

to the floor. Even then she smiled as she remembered the curse, for what could happen to Franz!

"Alas! and yet why alas? It was but the fruitage of their seedtime—the terrible ending was near for them all. Even then the Emperor Adolphe was collecting his forces to put a stop to the barbarous cruelties of Reichenstein, and before many days had elapsed the castle was razed to the ground. Richmodis escaped, but her guilty husband and all the rest of the fearful band were hung upon the selfsame trees, on the which they had formerly hung their innocent victims.

"The young mother clung to her babe in the days which succeeded this fearful event; but her cup of misery was not yet full. A distant relative, one who was of high standing in the religious world, interfered with the young widow's plans, and argued so much of the curse which would descend upon the child's head if his life were not dedicated to God, that Richmodis at length gave him up—but only in the bitterness of her heart—to the abbess of a convent near to where she herself had settled to live. The boy was very young, and the good nuns strove faithfully to teach him their creed; and in time he also learnt, as the records say, to despise his mother for the cruel life she and hers had led. Then Richmodis closed her heart entirely to earthly love, and sought that of heaven alone; she entered another holy house, saying in all humility, 'Thus I atone for the past,' and by and by, it is said, that peace came to her. She craved one look at her boy in his dying moments, but when a shorn priest with a stern, hard face stood before her, she only shivered, and closing her eyes, put all thoughts away save those of heaven."

"Is that all?" inquired Johann.

"Yes, all—only this boy, hard as he seemed in the eyes of Richmodis, was the sweet musician. He had his ear tutored at an early age, you see; but Johann, my boy, I would he had tutored his heart to a little softness as well; still I have heard, although the old parchments say naught to that effect, that on his death-bed he sang a glorious song of praise to God—the God who, as he believed, had given him the great gift of music and song, both as a token of the forgiveness of the sins of his forefathers, and also as a pledge of His Fatherly love towards himself."

"And was it so, grandfather?"

"Johann, my boy, every good gift, and every perfect gift, comes from above, and if we use them aright, they are, we may be sure, pledges of our God's love, and so long as the world lasts, so long will His gifts be showered upon us; therefore, so long as time and love endure, 'It is never too late to amend.'"

## 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 everything 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 to enjoy it? Some men make it a point to treat every other man's family well but their own—have snakes for all but their kindred. Strange, pitiable picture of human weakness, when those we love best are treated worst; when courtesy is shown to all save our friends! If 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 green ground are cruel magnets. 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 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.

## OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

- (1) *Waymarks Placed by Authority on the King's Highway.* By Rev. B. Smith. 3s. 6d.
- (2) *Robert Dawson; or, The Brave Spirit.* 1s.
- (3) *The Tarnished Escutcheon.* By M. A. H. 1s.
- (4) *Columbus; or, The Discovery of America.* By George Cubitt. 1s. 6d.
- (5) *Cortes; or, The Conquest of Mexico.* By George Cubitt. 1s. 6d.
- (6) *Pizarro; or, The Discovery of Peru.* By George Cubitt. 1s. 6d.
- (7) *Rest for the Weary in Jesus.* By Rev. P. M'OWAN. 9d.  
[London: Wesleyan Conference Office.]
- (8) *The Other House.* By Mary R. Higham. [London: Nisbet.]
- (9) *Little Folks.* Vol. VII. New Series. 3s. 6d. [London: Cassell.]
- (10) *Queen Pomare and Her Country.* By Rev. G. Pritchard. [London: Stock.]
- (11) *Violet Stuart.* By H. E. P. [London: Charing Cross Publishing Company.]
- (12) *Cyprus: Its Place in Bible History.* By Rev. J. Thain Davidson. 1s.  
[London: Hodder and Stoughton.]
- (13) *Three People.* By "Pansy." 1s. 6d. [London: Partridge.]
- (14) *The Band of Hope Chronicle.* 1d. quarterly.  
[London: United Kingdom Band of Hope Union.]

THE proverbs of Solomon have furnished a theme for many books, but the author of the work before us (1) has utilised them in a method quite his own. We are not greatly pleased with the title, but the book itself is all that can be desired. A hundred proverbs have been selected, and with these as texts, Mr. Smith gives us as many plain, short, yet telling sermons, addressed more especially to those just beginning their battle with the world. Catholic and straightforward in the extreme, and literally crammed with anecdotes, this volume is well worthy of attention, and we hope, in future numbers, to give our readers some specimens of its quality.

The story of Robert Dawson (2) who, by perseverance and steady industry rose from a farmer's boy to be a well-known publisher, should be thoroughly appreciated by the younger ones. A companion book (3) telling lovingly what a little country maiden did for her Saviour, and how patiently and self-sacrificingly she laboured for the temporal and eternal welfare of those around her, is a perfect little gem. These two books are the latest of the "Conference Shilling Series," well printed, plentifully illustrated, and attractively bound, and we can unhesitatingly commend them.

Next we have three volumes of history (4-6) condensed and popularised. The youngsters will be delighted with these books; interesting in their style, full of pictures, and pleasantly instructive, they are just the thing to put in the hands of our children, who will learn more from them than from a whole roomful of dry and unwieldy historical works.

Mr. M'OWAN's little book (7) is just what was wanted. Concise, yet overflowing with promises, it will bring sweet comfort to many sorrowing ones "bowed down with weight of grief."

We have just finished Mary Higham's new book (8), and hardly know how to express ourselves concerning it. There is a delicious atmosphere of simplicity about the whole story; it bears about the same relation to the ordinary every-day novels that a quaint old farmhouse, with its trailing ivy and its peacefully sweet surroundings, does to a luxuriously furnished house in the high-toned quarter of our metropolis. It is a book to think over and to live; simply an account of the doings of a few people in a quiet country village, yet full of heart-workings, self-abnegation, and love that seems almost glorified in its intensity. The feelings with which we read this book seem almost akin to those with which we first looked at Dore's great masterpiece, admiring the genius of the painter, feeling that his conceptions were too ethereal for our every-day money-grubbing world, and yet recognising in many details the one touch of human nature that made it a real living thing. Such is this book, and we are glad to have read it.

*Little Folks* (9) is as bright and sparkling as ever. Everything that can be said of this inimitable magazine for the young has been said long ago, and all we can do is to express our unqualified admiration, and heartily recommend to all our young friends this prince of magazines. The chromo frontispiece is a masterpiece.

"Mr. Pritchard has told the story of 'Pomare' as no one else could have told it." So runs Dr. Allon's preface to this little book (10). He is undoubtedly right, and many will be glad to have this trustworthy memorial of the Christian Queen of a savage land.