

health, and that the Church may again have the benefit of his wise counsel and earnest advocacy. We have from time to time given our readers extracts from Earl Nelson's "Home Reunion", notes, and know that they have been much appreciated.

It was thought by many that disestablishment in Scotland would quickly follow disestablishment in Ireland, and that this would pave the way for the general disestablishment and disendowment the English Church. The prospects, however, are not encouraging for the would-be despoilers of God's heritage. The new Government have set their faces against them, as Mr. Gladstone had done before. A letter has been addressed to the Marquis of Salisbury from Glasgow, asking his opinion on the disestablishment of the Church of Scotland. In reply he declares his opposition to the movement. He contends that an established Church secures to the poorest as well as to the richest districts opportunities of religious instruction such as a voluntary system would be powerless to supply. This is a sound view; and though disestablishment may eventually come, there is no immediate danger of it. It would, unquestionably, be a national curse, and not a blessing.

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

SUNBEAMS.

(Written for the CHURCH GUARDIAN.)

Beautiful, golden sunbeams,
Flooding the world with light,
Chasing away the shadows
That come in the train of night.

Sunbeams stealing so gently
In the darkened room,
Cheering the sick one who lies there,
Bringing light into the gloom.

What would we do without them
In this work-a-day-world of ours!
What would it be without sunlight,
Summer, and birds, and flowers!

And God gives so much sunlight
To some of us here below;
And others—how many others!
Little of sunshine know.

There are sun-clad hills and valleys
Where the shadows darkly lie;
The rain falls fast and heavy,
And the sunbeams pass them by.

God grant that those in the valley
May lift their hearts on high,
And see in faith the "Hills of God,"
Where our homes will be by and bye.

Let us labor in faith and patience
Till the earthly task is done,
Then we shall find rest where the Lamb
Giveth light,
And they have no need of the sun.

M.

(From The Church.)

MILDRED'S CONFIRMATION.

CHAPTER V.—"Tis Done."

It is confirmation day, and the two youthful disciples joined the company that were about to ratify their baptismal vows.

Occupying pews near the chancel, it was a very solemn sight, for it was a large class that were about to declare themselves on the Lord's side.

As the hymn was sung they moved slowly to the chancel, and it is hoped that they were all truly prepared to adopt the language of the sweet hymn:

"O happy day, that stays my choice
On Thee, my Saviour, and my God;
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell Thy goodness all abroad.

"O happy bond, that seals my vows,
To Him who merits all my love;
Let cheerful anthems fill His house,
While to His sacred throne I move.

"Tis done, the great transaction's done;
Deign, gracious Lord, to make me Thine;
Help me, through grace, to follow on,
Glad to confess Thy voice Divine.

"Here rest, my on-divided heart,
Fixed on thy God, thy Saviour, rest;
Who with the world would grieve to part:
When call'd on angels' food to feast?"

"High heaven, that heard the solemn vow,
That vow renew'd shall daily hear,
Till in life's latest hour I bow,
And bless in death a bond so dear."

The Bishop's address was very tender and solemn, commending the candidates to the covenant-keeping care of the Good Shepherd.

In the evening the two sought Aunt Helen's room, where they reviewed the transactions of the past Sabbath day. Mildred said:

"We sang a sweet hymn, dear auntie, the third verse so solemn, and I felt when we sang 'Tis done,' that we now had really professed ourselves to be the servants of our dear Master; and as I knelt in the pew when we returned to our seats, I hoped that I could say, dear auntie, 'Thine forever!' When I remember how great is the privilege of thus approaching our Lord, and how great is our responsibility, I felt strong desires to work for our Master, and now, dear auntie, how shall we best serve Him who died for us? Is there no work for us?"

"In the first steps of a young Christian," she answered, "there are two most important questions to ask ourselves; and that is, 'What am I? and where am I?' There is one answer that we should fully understand, for we are directed to do our duty in that station of life where our Master has placed us. We are not called to do great things, but just what He chooses for us."

"I think, dear auntie," Mildred replied, "that I answer, I am a daughter, a sister, a teacher, a niece; and that I dwell in a blessed home, where God expects me to glorify Him in these heaven-appointed relations, remembering the truth that by and by, when I am a little older, I may step out to a higher walk of devotion to God; but auntie, ought we not to work for the Lord in the Church that He has established upon the earth?"

"Yes, truly, dear Mildred, but not thrusting aside home duties, for more showy and public work. I have seen young people so eager to leave their appointed places, so noisy in their talk about their good works, when I knew that a delicate mother needed them at home."

"I was just thinking of one, auntie, who came to see us last week, and who rattled on about her Dorcas work, and her missionary work, and her Sunday School class, and never said one word about a crippled sister, who needed her sisterly acts of kindness, and who never could join others in either her amusements or her studies. But I think, auntie, if I know my own heart, I want to walk softly before the Lord," added Mildred, "and it seems to me that there is a field to cultivate that will point the way to all the rest."

"You mean our hearts, dear Mildred," said Aunt Helen, "that is a field where you will find many weeds of self-seeking, even in the garden of the Lord; don't forget that we are to look for the fruits of the spirits. I was thinking the other day what a lovely picture our lives would present, if we only were careful to cultivate these in that station of life where God has placed us. Just listen! love, joy, peace, long-suffering, deep humility, self-denial, patience, gentleness. Under the teaching of the Spirit of God, we should thus be led to see our duties as they are opened to us so gradually, that we should be epistles known and read of all men, though we should never dream how beautifully they are teaching for Christ."

This wise and faithful conversation made a deep impression upon the hearts of the young listeners, and afforded subjects for deep consideration in their truly earnest desires to be wholly the Lord's.

Mildred had left school, and Aunt Helen often hinted to her of so many little spots in the domestic circle, where she might be such a help, and appointed slowly to her niece her own sphere at home. Mildred still had charge of the two youngest children, and they will be

very sorry when they are called upon to change their teacher, for Mildred was so gentle, so patient with Fred, and so loving with Julius; but Fred is learning to control his wild spirits; to consider that he has something more to do than to frolic, and Julius to govern a temper that will bring the poor fellow into many a sea of trouble.

Mamma had her pensioners, and Mildred undertook the care of these in her weekly visitations, and also the care of the children's missionary bank.

But Emily caused her most trouble, for her selfishness showed itself in so many ways that Mildred's patience was often sorely tried in dealing with this young sister.

In a few weeks the good rector came round to ask if he could not look for some help in the Sunday School, for there was such a nice class of little girls without a teacher.

"We will talk about it," said Aunt Helen, "for I know that Mildred would like to labor among the young folks."

Talking it over with Mildred, she seemed so happy with the prospect of such delightful work and said:

"I can easily arrange it all, auntie, for with system I have plenty of time, on Sunday morning before Church, and leisure to prepare my lesson on Saturday evening."

And so Mildred took her place at the head of her class on the following Sunday, and met eight little girls, who were so glad to see the new teacher. Mildred was a bright, genial spirit, with plenty of sympathy with young folks, and Winnie could have told what a prize they had drawn in having sister for their teacher.

There was one little girl, very poorly clad, not much noticed by the others, but Winnie's eyes were always on the look out for something by which she could make neglected ones feel happy, and Mildred saw that Winnie had drawn up closer to little Betty West, finding her place in the hymn-book, and her texts in the Bible, and as they were leaving the class to go into Church, she whispered to Mildred:

"You are so good to Betty, and I thank you ever so much; you didn't choose the girls who were most dressed up."

Here was one of Winnie's sweet acts of kindness. And now we find Mildred so busy, so happy, for her work is for the Lord. Helping auntie, comforting papa, teaching Winnie and Fred, looking after Julius, training Emily, studying with Lucy, teaching her Sunday scholars, visiting mamma's old women; she finds her work slowly opening, and is just as bright and happy as a spirit working for the Lord will always be found.

When they reached home after Church Winnie said to sister:

"Can't we do something for Betty West? Her clothes are so poor."

And next day Mildred was very busy in looking over Winnie's wardrobe, and found enough to rig out Betty for the Sunday School.

CHAPTER VI.—Like the Master.

Mildred and Lucy have just partaken of their first sacrament with most humble penitence and faith; and it has left its sweet influence upon the young Christians, felt in the household, and Mildred has sought Aunt Helen, to tell that dear counsellor something about her new emotions.

"I am learning, dear auntie," she said, "a little about the nature of our bosom sins; for even during the solemn service of the day, when my whole heart should have been upon Jesus, wandering thoughts troubled me, and led me away from the holy love that should have filled my heart; I fear that I am forgetting my vows."

"Do not be alarmed, dear Mildred, your heart is no worse now than formerly; but you are learning more about the hidden springs of corruption which still lurk within the heart, and trouble the new-born Christian; but such trials