

some great problem to be solved, or spoke with a tinge of mournful bitterness of life as it must have looked to himself,—a state of perpetual warfare against the genial influences around him. Now it was a series of essays on the development of the human mind, touching upon the vexed question of the origin of species; now on the finite nature of human wisdom, and now an intricate argument on the Essayists and Reviewers' school of writing. And if one of the rough-shod and uneducated did chance to listen with all his might, he sat uncomfortably on his seat to hear an elaborate proof of truths which it had never occurred to him to doubt. Clever sermons perhaps, and satisfactory to the preacher, but for any practical use in such a congregation, valueless. And yet the curate was utterly ignorant of the great gulf which lay between his sermons and the capacities of their ostensible listeners. He had brought up before himself the mean old church, with its sea of human faces, fair and plain, intelligent and heavy. And suddenly across the bare platform on which he worked, far beyond them, there came a single spark from a distant fire. One face there was in that sea which had attracted him; one solitary earnest face, the face of a listener, turned speculatively sometimes towards the pulpit, sometimes away from it, but always in earnest. He smiled at himself for the thought. Was it likely that the delicate, childlike face in that dim corner should be thoughtful with such thoughts as worked in his own brain, or fell from his lips?

The improbability occurred to him, but not his own inconsistency in speaking what to so many must be an unknown language. Involuntarily he thrust away his paper and opened the book nearest to him. It chanced to be the only volume in the room below the hard standard he allowed himself: "Thorndale; or, the Conflict of opinions." It opened at a part whose dreamy beauty drew him on in spite of himself. What could he have in common with a man like Thorndale, that there should come into his mind a passing pity for him? He read as far as this: "I cannot describe her; I could not see her for the light love threw around her." And then he closed the book with a smile, laying a marker in it—the mark of his disapproval, and superiority to any such weakness.

If the great questions hovering round the solemn mysteries of life and death were to be lost in the sorrows of a pitiful love story, he had done; such things had no interest for him; he taught a sterner creed!

TO BE CONTINUED.

Holy Days of the Church.

[Written for *The Church Magazine*.]

FESTIVAL OF ST. MATTHEW.

SEPTEMBER 21st.

MORNING LESSON.—Ecclesiasticus xxxv. EVENING LESSON.—Ecclesiasticus xxxviii.

"Shame on us who about us Babel bear,
And live in Paradise as if God was not there!"

repeated Hugh Clifton as he closed the Christian Year on the evening of St. Matthew's Day; "I feel," he added, turning to his mother, "as if we ought never to forget Him, our home is so truly a little Paradise; but do you really think we are better in the country than in the town?"

"I dare scarcely say that, Hugh," replied Mrs. Clifton, "but I do think the living constantly in daily, hourly, contemplation of God's wonderful and beautiful works of creation ought to make us more mindful of Him, and may be a