

BENEATH HIS WING.

come, I rest beneath
The shadow of Thy wing,
That I may know
How good it is
There to abide ;
How safe its sheltering.

I lean upon the cross
When fainting by the way ;
It bears my weight,
It holds me up,
It cheers my soul,
It turns my night to day.

I clasp the outstretched hand
Of my delivering Lord ;
Upon His arm
I lean myself ;
His arm divine
Doth surest help afford.

I hear the gracious words
He speaketh to my soul ;
They whisper rest,
They banish fear,
They say, " Be strong,"
They make my spirit whole.

I look, and live, and love ;
I listen to the Voice
Saying to me
That God is love,
That God is light ;
I listen and rejoice. —Bonar.

Our Story.

From the Sunday at Home.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

BY HESHA STRETTON.

CHAPTER III.—SATURDAY AND SUNDAY.

Ruth had been hard at work all day hoeing thistles. Many a time she lifted up her eyes to the green woods where Ishmael and Elsie were at play, and recalled the rare days of holiday like it which she had had when she was young. The thought of the children's pleasure made her own work lighter ; and though she was tired enough when she heard the church clock strike the hour for leaving the field, she walked along briskly under the hedge, to be home the sooner. Elsie and Ishmael would be fine and hungry before she could get tea ready ; and Mrs. Chipchase had promised her some buttermilk to make them some buttermilk pikelets for a treat. There was a pleasant stir and agitation in Ruth's mind, yet there was a vague disquiet mingled with the pleasure. Ishmael was about to cease to be a child, and was stepping into the perils and duties of boyhood, that dangerous crisis in which she had seemed to lose all her other children. He was about to escape from under her wing and flutter away ; like these little half-fledged hedge-sparrows, which were twittering and hovering all along the thorn-bushes. Her other boys and girls seemed to care no more for their poor home than the nestlings of this year will care for the old nest next spring. But Ishmael was not like the others, who had all taken after their father, and only thought of their mother as a drudge to slave for them. She had not been as good a mother to them, she said to herself, but then she had not believed in God as she did now. How marvellously good He had been to her to give her such a son as Ishmael, when she was a weary, worn-down, grey-haired woman !

Mrs. Chipchase nearly filled Ruth's large brown pitcher with buttermilk ; and gave her two or three spoonfuls of tea in a screw of paper. Ruth was a favorite with her, as being a quiet, harmless old woman, and she lingered a moment at the door to speak a word or two to her.

"Mind Ishmael's here in time of a morning," she said, "for the master's very particular."

"I'm sure," answered Ruth falteringly. "as I don't know how to thank you to the master for taking him. It'll be the makin' of him, I know ; and he's a good lad, ma'am, God bless him !"

It was seldom Ruth uttered so many words together, except to Ishmael ; but her heart was full. The farmhouse was a homely place, but there was a rude abundance about it, which she seemed to feel for the first time, as if she also had a share in it. She stood at the kitchen door, and could see the big table at which Ishmael would eat, and where a plough-boy was now sitting, deeply absorbed in the contents of a huge basin, which had been filled up from a big iron pot hanging a little way above the fire. The smell of the good broth reached her, and seemed to promise that Ishmael would grow a strong, hale man, when he could always satisfy his hunger. "He

hath satisfied the hungry with good things," she murmured to herself, as she took up her brown pitcher, and with a curtsey to the mistress turned to go away.

"Ruth Medway," shouted a loud, rough voice from the far end of the farmyard. "Nutkin the keeper's been and hauled Ishmael to gaol for stealing pheasants' eggs in the wood."

"There's the master come home!" cried Mrs. Chipchase. "Whatever is he shouting, Ruth?"

Ruth was still standing with a smile on her wrinkled face ; but it died away as the meaning of the words reached her brain. The sky grew black, and the sunshine fled away ; a dizziness seized her which made the solid ground she stood on reel beneath her.

The loud crashing of her brown pitcher, as it slipped from her hand, and broke into a hundred fragments on the stone causeway, brought her back to her senses.

"What's the matter?" asked Mrs. Chipchase, running to the door, which her husband had now reached.

"Matter enough!" he answered. "Here's our new waggoner's lad that was to come on Monday morning, taken off to gaol for poaching. Nutkin caught Ishmael and Elsie roasting eggs in the wood ; pheasants' eggs, stolen from the nest ! There's no chance of him getting off ; for the squire's mad after game ; and Nutkin swears he'll lock him up out of harm's way. I'm sorry for you, Ruth, to have such a husband and family. I did think Ishmael was going to be a comfort to you in your old age. But the lad knew better ; and he's no excuse."

"It was naught but a lad's trick," said Mrs. Chipchase, "such as anyone 'ud do. Ishmael never stole an egg of mine, when I set him to gather them. Our own boys never brought in more than he did. He's as honest as the day, I'm sure."

"Thank you kindly, ma'am," murmured Ruth, turning away and walking slowly down the causeway towards home, with a bowed head and feeble feet. How heavily her sixty years seemed to weigh upon her all at once ! How rough the road was, which she had trodden so many hundreds of times in all kinds of weather, to earn her own bread and Ishmael's ! Was she half-blind that everything looked so dim ? And where had all the merry sounds of the summer evening gone to ? There was a sort of numbness and stupor over her mind, until she found herself trying to fit the old key into the lock of her poor hut, the home Ishmael had never yet left for a single night. He was not coming home to-night !

She sank down on the door-sill, and swayed herself to and fro in mute despair. No tears came to her eyes ; for she was old and her tears were exhausted ; but she sobbed heavily again and again, and yet again. There was no hope in her heart. She thought of Nutkin's enmity, and her husband's bad character. The Rector's family had gone away to foreign parts for six months, and a stranger, who knew nothing of Ishmael, was taking the duty of the parish. The squire could no be reached, for Nutkin's influence was all-powerful with him. No, there was no chance for Ishmael.

To be in prison ! Home was poor enough ; she felt all at once what a dark, miserable, empty hovel it was. But if Ishmael could only be within, it would be a true home to both of them. She sat down on the desolate hearth, and tried to think of God, but she could think of no one but Ishmael yet. Her soul was in the deepest depths. All night long she lay awake. The little bed on the floor beside her was empty for the first time ; and her ear listened in vain for Ishmael's quiet breathing. Her husband had come home so drunk that she had not dared to get him up the ladder, and he was lying in a dead sleep on the floor below. Over and over again she counted her nine children on her fingers, some dead and some living, and a heavy sob broke from her lips as she whispered "Ishmael." She had mourned over her dead and grieved over her living children who had forsaken her ; but no sorrow had been like this sorrow. None of them had ever been in prison, and now it was her youngest and dearest, yes, and her best, who was fallen into deep disgrace. When the morning came her heart turned sick at the thought of going to church, though Humphrey told her surlily she might go. Ishmael would not be in the singing-gallery, and how could she sing "Glory be to the Father" while he was in prison ?

All the morning Humphrey, sitting by the woodfire, was cursing Ishmael as a disgrace ; but Ruth did not answer a word.

She had kept silence so long that she hardly knew how to talk, except to Ishmael. It was a relief to her when her husband

took himself off in the afternoon, and left her in solitude as well as silence. She was sitting alone, with her wrinkled face hidden in her hands, deaf, blind, and mute to everything but her trouble, when she felt the warm pressure of loving arms round her neck. For a moment she thought it was Ishmael, but looking up she saw the face of Elsie. Her mother was standing near, and when Ruth rose to drop a curtsey to the school-mistress, she took her hand cramped between both of her own, and bending forwards, kissed the old woman's brown cheek. Ruth's face flushed a little, and a strange feeling of surprise and pleasure flashed across the darkness of her grief.

"I w. at you to get a cup of tea for me," said Mrs. Clift.

It was something for Ruth to do, and as she busied herself in kindling her swift-burning fire, and filling her small tin kettle from the well, for a few fleeting moments she forgot Ishmael. But she could eat nothing when the tea was ready, though Elsie had brought some dainty tea-cakes in order to tempt her appetite.

"I have been up to the Hall, and seen Mr. Lansdowne," said Mrs. Clift, as they sat together at the rough little table. "Elsie has to go before the magistrates to-morrow at Upton ; and I went to speak for poor Ishmael. But there's not much hope, Ruth. Mr. Lansdowne tells me Nutkin says Ishmael has infested the woods since his very babyhood, and all the village thinks him to be in league with poachers. That's not the truth, I know."

Ruth shook her head in sorrowful denial.

"I told the squire so," said the school-mistress, softly, "and he answered, women never could be made to believe that poaching was a crime. I did say I couldn't call taking a few eggs from a wild bird's nest any great sin—not bad enough for a young lad to be sent to gaol for. He said it was not only that, but all the Medways were a plague and a pest in the parish ; and it would be a kindness to check Ishmael at the outset. Ruth, I'm more grieved than I can tell you."

Again Ruth shook her grey head in silence.

"I've been thinking how lonely you are, and how you have to bear the sins of your husband and sons," said Mrs. Clift ; "and it seems to me that to think of our Lord's life here is the only thing to comfort you. Do you remember the words, 'He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ; and we hid as it were, our faces from Him ; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not?'"

The quiet voice speaking so gently to her ceased for a few minutes, and Ruth covered her troubled face again with her hands. It was the Lord Jesus who had been despised and rejected of men, as she was by her neighbors. He had been "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," more deeply than she was. Did her old companions in the village hide, as it were, their faces from her ? Nay, all the world had hid their faces from Him who died to save them. Even on the cross those that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads ; and the chief priests and elders, and the thieves crucified with Him, had mocked and jeered at Him.

"Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," resumed the quiet, gentle voice. "He was wounded for our transgressions ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with His stripes we are healed."

She was not bearing her griefs alone then, as she had fancied during the long, dark night. The Lord Himself had carried her sorrows. He had been wounded for her transgressions, and for Ishmael's. A healing sense of His love and compassion and fellow-feeling was stealing over her aching heart.

"All we like sheep have gone astray," went on the soothing voice ; "we have turned every one to his own way ; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth ; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers, is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth."

Dumb, and opening not His mouth ! Was not that again like herself ? She could not cry aloud, and speak many words, and make her grief known to every ear. It was true. Jesus Christ had lived her life of sorrows, and grief, and scorn, and silence. Her head was bowed down still, but her heart was lifted up. The suffering Son of God made it easier for her to bear her own suffering.

It was growing dusk now, and the school

mistress bade her good-night ; but Ruth would go a little way on the road with her. When she returned to her lonely home, she lingered for a minute, trembling, and reluctant to re-enter its dark solitude. It had always been her custom, since Ishmael was a baby in her arms, to sing, "Glory to Thee, my God, this night," as the last thing before he went to bed, except when Humphrey happened to be at home, which was very seldom. She had not thought of it last night, the first time that Ishmael had been away from her. But the thought crossed her mind and could not be driven away from it, that, may be, this Sunday evening he was singing it alone in his cell at Upton. The tears, which had not come last night, stood in her dim eyes, as, sitting down in her old chair by the dark hearth, she sang the hymn right through, in a low and faltering voice, which could hardly have been heard beyond the threshold.

THE REV. G. L. MACKAY, D.D., OF FORMOSA.

The Woodstock *Sentinel-Review* has published an interesting and timely biographical notice of the Rev. Dr. Mackay, of Formosa. This sketch is from the pen of the Rev. Mr. Mackay, of Woodstock, and but for its being rather too long for our available space we should have been happy to have reprinted it in full.

From this paper we learn that Dr. Mackay was born in the township of Zorra, in the year 1844. He is consequently only in the 36th year of his age, and, humanly speaking, has a lengthened career of usefulness before him.

The Doctor's early training, both scholastic and otherwise, was such as to contribute greatly to his success in his subsequent life work. The particulars need not be given.

"In the end of 1870," says this narrative, "he went to Edinburgh and spent the whole winter there, attending the lectures of the professors in the new college (Free Church), and studying the Hindustani language. Here he came in contact with such leading spirits as Drs. Guthrie, Candlish, and Duff. To Dr. Duff he felt drawn as to no other human being, and the readers of Mr. Mackay's letters in the *Presbyterian* remember the graphic and most touching picture he drew in one of them of his final parting with that eminent missionary of the cross. In conversation with the writer, Mr. Mackay has stated that he looked upon Drs. Hodge and Duff as the noblest and best men he ever met.

"Mr. Mackay's determination to be a missionary to the heathen was no sudden outburst of enthusiasm, but the deliberate, cherished purpose of many years. Thinking that Canada, his native land, should do something for the heathen, he offered his services for any part of the world, before going to Edinburgh ; and while there he was patiently waiting the decision of the Canadian Church. Month after month passed away, and he got no definite reply, so he travelled through the Highlands, and was spending a few days in Sutherlandshire with relatives, thinking that the Church in Canada was not going to accept his services. One evening he had all his personal effects packed, ready to start next morning to offer himself for the foreign field to the Free Church of Scotland or the American Presbyterian Church. That very night he received a letter from Rev. Professor McLaren, giving him the decision of the Church, and requesting him to meet the General Assembly in Quebec. He returned at once, and was fully designated to his work, the particular field of labor being left for himself to select.

"Acting on the advice of the Committee, he visited several of the churches in Canada, and, at length, bidding farewell to home and friends, he left Woodstock on October 20th, 1871. To many this would be a day of sore trial. It was not to Mr. Mackay. True, like every properly constituted mind, he had his attachments, but in his case these were so sanctified