

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

ECCE HOMO. The voice of Jesus! O how sweet Its gracious accents fall! How for the weak and weary feet, Pardon and grace for all.

AN EPISODE IN DR. MOFFAT'S LIFE.

BY T. P. BENTING. I tell the story as the genial old man told it, first to me privately, and afterwards in my hearing at a missionary dinner party at the ever-open house of Sir William M'Arthur.

Moffat was religiously trained by parents belonging to one of the dissenting communities in Scotland. He was apprenticed as a gardener. His father died whilst he was so occupied. He saw in some newspaper the advertisement of a vacant situation as an under-gardener at High Leigh, in Cheshire, the seat of an old and distinguished family in that county; applied for the post, got it, and took up his residence accordingly.

The parting with the godly and widowed mother was hard on both sides. She knew that, as yet, he, though kindly and moral, had not chosen her God to be his God; so she took him apart, gave him such Christian counsels as only mothers can give, and watered him with piteous tears. "Make me one promise, Robert," said she. "I will make you any promise," said the son. "Then promise me that, every day while you are away from me, you will read some portion of the Bible." He promised accordingly, and they parted.

He felt very strange when he entered on his new duties. A well-trained Scotchman is at once the most cosmopolitan and the most homesick of human beings. The first Sunday after his arrival he went to the church at High Leigh. There, to his profound surprise, a gentleman walked up into the aisle in a white surplice, which Moffat could not distinguish from a shirt! Still more horrified was he when the minister began to read some prayers out of a book!

In later years no man ever learnt more easily, nor more thoroughly, how the essence of Christian worship consists neither in place nor form. But at the time he was repelled, and even disgusted. He determined he would never enter that church again, and I think he never did. But he kept his promise to his mother, and conscientiously, if with very little interest or light, read some portion of the great Book which, the good Spirit helping, is all attraction, light and power.

One day, whilst he was working in the garden, he saw and heard a woman in a near walk crying aloud and piteously. He went to her: "What is the matter my good woman?" "My husband, my husband!" "What of him?" "He has been beating me." "You have been doing something to provoke him perhaps." "No; he beats me because I am a Methodist."

Now, if she had said that she was a negatherium, Moffat, on the first hearing of it, might possibly have had some faint understanding of her meaning. Geological science had even then discovered the relics of strange monsters, now happily extinct, and had even then given them monstrous names. As it was, he was fairly puzzled. He remembered, however, as he thought the matter over, that in some volumes of the Evangelical Magazine in his father's library, dating so far back as the beginning of the century, he had read of Rowland Hill, the Countess of Huntingdon, and others, who were spoken of as Calvinistic Methodists. He had never dissociated the adject-

ive from the noun; knew nothing more about either; and was totally ignorant that a large body of religionists existed who were by that time distinctively known as Methodists, but, thank God! by no means Calvinists, in the sense of the good old Evangelical Magazine. As for the difference, when he did discover it, I do not believe Moffat cared one jot. He was too great and too practical a man to concern himself much with theological metaphysics. There was but one 'decree' in his theology—that of the universal kingdom of Messiah, with the universal call to preach and spread it, and of the duty, and promised power to submit to it. His was missionary divinity—the professed, if simplest, of all.

He sought out the poor persecuted woman, and learned from her that there were some of these Methodists in the neighborhood, who stately worshipped at a small chapel not far off. He had twinges of conscience about his habitual neglect of public worship, and was glad to go to the chapel. Praised be God that the first time he went, under the preaching of a Mr. Jones, a local preacher—not improbably one of Sidney Smith's "converted cobblers"—he was "pricked to the heart!" The second sermon he heard was from the energetic and eloquent Dr. Beaumont. Of course he was invited to the class-meeting. Of course this simple and awakened soul soon found peace with God. Of course he began to make himself useful as he found opportunity.

Not many weeks after this great crisis of his life, there was a vacancy in the leadership of the class. Dr. Beaumont was at a week-night appointment at a place and was consulted. "Make the Scotch lad the leader," he said. Moffat took the post accordingly. Now, a godly and clever blacksmith became his chosen companion and guide, a member of the class, by name Hamblett or Hamlet Clarke. They communed much and happily together; only that Clarke was speculative and unsettled, disturbing the brains of himself and friend with questions which his heart, had he asked it, would have soon answered him; but the younger disciple took no harm.

One day Moffat was sent by his chief to Warrington on horseback. He was to return as quickly as he could. As he rode rapidly out of the town, he saw a placard on the wall. He was irresistibly led to stop and read it. It stated that a meeting of the London Missionary Society would be held on a given day and at a given place, and that the Rev. Wm. Roby, of Manchester, would take the chair. It added that the London Missionary Society sent out missionaries of all denominations to various parts of the world. Moffat hurried home; that was the moment of his call to missionary work. How he was to embrace it he knew not. He waited for the opening; but that was to be his assured vocation for life. By this time he had become skilled in his happy trade of gardening; had answered another advertisement; and was in receipt of an offer of a first class appointment, which would have brought him in three hundred a year. So what was to him a considerable preferment lay in one scale, and the great missionary idea in the other.

A Manchester Conference came on; and Clarke and Moffat walked to Manchester on the day before the Conference—Sunday—to hear the noted preachers of the day. They feasted on Robert Newton in the forenoon. As they sat together at tea, the question arose whether they should go at night. Clarke preferred some Methodist celebrity. Moffat stuck stupidly—(this last word in Lancashire means resolute persistence in either a wise or foolish saying or course)—that he would go and hear Roby. Each took his own way, and each was profited. The next morning they returned to High Leigh. Moffat said to his friend, "I shall go and see Mr. Roby, and ask him whether I can be a missionary." Clarke absolutely jeered at him; but Moffat was firm. He entreated Clarke to go with him; but could not induce him to do more than accompany him as far as the corner of the street where Roby lived. They set off together, and parted at that corner. Then Moffat's heart began to fail; he went to the gate of Roby's house, lifted the latch, looked at some steps which led to the door, trembled, turned and hastened to rejoin Clarke.

Roby's house—I remember it well—was in Bloomsbury, Chort-

ton-upon-Medlock, a street which runs between Oxford Road and Upper Brook Street, two main thoroughfares in and out of Manchester. The two companions had parted at the corner of Oxford Road, and Moffat hurried back to that corner; Clarke however had taken the other corner, and his friend could not see him. The latter paused and thought. "I will try again," he said to himself. He went to Roby's gate, unfastened it, and went up the steps, and then, in his own words, "I lifted up my heart to God, and prayed that he might not be in." Yes; but the good God read that prayer backward—far behind its words—in the truer desire of the heart, Roby was in.

(To be continued.)

THE ASSURANCE OF FAITH.

"Help me, O God! My boat is small and frail, Thy ocean is so wide." The Breton fisher prays, as setting sail, He floats upon the tide. He hears the thunders crash and billows rise, Far out of sight of land, Yet knows that underneath the darkest skies His times are in God's hand. A trust like this outrides the longest storm, And fiercest tempest braves, Still watching to behold the sacred Form, That treads the swelling waves. Lord, give us faith to equal that which wings The Breton fisher's prayer, Which to the life-life or a promise clings, Without a thought of care! Then, whether over tranquil summer seas, Or angry waves we sail, Our hearts can rest on Thee in perfect peace, For Thou wilt never fail. Amen.

THE ESKIMOS.

At the last meeting of the London Institution Dr. Rae, F. R. S., delivered a lecture on "The Eskimos and Life among Them." There was a very large audience. The lecturer began by calling attention to the vastly extended coast-line of 5,000 or 6,000 miles, occupied by this remarkable people, speaking, with slight dialectical variations, one and the same language, so that a native interpreter could be understood from Labrador to Alaska. Referring to the interesting problem of their origin, he quoted Dr. Rink, who had resided among them in Greenland during twenty years. According to that writer the Eskimo people seemed to have been the last wave of an aboriginal American race, which had spread themselves over that continent from more general regions, ever yielding to the pressure of the tribes behind them until they at last peopled the sea coasts of the Arctic circle. Another theory was that they came from the north, being driven southwards by the ever-increasing cold of a glacial epoch. Dr. Rae could not subscribe to either of these beliefs, and gave his reasons in detail, laying special stress on the Mongolian type of the Eskimo features and general physique for thinking that they must be regarded as an Asiatic race who crossed from Siberia by Behring's Strait. He cited native traditions strikingly confirmatory of this view. It was a common but quite mistaken idea that the Eskimos were hostile to the whites; during his twelve years of official life in the vast lands of the Hudson's Bay Company he had found them quite friendly, and not at all fairly open to the charge of treachery, which was also too often brought against them. He confirmed the testimony of Back and his sailors, who pronounced them "a bonnie lot of critters," especially the Eskimo lasses. Dr. Simpson, who measured the Eskimos near Behring's Strait, found the tallest man among them to be 5 feet 10 and a half inches, and the shortest an inch only over five feet. The heaviest full-grown male weighed 195 pounds, and the lightest 125 pounds. Their eyes have a fold of skin across the inner angle, giving them a cast of the countenance all but perfectly Chinese. The race was reproached with being dirty, but there was no more justice in such a sweeping accusation than in hasty inferences to the discredit of English cleanliness from what was too often seen in the Staffordshire black country. The lecturer described the Eskimo dwellings, which were stone and mud kraals, wooden huts, or snow-houses, according to circumstances. The last were most ingeniously constructed of blocks of frozen snow, built up in dome fashion, but with a skew arch, to resist the strong drifting winds from the icefields. They were described as very snug and comfortable. The windows were of ice, and afforded plenty of light. The Eskimos were very strong, and bore cheerfully very heavy loads. Dr. Rae spoke of the hardships undergone

by his Eskimo interpreter Albert during his painful walk of thirteen days over hummocks of an icefield. A liberal supply of food was needed to meet the strain upon the system thus caused. An Eskimo's meal was often as much as 8 pounds of seal's flesh or 12 pounds of fish. Their clothing was almost wholly made of the skins of the reindeer. The boots of the women were made big enough to hold their babies, being used instead of cradles. Polygamy existed among them, but he had never known two sisters at once the wives of one man. He had met with an instance or two of polyandry. Their domestic relations were in general not unhappy. Their love for their children, who were mostly very well behaved, was unbounded, although, when asked how many they had, they almost always went over their fingers three or four times to count six. Before concluding his lecture, Dr. Rae gave, as illustration of the Eskimo intelligence and good faith, the story of his gleaming among this people the first authentic tidings of the fate of Sir John Franklin's last Arctic expedition. It was in the spring of 1854, when resident at Repulse Bay, that he met with an Eskimo wearing a gold band round his head. Having asked whence he got it, the reply was, "From the white men (Kaboona) who were found dead far to the west, near a great river." The party, about forty in number, were first seen alive travelling south, hauling a boat or boats on sledges, making very short stages, and were thin. They gave or sold them a seal, which they ate. Later in the year about thirty-five dead bodies were found by the natives a long day's journey north of the Great Fish River, or its west bank. The sledges, the Eskimos added, were gone, but the boat or boats were there. They obtained a great number of spoons, forks, and some money, and saw a dozen books or so, which were given to their own children, by whom they had been destroyed. Large rewards were offered the informants if they could find any of the men alive, or if they had but a single book; but they shook their heads and said: "All dead, all book destroyed." This must have been true, the lecturer said, because not a book had since been found, and had there been any living man he must have been able to reach the Hudson's Bay settlements by the aid of the Indians, all of whom were friendly, being tribes which Franklin himself had come to know well on one of his inland journeys. Dr. Rae's party received the Government reward of £10,000 for the discovery of the fate of Franklin and his crews. The audience were reminded that M'Clintock, in 1859, found a document hidden in a cairn on King William's Island which fully bore out the truth of the Eskimo report of the route followed by the hapless crews.

BEHAVIOR IN CHURCH.

The other day I read in the Sunday School Times an admirable little article, entitled "A Point in Church Manners." It suggests to me one or two other points, concerning which I am stirred to address a word of remonstrance to church-goers. The first regards the attitude of the pew to the pulpit. If any one of us is entertaining the minister in the home drawing-room, the minister may be sure of being treated with courtesy. We shall not, though we find his call fatiguing, glance furtively at the clock on the mantel, fidget in our chairs, nor, drawing forth our watches, snap their cases in his face.

Yet well-bred people, with barbaric rudeness, constantly consult time-pieces, and move uneasily in their seats in church, if the sermon be over-long, or it does not interest them, or they dislike the ministerial manner.

The next point relates to children. You, sir or madam, who are grown up, do not, of course, need such a reminder. Children then, ought not to pitch their hymn-books into the rack when a tune is concluded, so that, simultaneously with the last notes, there ensues a sharp rat-tat-tat all over the auditorium.

Clothing, overcoats, mufflers, wraps of all sorts, should not be assumed during the doxology, or the final prayer. It is a manifest impoliteness to other worshippers, and a slight to the occasion, to be struggling into coats and cloaks, and adjusting reluctant fastenings, while the service is in progress. Good taste awaits the close, after the benediction.

And why the frantic haste with which so many flee the sacred edifice, when the blessing has been pronounced? Why not a slight and reverent tarrying, a waiting till the echoes of prayer have died into silence?

These points are submitted with relation only to the lower consideration of conventionality, the decorum on which we insist in society, not with regard to the veneration which should be paid in God's house to the rites and the messenger. — Sunday-School Times.

ADVICE TO A MINISTER.

Here is Bishop Wilberforce's advice to a clergyman, who wished the bishop to tell him how he had failed, and how he was to succeed: "Show the people that you have a pastor's heart, and I do not think they will be long in giving you the natural return, their support. I cannot tell you how earnestly I long for such a change in your ministry, in its fundamental character. I see not the love of souls, I see not faith in your Master's presence in it. Your ministry looks to me like the stunted, unwilling service of that fearful character, the mere professional priest. God knows if this is so. I speak but of the aspect which, outwardly, your ministry wears. My advice, for which you ask, is: Pray! Pray! for more thorough conversion of the heart—pray for love to Christ. Pray for the outpouring of the Spirit on your own soul, and on your ministry, and then live in your parish, live for your parish, work in it only as a man can work, who has come to his work for intercession for his people." There is the right ring in this. It is just the counsel which all ministers need. Would that they acted in the spirit of this solemn charge. — Selected.

UNPROTECTED GIRLS.

A young girl, beautiful and attractive, became the belle of her native village. Every evening it is said, she received young people at her home without supervision of any sort from her parents. One of these visitors, a young man to whom she had been engaged, wrote to her father accusing her of the grossest conduct, and when the father sought him to demand a retraction the traducer shot him dead.

The murdered was suffered to escape. Six months later the brother of the girl avenged his father's death and his sister's dishonor by shooting him through the heart.

It is believed that the girl into whose happy young heart these horrors crowded was innocent. Her principal fault was that she placed herself in the power of a man who was without truth or honor.

The key to this terrible story lies in a too lax system of social life. Among the more exclusive classes in American cities it is no longer customary for a young girl to receive the visits of gentlemen without the approval and presence of her mother or other matron. A young man is not expected to bring his friend to call at a house where there are unmarried daughters, without first asking permission of their mother, who is held to be the proper judge as to whether the acquaintance is desirable or not. She remains in the drawing-room during the evening when her daughters receive their friends, and also accompanies her daughters to every place of amusement.

But in many families, both in our cities and inland towns, the conduct of the young people is governed by very different rules. A girl of 17 gives parties, receives gentlemen at her home, goes out driving and walking alone with them, and finally engages herself to some young man without even consulting her parents or asking their approval.

It is probable that the girl who is so carefully protected by her mother is not a wit more pure or modest than the other who is unprotected. But she is out of danger. She is valued more highly and sought more eagerly because she is protected.

If this poor girl in Pennsylvania had made a constant companion of her mother, her reputation would in all probability now be stainless; her father would be alive, and her young brother's hands would be clear of blood. — Youth's Companion.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

LITTLE THINGS. "Little drops of water, Little grains of sand, Make the mighty ocean, And the beautiful land." "And the little moments, Humble though they be, Make the mighty ages Of Eternity." "So our little errors Lead the soul away From the paths of virtue, Oft in sin to stray." "Little deeds of kindness, Little words of love, Make our earth an Eden, Like the heaven above." "Little seeds of mercy, Sown by youthful hands, Grow to bless the nations, Far in heaven's lands."

MARY AND DOG CARLO.

Little Mary and her great black Newfoundland dog, Carlo, were a familiar picture to me. I often stopped to look at them as they ran about the yard. If it was a warm afternoon they lay asleep under the large evergreen trees. Mary's light curls made a lovely contrast to Carlo's shaggy black sides. His loving gentleness made him seem as good as he was handsome. Little Mary had a naughty habit of running away from home. Carlo would not leave her for a moment. He seemed to try to get her home again. He ran before her, keeping her from off the walks, and trying to coax her to turn about. Sometimes he would succeed, and then I heard his joyful bark when he saw her once more safely in the yard. If he could not get her home he would never desert her. When she was tired out she laid her curly head against his neck, ready to go wherever he led. Then you may be sure he led her home just as straight as she could go. One day, when I came out of the gate, Carlo met me, barking and jumping about in a most anxious manner. He ran a little way and then came back to me, as if coaxing me to follow him. I thought him too wise a dog to be mistaken; so I followed him, though a little slowly. He seemed to notice this and to beg me to hasten. In a moment more I saw dear little Mary toddling along the railroad track. I felt sure the dog's quick ears must have heard the train which was coming around the curve. I hurried fast enough I can tell you. Carlo had never allowed me to pick her up, even for a moment. Now, he seemed fairly wild with joy when I caught her in my arms. He led me home in a perfect dance of delight. After that I was a privileged friend, for Carlo never forgot that morning. To the day of his death he thanked me, in his mute, loving way every time he saw me. — Our Little Ones.

"LITTLE FOXES."

One little fox is called "By-and-by." If you track him you will come to his hole—never. Procrastination is the trait of time.

Another fox is called "I can't." You had better set on him an active, plucky little thing "I can" by name. It does wonders.

A third fox is "No use trying." He has spoiled more vines and hindered the growth of more good fruit than many a worse looking enemy.

A fourth little fox is "I forgot." He is a great cheat. He slips through your fingers like time. He is seldom caught up with.

A fifth little fox is "Don't care." No one can describe the mischief he has done.

A sixth little fox is "No matter." Beware of him, for he is most dangerous.

"Take up the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines." Remember, it is of the utmost consequence whether your life is spoiled by small faults which by God's grace you can avoid.

Between forty and fifty years ago three little English boys were amusing themselves together in a wood lodge one summer forenoon. Suddenly one of them looked grave and left off playing. 'I have forgotten something,' he said; 'I forgot to say my prayers this morning; you must wait for me.' He went quietly into a corner of the place they were in, knelt down, and reverently repeated his morning prayer. Then he returned to the others, and was soon merrily engaged in play again. This brave boy grew up to be a brave man. He was the gallant Captain Hammond, who fell in the attack on the Redan at the siege of Sebastopol. He was a faithful soldier to his earthly sovereign, but, better still, a good soldier of Jesus Christ.