

"I am sure I cannot guess. Nobody we know, of course."

"Deed thin, an' it is too. Alice, do you mind Sarah Good?"

"Sarah Good? No, I think not. I do not remember ever to have heard of her."

"Yes, ye do; certies! Dinna ye mind the puir creature tha' kim beggin' wi' her child, an' ye gave her yer fustian gown an' petticoat, an' I gave her my old shawl an' my black cardinal. Ye mind her, Alice, surely?"

"Yes, indeed! I remember the woman and the child; but I had forgotten the name. But grandmother, she cannot be a witch, I'm sure; I do not believe a word of it—not a single word. A poor, sick, miserable creature—a 'ne'er-do-weel,' as you may call her, I dare say she might be—a poor, half-crazy, homeless beggar; but I guess she was nothing worse. And what power can that poor creature have? If she had any, I think she would have used it to clothe herself and that poor, half starved child. Should not you?"

"I dinna ken. He said the gals charged it upon her, only way."

"I don't believe it. But who was the other? You said there were two."

"I guess ye dinna ken o' the ither. It is ane Sarah Osburn. I hae heard tell o' her; she wa' the Widow Prince, a woman o' some substance h--- once, an' she married her ain farmer mon. He wa' a 'redemptioner,' I think they ca' them. He an' her sons had trouble atween them, an' he left her, an' she ha' been half dementit ever sin'. I thought sure an' certain she wa' deed long ago; I dinna hear o' her this morn' a day; an' noo it turns she is charged wi' bein' a witch. The gals cry out on her, an' say she is the ane that torments them. I dinna see how it can be—a puir, feckless old bodie; what power ha' she?"

"But did Goodman Preston believe it?"

"Weel! he did na' just say; he thinks the sufferings of the gals is real; but he did na' let out his min' about the ither."

"And what are they going to do about it, grandmother?"

"There's a deal to be done about it. He said the folks is goin' to get out warrants, an' hae the twa arrested for bein' witches; an' there's to be a court held at the village—a 'special court,' I think he ca'd it (whatsoever that may be, I dinna ken)—an' he says they wi' be tried for their lives for it."

"And what will be done to them if they are found guilty?"

"Gude sake! I dinna ken; an' I did na ask him. He says the folks at the village are all up in arms like about it. They say the devil ha' broken out upon them, an' the people are half beside themselves wi' the terror—runnin' hither an' yon, an' crowds comin' to see the gals' terrible actions; an' ivery bodie talkin' an' spierin' about it, an' spreadin' it fra house to house. But, he says, happen the court kin get to the bottom o' it: an' he hopes it will, an' he prays they may know, an' be able to put an end to it; for there's nae doin' ony business, ivery bodie is so cast up about it. Is na' it awfu'?"

"But I wonder if sensible people there believe in it? Did he say?"

"He did, then. He said Nathaniel Ingersoll, Mr. Parris, an' Joseph Hutchinson, an' Edward an' Thomas Putnam, they all believe in it. Oh! wae is me! wae is me! 'Deed, but I think it's just awfu'! awfu'!"

"And you believe it too, then—do you, grandmother?"

"I dinna ken what to believe, lassie! I kinna say I do believe in it, an' yet, as folks say, 'Where there's sae much smoke, there maun be some fire.'"

"I know. But then, these two poor old creatures—what power can they possibly have? Grandmother, I don't think I believe one word of it."

"Weel-a-weel! I kinna say. But there, lassie, rin awa' noo; an' dinna fash uny mair about it, for it makes me sick wi' fear."

"But stay a moment, grannie, and tell me just this one thing: If the devil hath such power, hah not the Lord our God the greater power?"

"True for ye, lassie! Ye are right; I believe that: an' sure we maun put our trust in Him. But dinna talk mair about it noo, for it makes me sair sick at heart; an' I wad fain try to forget it."

(To be continued.)

THE LITERATURE OF FLOWER GARDENS.

From the very earliest times we find gardening illumined and directed by the pen. Bacon's celebrated Essay "On Gardens" will recur to those interested, and George Herbert, the divine, quaintly tell us that "of gardening and building no man knoweth the cost"—a shrewd observation which is likely to find an echo in the experience of many who have ventured on either pursuit. I have purposely avoided many allusions to ancient or what are popularly called classical authors, but I cannot resist pointing out the fact that some of our most successful writers of to-day, and of those whose works are read in these pages, are literally and truly gardeners. Who has not lingered over "Christowell," by R. D. Blackmore, who, Virgil-like, devotes much of his time to his Italian trees at Twickenham? And have we not noted the true instinct of fruit and flower culture in "Nature's Serial Story" and in the "Home Acre," by Mr. J. P. R., or laughed at Charles Dudley Warner's "My Summer in a Garden"? Even the artists share the fate of the writers, and become bond-servants to Flora. I have never seen Mr. W. H. Gibson's garden, but I am quite sure he has a good one, for it is only true and practical gardeners who can draw leaves and petals as he and Mr. Alfred Parsons do draw them. Every fond of flowers and gardens should read Alphonse Karr's "Tour Round My Garden": also "Days and Hours in a Garden," by Mrs. Boyle (E. V. B.); and every work written by the late Mrs. J. H. Ewing is alive with sympathy for garden blossoms, as is also a little volume entitled "The Six of Spades," a book about the garden and the gardener, by the Rev. Reynold Hole, Canon

of Lincoln, the genial pastor and rosarian, who formulated the aphorism that "he who would grow beautiful roses in his garden must first of all have beautiful roses in his heart." Charles Kingsley had a charming little garden near the Pine Trees at Eversley, and both he and his brother, Henry Kingsley, the novelist, always wrote feelingly on floriculture. There is scarcely a single work of John Ruskin's that does not enlighten us as to the exquisite fitness and grace of vegetation, and in his "Proserpina, or A Study of Wayside Flowers," there are minute studies and much subtle reasoning as to their anatomy and nomenclature.—F. W. Burbidge, in *Harper's Magazine for December*.

THE LINGERING MUSIC.

The bird has felt the autumn's breath,
And fled beyond the sea;
But naught can drive away the song;
It left with you and me.

The mother long has slept within
Her grave upon the hill;
And yet the lullaby she sang,
Her child is hearing still.

The clouds have gone, and yet keeps up
The patter of the rain;
The harp's unstrung, but still we hear
Its delicate refrain.

From every voice and trembling string,
Unending music starts;
They die away, or break, but it
Beats on in living hearts.

The strains we sing will soon be spent,
The singers soon be gone;
But oh, the joy, if through the years,
Our songs go thrilling on!

—J. R. J., in *United Presbyterian*.

DOCTORS AND PATIENTS.

A celebrated physician who lived in the days when the lancet and calomel were in constant use, is reported to have said he did not know whether he had done more good than harm by the exercise of his profession, and the wits have always made free with the killing powers of the faculty. "I died last night of my physician," sang Prior; and here is an epigram similar in suggestion upon three physicians of George III.:

"The king employed three doctors daily,
Willis, Heberden and Baillie;
All exceedingly clever men,
Baillie, Willis, Heberden;
But doubtful which most sure to kill is,
Baillie, Heberden or Willis."

The author quotes a rather brutal epigram addressed to the fat Dr. Cheyne, which ends as follows:

"Doctor, one more prescription try
(A friend's advice forgive);
Eat grass, reduce thyself, and die:
Thy patients then may live."

Such effusions directed against "medicine men" have lost their point in our day, or, if we still laugh at a jest against them, it is with no lurking suspicion that the half of it may be true. The art of medicine is to a large extent empirical still, but the symptoms of disease and the remedies to be applied are far better understood, while the modern pharmacopoeia includes invaluable drugs, such as quinine and ipecacuanha, which were unknown to the ancients. The modern physician has so increased the extent of his knowledge that he is the more conscious of his ignorance, and, as far as he can do so, waits on Nature, trusting to her help and moving obstacles out of her way. The story of the art of healing shows that this attitude was not recognized in former days, and that for long ages doctor and patient were equally credulous, and in some respects almost equally ignorant. To prove this we need not go back to the days of Hippocrates or Galen. Possibly the old amulets and talismans in which so much reliance was placed in the early ages of Christianity were no greater proof of credulity than the belief in patent medicines is in ours; but this and similar beliefs are, one may hope, now confined to the vulgar, while through the Middle Ages and up to a recent period they were shared with the learned.—*The Spectator*.

A CASPIAN LILY.

A still more pleasant afternoon I spent in visiting the haunts of the far-famed Nymph of the Caspian. Neither rock nor whirlpool besets the approach to this coy beauty, but as the siren can be seen only in her bath, from the luxurious heat of which she draws not a few of her charms, one might be led to prefer both Scylla and Charybdis to the peril of the brink to which this fascinating lures unsuspecting travellers at Chyulpan. Yet the danger is much more apparent than real. The Nympha Caspia has broken up no households, and precipitated no fratricidal wars; the worst that can be said against her is that she has planted a deep and never-to-be-satisfied longing in the heart of botanical Europe. Men of science, tender in their admiration of her beauty, and wishing to see it flourish everywhere, have carried her virtues to foreign parts in vain. This tall, lily-like flower, with its overflowing bulb of tender pink, bearing its seeds in a punctured gourd, and bathed far up its slender stem by a continual flow of well-nigh boiling water, mysteriously renewed,—the queen of desert, unpopulous Chyulpan, scattering her perfume over land and sea, is the unique product of unique conditions, and can no more be transplanted than the Caspian itself.—*Edmund Noble, in December Atlantic*.

British and Foreign.

TEMPERANCE mayors have been elected in Sheffield, Leeds, Newcastle and Tynemouth.

LIVERPOOL Presbytery is organizing large missionary meetings in that city and in Birkenhead.

DR. WALTER C. SMITH opened the new church erected for the Free Middle congregation in Tay Street, Perth.

A GLASGOW firm have secured the contract for the mason work of the Thomas Coats Memorial Baptist Church at Paisley; the price is about \$150,000.

MR. DRYSDALE, of Buenos Ayres and Liverpool, has given \$2,500 to the fund for the improvement of Dunbar parish church. The fund now amounts to \$15,500.

A BILL in the Manx Parliament to abolish grocers' licenses was carried by sixteen to four. Mona is now ahead of England and Scotland in this matter by means of her home rule.

THERE are 116 on the roll of the Free Church Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, and their average age is seventy-three years and five months, while twenty of them are over eighty.

THE late Mr. Theodore Walrond was to have written the biography of Dean Stanley, and the work has now been confided to Dean Bradley, Dr. Vaughan being unable to undertake the task.

THE Rev. Mr. Owen, vicar of a church in Edgbaston, Birmingham, has sent to the Queen a bottle of water from the Jordan, which was used at the baptism of the infant Princess of Battenburg.

THE Brighton Church difficulty is not yet settled. Many are of opinion that there is plenty of room for both Churches. Dr. Hamilton's is to be sold and another built in a more convenient place.

JAPAN possesses 2,000 newspapers, half as many as Great Britain and Ireland. Outside of Japan there are 1,000 newspapers in Asia, most of which appear in India. Africa has 206 journals and Australia 700.

MR. WILLIAM CARRUTHERS, of the British Museum, drew together a large audience at Sale, where he opened a course of lectures with his valuable address on "What the Plant World has to say to Evolution."

THE attendance of students this session at the General Assembly's College, Belfast, is the largest ever known. Mr. John Doherty, a Bohemian, is pursuing his studies there under the auspices of the Continental Mission.

THE Rev. James Milroy, in leaving Dregburn parish, after a ministry of upward of thirty years, carried with him the sympathy of the entire community, who deeply regret that continued ill-health compels him to give up his charge.

THE faculty of the Irish General Assembly's College have received 700 volumes from Mr. Jonathan Vint, together with a case for the books. They formed part of the library of his late son, Rev. R. Vint, of Southampton.

PROFESSOR MARTIN was installed in the chair of Christian Ethics at the opening, on the 10th ult., of the Irish Assembly's College, Belfast, and thereafter delivered an inaugural address dealing chiefly with the relation of the principle of continuity to moral responsibility.

DR. THAIN DAVIDSON says he has known many young men born and brought up within the sound of Bow Bells who, as regards high principle and a virtuous life, would compare favourably with numbers who come up to London from the wolds of Yorkshire or the heather hills of Scotland.

THE Rev. Dr. McNaught, at the congregational soiree of Abbotsford Church, Glasgow, said he had lately taken a census of the parish, which consisted of 6,792 Protestants with church connection, 1,180 Roman Catholics, and 922 who attended no church. The membership of the parish church is 662.

PROFESSOR LINDSAY, Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee of the Free Church, at the close of the present college session, will start on a tour of inspection among the mission stations that are sustained by his communion. This will necessarily make his outing pretty nearly a voyage round the world.

THE Rev. M. Nachim has been appointed missionary to the Jews in Glasgow. The Scottish Home Mission to the Jews has been affiliated with the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, and in terms of that affiliation Mr. Nachim will labour among the Jews in the second city of the Empire.

SIR JAMES McCULLOCH, who presided at the dinner which followed the opening services of the church at Wallington, challenged the congregation to raise \$2,000 during the next twelve months against his \$4,000 and so clear away the building debt. To his question, "Will you do it?" the answer freely came, "We will."

WEST HARTFORD has lately been constituted a borough, and its first mayor, Mr. Gray, is a member of the Presbyterian Church. On "Corporation Sunday" he was accompanied to his own church by the magistrates and town officials. Mr. Robert Lander, another member of the congregation, has been appointed alderman.

DR. HAMILTON'S "History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland" has been issued in a cheap edition. In three days from its issue nearly 9,000 copies were sold. This large sale is owing to concerted efforts put forth by many ministers of the Church to secure a large circulation of so excellent a handbook among the members of the Presbyterian Church.

THE Rev. Moffat Jackson, of Sligo, who died on the 17th ult., had a brilliant college career, and was among the earliest alumni of Queen's, Belfast, founded in 1850. Sligo was his only charge. He was a man of retiring disposition and of a cultured mind. His son, Rev. Wm. J. Jackson, is the successor of Dr. T. Y. Killen in the pastorate of Duncairn Church, Belfast.