

Family Department.

A PRAYER.

(For the Church Guardian).

By T. N. W.

Omniscient God! the Three in One,
Whose mighty power all creatures own,
Preserve my heart from sin;
Hear from Thy throne an ingrate's cry,
Let Thy pure Spirit sanctify
And cleanse the cup within.

When stern afflictions round me press
Do Thou mine efforts duly bless
And guard me from despair;
As Thou art wont, stretch forth Thine hand,
Lead me to safety's happy strand,
Protected by Thy care.

Let gratitude my heart employ,
'Thy service be my only joy,
'Till Heavenward I ascend,
And new existence be my lot
In that blest realm where sin is not
And pleasures never end.

Untrammell'd by this mortal clay
Thy wondrous works I shall survey
And through creation soar,
'Then join the saints' ecstatic lays
Before Thy throne, with hymns of praise,
To worship and adore.

CLAIRE.

A TALE.

(Written for the Church Guardian.)

By T. M. B.

Half a day's journey from Paris—not in these railroad days when distances are so much diminished, but before railroads were thought of—among its woods, and pastures, and vineyards, stood the Chateau Du Plessis. Its grey turrets were just visible among the ancient, wide-spreading trees which clothed the slope on which it stood, and at the foot of which the bourg, or village, of Du Plessis nestled. For long, long centuries the Counts of Du Plessis had lorded it over the vassals at their feet, and the vassals had crouched there contentedly. Tilling the broad lands and gathering the harvests of their masters, they had asked no more of fate than that their own little corner should yield them enough to keep their simple souls and hardy bodies together. But now the "old order" was changing and about to give place to the new—not calmly and naturally, however, but among agonizing throes and dire convulsions a new condition of society was to come into being.

In those days thoughtful, just-minded men trembled as they saw, more or less clearly, the cloud, no larger than a man's hand, which, ere long, was to be a horror of great darkness. A mysterious ferment was taking place in every social grade; it was like the faint, far-off sound of thunder which was soon to burst forth in appalling uproar.

On the lovely summer afternoon, however, on which my story opens it would have been difficult indeed for a stranger to imagine that any other spirit but that of peace could inhabit the smiling, fertile valley of Du Plessis. Corn-fields and vineyards, full of promise, stretched on either hand of the blue, shining river, spanned by an ancient bridge of three arches which connected the poplar-bordered high-road running parallel with the river on the right with that which led from the left bank through the village and upwards to the Castle Du Plessis.

We will follow this latter road, which takes us first through a cluster of rude cottages, and then through the "place" or "village green" as it would have been called in England, and which is flanked by dwellings of a somewhat more pretentious appearance—namely, the village inn, the house of the Cure, standing in a little garden, and that of the steward or *intendant* of the Count Du Plessis. The latter dwelling, though plain and homely enough, being a low square house of roughly-hewn stone, has, from its contrast to the squalor of the cottages,

quite an imposing appearance, being considerably newer and larger even than the priest's house or the inn. Without any garden in front of it, it stands uncompromisingly facing the others and is the visible symbol of the power and authority of the Count du Plessis.

Its inhabitants have much to do with my story, but to-day we should not find them there, and will continue our way past some more poor cottages and a very small and very ancient church, standing among a group of yews and ilex. It is the last building we shall pass, until, having gradually ascended the hill in the shade of magnificent beeches we come to the outer wall of the castle. Through a broad Norman archway we catch a sight of a wide, grassy terrace and the grey walls and many windows of the castle itself, but continue to follow the road which skirts this outer wall and then descends the western slope of the hill. This western slope is densely clothed with pines—in fact it is the beginning of a long, wide strip of pine-forest which extends like a dark belt across the sunny, fertile country.

About half a mile further, where the ground is somewhat broken, forming a little, fairy-like recess, overhung by the wide-spreading branches, a tiny spring rises from under a shelf of rock, and around it the loveliest ferns and wild flowers flourish. Here, on this silent, summer afternoon, two young girls are seated, or rather one is resting her head upon the other's lap, while she watches the sunbeams stealthily gliding here and there through the dense branches overhead. They form a very marked contrast in everything except their youth, but it is very evident that a tender affection exists between them; in the attitude of the pale, slender girl with the delicate, haughty features there is perfect, loving trustfulness, while the brown, clear-cut face looking down upon her is expressive of devoted attachment. A dreamy silence, broken only by the occasional flight of a bird or by a squirrel darting from branch to branch, had lasted for many minutes, then Claire du Plessis turned so as to look into her companion's face.

"Marthe, do you ever think that a change may come to our lives before long?" A sudden, anxious expression came into the dark, bright eyes of Marthe Duval. "What change, Claire?" "Well—the great, stirring world is all around us, though we neither see nor feel it, it is there. Sometimes it seems to me as though we were living on an enchanted island with the great, heaving sea all around us, and that at any moment one of its vast waves might break in upon us. It is strange that I should have this feeling, for I know absolutely nothing of the world, or what is going on in it." "O, Claire," and two small, firm hands clasped the slender white one resting on the moss, "don't talk of change; we have been so happy! and now, Felix is coming home."

"But Felix himself will be changed; have you ever thought of that? When he went away he was like us, he knew nothing of the world—he belonged to the enchanted island, but the great sea carried him away; he has seen and learned things that we, poor babies, have no idea of. He will come back and find us as he left us, but he will be another."

"Claire, you do not mean what you say! You know as well as I, that Felix will be *our* Felix still. Ah, it seems but yesterday that he went away, and yet it is four whole years ago. Do you remember how handsome he looked in his student's dress? Though I was sorry, too, that he had left off his dark, green hunting jacket. How hard it seemed when he told us he was going. I would not be comforted at first. I could not understand that my only brother should want to leave us. It was *you* who said, 'you are right, Felix. If I were a man, and in your place, I should not be content to be the *intendant's* son, and forrester to the Count du Plessis,' and he said—'Mademoiselle, I shall remember your words of encouragement.' It was the first time he ever called you 'Mademoiselle,' and I remember thinking that he did so, because it sounded more manly."

"Yes, he was right to go," said Claire after a pause; "I should have done so in his place, I should have been full of ambition, full of determination to conquer fate," and the long blue eyes flashed suddenly, and then she laughed. "And

in my *own* place I am—well—a sort of vegetable, let us say a flower, content to be fed with the sunshine and rain that find me out. I suppose because in *my* case fate was fixed and there was no room for ambition."

Marthe Duval made no reply except by softly stroking the fair, loose tresses that lay across her knee. Claire was really thinking aloud when she made such little speeches.

(To be Continued.)

Births.

CROCKETT.—On the 8th inst., at River du Loup, en bas, the wife of T. Crockett, chief train despatcher, of a son.

Marriages.

JENNINGS.—ROY.—On the 15th inst., by the Rev. the Rector of Hubbard's Cove, Elijah S. Jennings to Emily Roy, both of Mill Cove, Lunenburg Co.

WILKINSON.—DOUGLAS.—At St. Thomas' Church, Stanley, on the 19th inst., by the Rev. W. O. Raymond, William Wilkinson to Annie, daughter of John Douglass, Esq., both of Stanley, York Co.

DESBRISAY.—RUDOLF.—At Seaside Cottage, Maria, P.Q., on the 5th inst., by the Rev. P. Lindsay, A. Normand Desbrisay, son of Theophs. Desbrisay, Esq., Q. C., of Bathurst, N. B., to Annie Grace, youngest daughter of W. H. Rudolf, Esq., formerly of Halifax, N. S.

BOND.—PEBRINE.—At Whitehead, April 16th, 1882, by Rev. W. J. Arnold, Geo. Will Bond, of Halfway Cove, to Elizabeth Pebaine, of Port Felix.

MUNRO.—WORTH.—Also by Rev. W. J. Arnold, James Andrew Munro to Jane Worth, of Salmon River.

BIRDESMANN.—KILLAM.—At Trinity Church, Yarmouth, March 12th, by Rev. J. T. T. Moody, Rector, Mr. J. Oscar Birdesmann, of St. John, N. B., and Annie Amelia, youngest daughter of Samuel Killam, Esq., of Yarmouth.

JEFFERY.—JIMS.—On the same day, at the Rectory, Mr. James Jeffery, of Kingston, Michigan U.S., and Hannah C. Jims, of Plymouth, Yarmouth County.

HARRISON.—HUNT.—On the 25th inst. (St. Mark's Day), at St. Luke's Cathedral, Halifax, by the Rev. F. R. Murray, John Harrison to Lily Hunt, both of Bedworth, England.

MUNRO.—PERKINS.—At Montreal, April 5, by Rev. Canon Baldwin, Alexander Munro, M.D., of Montreal, to Ida Jane, youngest daughter of the late Harvey Perkins, formerly of St. John, N. B.

Deaths.

RAY.—At Digby, on the 6th inst., Mary, relict of the late Benjamin Ray, in the 82nd year of her age. Nurtured in and ever a faithful member of the Church of England, her example was most salutary. Her pious, pure, and consistent life proved that she daily walked with God, and her departure at His call was most peaceful and happy, full of the hope of a glorious immortality, and in perfect charity with all the world. She exemplified the fruits of daily conversion.

ATWATER.—At Londonderry Mines, on Sunday evening, the 16th inst., Sarah Atwater, aged 71 years and 5 months, widow of the late Capt. John E. Atwater, of Bayfield, Antigonish. The remains of this much-loved and respected member of the Church were interred on Thursday evening, the 20th inst., in the Churchyard at Bayfield.

DELANEY.—At Londonderry Mines, on Wednesday morning, the 19th inst., John Delaney, aged 67 years and 9 months. Mr. Delaney has been for years a faithful and zealous Christian, deeply attached to the Londonderry Church, of which he was frequently a Warden, and in communion with which he died.

PARKER.—On the 19th March, at Frelighsburg, Que., Fredrick John Parker, Collector H. M. Customs, aged 56 years.

HILTZ.—At Chester, on Thursday morning, April 13th, Mary Catharine, widow of the late J. C. Hiltz, Esq., in the 73rd year of her age. The deceased had been in failing health for many years, and the sudden death of Dr. C. W. Hiltz, in January last, was a great shock to her; but she kept about as usual up to the Saturday before her death, when she was taken worse, and sank rapidly. Her last hours were calm and peaceful and free from all severe bodily pain, and at the end she literally fell asleep in humble trusting faith on the merits of Him Who died for our sins and rose again for our justification.

WINTERTON.—On 25th January, 1882, at Boston, Mass., after an illness of three years and six months, borne with most exemplary patience and resignation, Louise Lorn, Frederica Winterton, aged 10 years, 4 months and 8 days.

Thy little form so beautiful
With grief we've laid away.
Expecting soon our Lord's return
To usher in the day
When thou, with all the ransomed throng,
Shall rise and sing that joyful song.

Sleep on, sweet child, in calm repose,
Naught can disturb thy rest;
Thou shalt arise as Jesus rose
And be forever blest;
Sleep on till thou art call'd away
To dwell with Christ in endless day.

MILES.—At Stanley, York County, N. B., on the 18th inst., of diphtheritic croup, Ella May, infant daughter of Chas. A. and Ella Miles, aged 3 years and 3 months.