

only shelter, and safety, and repose. It seemed as if the whole earth were nestling under great, warm, motherly wings.

My Bible lay open on my knee, but I had not been reading for some time. I had not consciously been thinking or even praying, my whole heart resting silently in the presence of God, as the earth around me lay silent in the sunshine: conscious of his presence as the dumb creatures are conscious of the sunshine, as a babe is conscious of its mother's smile, neither listening, nor adoring, nor entreating, nor remembering, nor hoping, but simply at rest in God's love.

It seemed like waking, when a low murmur below my window recalled me again to thought.

It was the broken murmur of a woman's voice. The room immediately under mine was the kitchen, and as I leant out of the window and listened, I perceived that the voice was Betty's.

I went down-stairs into the court, and as I passed the kitchen window, I saw Betty sitting there with her large new Bible open before her on the white deal table.

It was a long window, with several stone mullions, and casements broken into diamond panes. The casement at which Betty sat was open. The cat was perched on the sunny sill, and Trusty was coiled up on the grass-grown pavement beneath.

Betty was bending eagerly over the book; the plump fingers she was accustomed to rely on in so many useful works, could by no means be dismissed from service so laborious to her as reading a book; and her lips followed their slow tracing of the lines, as if she would assure herself by various senses of the reality of the impressions conveyed to her by the letters. As she bent thus absorbed in her subject, I noticed how much power was expressed in the firm, well-defined lips, and in the broad, square brow, from which the dark grey hair was brushed back; and, indeed, in every rugged line of the strongly-marked face. As I approached, she looked up. She seemed to think it necessary to apologise for her unusual occupation, and she said:

"I was only looking, Mrs. Kitty, to see if what that Yorkshireman said is true."

I could not help thinking of the noble women of Berea; and leaning on the window-sill, I listened.

"For you know, my dear," she continued, "if his words made my heart as happy as a king's, what good is it if they were only his own words? But if it's *here*, it is not his but the Lord's, and then it'll stand."

"Then his words did make your heart light, Betty?" I said.

"My dear," she said, "'twas not his words at all. It's all *here*, and has been here, of course, ages before he or I was born, only I never saw it before."

And turning the Bible so that I might see, she traced with her fingers the words—

"All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

"There's a deal more as good as that, my dear," she said; "but I keep coming back to that, because it was that that healed up my heart."

Her eyes were moist, and her voice was soft and quiet as she went on—

"Mrs. Kitty, the cure was as quick

as the hurt. Just as Mr. Wesley's words went right to the core of my heart in a moment, and made it like one great wound, feeling I was a lost, ungrateful, sinful woman—*these* words went right to the heart of the wound, and flowed like sweet healing balm all through it, so that just where the anguish had been the worst, the joy was greatest. Not a drop of the sorrow but seemed swallowed up in a larger drop of the joy. For it was not thinking, Mrs. Kitty, it was seeing. I saw in my heart the blessed Lord himself, with all my sins laid upon him, and he, while he was stretched, bleeding, there on the cross, all alone, and pale, and broken-hearted with the anguish of the burden, the burden of my sins, seeming to say with his kind looks all the time, '*I am not unwilling, I am quite content to bear it all for thee.*' And oh, my dear, my heart felt all right that very moment. I can't say it felt light, for it seemed as if there lay upon me a load of love and gratitude heavier than the old load of sin, but it was all sweet, my dear, it is all sweet, and I would not have it weigh an atom lighter for the world."

I could not speak, I could only bow down and rest my face on Betty's hand, as I held it in mine. We were silent a long time, and then I said:—

"Did you tell Mr. Nelson?"

"He came and asked. I had set myself as firm as a rock, that there should be no crying, and praying, and singing over me, Mrs. Kitty, but I was so broken down with joy, that I didn't mind what anyone did or thought about me, but sat crying like a poor fool as I am, until Mr. Nelson came up to me quite quiet and gentle, and asked if anything ailed me, and then I said, 'You may thank the Lord for me, Mr. Nelson, for to my dying day I shall thank the Lord for you, and that you ever came to these parts.' Then he asked what it was, and I told him all, Mrs. Kitty, as I have told you, and he looked mighty pleased, and said it was being converted; and said something about the 'inward witness,' 'the witness of the Spirit.' But what that meant I knew no more than a new-born babe, and I told him so. I knew my heart had been as heavy as a condemned murderer's, and now I was as happy as a forgiven child, and all through seeing the blessed Lord in my heart. And they all smiled very pleasant, and said that was enough, and that what more there was to learn, if I kept on reading the Bible, and went to church, the Lord would teach me all in time. But I felt I could bear no more just then, so I wished them all good day and went home alone. For I was afraid of losing the great joy, Mrs. Kitty, if I talked too much about it. I felt as if I had got a new treasure, and I wanted to come home and turn it over, and look at it, and make sure it was all true, and really mine."

"You spoke of *seeing*, Betty," I said, "but you had no visions or dreams?"

"No," she said, "and I don't want any. I don't see how it could be plainer than it is. And I found it quite true," she went on, "about the Lord teaching me at church. It is strange I never noticed before how the parson says every Sunday in the prayers so much that John Nelson told me. 'All we, like sheep, have gone astray;' and about the forgiveness of sins, and all. The prayers seemed

wonderful and plain to me to-day, Mrs. Kitty; but I can't say I've got to the length as yet of understanding our parson. But, oh, my dear," she concluded, "it is a great mercy for us ignorant folks that the Bible does seem the plainest of all!"

Then I left Betty again to her meditations, and went up for the precious half hour with mother before father came back from the fields. And I thought it right to tell her, as well as I could, what Betty had told me. She was interested and touched, and looked very grave as she said:—

"I don't see what we can say against it, Kitty. Your father thinks that John Nelson is a very remarkable man. Anything which makes a person keep their temper, and love to read the Bible, and go to church, does seem in itself good. But I think Betty is quite wise to wish to be alone, and not to talk too much about it. It seems to me we want all the strength religion can give us for the doing and the enduring, so that there is little to spare for the talking, or to waste in mere emotion."

"Yet, mother," I said, "it is love, is it not, which strengthens us both to do and to endure, and love has its joys and sorrows as well as its duties."

"Yes," she said thoughtfully, "many sorrows, and also joys. Yet, Kitty, love is *proved*, not by its joys and sorrows, which are so much mixed up with self, but by duty. God said, 'I will have obedience, and not sacrifice;' and I think that means that God will have, not the offering of this or that in the luxury of devotion, but the sacrifice of *self*; for obedience is nothing else than the sacrifice of self."

"Yet, mother," said I, "if the love is so deep that it makes the obedience a delight, can that be a mistake?"

"That would be heaven, child!" she said. "But I think none but great saints have experienced that on earth, at least not constantly."

"Yet, mother," I said, "it seems to me, the more one is like a little child, with God, the more one does delight to obey."

"Perhaps it is the little children that are the great saints, Kitty," she said, smiling.

"But you think we need not trouble Betty about what she feels, mother," said I, "she seems so gentle and happy?"

"I think we must wait and see," said mother.

And so our conversation ended.

Can it have been only yesterday morning I was sitting in the hall window, when Hugh Spencer came in, and, after just wishing me good-day, asked where mother was, and left me to go and find her? It seems so much longer.

I felt surprised that he should have no more to say to me, when we had not met for months, and he had been ordained in the meantime. And I supposed he wanted to consult mother, thinking me too inexperienced or too much of a child to be able to give any advice worth having.

I did feel rather hurt, and then I began to be afraid I might have shown him that I felt vexed, and received him stiffly and coldly. And I resolved when he came in again (if he came) to speak quite as usual to him. What right, indeed, had I to feel hurt? Of course mother was a better counsellor for anyone than I could be; and everyone could see how much better Evelyn's

opinion was worth having than mine. But then my thoughts went off into quite another channel.

Then Hugh came back, and his voice was very gentle and low, for he was standing quite near me; and he said:—

"Kitty, I came to speak to you about a very important subject." And then I looked up; but, indeed, I do not know what we said.

Nor, when Hugh went home and mother came in, did she say much. She only took me to her heart, and murmured, "My darling child."

To think that Hugh had been wishing this so many years!

Only I am not half worthy of Hugh and his love.

Yet God can make me even that, in time.

(To be continued.)

Some of the Uses of Coal-Tar.

THE history of coal-tar reads like a romance. What was formerly so offensive to any sense has been made to yield something highly charming to at least three of the five senses. Since the discovery of that sickly and somewhat fugitive colour, mauve, by Perkins, thirty years ago, investigation has been carried on with indefatigable industry, till at the present moment the most brilliant dyes—scarlets, blues, greens, and yellows—can be extracted from the waste of our gas-works.

There never was a deceiver like coal-tar. The lady who turns up her nose and screws her face because she happens to get a whiff of the crude article has possibly just been adding to her charms by using a perfume from the same source! One extract, now risen into considerable commercial importance as a scent, is largely employed in the manufacture of soaps, while its delicacy makes it also available for the higher branches of perfumery. But this instance of the complexity of coal-tar's character has other parallels quite as singular. It is, perhaps, the last substance that a person would like to get clothes stained with, but if the stains are there nothing will remove them better than an extract of the tar itself—benzine. Again, the light which has been shed upon coal-tar has been returned with light, for it is rich in naphtha and other illuminants. This black sea in which chemists have so successfully fished has recently been causing a good deal of speculation on account of a wonderful catch, drawn by Dr. Falberg. As far back as 1879 this gentleman alighted upon a terrible monster, according to one writer, who says that it may be properly termed anhydrosulphaminobenzoic acid! Fortunately Dr. Falberg has survived, and so we have full details of this tarry specimen, which he has modestly named saccharin. For sweetness it has already completely ruined the long-standing reputation of sugar. It caused but little attention for a time, mainly, there is reason to suppose, from the difficulty of making it in quantities, which was experienced at first, and also because there was little demand.

A large factory has been set at work in Germany for the production of saccharin. Its present price is from 40s. to 48s. per pound, and, though this seems a high figure, when we remember that in the sweetening quality one pound equals 220 pounds of sugar, the cost must be acknowledged moderate.