

about two hundred of these workmen came to lodge at Beckenham, the Christian benevolence at the Rectory was roused to make the most of the opportunity thus afforded, little knowing whereunto this would grow. By kindly advances towards making friends, visiting the men in their lodgings, and even penetrating into the beer-shops, to allure them forth to hear of nobler "pleasures" by unvarying kindness and cordiality, turning off even the blunt and surly refusal by gentle words and little acts of kindness, meeting the Infidel disclaimers of the Bible by judicious and kind expostulation, and showing an interest in all by thoughtfully providing some little treat for their gratification; their hearts were won, and many, if not all, gradually induced to attend the school room service and evening "cottage readings," established especially for their benefit. The glorious truths of the Gospel, now brought to bear upon these untutored hearts, softened previously by the experience of such unwonted kindness, took effect with wonderful rapidity; and the effects produced in those who had seemed confirmed swearers and drunkards might well seem incredible to those who know not the power of that grace which can work impossibilities. It was not long before some of these returned wanderers took their places at the communion table with a sincerity and depth of feeling which showed how thoroughly their convictions were inwrought with their earnest natures. One, with a conscientiousness which more enlightened Christians might do well to copy, came forward to his first communion with much fear and trembling, lest by any future "slip" he might "bring shame upon the name of his Lord;" "and that," he said, "I could not bear."

Of course the picture is not always so bright. Even in hearts really touched with Divine love old habits would reassert their claims, and quarrels and even fights would arise, and, worse still, the fatal spell of intemperance would sometimes prevail over the "new obedience," and a temporary return to old carousings attest too plainly the force of the Tempter. But, although the fall was disappointing, bitter and deep and true was the return. "I have wept bitterly every night since it happened," was one man's touching confession, and their humility and self-distrust to do better showed how effectual was the repentance. These deviations, however, could not excite surprise. Human nature could scarcely have been expected to act otherwise. Well does the authoress remark, "when the balance shall be struck between small sins (so called) with great pleasures in the one scale, and crying sins with few responsibilities in the other scale, who shall say that Infinite Justice may not see deeper guilt in the unkind word, the uncharitable suspicion, the selfish act, and other manifestations of an un-Christ like

spirit in which Christians are too often tempted to indulge than in the more glaring departures from the law of God of those who have but just begun to hear a Saviour's love, and to know anything of its constraining power.

During part of the narrative Hedley Vicars appears among the fellow-labourers in this work of love. Once more we are privileged to trace his footsteps, indefatigable where good could be accomplished, as he bent his steps to the London Hospital to visit a sick "navvy," as he addressed the assembled workmen in some cottage at Beckenham, or spared an hour amid his last partings from his English friends to encourage and cheer one of these humble disciples in his onward way. Fondly indeed was his memory cherished among them when far away amidst the horrors of that winter's campaign. Three of them even enlisted in the hope of being sent out to the Crimea to be once more "alongside" their beloved friend. One of them realized his hopes, and enjoyed for a time amidst the perils and privations of camp life the counsel and intercourse he so much desired,—an intercourse soon to be interrupted,—but not long, for he too was one of those

"Whom England"
"Shall never welcome back."

As months pass over, we come once more to that sorrowful season when the name of Hedley Vicars needed no longer to be remembered at the Throne of Grace, and when these rough but true-hearted friends mourned with an unfeigned sorrow over that distant Crimean grave which had closed over so much bright promise. Deeply was the stroke felt by the bereaved hearts at the Rectory, but even in the first bitterness of their grief no selfish sorrow was permitted to throw a check on the unremitting labours of Christian love. The Crystal Palace work was over now, but the formation of an "Army Works Corps" for service in the Crimea opened a new field of labour, in which, accompanied by one of Hedley Vicars' bereaved sisters, on the very anniversary of their last parting from him, Miss Marsh went forth to "sow in tears." She was indeed to reap in joy. The earnest efforts, so successful before, were not less so now. As she gained the confidence and riveted the attention of those with whom she came in contact, they expressed the generous desire that their less favored comrades should also hear the "glad tidings." The wish was not expressed in vain. Outside the Crystal Palace every morning four hundred of these "wild" men were assembled to receive the wages for which as yet no work was required. Among these formidable body operations were commenced by kindly addressing them and offering little Testaments, Tracts, &c. Soon large accessions to the "Cottage

Readings" at Beckenham showed how much the interest shown was appreciated. The "seed seemed indeed to have fallen on" good ground, and to have brought forth accordingly. To many of these untaught minds "conversion" was truly—what its name implies—a complete *turning of heart*. It could have been no weak transitory impulse which so penetrated the inmost being of men so uncultivated,—so unaccustomed to look beyond the outward and visible—which proved strong enough to overcome the iron force of old habits and inclinations, and which was able to support and comfort them amid the hunger, cold and toil of their camp life before Sebastopol. Along with this change was blended, as was most natural and right, a strong feeling of gratitude and love towards her who under God had been the instrument of effecting it. It was no common tie which bound their strong hearts to their benefactors. Seldom have we read of more touching demonstrations of respectful, almost reverential, gratitude and affection than those of the parting scenes, when the final embarkations took place and the corps was about to set out for the distant scene of their labours. Scarcely can we have a more convincing proof of the influence that can be gained over head-strong and turbulent natures by unvarying gentleness and kindness than the magical effect—upon an excited body of these men, who, maddened by injustice, were threatening the feeble police force with instant and terrible vengeance—of a single word from "the woman whom they regarded as their friend." In the simultaneous shout of "Trust ye to the end of the world," how much of hearty, child-like, unhesitating confidence is displayed! And in the overflowing of their attachment and grief at parting from one to whom they felt themselves so deeply indebted they earnestly requested her to accompany them to the Crimea, as they expressed it—"to keep them straight." Yet these, for the most part, were not impulsive Irishmen or enthusiastic Celts,—but belonging to a class which we have been accustomed to consider "phlegmatic, unimpressible Englishmen"!

As had been the case formerly, the only dark shadows, cast upon the otherwise unsullied brightness of the scene before us, were thrown by the terrible destroyer intemperance. The authoress adds her voice to the many eloquent appeals for legislation regarding this most fatal and prevailing vice.

"Oh, what can be done to rid Britain of this besetting sin of her working classes? Will no great soul give to this subject serious thought and persevering effort? Is there no "wise man" who will stretch out his hand to "save a city," or a nation, by his wisdom in suggesting and his energy in carrying through a moral or