

The Family.

"SHE NODDIT TO ME."

The following poem, which recently appeared in the Ben Accord, a weekly comic journal published in Aberdeen, attracted the notice of the Queen, and her majesty wrote expressing a desire to be furnished with the name of the author:—

I'm but an auld body,
Lavin up in Dreeside,
In a twaroom'd bit hoosie
Wi' a toufs' beside,
Wi' my eoo and my grumpy
I'm at happy as a bee,
But I'm far prouder noo
Since she noddit to me!

I'm nae sae past wi'—
I'm gie' t'g and hail,
Can Iant twa three tawtie's,
An' look after my kail;
An' when our Queen passes
I run out to see,
Gin by luck she micht notice
And nod oot to me?

But I've aye been unlucky,
And the blinls were aye doon,
Till last week the time
O' her veesit cam roon',
I waved my bit apron
As brsk's I could dae,
An' the Queen lauch'd fu kindly,
An' noddit to me.

My son sleeps in Egypt—
It's nee eese to fret
An' ye when I think o't
I'm sair like to greet,
She may feel for my sorrow—
She's a mither, ye see—
An' maybe she kent o't
When she noddit to me.

INDIA.

AN INTERESTING LETTER FROM REV. R. C. MURRAY, MIHOW, C.I.

[To the Editor of the PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.]

SIR,—Last week I had the pleasure of spending a few days with our missionaries at Neenuch. The Rev. W. A. Wilson settled here a year ago, and although the work is as yet in its infancy, signs of success are by no means wanting. The first golden sheaf has been gathered, as an earnest of what the harvest shall be. You have already heard from those better able to tell the story of the beginning of our work in this important centre. I will not repeat it.

We will take a ride through the country and see some of the neighbouring villages. Leaving Neenuch early Monday morning, we are soon beyond the limits of the cantonment. The Canadian-like appearance of the soil is quite striking. By the aid of a little imagination we can see within a few miles of each other the reddish soil of Prince Edward Island, the white limestone formation of Frontenac, and the black mud or loam of Manitoba. Scenery sometimes "repeats itself." However, there is much that is strange. To most of the grains, grasses, roots and trees, we are foreigners, although we can name some, such as the wheat and the maize, the leeks and the melons, the potatoes and the cucumbers, etc. The ground is generally fertile when properly cultivated, but the fields are rough and unfinished. There are no fences. Wood in India is scarce. An occasional garden with a hedge of cactus or prickly pear is a great relief to the eye. You look in vain for comfortable houses hiding beneath the shade of apple, pear or plum tree. The farmers have

NEITHER HOUSE NOR BARN on their land. Their people all live clustered in villages and towns. A watch tower of bamboos and catch grass is the only substitute for a building, in which you see a guard on duty in almost every field. India abounds in robbers, both biped and quadruped, hence the farmer must watch his flocks and fields by night and day. Under the shield of this booth the watchman is standing; in his hand is a sling, by means of which life is rendered rather uncertain to all who would dare intrude. Some of these Chankedars are very expert marksmen. Do you not think that David's victory over the Giant was partly due to the accuracy he gained in stoneling when keeping his father's sheep? The watch tower itself suggests the idea of Isaiah's lodge in a garden of cucumbers. Before us we now see

—IAWAD, a walled city of 1000 inhabitants. The walls are strong and unbroken. The gates and towers are now not guarded, as British rule has secured peace and protection. Before reaching the city it becomes manifest that more than ordinary excitement prevails. A crowd of Hindoos meet us and soon voice their trouble, thinking that we are Government representatives. In order to enlist our sympathy and perhaps to secure our support, they at once offer us a Rupee "bakshis." After some explanation we learned the cause of their disquiet. Alas the cause is a very serious one—death—yes, death, not of a mortal, but of an immortal, not of a man, but of a god. The Mussulmans have cut down one of their sacred pipaltrees to allow their own talj to pass through the lane where this pipal was growing, and the result is at least 1,000 men in

A FRANTIC STATE OF TERROR AND GRIEF, vowing vengeance and calling on the "Mnadev" and all the lesser divinities to bring speedy punishment upon the sacrilegious Mahomedans. After a few explanations given and received

MR. WILSON tried to quiet the Hindoos by saying that if the Mahomedans had done wrong Mnadev would punish them. "Ahl yes," said they, "in the next world; but we do not wish to wait till then; we want to punish them now and so make sure of it." On learning that we were missionaries they listened attentively for a while, but as no plan was proposed in the sermon to punish the guilty party, they became restless and at last asked Mr. Wilson to withdraw from the steps of the building to some distance from the Kachari or court house, as he was disturbing the parichyat then in session. He did so, taking his stand on a large circular stone and preached Christ and Him Crucified. By and by the head of the Hindoo community and his secretary rode up in grand style. They received us cordially, and invited us to sit with them while they were deliberating. A few witnesses were called, the Chankedars examined. A short inter-

change of opinion between the chiefs, and thus ended that part of the proceedings.

After this another opportunity was given to Mr. Wilson to preach, at the request of this officer. There was

A LARGE CONGREGATION of about 1,000. At first they listened much more attentively than a Canadian audience convened for some secular object, would have done. At last some of the over-zealous fearing that their gods were being endangered, cried out in opposition as the faithful missionary endeavoured to make known the true God to those ignorant idolaters. I could not help thinking of the Grand Missionary to the Gentiles in the court of the Aropagites, declaring the same truth and with surroundings not dissimilar. After making our salaam to the multitude, we enter and pass through the bazaar, to find the shops closed, business suspended and the people mourning over

THE DEATH OF THEIR GOD. They point out the god to us and show how the blood of the god is oozing out. We pass on, a large crowd following us; we are now outside the city and seeing a friendly banyan tree we sit down to have some tillin.

Returning again to the city we sit down on the steps of a shop, and soon the people gather. Some are curious, some interested, some anxious, some enraged.

WHAT A MIXED CONGREGATION! You ought to have seen them. How they did strive for the books and tracts that were given! But it is now evening time, and we must leave them—leave them with the prayer that the seed sown may bring forth good fruit; yes, leave them with sad hearts to know that here, as in hundreds of other places, there are so many perishing precious souls without any one to tell them of Jesus, the only Saviour of sinners.

Next morning we ride out to another village. How eagerly the people gather around "the Sahibs." The men have not yet gone out to their farms, and in a little while there are forty men listening to the Gospel.

THE PATEL INVITES US INTO HIS HOUSE.

It is not very grand. Dried mud is the staple material for village houses. One part is the cow stable, the other part is used for a bedroom. There is an inner court, or court of the women, into which we were not invited. After the people had listened for more than an hour, they were invited to ask questions, which they readily did, not always, however, bearing on the subject under discussion, nor wholly of a religious nature: such as "Do you smoke?" "Do you hunt?" "Do you receive a good salary?" and "Who pays you?" "How old are you?" "Have you a wife and children?" etc., etc. They then ask us to eat something with them, and bring a large cucumber and some parched corn. We eat some, and ask why they would not eat from us. The Patel, or head-man, does eat, yet he is careful in so doing that none of the food has previously touched our hands. Dear Christian brethren, there is no one here to break the Bread of Life to these kind and simple-minded villagers, and so they are dying, while there is abundance in Our Father's house for them.

Outside this village there are several INTERESTING RUINS in the form of old temples, thought to be built before the Mahomedan invasion between 600 and 700 years ago. They are crumbling into ruin, the home of owls and bats. From the tower of one you can see the fresh boughs of the pipal—one god overthrowing another. Mr. Wilson photographs some of them, and Mrs. Wilson and I find a prominent place, on our ponies, in the foreground of one.

I have already written too much, but will just add a few words about

MUNDESAUR, which we visited next day by train. It is also a walled city, with a population of more than 25,000—a city wholly given to idolatry. Look what way you will, and you see idols; idols under every green tree, stones bearing the image of everything which have never been seen under the sun. The people are most religious, but it is a religion without righteousness. Divinity and devilry have embraced each other. Many of the mothers are married to the gods, and their children debased and steeped in vice. How can they be better than the gods they worship? We were told that the only English family finds it necessary to have a guard of seven men to protect his house. The day after we visited the city

A CRUEL STRIFE arose between the Hindoos and Mussulmans—the cause being that the Hindoos forbade the Mahomedans to sacrifice goats at their festival. Last year the Hindoos were victorious, but this year the Mussulmans were determined not to be defeated, so for weeks before they were preparing weapons in the form of old swords and spears, guns and slings, stones and sticks. I have not heard of the result, but I fancy the smoke was worse than the fire. This is what Hinduism with its "light and sweetness" is doing for the people. Shall we not be more in earnest to tell them of Christ's gospel of peace, so that the time in India, as over the world, may speedily come when men shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks.

Sept. 23rd, 1886.

AUTUMN RAIN. THERE is no colour in the world, No lovely tint on hill or plain; The summer's golden sails are furled, And sadly falls the autumn rain. —Celia Thaxter.

In the September leaflet of the National Union of Primary Sunday School Teachers there is given a series of pertinent questions to primary teachers, as follows: Pastoral Duties of the Teacher.—Do you call on new scholars? Do you visit scholars who have been absent two weeks? Do you visit sick scholars? Do you make birthday calls? Do you secure the mother's co-operation? Do you invite the parents to visit the class? Do you make any efforts to get the parents to attend church? Do you make any suggestions about the books and papers which children read at home? What efforts do you make to have your scholars attend church? Why should children attend church as well as the Sunday School? Can you not hold a children's meeting in the middle of the week, say on Monday after school, to teach them temperance and other matters pertaining to practical religion, for which you have not time on Sunday?

THE SOCIAL ELEMENT IN THE CITY CHURCH.

A GREAT many pleasant friendships are naturally formed in the church, and among its most delightful aspects we regard its social opportunities and privileges. While its highest work is the directly spiritual, it takes in a whole round of obligations which have to do with humanity in the daily conflicts and experiences of life. To extend a fraternal hand to the young man in the city, whose room in the boarding-house is in pitiful contrast to the generous freedom of the old home on the farm, to bring young and old into agreeable association, to be helpful everywhere and harmful nowhere, are among the obvious duties of the city church. In the rural neighbourhood, where a new face is scanned at once, and the unexpected appearance of a stranger awakens speculations, kindly or curious, the situation is different. There, although in the even tenor of the prosperous day, there may be little demonstration of affectionate interest, the good offices of the neighbour are always a foregone conclusion. If serious illness falls upon a household, the neighbours, who are life-long friends, as well as members of the same communion, take turns in sitting up at night to relieve the wearied parent, and vie with each other in the performance of tender offices and the showing of thoughtful attentions. A few months ago sudden bereavement came to a home in New England village, and a kinwoman from Brooklyn, who went at once to offer her sympathy, told me that "the neighbours had done everything without solicitation, sending bread and biscuit, meats, cakes and pies, and themselves arranging hospitably for the entertainment of the arriving guests, who could not all be accommodated in the little homestead.

There may be less money spent in the country on gifts and in social courtesies, but there is no lack of the good-will which makes the simplest gift precious, and which far outweighs in true value the most costly tangible token of friendship. The hurried life of the city, and its greater distances apart, the incessant strain of business activity, and the constant ebb and flow of its people makes the social conditions more conventional, and regulates intercourse by laws which are necessarily more arbitrary.

For this reason, if for no other, the social element in the church should be jealously guarded, and never suffered to fall into abeyance. The caste feeling, however it may predominate elsewhere, should be trampled under foot when it obtrudes itself in the precincts of the church. Not that a church ever is, or ought to be, a mere society, a social club, a place in which people are to have a good time. Judge L., with his culture and his old family traditions will always find his intimate friends among those with whom education and breeding give him most in common. He will not be likely, in the church or out of it, to make a confidential intimate of the young man he met yesterday, whose knowledge of books is bounded by the school speller and arithmetic, and whose daily work is in a down-town store. This will not be because the Judge feels above the young man, but simply because friendship implies always some congeniality of sentiment and reciprocity of interests. But the two, both belonging to the same church, sitting side by side in the prayer meeting, meeting in the sociable, caring for the same things in their special church-home, will be drawn together, and drawn mutually nearer, the one doing the other good.

"Such a church is cold," "the atmosphere is freezing," "the people are so stiff and distant," we sometimes hear with regard to a city church. The church in question has seemed to us the very reverse. Stiff, freezing, formal, are these the epithets to apply to a set of people whom we know in their relations with us to be all that is genial, sunny, and winsome. "But," says the person who complains, "I attended that church a year, and nobody ever spoke to me? The pastor never called upon me, I came and went as a stranger. Don't tell me of the friendliness of that church!"

That a pastor should be expected to divine by some instinct, the home of every new-comer, and at once call upon him, is a little unfair, seeing that pastors are only human and that their strength, like that of other men, is limited. The stranger in a church should either call upon his pastor, send him a postal of three or four lines, or a note of perhaps twenty, asking the pleasure of personal acquaintance. No such summons is ever neglected. That objection disposed of, I would urge that friendly responsiveness on the part of the stranger, is, as much an obligation as tactful cordiality on that of the church member.

So determinedly repellent is the behaviour of some new-comers in the church that it is difficult to be friendly with them. They ignore the outstretched hand, are strong to the beaming smile, answer in frigid monosyllables the cordial greeting. The fire will warm you, if you will approach it, but how can it do its work, if you stand outside in the cold and shut the door.

The social element in the church is at its best in the proper exercises of the church work. Not sporadic agencies, such as fairs, bazars, sociables and entertainments are means here, but rather the weekly prayer-meeting, the teacher's meeting, and the missionary concert, those old-fashioned means of grace which God has blessed so signally in the experience of thousands. It very seldom happens that a man or woman is long unknown in any church, when he or she is present at its devotional meetings and takes hold heartily of its benevolent work. We desire to save souls. We go to the Sunday-school and take the first class which the superintendent offers, and we are immediately drawn into a circle of loving hearts, beating with ours in loyal desire for service. That the church should be social, friendly, full of warmth and tenderness, is just to say that the church should cultivate the spirit of its great Founder, who went about with his disciples, who sat in the little home at Bethany, and was a guest, whenever asked, at the table of Simon or in the house of Zaccheus.—Mrs. M. E. Sangster in The Interior.

CHILDREN of the present day are much criticised, in the pulpit and in the press, because of their forwardness and lack of reverence. It is even a common remark of the older parents, that "there are no children now-a-days?" no children who have the spirit and place of children. But children are usually what they are trained to be. If the children of a former day were better mannered than those of to-day, the reason must be looked for in the fact that they had better parents than those who are complaining about the children of to-day. There were some advantages, or advantages for some, in the long ago.—S.S. Times.

OUR SUPERSTITIONS.

It will, perhaps, surprise many Americans to read, as they may do in a recent letter to a French paper from the United States, that the people of this country are among the most superstitious in the world, exceeding in this respect the French, the Germans, and the English.

This statement cannot be proved, for it is not true that any large number of our people equal in superstitiousness the French peasantry, or even the English yeomanry. And yet it is undeniable that our sailors are full of superstitions, and that many of our farmers are the absolute slaves of fallacies about the influence of the phases of the moon upon their crops and upon the weather.

Many women, too, are apt to shudder at the breaking of a mirror, fearing bad luck, and a whole family of superstitions has been grouped about the cat. The idle and foolish fear, in the South and West, that it is "bad luck" to remove a cat from one house to another with a moving family, has probably been the cause of the desertion and cruel death of more than one unfortunate animal. Many superstitions, indeed, are wicked, and all are foolish.

The belief in the "unluckiness" of Friday is common all over the Christian world, and retains a certain hold in this country, in spite of the "lucky" circumstances that America was discovered on Friday, that the Pilgrims landed on Friday, and that the Declaration of Independence was adopted on Friday. The superstition arises from the belief that our Saviour was crucified on Friday. How unworthy to suppose that the event which saved mankind should have doomed the world to perpetual ill-fortune on the day of its occurrence!

If Friday were indeed an unlucky day, nothing could have been undertaken in this year, 1886, because the year began on Friday, will end on Friday, and contains fifty-three Fridays; for four of its months contain five Fridays each; the longest and shortest days of the year are both Fridays, and, more dreadful still, five changes of the moon fall on Friday!

The fear of the number thirteen is not so common in this country as it is in Europe. The superstition has its origin in the fact that the apostles, with the Saviour, made thirteen at table. The superstition in its original form was to the effect that, if thirteen men were seated together, one of the number was sure to prove a traitor or a criminal and be hanged. As executions ceased to be of common occurrence, the notion simply that one of the thirteen would die within a year replaced the former superstition.

The accidental spilling of salt is often noted by the American housewife as "unlucky," but rather, it seems, by way of a jest than seriously. This superstition also goes back to ancient times, when the exchange of a pinch of that necessary article, salt, was a sign of friendship, quite naturally, and its refusal a token of hostility. The overthrow of a dish containing it was held, therefore, to fore-shadow the end of friendship.

Superstitions about the moon are very old and of very varied origin. Men of science tell us that there is, so far as influence of the moon upon the weather is concerned, but one chance for any such effect; and that is in the possibility that the very slight amount of heat that the full moon radiates may have some little influence in dispelling clouds and rendering the atmosphere dryer.

A good story is told of a coloured man in the South who, though ignorant, was wise enough to get along without squaring all his acts by the state of the moon. He was a successful gardener, and the vegetables he produced were always the earliest and the finest.

"Do you plant your seeds in the new of the moon, Gabriel, or in the old of the moon?" he was asked.

"Go 'long!" said Gabriel; "I plants my seeds in de ground, an' lets de moon take care ob herself!"—Youth's Companion

A GOOD WORD IS NEVER LOST.

FIELD MARSHAL SUVAROFF, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army in the reign of Catherine II., was famous for his pithy sayings. He was small of stature, with an ugly face and shabby attire, but by sympathy and tact as well as by masterly military ability he won greater power over his own soldiers than any Russian General before or after. Just before one of his campaigns he gathered together a number of his best men, and thus addressed them: "We are about to fight the French. Remember, whatever you encounter, you must go bravely forward. If the enemy resist, kill them; if they yield, spare them; a Russian soldier is not a robber, but a Christian! Now go, and tell your comrades what I have said!" Soon a great battle took place, and the French were defeated. A brave soldier named Mitrophanoff captured, with the help of another, a French officer and two of his men. Mitrophanoff bound up the wounded officer's arm, and finding that the prisoners were faint for want of food, shared with them his own loaf of coarse rye bread. When they had finished eating, several Russian Grenadiers, fresh from the heat of battle, rushed upon them, crying out: "What! three of these French dogs still living! Die, villains!" leveling their bayonets as they spoke. "Hold, lads!" cried Mitrophanoff, "the lives that I have saved you cannot touch!" But the infuriated soldiers would not hear him, and were about to carry out their purpose when a stern voice from behind shouted out: "Halt, I tell you! On your peril advance a step further!" and a little pug-nosed, dingy faced man, dressed in a coarse linen shirt and tattered trousers, stepped in among them. Had he been a ghost these fierce soldiers could not have been more abashed. Skulking away quietly, they had only time to mutter: "The General." "Yes, the General," growled Suvaroff; "he will assuredly have some of you shot if you cannot learn to obey orders better. And you, Mitrophanoff," turning to the soldier, "who, pray, taught you to be so good? we did not think you were made of such stuff." "You taught me yourself, sir," answered the Grenadier, proudly. "Did you think I had forgotten what you told us last week, that a Russian soldier should be a Christian, and not a robber!" "Right, my man," exclaimed Suvaroff, his face all aglow now with the consciousness of a well-taught lesson, "a good word is never lost, you see! Give me your hand, my lad, you shall receive an honest man's reward. You will be a sergeant to-morrow, and a right good one you'll make; too!" True to his word, the Russian general promoted Mitrophanoff the next day, and all because of the few words of counsel which had fallen upon his heart and made him tender and true, at long last changing his mode of action.