

inundation; only a rock defied it, perfectly motionless. In vain the bellowing waters beat it in their fury; the rock yielded not, but the foaming waves died at its foot. "A rock, then, is my superior," said the cloud, "I would rather be in its place." "You shall be," said the angel. And he was transformed into a steep, unshaken rock. Insensible to the rays of the sun, indifferent to the torrents of rain and the shock of the tumultuous waves. But he distinguished at his foot a man of poor appearance, hardly clothed, armed with a chisel and a hammer; and the man, with the help of those instruments, struck pieces off the rock, which he dressed into stone proper for cutting. "What is that?" cried the rock? "Has a man the power of rending pieces of stone from my base? Shall I be weaker than he? Then it is absolutely necessary that I should be that man." "Have your will," said the angel; and he became again what he had been—a poor stonecutter, a simple workman in the quarries. His life was rude; he worked much, and gained little, but had learned contentment with his lot.

#### THE COMPENSATIONS OF THE BLIND.

If the blind man is in the middle of unsympathetic scenes, and people, and surroundings, he need never remain there long; just one strong effort with the wings of imagination, and he is far away in an instant. His eyes do not show him the cold or uncomfortable realities in the midst of which he is, and so his fancy is at liberty to play any bright magic tricks she pleases. When he is walking through a dusty, prosaic town thoroughfare, he may, unknown to the matter-of-fact companion at his side, be treading the dew-drenched paths of some forest solitude; or when he is sitting in a strange house, he may be in the familiar chair at some well-loved fireside, miles distant. It is a precious, blessed power, this, granted to the blind, the so-called afflicted—a power, which many who have eyes to see will, perhaps, with dreary longing in different stages of their life's journey, envy. "He is a dark," or "She is a dark," is not at all an uncommon way among the lower orders for speaking of a blind man or woman; but, "He is light," or "She is light," would be, in reality, a much truer form of expression. We are not now talking of the radiance that illuminates the mind; we mean the eye, and the eye alone. There is one sort of blindness which consists in a cloud of dazzling brightness, such as must have surrounded the Mercy Seat of the Most High, of old, into which the eyes are incessantly gazing. Let the night be ever so black, the sky ever so gloomy, this flood of excessive brilliancy still encircles him whom men call unhappy. And when any colour is named, and the blind seer of this wondrous light wishes to behold the mentioned hue, he has but to think intently on it, and the harmless fire, which is his constant companion, becomes a beautiful red, or blue, or green blaze. No doubt oculists can account fully for this apparently singular phenomenon, but not the less is it a further sign of God's love for His blind children. The very mistakes and small confusions which blindness sometimes brings about in daily life, are to blind men or women, if they have a spark of humour in them, sources of perennial amusement. What can be more comic than the situation when, misled by the singular similarity of voices which we so often find in families, you think that the prim old maiden lady who has just shaken hands with you is her younger sister, the happy mother of thirteen, and ask, with affectionate interest, whether she left the dear twins at home feeling better after the measles? Who can resist a hearty laugh, the sort of laugh that makes the spirit of ennui spread his wings and take flight, when on wandering along an inn passage, trying to find your way back to your own room, which sometimes at first, without your eyes, when you have not quite learned the bearings of the place, is a rather puzzling task, you suddenly come in contact with a fussy, nervous old gentleman, who sees that you are not moving about exactly like other folk, and cannot quite make up his mind whether he shall run away or offer you his arm?—Argory.

#### THE RICH DOCTORS.

Enormous sums of money would be amassed by a celebrated doctor in the days of academic prosperity. To retain his services a university would give him almost any terms he liked to ask. Taddeo, of the Florentine University, Villani tells us, was the most reputed medical man of his day. He was deemed a second Hippocrates, and summoned by the rich to all parts of Italy. The Pope fell ill and sent for him; when asked his fee Taddeo claimed 100 ducats a day, at which the invalid Pope remonstrated. Taddeo was firm, told stories of what large sums other Princes had given him, and hinted at stinginess on the part of His Holiness. The Pope recovered from his sickness, and, "to purge from himself all suspicion of avarice," he sent Taddeo no less than 10,000 ducats. The doctor was a man of pious intent, and spent this splendid fortune on the erection of a church. The university of Modena gave Suzzara 2,250 lire and a piece of land in their district on condition that he would live among them for his life. Suzzara accepted the gifts but the annals of his life show that he did not stick to his part of the bargain, for he wandered from place to place amassing wealth, and died far away from Modena. Suzzara was a man who extremely loved dress, great Professor though he was. He is reproachfully alluded to by a fellow-doctor thus: "Men of science should not go about in silken robes covered with coloured embroidery, such as Suzzara used to wear." Again, Prof. Baldospent a wandering life in spite of an oath to remain in one university. He taught thirty-three years in his native Perugia, and then passed six years at the Florentine University, from thence he went for three years to Bologna, for one to Pisa, for three to Padua, and for ten to Pavia where he died worth a large sum of money. This moving to and fro was a curious feature in Italian university life, for not only did the Professors travel, but they were followed by most of their devoted scholars who at that time were being instructed by them; thus the departure of a celebrated Professor meant a regular exodus from the place they left and a

signal for great rejoicings when they arrived at their proposed destination. Not only the cities but the Popes and Emperors gave to the Professors large gifts—to our friend Giovandrea, of Bologna, Pope John XXII, gave a feudal estate—and in their old age they were well looked after.—*The British Quarterly Review.*

#### A WILLING WORKER.

BY MINNIE F., ST. ELMO.

The dew lay glistening on the grass,  
The sunbeams slanted through the trees,  
And early dawn with mellow light  
Crept over dales and shadowed leas.

And from the woods a hundred notes  
Came trilling on the morning air,  
While in the cot the turtle dove  
Cooed to his mate—a happy pair.

But soon a voice of discord rose,  
And sorrow seized on every one;  
For in the barnyard—woeful tale!  
Alas, the speckled hen was gone.

And five small chicks were motherless;  
Two white, two speckled, and one brown;  
And how to help the little dears  
Was just the talk in poultry town.

They called a meeting to decide  
How best to act for their support;  
And shook their heads and rubbed their bills  
O'er motion dull and stale report.

"At length an aged rooster rose,  
And said—I'm wiser than the rest;  
The yellow hen has just one chick—  
Of course she'll take them to her nest."

They ran and found the yellow hen,  
Joyous to think all trouble done;  
She raised her feathers in a puff—  
"I've scarcely time to scratch for one;

I'm busy too from morn till night,  
I scarce can keep myself alive;  
It seems a very likely thing  
That I could undertake for five!"

The hens turned backward in dismay;  
'Twas clear no help could there be gained,  
And for the chirping little pets  
Each pullet's tender heart was pained.

The morning seemed to lose its light,  
The dewdrops were but trembling tears,  
And to the old brown hen they went  
To raise their hearts and tell their fears.

She listened to their tale of woe;  
A tear stood in her bright round eye;  
Then—"Oh, my dears," she softly said,  
"We must not let the darlings die."

"I've only got fifteen myself;  
My wings are very wide, you see;  
I'm sure to find enough for all—  
Just bring the little chicks to me."

#### MORAL

My moral is not hard to read;  
I think it must be plain to you;  
—If you want help in any work,  
Ask those who have some work to do.

#### THE FASCINATION OF NATURE.

It is astonishing what power inanimate things obtain over the mind of man; once fall in love with the sea, and what can ever replace it in our hearts? Nothing. It is for ever calling us; through the calm of a summer night we hear it above every other quiet sound; in the winter we picture it to ourselves in its thousand and one moods; and after being apart from it for any length of time, it is only the veriest shame that prevents us casting ourselves on the sand and touching the waves as they come toward us, so glad are we to know we can see its beautiful face again. It is the most perfect of companions, and never palls; but it is a subtle creature too, and so possesses itself of our inmost soul that we are never really happy unless we are within reach of the truest and most sympathising friend we possess. This, too, extends itself to some natures to the land. None can understand it perhaps who has not experienced it; but it entirely accounts for the way in which, year after year, farmers persistently lose money, simply because fields and pastures that they have known from their youth are more to them, have more to give them of perfect happiness, than riches and plenty have among houses and in cities or in countries that they do not know.—*J. E. Pantom, in Good Words.*

THE Rev. Dr. Rentoul, of Woolwich, is about to be called to the bar, but his congregation are willing to retain him as their pastor all the same.

MR. J. A. BROWN was recently ordained at Galashiels as missionary to Rajpootana. Dr. Gloag, parish minister, expressed the wish and belief that evangelical Christian missions would soon be merged in one and denominationalism lost sight of. Principal Cairns, Prof. Calderwood and others addressed a missionary meeting, attended by about one thousand persons, in the evening. The collection for mission purposes amounted to \$385.

## BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

EL MAHDI, the false prophet, sleeps during the day and transacts business at night.

A CONFERENCE on Christian life and work is to be held in Edinburgh on 5th November.

A SERIES of lectures on Presbyterianism has been commenced in the Churches of Auckland, N.Z., and its suburbs.

THE history of the Rothschilds is being written by a member of the house, who is well known in Paris for his literary tastes and talent.

WHILE oiling a dynamo machine at the Health Exhibition in London, one of the workmen inadvertently touched it with the oil can he held in his hand and was instantly killed.

By the death of Miss Cormack, sister of the late William and Alexander Cormack, merchants, Aberdeen, several thousand pounds fall to be received by the Church at Reay, Caithness.

THE Queen has sent her god-child, Victoria Alexandrine Carpenter, who was baptized on the same day of the Bishop of Ripon's enthronement, a gold pendant set in pearls and diamonds.

THE Pusey memorial fund has reached £30,346, the greatest part of which has been subscribed by men and women in all ranks in England, the colonies, and the United States.

THE Anglican synod of New South Wales proposes to establish a sisterhood. The scheme is opposed by the ablest of the Sydney dailies, which contends that women in general, and as they are, should do rescue work.

A SUBSCRIPTION had already been started of small sums to coin gold medals in honour of King Humbert of Italy, when the Prefect of Naples received an intimation that by the King's order the money should be distributed among the sufferers by cholera.

THE dean of Grahamstown, South Africa, who had brought an action for defamation against the publisher of a local newspaper, has been adjudged one shilling of damages, but himself convicted by the court of lying, gross immorality and drunkenness.

THE arrangements for the establishment of an Irish colony in Utah are now all but complete. A tract of 100,000 acres has been secured. Mr. John Dillon, who accompanied Mr. Parnell through the United States, has thrown himself into the scheme with great vigour.

THE addition of architectural attachés to the German Embassies in London, Paris, and Washington has proved a very great success. The reports of these officials are not only of value to the Ministry of Public Works, but are received with great interest by the profession and public at large.

THE financial condition of the Italian Government has very much improved of late years: deficits in the annual budget are smaller than formerly, the one for 1885 being set down at only a million of dollars. The peninsula no longer keeps financial company with Turkey, Spain, and Egypt.

SIR G. MACPHERSON GRANT, M.P., in opening a bazaar at Garmouth, said: In the north of Scotland they were agreed that a bazaar was a useful means, "whether honestly or not," of raising money. Promoters of bazaars do not ask too much about honesty, provided money comes rolling in at the end of the day.

THE sixth special communion service with unfermented wine arranged by Mr. John Hope, of Edinburgh, was held lately in Queen street hall. Revs. Thomas Duncan, Established Church, Bridge of Weir; John F. Daly, B.D., Renwick Free Church, Glasgow; and James Primrose, M.A., U.P. Church, Broxburn, officiated.

A PRESBYTERIAN congregation at Tuapeka having recently held a concert and dance in aid of its manse fund, the first instance of the kind in the history of the denomination in New Zealand, the Clutha Presbytery have severely censured the congregation and refused to receive the money raised by means so objectionable.

LORD LITTLETON, presiding at a meeting of working-men's clubs, remarked that whereas he had formerly been in favour of intoxicating drinks being sold in them, he had now, in view of the disheartening results that had taken place, especially in the north and in London, come to the conclusion that it was attended with the greatest danger.

ACCORDING to the *Samaraki Gazette* there is living in the town of Sysran, an old man aged 127. His age is indubitably attested. He was wounded in the battle of Borodino, and afterward entered Paris with the allied army. This veteran, who is still in the possession of all his faculties, now subsists on the precarious charity of his neighbours.

IN moving a vote of thanks to Mr. H. M. Stanley, the African explorer, for his address to the London chamber of commerce, Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., referred to the great importance of preserving the native tribes from the demoralizing influence of strong drink; and Mr. Stanley in his reply expressed his belief that by various restrictive measures some such result might be attained.

VAN RYSELBERGHE, of Belgium, has succeeded in transmitting a telegraphic and a telephonic message along the same wire at the same time. A trial of this has been made at the Antwerp Universal Exhibition, where concerts held at important towns in Belgium were heard, the transmission being made with ordinary instruments and along ordinary telegraph lines and with earth returns.

CARDINAL MANNING, speaking at Liverpool, said that as a member of the royal commission on the dwellings of the poor, he had heard for months past the most authentic evidence of the condition of the people. No one who heard the evidence but was convinced that the main cause of the havoc, ruin and destruction of the domestic and social life of this land was to be traced to intoxicating drink.