

Arthur, "to recommend me to Dr. Gilbert as a fit person to take charge of the centre school. He tells me, also, that you desire to have me become a member of your mother's family. You know that I cannot be otherwise than thankful for this mark of your confidence and respect; but there are some things that must be considered before I enter into your plans. I wish to have you withdraw your recommendation of me entirely."

"But I cannot do that," said Arthur, puzzled by the nature of the request.

"Very well; then you will, of course, tell Dr. Gilbert and me what you know about me."

"I know nothing but what you have taught me," said Arthur.

Miss Hammett smiled. "That is very little," said she, "and I wish to remove from you, in the presence of Dr. Gilbert, all responsibility for me. I did not suppose you had a competent reason for recommending me, and I wish the doctor to know it. You have thought it strange that I am here, I suppose."

Arthur coloured, and said that he had.

"Has there been any gossip about me at the Run?" inquired Miss Hammett.

"None of any consequence—none that has done you harm."

"Yet I am a mystery, I suppose."

"They wonder where you came from, why you are here, what your history is—it is very natural."

"Possibly, though I do not see how. I have never assumed anything. I have never sought, as I have never shunned, society; and I presume that there are many here whose histories are unknown to the rest, like my own. You are sure that if I go to Crampton no rumours will follow me to injure my good name, and those who befriend me?"

The doctor had spent all the time he could, and rose to his feet. "I see what you wish," said he to Miss Hammett "and as my shoulders are broad, I will release Arthur from all responsibility. I don't care where you came from, what your history is, or what you are here for. I have seen something of men and women in my life, and I say to you frankly, that I thoroughly trust you."

Miss Hammett's blue eyes grew luminous with sensibility. "I thank you, sir," said she, "and now promise me that you will always trust me. I will not say that I am unworthy of your confidence; for I should belie myself; but I must remain to you just as much of a mystery as I am now. Only believe this, Dr. Gilbert, that if you ever learn the truth about me, by any means, it will bring disgrace neither to me nor to those who may befriend me. Will you promise me?" Miss Hammett looked into the doctor's eyes, and gave him her hand.

"It does not seem difficult," said Dr. Gilbert, "to promise you anything; and now we will consider the engagement closed. I bid you a very good morning." There was something so uncommonly complimentary, nay, gallant, in the doctor's tone and bearing, that Arthur was annoyed.

When the doctor left the room, he left the young man not only annoyed, but oppressed with an uncomfortable sense of youthful insignificance. The self-possession and easy style in which Dr. Gilbert had borne himself in Miss Hammett's presence, the calm tone of the young woman, the quiet manner in which she had shown him the valueless and boyish character of his recommendation of her, all tended to dwarf him. He could not realize at all that he was six feet high, or that he had risen above his initial teens. Oppressed by a crushing sense of his insignificance, he blushed under the frank blue eyes, with the thought that he could ever have had the audacity to love the exalted being who owned them.

"The doctor seems to have a strong, hearty nature," said Miss Hammett, resuming conversation.

"And a strong and hearty will within," responded Arthur.

"I judge so," said Miss Hammett, "and I do not object to it. I think I shall like him."

"I'm afraid you—yes, of course, I think you will," said Arthur.

Unsuspecting of Arthur's feelings, Miss Hammett thanked him for his thoughtfulness, and told him that her situation at the Run had become almost insupportable to her. "I knew that Providence would open a door for me," said she, "and somehow I felt, when I first saw you, that you were sent to do it. I think I shall like your quiet home and your quiet mother very much." Then she went to the mill to find the proprietor, that she might give him notice of her intention to leave, and Arthur returned to his employment, thankful, at least, that he was considered by Miss Hammett worthy to be the doorkeeper of Providence for her benefit. He hoped that Providence would allow him to open doors for her gentle feet in the years before him, a great many times.

(To be continued.)

#### FRENCH PEASANT LIFE.

The family life, so far as husband and wife are concerned, is decidedly happy, and this must be largely attributed to their great sobriety. They have alike one aim in the South of France, for which no pain or trouble is considered too great, namely, to pinch and save wherever possible, so as to lay by a little store. They are of an affectionate disposition, and quarrels between man and wife are rare. They vary this peaceful monotony, however, by life-long feuds between neighbours and relatives, always springing from jealousy. Brothers and sisters are frequently divided by this wretched feeling, one of the many baleful effects of the *partage force*. How far it has fostered selfishness and greed the following instances will show. The writer met one day a peasant of her acquaintance in great grief. He was literally sobbing as he carried his burden. In answer to a sympathetic inquiry he told in a broken voice that his wife had that morning presented him with twins. His sorrow was unappeasable. Another peasant friend spoke of a neighbour in the following phrase, given verbatim: "Mais celui-là

eu le bonheur de perdre sa sœur après sa mariage, mais avant qu'elle avait des enfants," which he clearly thought to be the most enviable luck. Lastly, a girl of twelve years, the daughter of well-to-do peasants of the better class, was found crying bitterly because a little brother had just been born, "pour partager l'héritage," as she said sobbing. Often the little hoard of savings acquired by years of toil and painful parsimony is dissipated in a court of justice over some petty boundary dispute or the like. Whatever improvement a man makes upon his land is viewed with mean envy and restless jealousy by his neighbours, and whenever one seeks to rise all the others combine to pull him down again to their level. The consequence is a dull stagnation. *Partage force* has much to answer for. The excessive subdivision has shut out all the large land owners, and reduced those who once were gentry to the condition of peasants. The result is that there is no capital in their midst, no wealth, and no enterprise to give a stimulus to thought and fresh ideas of cultivation. The old methods and the old form of farming implements are in use just as they were a century ago.—*The National Review*.

#### A SONG OF HOPE.

There are times when life is dreary,  
There are times when hope lies prone,  
When the heart is, oh, so weary!  
And the soul feels so alone.  
Then, oh, then, my heart repining;  
Turn thee, turn thee in thy way;  
For, behold! the East is shining,  
See the mountain bright with day.

When the soul sinks into slumber,  
When thine eyes are wet with grief,  
And the days that man can number  
Bring no balm to his relief.  
Then, oh, man! be lion-hearted;  
They shall win who but endure;  
Through the travail of the mortal  
Immortality is sure.

Death in life is but the lesson  
That is taught us every day;  
And through every change and season  
Life renews from death's decay.  
Then, my heart, be thou not fearful;  
Cast the idle doubt aside.  
Forward! ever brave and cheerful;  
There is One who will provide.

Nothing's lost. Why need we linger  
Steeped in bitterness and gall,  
When Faith points with certain finger  
Where the Day-star shines for all?  
Let us then be patient, steady,  
Under trial, pain or wrong;  
Thus shall we make others ready;  
With our strength make others strong  
—I. E. Dickenga.

#### THE CYLINDER PRAYER.

All the altar vases in this Yung ko-kung Temple, in Peking, are of the finest Peking enamel—vases, candlesticks and incense burners, from which filmy clouds of fragrant incense float upward to a ceiling panelled with green and gold. Fine large scroll paintings tempted me to linger at every turn, and the walls are encrusted with thousands of small porcelain images of Buddha. In the main temple, which is called the Foo-koo, or Hall of Buddha, stands a cyclopean image of Matreya, the Buddha of Futurity. It is seventy feet in height, and is said to be carved from one solid block of wood, but it is coloured to look like bronze. Ascending a long flight of steps, we reached a gallery running round the temple above the level of his shoulders. I found that this gallery led into two circular buildings, one on each side, constructed for the support of two immense rotating cylinders, about seventy feet in height, full of niches, each niche containing the image of a Buddhist saint. They are rickety old things, and thickly coated with dust; but on certain days worshippers come and stick on strips of paper bearing prayers. To turn these cylinders is apparently an act of homage to the whole saintly family, and enlists the goodwill of the whole lot. Some Lama monasteries deal thus with their 128 sacred books and 220 volumes of commentary, placing them in a huge cylindrical bookcase, which they turn bodily to save the trouble of turning individual pages, the understanding having apparently small play in either case. Dr. Edkins saw one of these in the Ling-Yin Monastery at Hang-Chow, and another of octagonal form and sixty feet in height at the Poo-sa-ting Pagoda in the Wootai Valley—a district in which there are perhaps 2,000 Mongol Lamas. At the same monastery where he saw this revolving library there were 300 revolving prayer or praise wheels, and at another he observed a most ingenious arrangement, whereby the steam ascending from the great monastic kettle (which is kept ever boiling to supply the ceaseless demand for tea) does further duty by turning a praise wheel which is suspended from the ceiling. I myself have seen many revolving libraries at Buddhist temples in Japan; but this is the first thing of the same character that I have seen in China.—*The Gentleman's Magazine*.

OF the 670 candidates for election to the new Parliament, no less than 260 men were graduates of Oxford and Cambridge; and the probabilities are that of the entire number, at least four-fifths of the members of the House of Commons hold degrees from some school or college.

THERE are eight of the Samoan Islands, and they contain an aggregate of thirty-five thousand inhabitants. Their chief value consists in the fact that they are on the direct route to Australia, and that they have several good harbours which serve admirably as coaling stations.

## British and Foreign.

THE treaty of peace between France and Madagascar has been ratified.

THE North Georgia Methodist Conference raised this year \$25,223.60 for mission purposes.

THE wife of an English baronet advertises in London papers for the place of companion.

JOSEPH COOK will begin a series of eight lectures in Tremont Temple, Boston, on Monday, February 7.

THE Bible Prayer Union now has 229,000 members registered in London, and about 30,000 in the United States.

THE Rev. G. O. Barnes, "the mountain evangelist," is holding meetings in Fatehgarh, India, chiefly for the benefit of the soldiers.

A MOVEMENT is on foot in England to promote the interchange of pulpits between clergymen of the Establishment and Nonconformist ministers.

PRINCE BISMARCK is the first Protestant that has ever received the decoration of the Order of Christ from the Pope. The badge is worth \$3,000.

THE Government of Madagascar has consented to allow France to have a minister resident at the capital and to maintain a special French guard.

THE Rev. Henry Merle d'Aubigne, eldest son of the late Dr. Merle d'Aubigne, has been ordained as suffragan pastor to Rev. Kennedy Anet in Belgium.

THE New Church (Swedenborgian) College has at present no students, and the principal, Rev. W. Omant, has therefore severed his connection with the institution.

THE normal school at Tuskegee, Alabama, for training coloured youth of both sexes, has received from Boston friends a gift of \$7,000. The school has 225 pupils.

THERE is an association in Paris whose object is to help drunkards home at night. If the patient is too far gone to give his address, the club cares for him till he can.

LONDON has sixty-seven hospitals, with 6,588 beds, and 56,493 patients are received annually. The number of out patients treated during the past two years exceeds one million.

THE materia medica of China requires twenty-eight huge volumes, named Pan-Tso, to describe it. It presents 11,896 formulas, and includes over 1,900 substances of supposed medicinal value.

THE Vicar of Masham, England, thus concluded a sermon to his flock: "And now, friends, which is it to be—Salisbury, Churchill and heaven, or Gladstone, Chamberlain and hell?"

THE special collection of 1,840 copper, wood, and steel engravings of Shakespeariana belonging to the late Richard Grant White has been bought by Wellesley College, Mass., for its Shakespeare library.

THE New York Tax Commissioners have completed their tables of the assessed valuation of real estate in New York city for 1886. They fix the total at \$1,206,112,404, which is an increase of \$37,669,267 over last year.

THE Government of Austria has given the American Board the right to buy or build halls for Bible lectures anywhere in Bohemia. This is an important concession, and shows the growing favour of the authorities toward evangelical work.

AN important change has been made in the formation of the Japanese Government. A responsible cabinet has been organized, and the general make-up of the executive department now corresponds closely with that of England and the United States.

IT is said that the largest weekly church prayer meeting in America is in Chicago, and is that of the Third Presbyterian Church, of which Rev. Dr. Abbott E. Kittredge is pastor. The lecture room will seat a thousand people, and it is usually full.

AT the opening services recently of Belmont Church, Kelvinside, Glasgow, conducted by Revs. Dr. Strong and G. G. Gunn, M.A., the collection exceeded \$1,760, which, with the funds at their disposal, enables the managers to pay the entire cost of the building, and leave a balance in hand.

THE London *Charity Record*, giving a summary of the more important charitable bequests of 1885, says that Sir Moses Montefiore left upward of \$150,000 to congregational and charitable institutions in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and about \$75,000 to charities in London and Ramsgate.

THE minutes of the Associate Reformed Synod of the South for 1885, report eight Presbyteries, 2,535 families, 6,817 members—a net gain of 327—sixty-six adult baptisms, 293 infant baptisms, 6,646 pupils in the Sabbath schools under the instruction of 228 teachers. The total contributions were \$40,418.24.

THE London correspondent of *Science* announces that the old public schools in England are relaxing in their strict adherence to the classics. Rugby, he says, is about to institute a modern side, and change in the same direction are being gradually introduced at Eton, her great rival, Harrow having long had something of the kind.

MR. MAURICE K. JESUP, president of the New York Museum of Natural History, objects to opening the museum in the Park on Sundays, because he believes it would not only be a source of additional expense, but would be a detriment to the working classes in being an opening wedge in reducing the Sabbath from a day of rest to one of labour.

DR. S. SIMPSON has resigned the precentorship at St. Paul's, a post worth \$5,000 a year, which he has held for over thirty years. Having strong objections to choral services, he has taken small interest in the cathedral; indeed his last public appearance at St. Paul's dates as far back as the national thanksgiving for the recovery of the Prince of Wales. Mr. Russell, a minor canon of the cathedral, succeeds the retiring sinecurist.