

Children's Department.

MY MOTHER.

THE following piece of poetry is exceedingly touching and beautiful. It was written by a convict in Ohio Penitentiary.

I've wandered far from thee, mother,
Far from my happy home;
I've left the land that gave me birth,
In other climes to roam.
And time, since then, has rolled its
years

And marked them on my brow;
Yet I have often thought of thee—
I'm thinking of thee now.

I'm thinking of the day, mother,
When at my tender side,
You watched the dawning of my youth
And kissed me in your pride.
Then brightly was my heart lit up,
With hopes of future joys,
Which your bright fancies wove
To deck your darling boy.

I'm thinking of the day, mother,
When, with anxious care,
You lifted up your heart to heaven—
Your hope, your trust was there.
Fond memory brings your parting word,
While tears rolled down your cheeks;
The long, last loving look told more
Than tongue could ever speak.

I'm far away from thee, mother;
No friend is near me now
To soothe me with a tender word,
Or cool my burning brow.
The dearest ties affection wove
Are now all torn from me,
They left me when the trouble came;
They did not love like thee.

I'm lonely and forsaken now,
Unpitied and unblest;
Yet, still I would not have thee know
How sorely I'm distressed.
You could not chide me, mother;
You could not give me blame;
But soothe me with your tender words,
And bid me hope again.

Oh, I have wandered far, mother,
Since I deserted thee
And left thy trusting heart to break,
Beyond the deep blue sea.
Oh, mother, still I love thee well,
And long to hear thee speak,
And feel again thy balmy breath
Upon my care-worn cheek.

But, ah! there is a thought, mother,
Prevades my bleeding breast,
That thy freed spirit may have flown
To its eternal rest.
And while I wipe the tear away
There whispers in my ear
A voice that speaks of heaven and
thee,
And bids me seek thee there.

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE third great Christian festival has dawned upon us,—the glorious day on which our ascended Lord sent down the promised gift, His Holy Spirit, upon the guides and teachers of His infant Church. Few were the chosen ones on whom He came that day; but the Lord gave the word, and great was the company of the preachers. One room in Jerusalem contained them then; but now their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. The light of the day of Pentecost has kindled the whole earth.

What so fitting, then, at Whitsuntide as to tell of the triumphs of the gospel, the spread of the Church into lands whose very names the Apostles knew

not, but which now are white unto the harvest, or are yielding their first fruits to the spiritual reaper? Such a country is India; a vast empire crowded with Mahometans and idolaters, yet not without its congregations of native Christians and its devoted native clergy. Of one of the latter I am about to speak.

In the ancient city of Delhi, once the capital of the Great Mogul, was born, about ninety years ago, a man named Shekh Saleh. His father, a learned Mussulman, and by profession a schoolmaster, brought up his son in his own belief, and taught him the Persian and Arabic languages. Shekh Saleh seems to have possessed a noble upright nature, and, like St. Paul before his conversion, to have attended to every observance of his religion, and been exceedingly zealous for the tradition of his fathers. He obtained, when old enough, the appointment of moonshee or language-master to an English officer, but got into trouble by bringing over one of the Hindoo servants to Mahometanism. He then enlisted as a soldier under a native chief, but while on duty he saw a young man, who had come to his general on a peaceful mission, murdered in cold blood by his fellow soldiers before his eyes. The treachery shocked him, and, dreading lest he should be called on to take part in such an action, he left the army as soon as possible. The only way of life now open to him was trade, and on this he entered at once, in spite of its being little esteemed by his countrymen. Though still a heathen, he might have shamed some Christians by his ready choice of a sphere of honest labour, safe though lowly, in preference to idleness; and as St. Matthew was called at the receipt of custom, and Elisha at the plough, so was Shekh Saleh busily employed when the call reached him to follow Christ.

It came thus: the Rev. Henry Martyn, a holy and devoted missionary, after leaving his English home and friends for his Master's sake, was doing his work at Cawnpore in the north of India. There were in Cawnpore, as in other heathen cities, many starving beggars, and Mr. Martyn chose Sunday as his day for relieving them, when, after attending to their bodily wants, he would tell them of the Lord Jesus, the great comforter of the afflicted. While this was his plan, Shekh Saleh came to visit his father, then residing at Cawnpore. Curiosity led him at first to go and listen to the English priest preaching to the beggars, but better feelings took him there again. His mind was awakened, and he began inquiring about the Christian religion, even questioning the pupils of the mission school, till at last he begged his father, to find him employment at Cawnpore that he might stay and hear more of these things. This was done. His father persuaded Mr. Martyn's secretary to engage him as copyist, and soon an Hindostanee New Testament was given him to bind. His heart glowed at seeing the Christian's sacred book; he read it eagerly, and his desire to become a disciple strengthened within him. Still he felt the importance of the step, and hung back even from opening his mind to Mr. Martyn till he found that, from failing health, the missionary was about to leave Cawnpore. Then he delayed no longer, but applied to him at once for teaching and baptism. The time was, however, too short, so Mr. Martyn took him to Calcutta, and left him there with another clergyman, the Rev. David Brown. By him the new convert was instructed, and, on Whit-Sunday, 1811, publicly baptized by the name of Abdool Messeeh, which means in the Hindoo language "servant of Christ."

Some of his friends, more zealous than prudent, would have had him return at once to his former home as missionary; but he hung back, saying he was yet too ignorant and untaught in the Scriptures. So he lived two years in private, learning, not teaching, only

venturing at least to note down the lessons of a friend and repeat them in his own language to some poor natives. By his means, however, five Mahometans were converted to the Christian faith. Their relatives were very indignant at this, and molested him in many ways, but he bore all with great meekness till his friends advised him to leave Calcutta.

Accordingly the chaplain at Agra, a town in the north of India, took him to that place, instructed him daily in the scriptures, and employed him as a Catechist, in which capacity he laboured diligently for eight years. By this time India had a bishop of her own, and to him Abdool Messeeh's friends applied for his ordination. But things were still unsettled in that long neglected country, and Bishop Middleton demurred to ordaining a native. Abdool Messeeh, therefore, longing to preach the gospel to his heathen countrymen, turned to some Lutheran ministers for sanction. They gave it, and he laboured on at Agra till the good Bishop Heber visited that place in 1825. He remarked the zeal and devotion of the now aged disciple, and offered to ordain him deacon. So Abdool Messeeh followed him to Calcutta, and there received Holy Orders, with three other missionaries.

On his way to Agra he visited his aged mother at Lucknow, and his health being weak and the journey during the hot season trying, a clergyman being also wanted there, he begged to stay instead of going further. This was agreed to by the Church Missionary Society under which he worked, and his labours at Lucknow were not without success. He made one missionary journey to Cawnpore, where first the light of the truth dawned on his soul, and would have gone again, but in the early spring of 1826 he was taken ill. Dr. Luxmore, a physician, with Christian kindness received him into his home and watched him carefully. For this he expressed great gratitude, and rejoiced that Christian brethren now would bury him, at which there would have been difficulty had he died among his relations who were heathens.

His illness increasing, he began calmly to prepare for death. He took leave of his friends, arranged his affairs, and made his will after the English manner. And when this was all over, he said, "Thanks be to God, I have done with this world: and as regards my mother, I commend her to God." He then called to his side a friend who had been with him from the beginning of his illness, folded his hands in prayer, and said, "Oh, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be gracious to him!"

The next day he sent for a convert whom he was preparing for baptism, instructed him for the last time in the Lord's prayer, and promising to baptize him should he recover, telling him at the same time what clergyman to go to in case of his death. Towards evening he grew worse; yet he begged to hear the fourth chapter of St. John, which having been read to him, he said, "Thanks be to God."

Abdool Messeeh had always loved hymns, and had composed several in his own language. His last was as follows:—

"Beloved Saviour, let not me
In Thy kind heart forgotten be;
Of all that deck the field or bow,
Thou art the sweetest, fairest flower.

"Youth's morn has fled; old age come on;
But sin distracts my soul alone;
Beloved Saviour, let not me
In Thy kind heart forgotten be."

He asked the friends who were around him to sing this hymn, and joined his voice to theirs till it faltered in death; and so he peacefully breathed his last on the evening of March 4th, 1826. The next day his body was laid to rest as he had desired, by Christian brethren, with Christian prayer and praise.

Thus lived and died the Rev. Abdool Messeeh, one of the first native clergy-

men of India. There are now many of them, following, we may trust, in his foot-steps. Let us pray that their number may be increased a hundredfold, and that they may be blessed to the bringing that wide country into Christ's kingdom.

ASCENSION DAY.

Or the five great feasts of the Christian Church the one most specially honourable to man is that which celebrates his elevation in the person of God Incarnate to the throne of the universe.

It marks the final triumph of the seed of the woman. It shines out in strange contrast with the manger, with the cross, and with the tomb in the background. No pall of darkness veils the form of the Holy One. He hides Himself in light. A bright cloud receives Him out of sight. For a ray of Heaven darts upon the earth. For a moment the golden gate is open and man enters into the unspeakable joyousness and peace of the city of his God.

Is it not strange that this great day should have fallen into neglect? Men who would not think of labouring on an ordinary Sunday will go to their places of business on Ascension Day without a prick of conscience. Devout women ply their needles and engage in household tasks without a thought that they are trenching upon holy time, dishonouring their God, or robbing their souls of grace.

Yet no Sunday in the year, except Easter, is to be compared with Ascension Day. No day is more truly the Lord's Day than this.

The day of the coronation of the King of Kings, the day when those Hands, pierced by woful nails, first grasped the sceptre of the universe, the day when first began the triumphant pleading of the awful Priest and Victim, is surely a day to be much observed in all our borders.

Would that its heavenly holiness and peace could linger with us all the year

"GIRLS, HELP FATHER."

"My hands are so stiff I can hardly hold a pen," said Farmer Wilber as he sat down to "figure out" some accounts that were getting behindhand.

"Can I help you, father?" said Lucy, laying down bright crochet-work. "I shall be glad to do so if you will explain what you want."

"Well, I shouldn't wonder if you can, Lucy," he said reflectively. "Pretty good at figures, are you?"

"I would be ashamed if I did not know something of them after going twice through the arithmetic," said Lucy, laughing.

"Well, I can show you in five minutes what I have to do, and it'll be a wonderful help if you can do it for me. I never was a master-hand at accounts in my best days, and it does not grow any easier since I have put on spectacles."

Very patiently did the helpful daughter plod through the long lines of figures, leaving the gay worsted to lie idle all the evening, though she was in such haste to finish her scarf. It was reward enough to see her tired father, who had been toiling all day for herself and the other dear ones, sitting so cozily in his easy-chair enjoying his weekly paper.

The clock struck nine before her task was over, but the hearty "Thank you, daughter, a thousand times!" took away all sense of weariness that Lucy might have felt.

"It's rather looking up when a man can have a clerk," said the father. "It's not every farmer that can afford it."

"Not every farmer's daughter is capable of making one," said the mother, with a little pardonable maternal pride. "Nor every one that would be willing

if able," was a sad might be and many of lighter at best willing or claim Girls, cheerful comes, by fretting all the exert as parents

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