

A NOCTURNE IN WHITE.

About the end of the first quarter of the present century a man named Joshua Jacob was a shining light among the Quakers in Dublin; he took a prominent part in the assembly, which was held once a month for the affairs of the society, and occasionally spoke in the "First day meetings." He was also what is called a very "plain friend"—that is, one who adhered closely to old customs, and was altogether a highly esteemed and apparently a very worthy individual. One of his theories was that the prophetic inspiration, which some of the early Quakers believed they possessed, and termed "revelations" or "openings," had not died out, and that he was as veritably inspired as ever was Jewish prophet. His earlier "openings" related chiefly to the errors the society had committed in not keeping to their primitive customs. Many of the Dublin friends believed in his pretensions, and his commands were obeyed and himself honoured as became a man of such wonderful powers. In obedience to his behest, they returned to the cumbersome forms of language and antiquated usages common in the days when Loe made so gallant and unsuccessful an attempt to convince the Irish of the errors of Popery and the superiority of Quakerism. Some of the Dublin friends had been so lax as to put on mourning, a few even allowed pictures and musical instruments in their houses, and had he gone no further he would have done little harm in persuading them to discard these things; but, unhappily, this did not content him; so he insisted that all men and women ought to wear white, or the nearest approach to it they could possibly procure. His own dress was composed of shoes of untanned leather, white flannel breeches and coat, unbleached cotton stockings, and a very light-coloured broad-brimmed hat. His wife clad herself in unbleached calico from head to foot. His house was whitewashed inside and out, and his costly furniture—for he was a wealthy man—was replaced by common white wood. His enthusiastic wife went so far as to smash every article they had which was not as white as the driven snow, and Jacob called her a noble woman for it. No warrant being found in the writings of the Quaker fathers for such eccentric proceedings, Jacob was "disowned," whereupon he set up a sect of his own, inculcating a highly doubtful code of morals, which he made a gallant effort to live up to. In the end the society came to grief, and Jacob turned Roman Catholic. It is possible that these mad acts led to the "dress rules" being abrogated earlier than they would otherwise have been.—*London Society.*

SITTING DOWN WITH A PREACHER.

In a western town dwells Elder R—, a clergyman very well known throughout his State for ability and shrewdness. It is pretty generally believed, on account of his evident knowledge of the ways of the world, that he was rather "rapid" in his youth. Among his sceptical neighbours is a hotel keeper of jovial disposition and liberal heart. Whenever the elder has a specially convincing and sweeping discourse prepared it is his wont to give special invitations to his doubting friends to be present, and these are sometimes accepted with the proviso that the dominie and his lady shall meet the party at the hotel, at dinner, on an appointed day during the week, so they may have an opportunity to defend themselves. On these occasions dinner often lasts the whole afternoon, and the elder is obliged to parry the combined blows of the opposition.

On one occasion mine host found his match in the clergyman in a worldly way, and it was this circumstance that I set out to relate. The landlord returned on a certain Saturday evening from a trip to the far west, and the next morning found him, with his wife, seated in a front pew. When the plate was passed, he felt in all his pockets, but could find only a comb, jackknife, and a circular piece of ivory marked "5," which is supposed by poker players to represent value. This latter was dropped in the plate under the vigilant eye of the pastor, but unnoticed by the sexton, whose eyes had been dimmed by age. On receiving the collection, the pastor missed the "chip," and asked the sexton for it. The latter had thrown it away, supposing it to be a mark of disrespect from some scoffer. Elder R— knew his man, and caused the representative of value to be recovered. Next morning, as the landlord was dilating upon his trip to a crowd of friends in his office, Elder R— appeared, and advancing to the counter, placed the chip down with the click so familiar to connoisseurs, and asked, "Can you 'redeem' that this morning, Brother S—?"

Of course S. could not do less than hand out \$5, and the elder departed, after expressing the hope that he might always be as lucky. Mine host says he shall not "sit down" with a preacher again.—*Pet R. O'Leum, in Harper's Magazine for December.*

THE SECRET OF A GREAT RIVER.

Descending from the Himalaya Mountains, and flowing for nearly 1,000 miles along the southern border of Thibet is the River Sanpo, which has been the subject of more geographical controversy than any other river in the world. Nobody has known whether this large river was the headwaters of the Brahmaputra and reached the sea through India, or whether it fed the Irrawady and flowed through Burma. Most geographers have been disposed to identify it with the Brahmaputra, but as late as January last year, Mr. Robert Gordon, the leading authority on the hydrography of the Irrawady, read a paper in London, to show that the Sanpo must be tributary to the Burmese river.

In the south-east part of Thibet is a large region marked on some maps as "The Country of Robber and Wild Tribes." These tribes have guarded the secret of the Sanpo. No explorer, white or Indian, had ever penetrated their country. The last to try it was the now famous Indian traveller, A—K, who had to turn back three years ago from the threshold of the dreaded Mishmi country. The Mishmis are still unvisited, but the secret of the Sanpo has

been solved beyond all doubt. It is identical with the Dihong, the northern branch of the Brahmaputra, and is thus the headwaters of that Indian river.

Not far from the southern edge of Thibet a river coming from the east unites with the Dihong, to form the Brahmaputra. Messrs. Needham and Molesworth, fifteen months ago, followed this branch far east until their explorations joined those of A—K, proving that the river was identical with the Zayul Chu, whose upper course he had thoroughly explored. The Zayul Chu is therefore the eastern branch of the Brahmaputra, instead of an affluent of the Irrawady, as Mr. Gordon and some Chinese geographers have believed.

The Zayul Chu having now been ascended east and north-east for several hundred miles to its sources, it is certain that the Sanpo cannot join the Irrawady, unless it either burrows under the Zayul Chu or takes a flying leap over it. It is thus proved beyond a doubt that the Sanpo is identical with the northern branch of the Brahmaputra. Another geographical mystery has passed into the realm of ascertained fact.

The explorer A—K is so called, because the names of the travellers in the employ of the Indian Government are not published until after they quit the service. A—K travelled in the guise of a merchant, and if his real character became known in many regions north of India, his usefulness as an explorer would be destroyed.

LOVE'S SILENCE.

Sweet, shall I ask thee why thou art so still,
Gazing afar into the deeps of space,
With shadows of the twilight on thy face,
And eyes that quick with dewy moisture fill?
Why is thy laughter's mellow rippling rill
Silent and dumb? What chime of perfect grace
Shall fall upon those lips and find a place
To bid their accents on the dusk to thrill?
Why art thou voiceless, love? Ah, speak to me
With speech that ever into music grows,
She turns her eyes, that hold me in their thrall,
As dark and sweet as night upon the sea,
Saying, while one swift look upon me glows,
"Love is unutterable and is a I."

—W. J. Henderson, in *Longman's Magazine*.

BURNING THE DIAMOND.

The ancients were as sure no diamonds could be burned as they were that none could be broken. Adamas, the invulnerable, yielded neither to fire nor force. It was not till 1609 that De Bont suspected its inflammability, nor till 1673 that it was actually burned. In 1694 Averani and Targioni of Cimento, at the instigation of Cosmo III., the Grand Duke of Florence, burned the diamond in the focus of concentrated sun rays, where it was seen to crack, carbonate and finally disappear. They had tried to learn the secret of its composition, and, like a true martyr, it had perished unconfessed; it had burned itself out like a sun. Forty-four years after the death of Newton (who guessed the diamond to be some "unctuous body coagulated," perhaps the vegetable secretion of the banyan tree, better to shake than the Pagoda,) a magnificent diamond was burned, on July 26, 1771, in the laboratory of M. Macquer, and in the presence, among others, of a well-known Parisian jeweller, M. LeBlanc, who, notwithstanding what he had just seen, stood forward and declared the diamond to be indestructible in the furnace, for that he had often subjected stones of his own to intense heat to rid them of blemishes, and that they had never suffered the slightest injury in the process. Thereupon the two chemists, d'Arcet and Rouelle, demanded the experiment should be made before them on the spot. Rapit in jus; clamor utrinque, undique concursus; with the result that poor LeBlanc, like the *savant de village*, found himself, after three hours' trial in the crucible, at the temperature that melts silver, minus one of the most precious of his stock in trade.—*The Cornhill Magazine*.

SIR GORDON SPRIGG, Treasurer-General of the Cape Colony, who has just been knighted by the Queen, is the son of a Suffolk Baptist minister.

The many friends of the late Dr. Fleming Stevenson are desirous that some tribute be paid to his memory. As Mrs. Stevenson declines to accept any money for her own use, the committee propose devoting it to the training of a native ministry in India in connection with the Irish Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Stevenson has intimated her intention of presenting to the college at Belfast as many of her husband's books as may be suitable, to be called the Stevenson Library.

The correspondent of a New York paper, writing from Paris, when speaking of working people, said: "The Seventh day brings no respite to them here. On the contrary, it is the day when they work hardest. On no other night are the theatres so crammed; on no other day are the butchers' stalls frequented by more customers than on Sunday. It is not a day of rest in Paris, but a day of activity. I have heard some American men applaud this manner of spending Sunday as they ridiculed the old-fashioned American way of hallowing the day. They do not know the sequence of this feverish activity. There is no old stone mason, no old shoemaker, no old carpenter, no old painter, no old artisan in Paris. Medical men say this premature decline is owing absolutely to the want of a day of rest once a week. Going to museums, poring over books, amusements of every sort, are equally pernicious with hard work." The reader may take this for what he may think it worth; but to our mind it is evidence that, aside from all religious and moral considerations, man needs a Sabbath or a seventh day to meet the necessities of his physical nature. What city in the civilized world has more trouble with her people than Paris.

British and Foreign.

DR. CUNNINGHAM, Cref, has been installed as Primary Professor and Principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews. The tutors appointed at the recent meeting of the Baptist Union of Scotland are Rev. J. M'Lellan, Dr. Landles and Dr. Macnair, all of Edinburgh.

THE general session in Glasgow find that there turns from congregations do not warrant their recommending any change in the hours of public worship.

THE Home Secretary has refused to interfere with the sentence of the Rev. James Mackie, of Manchester. Intense disappointment is felt at Manchester in consequence.

MR. J. AULDO JAMIESON, as commissioner to the Duke of Hamilton, superior of the parish, laid the memorial stone of a new church at Bo'ness. It will seat 1,250 persons, and cost about \$35,000.

MRS. CHARLES TURNER, widow of the late member for Liverpool, has given \$100,000 to establish a pension fund for aged and invalid incumbents in the diocese. An anonymous donor has given \$10,000 for the diocesan institution.

DR. PALEY, of Peterborough, who is a descendant of the famous theologian, has just retired from the office of alderman, which he has held for many years in the city where he has also been the leading physician for nearly half a century.

A FRIEND has offered to the British and Foreign Bible Society to purchase for them a Bible ship to be manned by sailor carpenters to visit the islands of the Asiatic archipelago, but the state of the society's funds prevents the acceptance of the generous offer.

THE congregation at Bruckley, of which Rev. Hugh McIntosh is pastor, are at considerable expense laying out a portion of ground by the side of the church in lawn tennis courts. The example has been set by a congregation of the Church of England close by.

IT is rumoured that the Queen has decided, after some hesitation, that the thanksgiving service in honour of her jubilee will be held in Westminster Abbey on Monday afternoon, June 20, and that it will be short and principally musical, with a short sermon by the Primate.

THE Rev. George C. Green, the pastor, at a valedictory soiree in Cranstonhill Church, Glasgow, said that owing to the steady growth of the congregation, from twenty to 450 members, the church was too small, and they were about to build a new place of worship in Lancefield Street.

THE Presbytery has been considering the disputed possession by Free St. John's Church, Haddington, of the communion cups which were presented to the congregation before the Disruption. The next session of the parish church are to take the necessary steps for their recovery.

THE Foreign Mission Committee are in search of a suitable man to proceed to Amoy to assist in the training of native students for the ministry. They also want an ordained and a medical missionary to break new ground to the west of Amoy in connection with the generous proposals of Mr. J. T. Morton, of London.

DR. HATELY WADDELL, Glasgow, at a soiree celebrating the admission of his congregation to the Church, mentioned that they had received a kind of special invitation to join the national communion. He was presented with a pulpit gown and cassock, and a timepiece and a silver cake basket for Mrs. Waddell.

DR. SOMERVILLE, accompanied by his son, Rev. James Somerville, has been continuing his Highland evangelistic tour. At Lochcarron, Torridon and Applecross he had large congregations. At the first-named place the ex-Moderator's sermon was translated into Gaelic, as he proceeded, by Mr. Macrae, of Carloway.

THE Queen has appointed Dr. Story to the vacant chair of Ecclesiastical History in Glasgow University. The new professor has published an angry rebuke of Bishop Wordsworth for naming Dr. Story as the author of the article in the *Scottish Church* attacking the bishop. Dr. Story protests in the interests of the ordinary courtesies of literary intercourse and discussion.

THE Rev. John Brand, who resigned the pastorate of John Street Church, Glasgow, some months ago, has been presented by the congregation with an illuminated address, a purse of sovereigns and a silver tea-service for Mrs. Brand. In his reply, Mr. Brand intimated that he had decided to go to Downfield Church, near Dundee. He entered on his duties there last Sabbath.

DR. PETTICREW, the newly-elected Professor of Theology in Magee College, Londonderry, in his inaugural address, maintained that the Westminster Confession is the ablest and ripest product of the symbolic literature of the Reformation. "We do not say that it is in all respects perfect; but we mean to retain it till we find a more scriptural and a better, which will not be just yet."

THE Rev. Robert Gemmell, the old minister of Arthur Street, Edinburgh, as he used to call himself, died very suddenly while conducting family worship. A native of Irvine, he was licensed by the Relief Church forty-three years ago, and was pastor of a congregation in Cupar, Dundee and Edinburgh. For several years he had a sharp contention with the Courts of the Church regarding his status and the financial arrangements made at the appointment of a colleague.

A SERIES of missionary meetings for the young have been held during the past fortnight in Glasgow under the arrangement of the Sabbath Scholar's Missionary Association of the Free Church Presbytery. The various districts of the city have been visited in rotation by two or more of the following speakers: Principal Robertson, Calcutta; Rev. A. C. Grieve, Bombay; Rev. Charles Gordon, South Africa; Mr. Wm. Stevenson, Pachumba, and Dr. John Moir, Livingstonia. All the meetings were very largely attended.