

word might have broken the spell of silence between them, but the word was not spoken.

"Have you anything to say to me, Allison Bain?" But Allison shook her head. "Nothing that it would please you to hear; and it is all over now, and I am going away."

"Yes, you are going away. I may not be here when you come back again, and I must say one thing to you. I trust you, Allison Bain. I believe you to be good and true, whatever trouble may have come into your life by the ill doing of others. May the Lord have you in His keeping, and bring you safe though all trouble 'into a large place.' Kiss me, my dear."

Allison stooped and kissed her, and went away without a word. As she turned from the door a hand was laid upon her arm, and a voice said:

"Is it you, Allison Bain? I would like a word wi' ye. I'll no' keep ye lang."

Allison was tired and sad at heart, and she longed to be alone. She could not but yield, however, to the entreating voice of the mistress, and she crossed the street to her door. The lamp was lighted, and a small, bright fire burned on the hearth, and one of the chairs had been taken down from the high dresser for the expected visitor.

"Sit ye doon, Allison," said the schoolmistress. "I saw ye when ye gaed into Mistress Beaton's, and I waited for you, but I winna keep ye lang. And ye're going far awa'? Are ye glad to go? And are ye ever comin' back again?"

"I must come back with Marjorie. Whatever happens, I must bring home the child to her father and her mother," said Allison, gravely.

"Ay, ye must do that, as ye say, whatever should happen. And may naething but gude befall ye. I'll miss ye sairly; ye hae been a great divert to me, you and the minister's bairn thegither—especially since the cloud lifted, and other things happened and ye began to tak' heart again. Do ye mind the 'Stanin' Stanes' yon day, and a' the bairns, and John Beaton wi' his baps? Oh' ay. I'll miss ye mair than ye ken."

The old woman sat for a long time in silence at Allison, then she said:

"Eh! woman! It's weel to be the like o' you! Ye're young, and ye're strong, and ye're bonny; and ye hae sense and discretion, and folk like ye. It's nae ance in a thcusan' times that a' these things come to a woman thegither. Ye mind me o' mysel' when I was young. I had a' that ye hae, except the sense and discretion. But that's neither here nor nor there, at this late day," added she, rising.

(To be continued.)

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS AND HER MOST SUCCESSFUL BOOK.

The papers are telling a romantic little story about the courtship and marriage of that charming writer of entertaining books, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. Her latest book seems to have procured her a husband, though it was also the cause, in a way, of the accident which nearly sent her prospective father-in-law to his tomb. But there is no need to repeat the details of the very interesting episode here. My story is about Mrs. Ward's first great success as a writer of strong and bright fiction. The incident has not appeared in print before, so far as I can learn. It came to me from good authority, and its truth may be vouched for. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps began authorship at the bread and butter age of most school girls. Her productions were characterized by gracefulness of narrative and strength of incident. For the most part they took the form of short stories. In 1868, however, she turned her attention to more elaborate work, and one fine morning she rather tremblingly entered the sanctum of the late James T. Fields, at that time the head of the publishing firm of Fields, Osgood and Company, Boston. She carried the manuscript of *The Gates Ajar* in her hand. Fields knew her father well, and though he had not much confidence at first in the wares which the young authoress offered him, he received her graciously, and promised to give her story every consideration. Esteem for the old Massachusetts clergyman probably prompted him to give *The Gates Ajar* his best attention as much as anything else. Fields' manner was always captivating. Authors used to say that his refusal of a manuscript was oftentimes preferable to the acceptance of the same by other publishers. In this instance, however, he resolved for the sake of the girl's father to risk the expenses of publication. He was shrewd enough to make the edition small; so five hundred copies of the great book were printed and bound. Osgood, his partner, being more of a man of the world, did not quite share Fields' sympathies in the matter. He looked upon the venture as another evidence of his partner's "foolish, soft heart." Asked if he had read the book; he said, "No, he never read any book published by his house until it had reached a circulation of ten thousand copies." Well, *The Gates Ajar* was published. Copies were sent out to the reviewers and a few booksellers were supplied with small quantities of the work. The criticisms were not all unfavourable, but the orders came in very slowly. Nearly three months passed away, when, to the surprise and joy of Fields, there was a visible change in the fortunes of the book. Letters began to come to him from all parts of the country demanding *The Gates Ajar*. These demands increased, and edition after edition was put to press. The success of the work was phenomenal. It rapidly became the vogue and the subject of enthusiastic conversation everywhere, and Miss Phelps' name was on the lips of everybody. She had struck a new vein in fiction, and imitators of her style and manner sprang up on all sides. Less than two years after *The Gates Ajar* had seen the light, a friend dropped into Osgood's cosy library one night, and seeing him with a book in his hands, asked him the name of it. "*The Gates Ajar*," he replied, "and a mighty good book it is, too. We are printing our fortieth thousand."—Geo. Steuart, Jr., in the *Week*.

MY BABY SLEEPS.

The wind is loud in the west to-night,
But Baby sleeps;
The wind is blowing with all its might,
But Baby sleeps.
My Baby sleeps, and he does not hear.
The noise of the storm in the pine trees near.

The snow is drifting high to-night,
But Baby sleeps;
The bitter world is cold and white,
But Baby sleeps.
My Baby sleeps, so fast, so fast,
That he does not heed the wintry blast.

The cold snows drift, and the wild winds rave,
But Baby sleeps;
And a white cross stands by his little grave,
While Baby sleeps;
And the storm is loud in the rocking pine,
But its moan is not so deep as mine.

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JANE AUSTEN AND CHARLOTTE BRONTE.

In fact, humour would at all times have been the poorest excuse to offer to Miss Brontë for any form of moral dereliction, for it was the one quality she lacked herself, and failed to tolerate it in others. Sam Weller was apparently as obnoxious to her as was Falstaff, for she would not even consent to meet Dickens, when she was being lionized in London society—a degree of abstemiousness on her part which it is disheartening to contemplate. It does not seem too much to say that every short-coming in Charlotte Brontë's admirable work, every limitation of her splendid genius, arose primarily from her want of humour. Her severities of judgment—and who more severe than she?—were due to the same melancholy cause; for humour is the kindest thing alive. Compare the harshness with which she handles her hapless curates, and the comparative crudity of her treatment, with the surpassing lightness of Miss Austen's touch as she rounds and completes her immortal clerical portraits. Miss Brontë tells us, in one of her letters, that she regarded all curates as "highly uninteresting, narrow, and unattractive specimens of the coarser sex," just as she found all the Belgian school-girls "cold, selfish, animal, and inferior." But to Miss Austen's keen and friendly eye the narrowest of clergymen was not wholly uninteresting, the most inferior of school-girls not without some claim to our consideration; even the coarseness of the male sex was far from vexing her maidenly serenity, probably because she was unacquainted with the Rochester type. Mr. Elton is certainly narrow, Mary Bennet extremely inferior; but their authoress only laughs at them softly, with a quiet tolerance and a good-natured sense of amusement at their follies. It was little wonder that Charlotte Brontë, who had at all times the courage of her convictions, could not and would not read Jane Austen's novels. "They have not got story enough for me," she boldly affirmed. "I don't want my blood curdled, but I like to have it stirred. Miss Austen strikes me as milk-and-watery, and, to say truth, as dull." Of course she did! How was a woman, whose ideas of after-dinner conversation are embodied in the amazing language of Baroness Ingram and her titled friends, to appreciate the delicious, sleepy small talk, in *Sense and Sensibility*, about the respective heights of the respective grandchildren? It is to Miss Brontë's abiding lack of humour that we owe such stately caricatures as Blanche Ingram, and all the high-born, ill-bred company who gather in Thornfield Hall, like a group fresh from Madame Tussaud's ingenious workshop, and against whose waxen unreality Jane Eyre and Rochester, alive to their very finger-tips, contrast like twin sparks of fire. It was her lack of humour, too, which beguiled her into asserting that the forty "wicked, sophisticated, and immoral French novels" which found their way down to lonely Haworth gave her "a thorough idea of France and Paris"—alas, poor misjudged France!—and which made her think Thackeray very nearly as wicked, sophisticated, and immoral as the French novels. Even her dislike for children was probably due to the same irremediable misfortune; for the humours of children are the only redeeming points amid their general naughtiness and vexing misbehaviour. Mr. Swinburne, guiltless himself of any jocose tendencies, has made the unique discovery that Charlotte Brontë strongly resembles Cervantes, and that Paul Emanuel is a modern counterpart of Don Quixote; and well it is for our poet that the irascible little professor never heard him hint at such a similarity. Surely, to use one of Mr. Swinburne's own incomparable expressions, the parallel is no better than a "sublimous absurdity."—*Atlantic Monthly*.

A NEW ALUMINUM PROCESS.

A new process for producing aluminum alloys has been invented in London. Ordinary rich clay is mixed with a reducing agent or "flux" into a paste with water. This paste is put into a small cupola in layers with broken pig iron and coke. In about twenty-five minutes the pig iron is melted and the product is "aluminum steel," containing about 1.75 per cent. of aluminum, very sonorous, free from impurities and blow holes.—*New York Telegram*.

British and Foreign.

THE Baptist missionaries are about to issue from their press in Calcutta a bi-monthly in Hindi.

AT Travancore a theological class has been started for training the future leaders of the local church.

PROF. KENNEDY, of the Hebrew chair, was ordained by Aberdeen Presbytery lately in the university chapel.

MR. D. WALKER, secretary of the Young Men's Association at Sydney, travelled 40,000 miles in his recent trip round the world.

A SCRIPTURE reading competition has been the latest novelty at Melbourne; but it was confined, some think improperly, to the laity.

DR. WM. ALEXANDER, the author of "Johnny Gibb," has been giving in a graphic lecture at Aberdeen his personal recollections of the Disruption.

It is a curious coincidence that George Bancroft, the American historian, very closely resembles the late Dr. Von Ranke in personal appearance.

THE Rev. William Turnbull, of Newport, Fife, who was sent out to Natal by the colonial committee, has received a unanimous call from Umgeni congregation.

THE Rev. Dr. James Brown, of Paisley, the biographer of Robertson, of Irvine, has received three months' leave of absence from his Presbytery on account of ill-health.

THE call to Rev. John Smith, Edinburgh, by Claremont U.P. Church, Glasgow, is signed by 215 members and 109 adherents, and is concurred in by thirty-two ordinary hearers.

EAST BANK U.P. Church, Hawick, is prospering greatly under Dr. Orr, the membership being now 648 and the amount raised for congregational and mission purposes last year \$4,500.

A GRANITE sarcophagus just completed at Aberdeen is about to be placed over the grave of Mrs. Henry Wood, the novelist, in Highgate Cemetery; it is an exact counterpart of the tomb of Scipio Africanus at Rome.

ARBUTHNOTT Church, Kincardineshire, part of which was of pre-Reformation date, was burnt to the ground on a recent Sunday morning, the chancel of the old building and a small chapel adjoining were fortunately uninjured.

THE current number of the *Contemporary Review* has already reached an eighth edition, a fact without a parallel in the history of periodical literature; and the two latest numbers of *Good Words* are each in a third edition.

SOME of the congregation in Holburn Church, Aberdeen, are very indignant with their minister, Mr. McClymont, because of his asking the people to join in uttering the Lord's Prayer together without first consulting the Session.

NORTH ESK congregation, Musselburgh, have celebrated the jubilee of their church by a soiree and concert, at which the pastor, Mr. Macgill, was presented with a purse of sovereigns by Sir Charles Dalrymple in the name of the congregation.

DR. SHOOLBRED, of Rajpootana, Moderator of the U. P. Synod, is a native of Dunfermline, and he recently gave an address on missions in the Church there, in which he received his early religious impressions and where he was ordained in 1859.

MR. ROBERTSON, of Strathblane, who has received an appointment in New Zealand from the Colonial Committee, and been liberated from his charge, was entertained to dinner by the Dumbartonshire Theological Club with an illuminated address.

DR. OLIVER, lecturing on a recent Sunday evening in Regent Place, Glasgow, to a crowded congregation, gave an account of the Plymouth Brethren, exposing the unscripturalness of their views, and the injurious influence of their whole system on Christian life and work.

AT a valedictory missionary meeting in the Waterloo rooms, Glasgow, recently, addresses were delivered by Rev. James Luke, who is about to return to Old Calabar, and by Messrs. Thomas M. Young and J. A. Greig, who go out as medical missionaries to Manchuria.

THE Rev. William Wilson, in interim charge of Forgandenny Parish Church, and who is popular among all denominations, preached on the evening of Sabbath week to a very large audience in the Free Church. This was the first occasion in the parish of an Established Church minister occupying the Free Church pulpit.

THE Rev. D. W. Forrest, of Moffat, lately paid a tribute to the late Mr. William Scott, Sailfoot, an elder of the Church for nearly half a century. A shepherd in Eskdalemuir, he had ten miles to walk to church, but he thought nothing of it, starting at seven in the morning, and not reaching home again till seven in the evening.

THE English teetotal mayors are going to hold a high time at the London Mansion House next month. The Lord Mayor of York, the Mayors of Birmingham, Sheffield, Cork, Jarrow, Stafford, Pembroke and Pwllheli are to give addresses; and the Lord Mayor of London, all the members of whose family are total abstainers, will preside.

THE Barbour family have contributed \$5,000 to the new north congregation, Edinburgh, towards the purchase of a manse; and other recent donations, include \$3,000 by the Kintore family, for the Arabian mission. \$5,000 by Mr. James Stevenson, for the debt Scheme; and \$4,500 by Mr. J. Campbell White, for mission work in Africa, and other objects.

OF the 332 students enrolled this year in the three Scottish Free Church colleges, the largest number ever reached, many have taken their master's degree, several with first-class honours. At New College, Edinburgh, there are students from Ireland, Canada, Australia, United States, Cape Colony, France, Switzerland, Denmark, Hungary, Bohemia, and Moravia.

LORN Presbytery has been discussing non-church-going, which Mr. McCallum, of Muckairn, lays at the door of intemperance. Mr. McGregor, of Appin, and Mr. McDougall, of Duror, objected, laying the blame on the weather and farm duties. The poorer classes, they declared, are better attenders than the well-to-do. Sectarianism is also a cause of the indifference manifested.

DR. BEITH enters next March on the sixty-eighth year of his ordained ministry. He is the father in respect of ordination of all the Scottish Churches, and also the oldest in respect of years in the Free Church, with perhaps the exception of Dr. William Nicholson, of Tasmania, who from 1825 to 1843, was parish minister of Ferry-Port-on-Craig, and who is also about ninety years of age.