

distinctly understood that Miss Skrine was to remain—if she would.

But neither Dr. Fergusson's, nor any other earthly skill, could lift the shadow that hung over little Edwin's life—the shadow of the wing of the Angel of Death, who touches the innocent children so lovingly, that they rarely shrink from him as men and women do, who, sin-laden, fear to look upon his face.

Katharine had had a little bed put up in his room, for she woke at every sound, and he could bear no one but her or his father, or the good-natured Owen near him. His mother, now full of remorse and regret, came often up; but, patient as he was, her fussy, fidgety ways tried his little nerves beyond endurance, and he could never wholly stifle the sigh of relief which marked her departure.

One morning Katharine was sleeping later than usual after a disturbed night for them both, and was awakened at last by subdued little voices; Stephanie had crept in from her own cot in the adjoining room to talk to Edwin—

"But you doesn't think you're going to die, Eddie?" asked the little girl's awestruck tones.

"Yes, I do, and I don't feel afraid a bit, Stepphie."

"But won't it be lonely up in heaven? You don't know anybody there!"

"I feel as if I did; Katie told me. Jesus will come and meet me you know, and take me in His arms like He did the children on earth, because you see He knows me. Then I think one of the angels will come and lead me round and introduce me to everybody; because you know, Stepphie, everybody who's been good will be there; there'll be Joan of Arc, and Shakespeare, and Milton and Mrs. Hands" (the children's old nurse who had died two years before), "and lots of other people; just think the time it'll take; why, I shan't know them all till you, and Katie, and father come—" the child stopped short, and Stepphie tearfully said—

"I wis! I was coming now, Eddie."

Then Katie got up, wondering why Edwin had stopped so abruptly, but she wondered no longer when his father that evening, wishing him good-night, was asked earnestly—

"Father, you'll come and see me in heaven, won't you? Because I shall be waiting for you there."

And the father hastened to his own room, and poured forth in secret his first tears and prayers for many a year.

The end soon came; the little soul passed quietly and gently away, and the tiny, weary body was laid in the earth, which, with its returning spring, was teaching all mourners its glad, yearly resurrection lesson.

Katharine fairly broke down after the strain, and was taken away by Mrs. Drew to the quietude and rest of a small Devonshire watering-place, where she quickly regained her usual health; none the less so, that Anton two or three times contrived to run down to them, and at last won from her the shy confession of her love.

After that she went to her mother, taking Stephanie with her, by Mr. Mathew's request; and it was arranged that after the wedding the little maiden should go to her former governess for lessons, during the long hours that Anton was on his rounds.

Many an hour, too, did Mr. Mathew spend in the little house that Katharine made so cosy, going to fetch his small daughter in the evening; and as the sunset glow faded, and the evening twilight fell on the earth, their words or thoughts turned most often to the pure little soul of Edwin, waiting to keep tryst with them all in Paradise.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

SWEET SEVENTEEN writes from Shanghai, China: "Will you kindly tell me through your Answers to Correspondents if King Cophetua in Tennyson's poem entitled 'The Beggar Maid' is a classical or historical personage, or simply a person and name of Tennyson's own imagination?"

King Cophetua was an imaginary personage, but not of Tennyson's creating. He and his beggar maid are mentioned by Shakespeare in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act IV., Scene I., and *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II., Scene I. Cophetua was supposed to be a King of Africa, of vast wealth, proof against the attractions of woman-kind. One day he saw a beggar maid from his window, and fell in love with her. Her name was Penelophon, called by Shakespeare Xenophon. They were married and "lived happily ever after." See a ballad dated A.D. 1216 in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, book ii.

EDON writes.—"The following lines from E. B. Browning's 'Lady Geraldine's Courtship' have puzzled me very much—

"When we drive out, from the cloud of steam, majestic white horses,
Are we greater than the first men who led black ones by the mane?"

The "majestic white horses" are synonymous with the power of the steam-engine. The poet is (somewhat after the fashion of *Locksley Hall*) attacking the modern pride in the advance of scientific improvements.

"Why, what is this patient entrance into nature's deep resources,
But the child's most gradual learning to walk upright without bane?"

It is absurd to pride ourselves, the author says, through the lips of Bertram, upon the progress of civilisation in such matters, unless we also attend to the progress of the soul, which we are in danger of neglecting. And, because we have learnt to bend the powers of steam to our will, are we necessarily greater than our forefathers, who, in simpler fashion, also curbed the powers of nature by asserting their sway over the animal kingdom? The expressions in the quotation are a little far-fetched, as some of this sweet singer's ex-

pressions are apt to be; but study of the context will render the verse quite clear. It does not make us greater men in life, nor bolder men in death, than our forefathers were, to be able to travel by the aid of the steam-engine rather than by the aid of the steed, as they did. There is a life, a spirit-power beyond all this, and if we do not cultivate it, our boasted scientific progress will avail us but little. Mrs. Browning called the poem (v. her recently published *Letters*) a "Romance of the Age, Treating of Railroads, Routes, and all Manner of Temporalities."

PEGGY writes.—"Could you oblige me by letting me know through your much appreciated page devoted to Answers to Queries who are the two women referred to in Tennyson's 'Dream' as—

"Her, who clasped in her last trance,
Her murder'd father's head,"

and—

"Her, who knew that love can vanquish death,
Who, kneeling with one arm about her king,
Drew forth the poison with her balmy breath,
Sweet as new buds in spring."

"I was delighted to find in these pages during last year the account of Iphigenia in her relation to the passage."

The first-quoted lines from the *Dream of Fair Women* refer, doubtless, to Margaret Roper, the daughter of Sir Thomas More. Her parting with her father before his execution is a well-known and touching incident of history. After his execution, his head was exposed on a pole on London Bridge. Margaret Roper, in her grief and horror at this insult, resolved to try and get possession of the beloved yet ghastly relic. According to Aubrey, "One day, as she was passing under the bridge, looking on her father's head, she exclaimed, 'That head has lain many a time in my lap; would to God it would fall into my lap as I pass under!'" She had her wish, and it did fall into her lap. Unlikely as this may seem, it is probable that the devoted daughter had induced one of the bridge-keepers to throw it down to her, on the

pretext of making room for another, and that the exclamation to her boatman was part of the scheme. She was summoned before the council for having the relic in her custody, and boldly retorted that "Her father's head should not be food for fishes."

After a brief term of imprisonment for the offence, she was set free, and allowed to keep her treasure, which she caused to be enclosed in a leaden casket. On her death in 1544, at the age of thirty-six, the casket, by her own desire, was placed in her coffin, and "embraced in her last trance." Subsequently the head was removed from the coffin and placed in another niche in the same vault—the Roper vault, under the chancel of St. Dunstan's, Canterbury. A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for May, 1837, describes his descent into the vault, then accidentally opened, and his discovery of the fleshless skull behind an iron grating. A little book of a generation or two ago, by the author of Mary Powell, *The Household of Sir Thomas More*, gives a very interesting picture of the More family, and is written in the first person, as though by Margaret Roper.

The second quotation sent us by PEGGY refers to Eleanor of Castile, Queen of Edward I. of England. She accompanied her husband to the Holy Land on the Crusade in 1269, and is said to have saved his life by sucking the poison from a wound inflicted by the poisoned dagger of a Saracen. Thus, in these two widely different instances of the poet's "Dream," love may be said to have vanquished death.

OUR OPEN LETTER BOX.

MARGARET BULGIN asks whence the following quotation is taken—

"'Tis a day just to my mind,
All sunny before and sunny behind,
Amongst the heather."

We have to thank E. M. H. Malmesley for kind information about the song with the refrain *Will ye no come back again*. She adds that she thinks the song *Bonnie Charlie's Gone Awa'* may be procured at any music-seller's in London or Edinburgh.—We also thank M. E. Pickford for referring LILAAC's quotation to "The Old Settler's Story," by Will Carleton.