdrop opened the floodgates of his own tears, and he sank by the bedside in an agony of penitential sorrow. The hand of God was upon him, and he thought only of his own sinfulness and the possibility of Divine mercy revealing itself in pardon. He struggled long, but at last gained the victory,

and when he rose from his knees a new light had dawned upon his soul and a new hope had sprung up in his heart. He felt himself a 'new creature,' and, bending down over the unconscious sleeper, his eyes suffused with tears of joy, he said, 'Sweetest Minnie, thou hast led thy prodigal father to his home and to his rest, and saved him and his loved ones from a world of misery and sorrow.'—*Christian Herald.*

A Guest-Chamber Sentiment.

Stopping recently at a friend's house, relates the Rev. Addison P. Foster, in the 'Advance,' when I came to enter the guest chamber for the night, I found hanging up under the gas-light the following beautiful lines. They were so sweet and comforting that I copied them, having never seen them before. Possibly some one else may be glad to place a fair copy of them where they shall greet a tired and burdened guest when he first seeks the retirement of his room:

Sleep sweetly in this quiet room,
O thou, whoe'er thou art,
And let no mournful yesterdays
Disturb thy peaceful heart.
Nor let to-morrow scare thy rest
With dreams of coming ill:
Thy Maker is thy changeless friend,
His love surrounds thee still:
Forget thyself and all the world,
Put out each glaring light;
The stars are watching overhead,
Sleep sweetly, then; Good Night.

The Universal Poet.

Longfellow has been called the universal poet. A London editor recently remarked of English working-people: 'Thousands can repeat some of his (Longfellow's) poems who have never read a line of Tennyson, and probably never heard of Browning.' An American has just given this testimony: He was travelling on a Mediterranean steamer, and Longfellow was mentioned. Six nationalities were represented by the passengers who recited selections from our poet. A Russian lady repeated the poem beginning, 'I stood on the bridge at midnight.' An English captain returning from the Zulu war repeated, 'A Psalm of Life.' The captain of the steamer, who was an officer of the French navy, rendered 'Excelsior,' in broken English. Others united in this expressive tribute to one who sang for all lands in a language of the heart, that all can understand.—'Forward.'

Persevering Scholars.

The governor-general reported that at the autumnal examination in Fuchau nine candidates over eighty years of age, and two over ninety, went through the prescribed tests and sent in essays of which the composition was good and the handwriting firm and distinct. Aged candidates, he said, who have passed through an interval of sixty years from attaining their bachelor's degree, and who have attained the three last examinations for the higher, rare, if successful the fourth time, entitled to an honorary degree. The governor of Honan in like manner, reported thirteen candidates over eighty years of age, and one over ninety, who all 'went through the whole nine day's ordeal, and wrote essays which were perfectly accurate in diction, and showed no signs of falling years.' But even this astonishing record was surpassed in the province of Anhui, where thirty-five of the competitors were over eighty years of age, and eighteen over ninety! Could any other country afford a spectacle like this?—Rev. A. H. Smith, D.D., in 'Chinese Characteristics.'