

allike in being utterly indifferent to higher things than the ordinary daily duties of life.

But, one Sunday in early spring, John had been startled and impressed by a sermon on our need of a Saviour, and as he listened to the preacher, the Holy Spirit opened his eyes to see that his outwardly good life had not been without sin in the sight of God, and such sin as no effort of his could do away with.

On the way home, John remarked: 'Mary, did you understand how the minister said we were to be saved?'

Very much surprised, Mary answered: 'Not I; I never trouble myself to listen; I'm only too glad to sit quiet a bit.'

'But, if we are sinners, as he said, don't you think that it's quite time we found out how to be saved?'

'Well, you are foolish: if he said sinners, of course he didn't mean such as you and me.'

'I'm not so sure about that: he read a text from the bible that says there is none righteous, no, not one; and I don't feel as though I could ever be happy till I find what he said was the real remedy for sin.'

'Well, John, of course you must do as you like; but mind, I am not going to be bothered with such nonsense. I am quite content as I am, and I don't believe in a lot of talk.'

And so matters went on for many months, John growing in all excellence and goodness, and Mary apparently hardening more and more.

But at length came a change. Mary, for the first time in her life, became so seriously ill as to be brought consciously face to face with death, and then indeed she realised that, for all her boasted goodness, she was quite unfit to meet her God; but the memory of her past behavior to John sealed her lips especially as his devoted attention seemed to be heaping coals of fire upon her head.

One evening Mary suddenly said, during a short respite from pain, 'I wish you'd read to me a little bit.'

'What shall I read?'

'Oh, anything, I'm tired of tossing about, and perhaps it may put me to sleep.'

In fear and trembling John replied, 'May I read a few verses from the bible?'

'Oh, yes, that'll do,' was the unexpected answer.

And as John read the fifty-first Psalm, in which David confesses and seeks forgiveness for his sins, tears stole down Mary's pale cheeks; but she made no remark, and a fresh attack of pain forbade any conversation.

But the next evening she again asked to be read to, adding, 'I want to hear about the man who came to Jesus by night; and the next time read about the thief on the cross.'

It may be imagined with what a thankful heart her requests were complied with; and knowing her to be naturally reserved, John was content to do simply what he was asked, and leave the rest to him who had evidently begun a good work in Mary's heart.

The next evening, when John had finished talking, Mary lay thinking quietly for a few minutes, and then said,

'I should like to hear more about it. Do you think the clergyman would come and see me, if we asked him?'

'That I am sure he would.'

'Well, then, go and ask him to-morrow.'

This John did; and the afternoon found Mr. Fordyce sitting by Mary's bedside, reading and explaining to her the Word of God. To his teaching Mary lent a willing ear, and drank in bible-truth with an eagerness that plainly showed her soul to be athirst for the 'Water of Life.'

One night she was seized with a frightful spasm of agony, and gasped out, 'John—I'm—going!'

'Are you afraid?'

'No—He died for me.'

But Mary's life was to show the necessity of her faith, and she was given back from the very gates of the grave, though for many days it was believed she could not possibly recover. During this time of suspense, her sister-in-law remarked, one day,

'Mary, the neighbors are always pitying you, and saying it's time you got better.'

Mary shook her head and answered quietly, 'I don't think there'll be any getting better for me in this life.'

'But you don't seem to mind, and you don't look unhappy.'

'I am not unhappy.'

'But don't you care about leaving John and the children?'

'Of course, I would like to live for their sakes; but God will care for them, if he takes me.'

'Well, you've always been very good, Mary.'

But at this Mary's reserve gave way, and, with all the energy she could muster, she exclaimed, 'Never say that again. Only God knows how bad I've been—so bad, I thought he never could forgive me. But now I know that My Saviour loved me and gave himself for me, and it's that makes me happy.'

She sank back exhausted; but her lips had been unsealed, and she and John never wearied of testifying to the power of a Saviour's love—that love which, in different ways, had sought and found these two wanderers from his fold.—H. A. Newman, in 'Friendly Greetings.'

The Earthquake in Assam.

(By Charles E. Burdette, in 'Chicago Standard.')

I must write a few words about our great earthquake. Of course, being on the scene, it may appear greater to us than it will to others, but its force and extent and duration really seem so great to me, that it must become historical. Shillong, which is said to be the centre of the disturbance and the greatest sufferer, is sixty-four miles from Gauhati and we hear that the vibrations of the shock were felt in Paris. It is now ten days since the shock occurred and we are still experiencing a number of tremors every day. They seem slight to us now, but many of them are more severe than anything we ever had before Saturday, June 12. Last Saturday evening, June 19, we had nine distinct shocks, nearly every one of them more severe than the formerly customary Assam shocks, between seven and ten o'clock, and still others during the night. Indeed, if you sat quietly, and gave your attention, you would find the earth slightly trembling at any time since the great shocks. There have been quite marked tremors this morning, and it is but a little past five o'clock; not yet sunrise.

THE EARTHQUAKE.

About five o'clock p.m., a week ago last Saturday, I was sitting at my study table figuring up the average of a number of examination papers, when I was startled by a severe 'thump.' I had felt earthquakes often enough to know what it was, and although it was a little more severe than common, I expected nothing more serious than the tumbling of a few bricks from the tops of our mud laid walls, and was not alarmed in the least. But in order to save each other from anxiety, Miriam (his wife) and I have long faithfully observed a rule that upon the first signs of an earthquake each of us shall immediately run out of the bun-

galow by the nearest door. So I jumped and ran bareheaded, my pen in my fingers, expecting to be again at my desk in a minute or two. But before I had crossed our veranda, the 'thump' was followed by what seemed a double shock—thump, thump—two in close succession, and giving the impression of coming from opposite directions, and became quite serious as I sprang with all my might off the veranda and out of the drive-way into the open compound. By this time the earth was in constant vibration, and though I could not say that I heard anything, I had had the constant sensation that the 'chucking' vibration was accompanied by a chucking sound. I remember now that as I called for Miriam, my own voice had a faint distant sound, and that I was surprised to hear almost no outcry from the bazaars, which were not far off, nor from passers by. Reports from Shillong say that the roar accompanying the shock was deafening, preventing them from hearing the fall of bricks and stone buildings, and one of the weirdest parts of the occurrence here was the noiseless collapse of our bungalows.

Miriam and I seldom fail to see each other as we run from the bungalow, and have never failed to meet soon after getting outside. But this time I saw nothing of her and at once feared that she might have been sleeping. We neither of us have the habit of daytime rest, though sometimes we have taken a little sleep in the afternoon. The weather for a day or two preceding the earthquake had been all but insufferably hot, and peculiarly depressing, and I did not know how late in the afternoon it was. So I at once feared that Miriam might be sleeping. I dismissed this thought as too absurd in the midst of such confusion, but still, she might be delayed dressing, or hindered in getting out, for we were by that time rocking about like a freight caboose. I ran toward the windows and called. Then I saw the chimneys sway and break and clatter down the roof, and I ran back, and immediately forward, saw the bungalow swing violently and then settle down over its foundation. The fall was not attended by a particle of a crash, but a dense cloud of red brick dust beached out on all sides to a great distance, suffocating me, as well as frightening me, and driving me further back. I could still think of nothing but Miriam, but, as I ran again towards the ruins calling her name and waiting for a reply, I noticed that both the other bungalows and the mission chapel were down. I suppose I was myself staggering like a drunken man, for all but one or two of the people in sight were sitting or lying down, gripping the turf with their hands to steady themselves, and I was, myself, conscious of great difficulty in standing or walking. Then there seemed to come a deathly calm. I learned that Miriam had gone to the ladies' bungalow and ran over there to find her with Miss Morgan and Miss Wilson, safe and sound, and in the same awestruck mental condition as myself. Europeans say the first shock lasted two minutes. It seemed to me at the time like ten or fifteen, but recalling what really happened it does not seem that a minute passed before the whole compound was in ruins. A few of the earthquake was over we remembered the unusually sultry weather that preceded it, and especially that the night preceding the earthquake the water brought for our bath rooms was so much warmer than common, that we spoke of it.

RÜINS IN THE MISSION COMPOUND.

Miriam had saved her 'topi' (hat) by being away from home. She was the only