

GENERAL READING. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY.

(Continued.) In the year 1226 the Landgrave Louis accompanied the Emperor Frederick II. into Italy. It was a year of famine throughout all Germany, but the poor Thuringians were the greatest sufferers. The tender heart of Elizabeth was oppressed beyond measure by this calamity, and she began to distribute corn from the royal granaries. As she was prudent as well as charitable, she so dealt it out that her resources lasted through the summer, when the harvests were again ready. It is related that the Wartburg was a busy place during these months. A certain number of loaves of bread were baked, and distributed to the crowds who gathered to receive it, sometimes to the number of nine hundred. The famine was followed by great mortality and distress, which taxed her sympathies and powers of endurance still further. In the town of Eisenach, at the foot of Wartburg she founded a hospital for poor women only, and another called the Hospital of St. Anne, were all who applied were received. These were afterward the scene of her tender ministrations to the sick with loathsome diseases, from whom the ladies who attended her were wont to turn away in disgust. She also founded a hospital for poor children, to whom she was both mother and ministering angel. To the support of these charities went all the means she could draw from the treasury, her own jewels and state robes, and at last the jewels of state. The councillors were in a state of alarm at this, and upon Louis's return hastened to charge upon his wife the loss of the royal treasure, but he would not listen to them. "Let her give what she will," he said, "if she but leave my castles of Wartburg, Eisenach, and Naumburg." Elizabeth meeting him with her children, threw herself into his arms crying, "See! I have given to the Lord what is his, and he has preserved to us what is thine and mine."

It was the following year that all Europe was stirred by the zealots who inspired the third crusade. In Germany Frederick II. assumed the cross, and sent a summons to Louis to join him. He took the cross with many other princes and nobles, but dared not tell Elizabeth. After many days she found the cross which he dared not wear in her presence. She was playfully searching in his purse for money to give to her poor, and drew forth the badge that told its own story to her quick eye. She swooned away at his feet, but said on recovering, "Let it be as God will; I will stay behind and pray for thee." But a shadow of the coming cloud must have touched her even then; for she accompanied him on a two day's journey before she could part with him, and then she was brought back half dead by her knight and ladies. Prince Louis shared the fate of thousands of the "flower of chivalry" who went on those mad and perilous missions to seek "the living among the dead." He journeyed as far as Otranto, in Calabria, and then was arrested by a fever. He died in the arms of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, commanding his knights with his latest breath to bear his body back to his own country, and to defend his wife and children with their blood against wrong or oppression. When the evil tidings came to Elizabeth she would have died, it is said, but for the little baby daughter that had just come to claim with her other children a mother's care. Then the pitiless storm began to fall thick and fast upon the young mother whose young castle was no refuge against the designs of evil men. Henry the eldest brother of Louis, aided by wicked counsellors, assumed the right to take possession of the Wartburg, and drove Elizabeth and her children from it. She was but little past twenty years of age, but through the winter snow she passed down the rocky path, her baby in her arms, and women following with the three elder children. She took refuge in an inn, and for weeks supported herself by spinning wool, for Henry had issued a proclamation that forbade the people to receive her. She had no expectation that redress could ever come from that far grave in Calabria; but in time—and how long were journeys and how wide were separations in that day!—the knights who received Louis's dying command returned to Thuringia bearing his body. They had learned before reaching Eisenach of the cruel treatment Elizabeth had received from Henry, and were ready to avenge her. They placed the young Herman, Louis's eldest son on the throne, under a regent, and gave to Elizabeth as her dower the city of Marborough, to which she retired with her daughters. And now the power of Conrad, no longer tempered by the will of Louis, began to fall with tenfold strictness upon the young widow, who had already learned to fear everything, even her God. He held absolute sway over her by virtue of his holy office, and conscious of this, he set himself to the task of her "purification." She already wore the cord which is the badge of the Franciscan Order, and would have given away all her possessions that she might fulfil the vow of the Order—absolute poverty. One by one she parted with her children, lest she should give them too much love; for Conrad had doubtless assured her that God had in wrath taken her husband from her, because she lavished upon him a part of that love that He alone should have. Her charities, which had been the joy and consolation of her life, Conrad limited, that she might not find pleasure even in these. But, if not allowed to give her possessions to the poor, she was allowed to earn her bread, and so suffer the limitations of poverty as really as if she possessed nothing. She spent her days in spinning wool; but sorrow and penance and exposure had done their work, and the poor weak fingers and faltering feet made such sorry work that she could not earn enough to meet her wants. She earned less and less, until her clothes became ragged, and she patched them with shreds of any color, until the children in the street pursued her like a mad woman. Who shall say that the tender woman, shut up in this iron cell devised by a fanatical priest, and feeling its walls closing around her day by day, did not feel her brain reel as her heart and her flesh failed? Her two faithful women Conrad had sent away; and now, as if her cup were not already full to the brim, the rumor spread that she was living in unholy union with Conrad. Walter de Varila, her old friend, who had sorrowfully watched her course, but could do nothing for her, now came to protest against her subjugation to the will of Conrad. He told her of the floating rumor that he had heard, but she was too far beyond the sense of things present to be deeply moved by it. She only bared her shoulder and showed him the marks of the penitential lash inflicted by Conrad, and her life-long friend went sadly away, leaving her to the mercy of God. At last she lay down, and it is recorded that she turned her face to the wall and chanted a hymn in a sweet and tender voice; then as her strength failed, she muttered the word "silence," and fell asleep. Conrad's work was over; he had made not only a slave but a martyr; and because of his proclamation of sanctity a most disgraceful scene took place over her remains. Crowds came to view them, and bore away shreds of her garments, her hair, and even mutilated her poor body for relics. There were miracles and lamentations at her burial, and within a year the Church of St. Elizabeth was founded at Marborough. It was forty eight years in building, and is a rare specimen of the pure early Gothic. All Germany poured its offerings at the shrine of the gentle woman whom they pitiouly pursued to an early grave, and she now has a tomb, the stone steps around which are worn hollow by the knees of pilgrims. And all this filled the few fleeting years that we call "a girl's life," for Elizabeth at the time of her death, had just completed her twenty-fourth year, and had survived her husband three years and a half. Surely Protestantism can not say, "We have no part in this woman—a canonized saint in the Romish Church." Protestantism did say this when, at the time of the Reformation, her own descendant Philip, Landgrave of Hesse (styled the Magnanimous,) caused her tomb to be violated with brutal levity, and her remains dispersed no one knows how or whither." And Protestantism does say this when pilgrims' feet from Christian lands visit the Castle of the Wartburg, and Christian hearts muse and commune with the mighty and sainted dead in the chamber where Luther found a refuge from priests and princes, and where he completed the translation of the Bible, and yet are careless of the fact that it was also the chamber of Elizabeth. They look with awe on the ink stain upon the wall, and remember how Luther threw the ink-stand at the head of the Sagan in one of his mental conflicts, and forget that in this very room were waged contests as terrible between love and duty, between nature and a cruel creed, and these in the heart of one of the loveliest of women. As a pendant to this outline of a real life, we will quote from Mrs. Jamieson's work of the many legends that the German Catholic preserve with religious care, and which is the subject of the illustration on a preceding page of this paper. "Elizabeth, in the absence of her husband, daily visited the poor who dwelt in the suburbs of Eisenach and in the huts of the neighboring valleys. One day, during a severe winter, she left her castle with a single attendant carrying in the skirts of her robe a supply of bread, meat and eggs for a certain poor family; and, as she was descending the frozen slippery path, her husband, returning from the chase met her bending under the weight of her charitable burden. "What doest thou here, my Elizabeth?" he said. "Let me see what thou art carrying away?" "And she, confused and blushing to be so discovered, pressed her mantle to her bosom; but he insisted, and open-

ing her robe he beheld only red and white roses more beautiful and fragrant than any that grow on earth. Then he was about to embrace his wife, but, looking in her face, he was overawed by a supernatural glory that seemed to emanate from every feature, and he dared not touch her. He bade her go on her way and fulfil her mission; but taking from her lap one of the roses of Paradise, he put it in his bosom and continued to ascend the mountain slowly, with his head declined, and pondering these things in his heart." Such is the story of Elizabeth of Hungary, princess, saint, martyr, woman. NEVER TOO LATE. How often do we see men around us who, having been discouraged by financial reverses, are broken in spirit, and declare it is no use to make any further efforts—that fortune is against them! How often do we meet people addicted to bad habits who affirm that they are too old to break them off, that after so many years of indulgence, it would be impossible to give up this or that pleasure! How often do we encounter individuals who earnestly desire this or that accomplishment, but who argue that they are too far along in years to acquire it! If they were only a little younger they would lay hold and master it. And yet all history affords illustrations of the old adage that "it is never too late to mend." It is never too late to make a beginning. Swiles tells us that Sir Henry Spelman did not begin the study of science until he was between fifty and sixty years of age. Franklin was fifty before he fully entered on the study of natural philosophy. Dryden and Scott were not known as authors until each was in his fortieth year. Boccaccio was thirty-five when he commenced his literary career. Alfieri was forty-six when he commenced the study of Greek. Dr. Arnold learned German when at an advanced age for the purpose of reading Niebuhr in the original, and in like manner James Watt, when about forty, while working at his trade as instrument maker in Glasgow, learned French, German and Italian to enable him to persevere the valuable works on mechanical philosophy which existed in these languages. Thomas Scott was fifty-six before he began to learn Hebrew.—Robert Hall was once found lying on the floor racked by pain learning Italian in his old age to enable him to judge of the parallel drawn by Macaulay between Milton and Dante. Handel was forty-eight before he published any of his great works. Indeed, hundreds of instances might be given of men who struck on an entirely different path, and successfully entered on new studies at a comparatively advanced time of life. BIG WORDS. Big words are great favorites with people of small ideas and weak conceptions. They are sometimes employed by men of mind, when they wish to use language that may best conceal their thoughts. With few exceptions, however, illiterate and half educated persons use more "big words," than people of thorough education. It is a very common, but very egregious mistake to suppose the short ones—just as the same sort of people imagine high colors and flashy figures improve the style of dress. These are the kind of folks who don't begin, but always commence." They don't live but "reside." They don't go to bed, but mysteriously "retire." They don't eat and drink, but "partake of refreshments." They are never sick but "extremely indisposed;" and instead of dying, at last, they "decease." The strength of the English language is the short words—chiefly the great national library which has been made for some time past. The work is remarkable as having nothing parallel to it extent in the literature of other countries. It is comprised in 5,020 volumes, and consists of a vast thesaurus, into which is digested the entire mass of Chinese literature extant at the date of its publication, classified under appropriate headings, and accompanied with illustrative drawings, plans, and maps. It includes treatises ranging from 1150 B. C. to about the year 1700 of our era, and it professes to represent every branch of Chinese literature, with the single exception of works of fiction. So completely private is the ownership of copies of this "Encyclopaedia" in China, that no copy is known to be accessible for reference to the general body of students of that country. DISCOVERY OF AN OLD MAP.—A novel discovery has been made in the library of Lyons, France. It is a map of the entire extent of the plateau of Africa, which has been lost for years explored by Grant, Baker, Livingstone and Stanley. The system is traced upon the globe which was constructed in 1701, and contains in detail the sources of the Nile and the Congo. This map was executed by order of Fathers Placide de Saint Amour, principal of the Monastery of the Third Order of St. Francis, by Crispinien of Toulon, and by the monks of Bonaventure and Gregoire, both connected with the above establishment. The report does not mention the name of the explorers. The modern maps place the source of the two rivers slightly to the northward of that just discovered.

FAMILY READING.

A PROMISE FOR WEARY DAYS

"My people shall dwell in quiet resting places." The message finds us at our work In the sultry hour of noon, And bears our thoughts to a shady spot With many a green festoon; And we can but ask, While we toil at our task, Is the resting hour coming soon. Through the streets and houses, the under tones Of the anthems among the trees Come softly near into weary ears, Brought by the truant breeze, And we dream we see, Through far they be The butterflies and bees. As in a vision the hours pass by, Till the soft sounds hither reach Of the gurgling laughter of the waves As they fall upon the beach, And we can but deem That the pleasant dream Has earnest truths to teach. But this, the promise, of what shall be, In our days of joys increase, When sin and sorrow shall flee away And we from toil shall cease, Has greater power Than tree or flower To bring our spirits peace. We thank Thee, Giver of sun and shade For the mirth of the early morn For the silver light on the gladsome sea. And the wealth of the ripening corn; But we thank thee more For the heaven in store For the souls that have been forlorn. Give us patience to wait and to labour still; But at last in thy tender grace, O give us the summer for which we long In thy quiet resting-place, Where the work is done And the crown is won In the light of the Master's face.—Marianne Farningham.

HOW CHARACTER PREACHES.

On a bright summer morning, by the side of a country road running along the Hudson, not many miles from New York, two men stood talking together. One was a judge of high social standing and legal distinction, the other was a stone mason, and their conversation was about the building of a new wall near the place where they were standing, to consult about which the judge had sent for the mason on this Sabbath morning. Just coming into sight, as he trudged along the road on his way to church, was a plain Scotch farmer, well known as a God-fearing, Sabbath-keeping, honest, hard working man, neither fearing nor asking favor of the great or rich. His chief ambition seemed to be to raise a large family of children in the fear of God and honorably in the sight of men, which his example was well fitted to do. In the midst of an animated explanation of what he wanted in a new wall the judge caught sight of the farmer. Stopping suddenly he said: "There comes David Stuart; it will never do to let him see us talking business on Sabbath morning. We will just step behind this bit of wall until he passes." And the judge and the mason crouched down behind the wall until the plodding footsteps of the farmer echoed faintly in the distance; and the good man passed from sight, all unconscious of the silent reproof of his appearance had caused, while the judge, with feelings, one would think, belittling to his manliness, crept from his hiding-place to continue his conscious and confessed desecration of the Lord's day. The next morning the incident was related to the farmer by the mason, who was himself a Scotchman, though, unhappily, not so conscientious as his friend. He told the story with some glee, adding: "What wad a' thoct, man, that ye had sich a poor in ye as to mak' the judge hide 'int the wall for the fear o' ye?" Is not this an illustration of the force and influence of a sincere Christian character, though devoid of the adornments in the world's sight of either position, wealth, or learning? All these together could not resist the silent sermon of the good man's life, which brought home to the haughty judge the conviction of his sin.—Baptist Weekly.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

An old woman of eighty wished to become a Christian. But there was difficulty in the way. So she asked several friends to come with the minister and talk with her. She admitted the truth of all they said, but something held her back. Said the minister: "Why not give yourself now, within ten minutes?" "O, she could not!" "Why not?" She wanted time she said. It was too sudden. Ten minutes! O no! she must have time to think about it. "You are old," said the minister; "how long have you been thinking about it already?" She paused a moment and then said slowly: "Fifty years." "Yet you want more time! Isn't fifty years enough?" That was a new way of looking at it. "What shall I do?" she eagerly asked. "Do nothing," was the answer; "but leave all with God. Let us pray to Him to lift the burden." "So they prayed. And suddenly, when she no longer pleaded for time, light came through the darkness, the burden rolled away, and like a little child, the old woman entered the kingdom.—Congregationalist.

HAPPY CHRISTIANS.

The Church of Christ, in its early history, was a singing church! The somberness of our modern theology finds no justification in the first three hundred years of Christian history. Even Paul, whose mental discipline and thorough scholarship made him conservative in his emotional expressions, failed not to urge upon the churches that he founded the propriety of rejoicing. He lifted gladness to the level of an obligation. He taught it with reiteration. "Rejoice! and again, I say rejoice!" It is a matter of record that the early Christians were excessively happy. The heathen historians were composed of people noted for their happiness. They wrote: "These Christians sing continually; in their houses, and at work in the fields, and when journeying on the public roads, they are forever singing." It is not a legitimate question for us to ask: Where is the old-time happiness! and what has driven it out of our hearts, and exiled it from our homes? When will the original joyfulness return to our faith, and the ancient hopes? Is it not possible that, as Christians, we think too much of thinking, and too little of singing? Is the head so much better than the heart, after all? Have we not intellectualized piety nearly to suffocation? If we smother our emotions, shall we not smother the life to which they are breath? Our advice is, sing more. Logie is good; but piety cannot live on logic alone. Let our brotherhood be more melodious. Give expression to the hope that you have within you of everlasting life. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."—Golden Rule. HOME PIETY. It is in the family life that a man's piety gets tested. Let the husband be cross and surly, giving a slap here and a cuff there, and see how out of sorts every thing gets! The wife grows cold and unamiable too. Both are turned on one key. They vibrate in unison, giving tone for tone, rising in harmony or discord together. The children grow up saucy and savage as young bears. The father becomes callous, peevish, hard—a kind of two-legged brute with clothes on. The wife bristles in self-defence. They develop an unnatural growth and sharpness of teeth, and the house is haunted by ugliness and domestic brawls. Is that what God meant the family to be—He who made it a place for love to build her nest in, and where kindness and sweet courtesy might come to their finest manifestations? The divine can be realized. There is sunshine enough in the world to warm all. Why will not men come out of their caves and enjoy it? Some men make it a point to treat every other man's family well but their own—have smiles for all but their kindred. Strange, pitiable picture of human weakness, when those we love best are worst treated; when courtesy is shown to all save our friends! If any one must be rude to any, let it be some one he does not love—not to wife, sister, brother or parent. Let one of our loved ones be taken away, and memory recalls a thousand sayings to regret. Death quickens recollections painfully. The grave cannot hide the white faces of those who sleep. The coffin and the ground are cruel magnates. They draw us farther than we would go. They force us to remember. A man never sees so far into human life as when he looks over a wife or a mother's grave. His eyes get wondrous clear then, and he sees as never before what it is to love and be loved; what it is to injure the feelings of the loved.—Christian Union. PEACE. "The peace of God"—it is a precious phrase, worthy to be engraved on your signet ring—may, on your heart. It is one of the beatitudes which might well have been included in those of the Sermon on the Mount. It is implied in the second. An apostle speaks of this divine peace as "passing all understanding," so ineffable are its comfort and other effects on the inner life of the believer; for it is not only a comforting but strengthening grace. Christ pledged it to His disciples, in circumstances which show its blessedness its superiority to all the troubles of life. It was when every omen of darkness was crowding upon him: "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." The greatest sorrow that perhaps the stars ever looked down upon, on this planet, was about to overtake Him and His little band (for the night of Gethsemane was at hand) and yet he pledged them "peace," and bids them be not "troubled," be not "afraid." SELF-SACRIFICE.—The spirit of self-sacrifice is one of the greatest beauties of holiness. Husband yielding to wife, wife to husband, brother to brother, sister to sister, friend to friend, in great things but in small especially. First and foremost, see that the spirit is with you at home, then carry it abroad in the world. It is a spirit that will sweeten happiness and lighten trouble; and when the soul is ready to wing its flight to its eternal home, it will have the unspeakable consolation of knowing that it cannot live to itself; that it has left the world happier and better in some degree than it found it, that it has been faithful to its earthly mission. So will it listen with unutterable bliss to the sentence, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Argory.