

The Rev. H. F. Bland.

that she was provided with the necessities of life, because He would know that she had need of all these things. Therefore, she abandoned her salary and went penniless to her new post. When the ladies who had elected her their chief kindly enquired as to her means of support, her tranquil reply, "I shall be taken care of," naturally enough led them to suppose either that she had means of her own, or was sure of the financial backing of some wealthy friends. The next three months taught her that she had been mistaken, not in believing implicitly, but in forgetting the fact that God works by means, rather than by miracles. At last quite worn out with too hard work, and too meagre living, she fell ill. On her asking for a physician, her uncomplaining mother wisely said, "If you are going on faith, so be it; there is no need for a doctor!" This set Frances thinking as she tossed about in her pain. If a doctor might be God's means to an end in illness, surely a salary might be His means to the end that good work might be done. She wrote a frank statement of the situation to the executive committee of her society. It was read in tears, and answered with a bountiful cheque.

These illustrations say, what the narrative before us says. They teach us something which we all sorely need to learn. In our dealings with Providence, and especially in the great work of personal salvation, we are apt to overlook it. The stanza sometimes sung, "Till to Jesus work you cling, By a simple faith Doing," etc., is not true. Faith and work must go hand-in-hand. We must obey and believe. We must do and trust. It Christ says, "Go shew yourselves to the priests," without giving us the faintest indication of a cure, we must go though leprous as Naaman. If you feel your need of salvation, do the very first thing which God's word and your contrite heart tells you to do. Don't wait for the approval of the intellect, or the endorsement of reason, or some warm feeling of encouragement within you. Trust Christ to save you, and act as if He were already doing it, though everything within you should be as cold as an icicle. "Then shall ye know if ye follow on to know." Give up what you know to be wrong; do what you know to be right; trust an invisible Christ as firmly as if you saw Him and heard Him speak. If you feel your need you can be saved to-day; you can be healed to-day; you can have your leprosy removed to-day. Don't hesitate in renouncing self. Don't hesitate in trusting Christ. You will not be tantalized. Your obedient trust will not be disappointed. "The steps of faith fall on the seeming void, and find the rock beneath."

4. But in order to secure the highest measure of spiritual healing, there is another element of faith needed—an element very graphically brought out in the narrative before us. This element is Practical Thanksgiving v. 15. "And one of them when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks; and he was a Samaritan." Nine of them, when they got what they asked for, joyfully, but thanklessly, went on their way, pleased that their leprosy was gone, but indifferent to the Man that had done it. Only one was penetrated with gratitude for the work done; only one sought the Donor, and with gushing joy adoringly gave Him thanks. What rendered the action all the more noticeable was that this man was a Samaritan—a stranger of another province, and he did what the Donor's countrymen failed to do. "And Jesus answering said: Were there not ten cleansed; but where are the nine? there are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger" (v. 17-18). Now listen how a thankful spirit is noticed and rewarded: "And He said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith has made thee whole." The first blessing, growing out of obedient faith, touched the body, but the second growing out of thankful faith touched the soul—the leprosy of the body was gone—and now the still deeper and more fatal leprosy of the soul goes. A spirit of believing thanksgiving touched the highest possibilities of the man, making him outwardly and inwardly every whit whole.

1. Let us then in closing ponder two questions: How is it that the blessing of soul healing in so many cases fails to mature? "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?" What brought the one ought to have brought the rest. Providential good given to the one, ought to have been equally fruitful in the nine. Only one gained the higher prize, and it was a thankful faith that gained it.

How suggestive is this! A faith that is not mingled with thanksgiving fails to realise the highest bestowment. An obedient faith interpenetrated with thanksgiving has its own way in the treasure house of God. Many Christians are cold and poor and feeble because their lives are not leavened with grateful faith. Are you spiritually leprous, take the first step towards Christ which your conscience tells you you ought to do, however much of self-denial it may involve—don't wait for more light or more conviction. Have you experienced a benediction in any form, stir up the fire of grateful faith, give glory to the loving Saviour who has done it, and see if He will not give a spiritual roundness to your character that shall make you "strong in the Lord and the power of His might."

2. The second question is this: How is it that soul healing is so frequently limited to the unlikely? "There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." The one the most unlikely to get it found what the nine lost. Is not this the case now? Those nearest to the gate of the kingdom frequently fail to go in, while the degraded and abandoned welcome the invitation. The prodigal finds what the good moral man will not humble himself to seek. "And they shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves shall be thrust out" (Luke xiii, 27-28.) O ye children of the kingdom, ye highly favored ones, ye that have praying fathers and praying mothers, ye that are so near the gate of life but fail to enter, let not the Samaritan pass by you. Let not Jesus say as He welcomes the unlikely and the unprivileged, Where are the nine? Great will be your condemnation if you negligently lose your chance of life.

The Rev. H. F. Bland of the Methodist Church, Quebec, one of whose sermons we publish in this issue, is a native of England, and of that county famous for its warm-hearted Methodism—Yorkshire. He was converted to God at the age of thirteen, and only two years later preached his first sermon from behind a large chair in a farm-house near Bolton Abbey. From that time his preaching career has been unbroken—for some years as one of the most popular and laborious of local preachers in the West Riding, and since 1858 in the Canadian ministry. During the latter period he has been successively stationed at St. Andrews on the Ottawa, Hemmingford, Montreal, Dundas, Kingston, Belleville, Quebec, Montreal (Dominion Square), Pembroke, Kingston (Queen street), Perth and Quebec.

Of Mr. Bland's energy and financiering ability almost every one of these charges bears record in debts liquidated or churches and parsonages built, most notably the great Church Extension Movement in Montreal in 1863, of which he was the originator.

The high character and usefulness of Mr. Bland's preaching is shown in the character of his appointments, the esteem and confidence of his brethren in his fifteen years of Chairmanship of Districts, and his election to the Presidency of the Montreal Conference held in Napanee in 1881.

But perhaps there is no honor higher, or more deserved, than the reputation which has almost made Mr. Bland's name proverbial in the Montreal Conference, for faithfulness and usefulness as a pastor.

Written for the LADIES' PICTORIAL WEEKLY.

A Peep at New Orleans During Mardi Gras.

DEAR LOU:—You remember what a stormy, disagreeable day it was, the Tuesday we left Toronto? Well, imagine our unbounded delight, in reaching New Orleans the following Friday morning, to find ourselves in the midst of bright sunshine, and seeing jonquils, narcissis and daffodils galore, beside numerous other plants and flowers peculiar to this "Sunny South," such as magnolias, and catalpas and the quaint mock orange trees. Our first effort was to procure comfortable lodgings, for our fellow passengers frightened us into believing we should have to spend the night on the street or seek shelter in one of the "Houses for the Destitute," as during Mardi Gras season, neither love nor money could buy, at times, a place to lay the head. However taking our letters and addresses we proceeded at once to St. Charles Avenue, (New Orleans' Fifth Avenue) and were so fortunate as to procure most comfortable quarters in a house once owned and occupied by General Beauregard, the famous old warrior, who for the mere signing of his name to the lottery tickets, is paid the sum of ten thousand dollars annually, so much is he respected, and so upright and just is he in his dealings that his name alone carries confidence, and prevents suspicion of fraud on his fellow-countrymen. This house, which was the wedding gift of General Beauregard to his daughter, who lived but two short years to enjoy her married life, and whose grave we afterwards visited, has the usual southern piazzas, covered with vines and roses, from which we could see the numerous processions of Rex and his court. In due time these came off, and for hours before the regular train appeared, we were amused with quaint and grotesque figures of imps, clowns, elves and every conceivable unnatural sprite, hovering near till the king shall appear, then among his courtiers they will adjust themselves. For it is Mardi Gras—the synonym of gaiety, laughter and frolic. "Rex, the king of the Carnival," has come again to receive the homage of his faithful subjects, and lend his presence to the scene of dancing and fun, with which his coming is associated.

Every Shrove Tuesday this delightful farce is gone through. They play giving the city to "Rex, the King of the Carnival." It is his, for the time being, and no scene in Columbus, or Cortes' triumph, could be acted with more apparent solemnity than is this graceful tribute of the New Orleans people, paid to Comus, the god of mirth. Fortunately, Rex is content with the day's "freedom of the city," as no business is done while he holds court, for all, rich and poor, black and white, join in the frolic which makes Mardi Gras the great festival of the year.

The real word (and pleasure) of the day begins at eleven o'clock in the morning, when Rex, surrounded by his courtiers, makes the grand tour of the city. Mounted on "floats" or thrones, drawn by richly caparisoned horses, that might well uphold the dignity of an eastern prince. Rex and courtiers, in masks and costumes suitable for the occasion, pass smilingly by through the principal streets, dispensing their gifts of bon-bons, right royally. Happy is the maiden whose lover is among them, for the shower of favors that find their way to her gate, where she stands smiling among the roses to receive them, is such as to cause many an envious flutter among her less fortunate sisters.

In case Rex and his courtiers should be too easily recognized, a change of character is made each year. One season finds the gods and goddesses of Greek mythology gracing the carnival with their presence, another sees the ancient Egyptian deities presiding over the motley crowd, while a third beholds the famous discoverers of the world, mounted on thrones. Thus each year presents a different spectacle, always something new, novel, and surprising, and one is inclined to think that nothing can eclipse this year's beauty in design and originality of conception. With bands of music, laughter and song, Rex has come, and, as of old, conquered, and passed from our admiring eyes till the evening, when in triumph he leads his queen, a marvel of loveliness, ablaze with jewels, to the great throne room, where with a graceful tribute to his royal sister,

Terpsichore, he salutes his fair queen and with an inimitable grace they glide off to the tuneful strain of Strauss' best and most graceful effort.

Then is presented a scene which baffles the pen to describe. On all sides dance seraphs and devils, clowns and graces, here Apollo leads forth the stately Cleopatra, and Clio succumbs to the fascinations of Baccus. These wierd figures flit to and fro before the bewildered eye, and lend an air of mystery to the scene which is in keeping with the events of the day. Late into the night is the revel kept up, and dancing continues, the courtiers meanwhile keeping on their masks and preserving their incognito, which many a belle endeavors in vain to penetrate. Woe, betide the masker who reveals his identity. Rex's court martial deals severely with him. Though many a maiden guesses who her partner is, by the pressure of the hand, or the sweetest nothing, or the memento of diamond worth he gives her yet to be certain would entail the most direful consequences. Finally one by one the revelers depart till there remains but the shadow and echo of the evening's pleasures, a rare bit of lace, or perchance the prized favor of a lover to his sweetheart, to remind us of the mad frolic of Mardi Gras.

There are few cities in America which contain in themselves more historic interest than this "Crescent City." The largest and most influential in the south, it is the port and harbor of the Mississippi, that great artery of the west. In the docks, ships from every nation are seen. The unfamiliar flags of Russia, Spain, and France wave in the faint breeze and give to the waterway a cosmopolitan air not found elsewhere in America.

The New Orleans people point with pride to the statue of General Jackson, which they erected to commemorate their victory over the English in the war of 1812, and which they fondly imagine to be the only important battle of the time. Of Queenston Heights they have never heard, and smile in derision if you suggest it was of more importance.

Last Sunday morning we went to the French Market for breakfast, which is one of the most interesting sights in the charming city. The conglomeration of fish, fowls, and vegetables, strawberries, bananas and pine-apples, coffee rolls, and boullion, Spaniards, French, and negroes is a *tout ensemble* that to be fully appreciated must be seen in the flesh. It only remained for us to cross the street to the old church, Notre Dame, built about 1750, and hear the cackle of the hen, and quack of the ducks mingling with the early mass of the priests, or the mumblings of an old negress over her beads, and in the dim morning light hear over all the solemn organ peal, to have a picture impossible of reproduction anywhere but in New Orleans.

How fascinating is the French opera, with its crimson, white and gold decorations; its boxes filled with Creole beauties, and its foyer for promenading entres acts. This is the only city on the continent which supports a troupe the entire season, and very proud are they of the entertainment it affords. Another day we went to the Spanish Fort, for a soft shell crab breakfast, and there on the banks of Lake Ponchartrain enjoyed an hour amid the roses and balmy air of this pretty suburb, crossing the lake afterwards in a punt of uncertain age, the dark Italian, who acts as captain, crew, purser, and pilot, meanwhile regaling us with stories of each rock and creek we passed. We run into West point, hence back to our delightful quarters on St. Charles Avenue. Yet another day we spent among the cemeteries, which are unique. The ground being of a marshy character, it is impossible to bury the dead, therefore sarcophago have been built, into which the coffins are placed. Imagine rows of marble or stone tombs, shaped somewhat like kennels, with here and there a huge column erected to the memory of those brave men who died fighting for their rights and homes, and you have an idea of the cemetery in New Orleans. The remains of Jefferson Davis lie in one of these vaults, and the Confederate flag, waving over a tent which shelters the sentinel who guards the grave day and night, proves an efficient guide to direct our footsteps to the spot where lies buried the hero of a lost cause. We plucked a flower from the grave, and hurried away from a spot full of such sad memories. We were fortunate enough to obtain entrance into that retired spot—Beauvoir—the home of the widow and "daughter of the Confederacy." Very pretty is this typical old Southern home of Mrs. Davis, with its wide verandahs, covered with moss, and its pretty French windows opening into the rooms beyond. Mrs. Davis and her daughter see very few strangers, but are courteous to all who bring letters to them. Mrs. Davis spends many hours daily on a book she is publishing on the life of "My beloved husband," and truly a labor of love it is. Dame Rumor hath it that Miss Davis is to be married to one of the wealthiest men in the South, one whose devotion to the great actress, Mary Anderson, has made him as famous as Mrs. Langtry's immortal "Freddie."

We noticed particularly the difference between the French and English parts of this place; the latter being like any modern handsome city, while the former retains all the peculiarities of its ancient (but now departed) splendor. The streets are very narrow, the buildings low, and you hear French spoken exclusively in this old-fashioned part of the town.

As the time draws near for our departure, we sigh and moan, at the thought of leaving this Paradise of roses, and we wish, dear Bab, that every reader of the LADIES' PICTORIAL could only have a peep at New Orleans during Mardi Gras!

DAISY DEAN.

A PERSON overheard two countrymen, who were observing a naturalist in the field collecting insects, say to one another:

"What's that fellow doing?"

"Why, he's a naturalist."

"What's that?"

"Why, a fellow that catches gnats, to be sure."