

towards me in the storm was more a deceptive illusion, something I had fancied or dreamed; but faithful memory insisted that it was quite true. So I groped about on my hands and knees on the wet ground, seeking her in the darkness that had fallen upon me. I could not find her for a long while, but at last my hands touched her dear form, and carefully feeling my way, I passed my hand over her face; it was cold and damp. Was it only with the beating rain? I gathered her in my arms; I felt her heart—it was still. I seemed to have known it before—my Annie was dead. The first thing I had learned to feel after in the night of my blindness was the corpse of my wife. Gently I bore her along, shouting loudly as I went—I, the blind one, with my solemn burden of death. When assistance came at last, the storm had spent its rage, and my voice was heard. I stumbled and fell, and was picked up unconscious, and so remained for many a long day. I came to my senses in time, but my sight was entirely gone. My hopes were annihilated, and oh! worst misery of all, my gentle wife was taken from me.

“When I grew better my faithful little nurse, my poor Janet, my wee despoised lassie, dearer and more to me now than seven sons, told me all: How ‘Uncle Aleck’ had heard my wild cries, and had come to me, certain something dreadful must be the matter, to be appalled by the sight of his dear sister and blinded enemy, how he had procured assistance and brought us home, the living and the dead. Annie was buried when I was in the wild delirium of my fever, but the first place I tottered to was, you may be sure, my darling’s grave; the arm I leaned upon was the arm of ‘Uncle Aleck,’ the little hand I clasped was my Janet’s. Since that time, that long-standing earthly quarrel has felt to be a mean thing to have wrought such havoc in our family life. I was saved by my God from the ‘pride which leadeth to destruction,’ ‘but saved, ye ken,’ added the blind singer, ‘so as by fire.’”

We were all silent for many minutes, I hope we, my darling May and I, reverently thanked God for the lesson He had brought us to Burntisland to learn.

“I sold my wee bit farm to Aleck after that,” said blind Donald, “and because music had always been a delight to me, I turned to it as my solace and maintenance. And you’ll excuse me, for I maun be going again to the boat.”

We parted from him cordially, and when, a few hours later, as we crossed back to Granton in the last steamer, we again heard his sweet voice floating plaintively over the glittering waters of the moonlit sea, in the songs of his native land, May’s little hand was clasped in mine, and her dear voice whispered, “Charlie, I shall never forget blind Donald, SINGING THROUGH THE NIGHT.”

Our next number will contain an original story by J. W. KIRTON.

NEVER DESPAIR.

A LADY of great refinement and benevolence being obliged to establish her house in a village hitherto known to her only by reputation, found herself in the vicinity of a very large number of people to whom the Gospel was not preached. In dependence upon God, she determined to do what she could, and therefore appointed a weekly prayer-meeting to be held at her house every Sabbath evening, to which she invited all to whom she could gain access in that destitute neighbourhood. One after another yielded to the gentle influence of her persevering kindness, and many were led to choose the service of Jehovah. The very place itself quickly confessed the blessed change. Neatness and an air of comfort usurped the place of the confusion and filthiness of those miserable dwellings; wranglings and contentions were silenced by the whisperings of peace, the ministrings of a meek and quiet spirit.

But there was one wild, young, rebellious spirit who scoffed at religion, openly reviled and ridiculed those who embraced it, mocked at the woman-reformer, and became so completely the terror of all, that with one consent he was regarded as beyond the reach of all means of grace, as one to be let alone rather than excite his active enmity. Though the lady’s friends had advised her not to speak to this much-fearing creature, she could not forbear, upon accidentally meeting him in the street, to ask him to her house the next Sabbath evening. He said he would come, but boasted among

his companions that he was only going to break up the meeting. He went, but took a seat near the door, intending to leave after accomplishing his purpose. The exercises were conducted in the usual manner, no special reference being made to him. When the meeting was over, the lady approached him, saying, “I am glad to see you here, I hope you will come again.” He made no reply, but the next Sabbath evening, and the next, found him still in his place. Soon he expressed a wish to go to school. The lady aided him. Presently he desired larger advantages than the village school afforded, and again she proved his friend, giving him letters of recommendation, which secured his entrance into one of the public schools of our city. There his diligence and good deportment gained him the favour of all about him. But he knew that far from the scenes of his early life must he win a name and win a noble character. He went South, engaged in trade, in course of time acquired a handsome fortune, and after many years returned to his long-remembered, long-revered benefactress, a self-made man and a humble Christian, ever ready to do good to others, though as a boy his heart had seemed fully set on evil. Ah! how did her heart rejoice in this new proof of God’s goodness to her. And when he sought a nearer relationship to her, she felt that one who had so nobly vindicated his claim to confidence would make her daughter a kind husband. So the wild boy became her honoured son, and even now seeks to extend the blessings he once received by caring for the worst boys.—*Sunday School Times.*

STRIVING FOR GREATNESS.

THE strife for greatness is a fruitless chase; it is pursuing a phantom, seeking a shadow, grasping a bubble. Many a man has testified that he was never happy until he ceased to seek for fame and greatness. It is beyond the power of man to make himself great. His mental constitution, his capabilities, and powers, are largely what he has received and inherited. He may use or abuse them, but he cannot largely change them. And as it regards position, and power, and authority, “God setteth up one and putteth down another.” The loftiest pinnacles of earthly pride are places of the greatest insecurity, and he who without the Divine benediction climbs the hill tops of earthly grandeur, only does so that he may fall as Satan fell, “like lightning from Heaven.”

The path of lowliness is the path of greatness. “Before honour is humility,” and it is easy for God to lift the lowliest head above the proud and mighty; to exalt the humble while he abases those who seek to glorify themselves. Let Christians learn the path the Master trod, and in the hope of sharing the joy and glory which he has gained, they may well be content to suffer with him in a world of toil, sin, and tears, and wait for that honour which shall come from above, that glory which shall never fade away.

“For the joy he set before thee
Bear the momentary pain;
Die to live a life of glory;
Suffer with the Lord to reign.”

The Common People.

LOW SPIRITS.—The grand constituents of health and happiness, the cardinal points upon which everything turns, are—exercise for the body and occupation for the mind. Motion seems to be a great preserving principle of nature, to which even inanimate things are subject, for the wind, waves, the earth itself are restless, and the waving of trees, shrubs, and flowers is known to be an essential part of their economy. A fixed rule of taking several hours’ exercise every day, if possible, in the open air, if not under cover, will be almost certain to secure one exemption from disease, as well as from attacks of low spirits, or ennui—that monster who is ever waylaying the rich and indolent. Low spirits cannot exist in the atmosphere of bodily and mental activity.

THOUGHTS.—People often say that thoughts come into the mind; as if thoughts were things outside of the brain, and could walk about and help themselves to a home in any man’s brain as they pleased. It is not true. Thoughts are formed by the brain, suggested by other thoughts partly, or by facts, or by observations on things seen. Without brain there would be no thought, so far as this life is concerned.