

Pastor and People.

NOW AND THEN.

"Now we see through a glass darkly; but then, face to face."

Now, by the wayside, see! thistle and thorn,
Often 'neath storm-cloud, yet wending one's way;
Footsore and weary, depressed and forlorn,—
Sighing and hoping for some cheering ray.
After a while, then, cessation from toil;
After a while, then, the harp and the song;
Deliverance forever from strife and turmoil,
Rejoicing and saved, with the blood-washed throng.

Now, in the desert, o'er parched lands we tread,
Pitching our tent on cold, wild, sterile ground;
With desolate prospects;—it is the place of the dead;
And the waters of Marah so bitter we've found.
After a little, then, a heavenly land;
A far better country, where spring-time seems rife;
Companionship lovely, with the white-clad to stand,—
As heirs of salvation,—by the river of life.

Now, treading the vale, with life's trials and cross,
They chafe the poor pilgrim by night and by day;
'Tis woe, disappointments, sad chastenings and loss,—
The heart-breaking farewells, of those passed away!
After a little, then 'neath heavenly palms,
Shall come the re-union, in that land of song;
We shall join with eternity's thanksgiving psalms,
And vie with the millions—the chorus prolong.

Now, in the home-land, where doubtings and fears,—
Where sin, pain and sickness infest every breath;
Where sorrows, bereavements draw forth floods of tears,
And hovering close by is the Angel of Death!
After a while, then, the last tear and prayer,
A sundering of earth ties, so tenderly riven;
And then, the King's welcome, for He will be there
To give us a place 'mid the glories of heaven.

—Rev. Charles Collins.

THE VICTORIAN AGE.

BY REV. E. D. MACLAREN, M.A., B.D.

There is probably no period of similar length in the whole history of the world, into which there has been crowded so much that is important and influential, as the period covered by the reign of the good Queen, upon whom both because of her official position, and on account of her personal worth, we pray that the choicest blessings of heaven may rest. No thoughtful man can regard with indifference the reign of a sovereign, who, for the long period of fifty-four years, has kept strictly within the limits of constitutional government, and at whose—

Council statesmen met
Who knew the seasons—when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet.

By shaping some august decree,
Which kept her throne unshaken still,
Broad-based upon her people's will,
And compassed by the inviolate sea.

Possibly no other occupant of the British throne may ever have to do with so many influential forces as those that brought about the disruption in the Church of Scotland, the abolition of the corn laws, the inauguration of the peaceful rivalries of international exhibitions, the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, the removal of the political disabilities of the Jews, the laying of the trans-Atlantic cable, the Reform Act, the Confederation of the British North American Provinces into the Dominion of Canada, the dis-establishment of the Irish Church, the Abyssinian, the Ashantee, the Zulu, the Afghan and the Egyptian wars, the explorations in Africa of Moffat and Livingstone, and the consequent establishment of Christian missions in the very heart of "The Dark Continent." And if our survey be extended to include other interests than those that are purely British, it will be found that the Victorian age has witnessed the overthrow of the temporal power of the Pope and the formation of a free and united Italy, the unification of the petty principalities of Germany into the great empire of Prussia, the bitter and bloody civil war of the American Republic, that resulted in the abolition of the curse of slavery in the Southern States, the awful shock felt by the whole civilized world of that Franco-German conflict that ended in the Siege of Paris and the cruel outrages of red-handed Communism, the recognition by the great powers of Europe, as a means of settling international disputes, of that principle of arbitration that had already been acted on in the case of the Alabama claims, by the two great divisions of the Anglo-Saxon race, and the opening in all parts of the heathen world of "great doors and effectual" through which with eager zeal the followers of Christ have pressed to plant amid ancient philosophies or ignorant superstitions the blood-stained banner of the Cross. Perhaps the world is as yet in its infancy in regard to scientific research and inventive genius; but however great may be the progress made in the coming days, a peculiar glory will always attach to the age that witnessed the development of the idea of railroads and steamboats, that saw the introduction of the arts of photography, telegraphy, and telephony, and that even took the subtle, deadly, electric current and harnessed it to street cars and railway trains, or, hanging it aloft, bade it dispel the darkness of the night with an effulgence that almost rivals the splendour of the mid-day sun. To those who believe that God is immanent in His works, not a far-off, indifferent spectator of sub-lunary affairs but actively present in the forces of nature and in the energies of humanity, and who, therefore, seek with reverent spirit to trace the footsteps of the Creator in the onward march of the human family, the study

of such an age is tremendously important, and of fascinating interest. Of course even a cursory and superficial glance at the progress of events will disclose much that is discouraging; but it will also reveal a great deal that we ought to be profoundly thankful for. On the very surface are the indications of material prosperity and intellectual acumen, and if we look a little deeper we shall find that in regard to more important matters the trend of the nation's life has been in the right direction. On this anniversary of our Sovereign's birth it may not be unprofitable, and it certainly will not be inappropriate, for us to consider some of the encouraging features of the Victoria age.

1st. The ever-widening influence of the Anglo-Saxon race. The progress made by the English-speaking people during the last fifty years is worthy of serious thought. Canada, from being an obscure uninfluential colony, has come to be one of the brightest gems in the diadem of Britain's Queen. In India the power of Christian truth and the influences of Christian civilization, which have been introduced under the protecting shield of British rule, are slowly breaking up the hard crust of social and religious usages that have prevailed for thousands of years. In Australia we have a whole continent possessed by Anglo-Saxons; and there is every prospect of the independent colonies of which it is composed combining in the near future to form a magnificent Australasian confederation. The development of British power in South Africa is regarded by many as an indication that ultimately that power will control the destinies of the whole African continent. And side by side with this increase of the original stock of the Anglo-Saxon race has been the marvellous growth of Britain's eldest daughter, the great American Republic. Unprincipled demagogues in both countries may seek to stir up strife and hatred; but all right-minded Britons will enthusiastically applaud America's Quaker poet, when speaking for the best elements in American life, he sings:—

O, Englishmen!—in hope and creed,
In blood and tongue our brothers!
We, too, are heirs of Runnymede;
And Shakespeare's fame and Cromwell's deed,
Are not alone our mother's.

"Thicker than water" in one rill,
Through centuries of story,
Our Saxon blood has flowed, and still
We share with you its good and ill,
The shadow and the glory.

Joint-heirs and kinsfolk, leagues of wave
Nor length of years can part us;
Your right is ours to shrine and grave,
The common freehold of the brave,
The gift of saints and martyrs.

Is it too much to expect that the severed ties will yet be re-united? Surely what so many have dreamed of will some day come to pass, and the world will see what a contributor to a late review was thinking of when he wrote:—

Where is a Briton's Fatherland?
Is't English land or Scottish land?
Is't Wales, with many a wild ravine?
Is't Erin's groves and meadows green?
No; greater far it seems to me
A Briton's Fatherland must be.

Where is a Briton's Fatherland?
Is't Canada or Newfoundland?
Is't where, amid her lakes and isles,
St. Lawrence flows two thousand miles?
Oh, no! however grand they are,
My Fatherland is greater far.

Where is a Briton's Fatherland?
Is't fair Natal or Caffreland?
Is't where they rear the fruitful vines?
Is't where the Afric diamond shines?
No; let me rove where'er I will,
My Fatherland is greater still.

Where is a Briton's Fatherland?
Is't far Australia's coral strand?
Is't where they dig the yellow gold?
Is't where they gather flocks untold?
No; honour these well you may,
My Fatherland is more than they.

Where is a Briton's Fatherland?
Is't India's bright and sunny strand?
Is't where the hollow bamboo grows?
Is't where the sacred Ganges flows?
Ah, no! they see the sun decline,
A greater Fatherland is mine.

Where is a Briton's Fatherland?
What oceans bound that mighty land?
Is't where the pilgrim fathers rest,
The great Republic of the West?
No, no! her stars above her set,
My Fatherland is greater yet.

Where is a Briton's Fatherland?
Will no one tell me of that land?
'Tis where one meets with English folk,
And hears the tongue that Shakespeare spoke;
Where songs of Burns are in the air—
A Briton's Fatherland is there.

That is a Briton's Fatherland
Where brother clasps a brother's hand;
Where pledges of true love are given,
Where faithful vows ascend to heaven,
Where Sabbath breathes a stillness round—
A Briton's Fatherland is found.

Oh may that Fatherland be still
Safeguarded by th' Almighty's will!
May Heaven prolong our times of peace,
Our commerce bless, our trade increase,
And wider yet the bounds expand
Of our Imperial Fatherland!

But, it may be asked, what encouragement for the world at large is to be found in the fact of the increasing influence of the Anglo-Saxon race? Simply this, that during the last hundred years that race has done more for the world's advancement than all other races combined. In scientific investigation, and in the work of civilization, in the opening up of new channels for trade and new countries for settlement, and in regard to education and literature and mechanical appliances, those who speak the English tongue have more than held their own with other nations in the struggle for supremacy. And in a far more important matter than any of these, in the matter of Bible circulation and missionary effort, there is simply no comparison between Britain and America on the one hand and all the rest of the world on the other. "Happy is that people that is in such a case."

2nd. The fuller recognition of the principle of human brotherhood.

Not the least hopeful sign of the age we live in is the interest that men take in one another. Ancient abuses are being rectified, and more fully than ever before the rights of all classes are being recognized. There is something touchingly beautiful and wonderfully encouraging in the deep anxious interest manifested by the public at large in the bitter conflicts that occasionally take place between capital and labour. And when it is seen that a wrong has been committed, when wealthy individuals or powerful corporations trample upon the rights of their fellow-men, the moral sense of the great body of the people is aroused, and ecclesiastics and statesmen unite to interfere, and pulpit and press persist in their denunciations of the wrong-doer until the wrong is redressed and truth and justice triumph. Never before in the history of the great British nation has so much attention been given to the great social problems that clamour for solution. Never before were so many leading men ready to give time and thought and anxious effort in order to bring contending classes to a truer appreciation of each other's position, and thus help to usher in the time

When man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be.

"Happy is that people that is in such a case."

3rd. The higher regard paid to morality.

There is still vast room for improvement in the moral tone of our professedly Christian nation; but everyone who is at all familiar with the social and political condition that prevailed at the beginning of the present century will feel profoundly thankful when he contrasts therewith the altered state of things that exists to-day. When, during the Soudan campaign, the Queen declined the offer of the services of a distinguished soldier who had brought upon himself well-merited disgrace, the moral judgment of the nation endorsed the Queen's decision and proclaimed that in the interests of morality it was desirable that Baker Pasha should never again have the honour of wearing the uniform of a British officer. A few years ago the exposure of the immorality of Sir Charles Dilke brought his brilliant parliamentary career to an ignominious close and compelled his retirement into private life. Very lately the world has witnessed the pitiful downfall of the great Irish leader, the result of his violation of the principles of morality. Such incidents as these show the direction of the moral currents of the nation's life. Let us hope that with increasing emphasis the moral sense of the nation will declare that while a premium must not be placed upon dulness merely because it happens to be associated with morality or even with religion, still less must a premium be placed upon cleverness when divorced from principle or defiant of morality. "Happy is that people that is in such a case."

4th. The larger measure of activity displayed by Christians.

Perhaps in the coming days the great glory of the Victorian age will be the wonderful development that it witnessed of the spirit of missionary zeal. During the last half-century the Christian Church has put forth more efforts to win the world for Christ than had been put forth during all the centuries that have elapsed since the early days of Christianity. The Gospel banner has been unfurled in all the chief countries of the heathen world; and at the same time earnest and sympathetic attempts have been made to evangelize the masses of practical heathen that are to be found at home. The energies of consecrated Christian men and women have gone out in all directions, and the beneficial results of these charitable and philanthropic efforts are visible on every hand. One very noteworthy characteristic, destined perhaps to be the distinctive feature of the religious life of the Victorian age, is the disposition manifested by so many of the followers of Christ to heal the wounds of old ecclesiastical strifes, to draw nearer to one another in the bonds of a common faith and so to assist in bringing about the answer to that sublime petition in their Lord's intercessory prayer: "That they all may be one; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." "Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

THE DEVIL'S VACATION.

A vacation ought to mean only a change of place and work for a little while. It is true that the devil never takes a vacation, but he closes the theatre and goes to the summer resort, that he may catch careless Christians who have left their religion behind them. To prevent this, Christians must be Christians always and everywhere. It may be duty that calls you away from your congregation or Sabbath school to mountain or seashore for a time; but duty also requires that you confess and worship and serve your Master there as in your place at home. There can be no wrong in going apart into a desert place to rest for a while, provided we go to rest in His love and companionship who frees from heavy burdens, and whose yoke is always easy.