

Family Department.

THE INNER CALM.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
While these hot breezes blow;
Be like the night dew's cooling balm
Upon earth's fevered brow.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
Soft resting on Thy breast;
Soothe me with holy hymn and psalm,
And bid my spirit rest.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
Let Thine outstretched wing
Be like the shade of Elin's palm
Beside the desert spring.

Yes, keep me calm, tho' loud and mad,
The sounds my ears that greet;
Calm in the closet's solitude,
Calm in the bustling street.

Calm in the hour of buoyant health,
Calm in my hour of pain,
Calm in my poverty or wealth,
Calm in my loss or gain.

Calm in the sufferance of wrong,
Like Him who bore my shame,
Calm 'mid the threatening, taunting throng,
Who hate Thy holy name.

Calm when the great world's news with power
My listening spirit stir,
Let not the tidings of the hour
E'er find too fond an ear.

Calm as the ray of sun or star
Which storms assail in vain,
Moving untroubled through earth's war
The eternal calm to gain!

—Rev. H. Brown.

"NOT MY WAY."

A TALE.

(Written for the Church Guardian.)

By T. M. B.

[Continued.]

In Stephen Ray John had found one who seemed peculiarly adapted to be his confidant, his friend and guide, one who could not only enter to the full into the plans and purposes of his life, but could practically help him in carrying them out, and stimulate him to yet nobler endeavours, for it was impossible to be associated with this man without being influenced by him: his impress was felt more or less distinctly on all with whom he was connected. Sybil gladly and eagerly lent her aid in any scheme in which she could be made useful, and as Stephen Ray smilingly assured her, there was no limit to her usefulness. The 'Coomb' people who had remained an uncomfortable problem even during the incumbency of Hugh Barrington and in the life of the late Squire, were both for John and Mr. Ray the source of peculiar anxiety and interest. The 'Coomb' was a valley or ravine which ran like a deep furrow along one extremity of the upland where it bordered upon the adjoining estate: a brawling stream, bordered by stunted alders, ran down it, forming at the end of the slope a little lake or tarn, surrounded by steep banks likewise fringed with alder. Scattered the whole length of this little valley, from the tarn below to where the stream broke from among a group of rocks at its head, were rude cottages, built chiefly from the debris of these rocks, plastered with mud and thatched with straw or reeds. Most of them possessed what, by courtesy, might be termed a garden, consisting of a little patch of potatoes or turnips, and a row of Hollyhocks. The inhabitants of these primitive dwellings were a stalwart race of strangely clad people who might readily have been taken for Gypsies, and amongst whom, doubtless, some really belonged to that mysterious folk, but whose origin could in most instances have been traced to the surrounding counties. As John had told Mr. Ray, when the subject had first been mentioned between them, these 'Coomb' people were squatters; more than a generation ago they had settled in this little forsaken corner which at that time was considered as nobody's property, but which Squire Carruthers, on closely examining the records of the estate, found to be within its boundaries.

Arabs and Bohemians in their tendencies, poach-

ers by profession, persistently violating the game laws and displaying the cunning of savages in eluding them, as muscular as reckless in their appearance, the 'Coomb' folk were certainly an ingredient which would cause perplexity in any otherwise well-ordered parish, and that Stephen Ray was successful in establishing a friendly relation with them might well be considered as a test of his ability in dealing with human nature. "The 'Coomb' represents the height of my ambition," he said, one day to Sybil, while discussing his project of a school. "I am so much older than your brother, and have necessarily had so much more painful experience of humanity than he, that it would be quite unfair to him were he left to grapple with this business as it stands, but I want to leave it in a manageable state for him, and he, with his young energies and his warm heart, will be able to carry out all, and more than all that I in the long run could accomplish.

"O, Mr. Ray," replied Sybil fervently, "I want him to be all that you are—all that my father was—and I believe, I do indeed believe, that he will be." "And I want him to be, oh, so much better than Stephen Ray," he said, with a deep reality which touched Sybil to the heart—"he has better gifts to bring to the Master's service, youth, strength, comeliness, a thousand gifts to win men's hearts for Him."

In their close friendship with Mr. Ray, John and Sybil found another bond of union; he seemed the means of making the good in each more apparent to the other. Sybil had become so interwoven with John's life that it was impossible to him to imagine what life would be without her, and yet he had deterred speaking the words which might bind her to him forever. It may have been in part, because Sybil's manner towards him had of late acquired a touch of reserve which John, in the self-depreciation of his great love, misinterpreted, he dreaded being premature in his avowal, and risking a change in their present relation to each other, which was the source of so much happiness to him.

CHAPTER VII.

It was, as he himself said, a red-letter day in Stephen Ray's life, no less than in that of John Carruthers and Sybil, when the little school-house, which was also to serve the purposes of a mission chapel for the 'Coomb,' was completed. Whether these Ishmaelites realized the fact or not, the erection of the little building meant no less than the introduction among them of an influence which was gradually to change their whole existence. Hugh Barrington, with all his goodness, had failed in his endeavours to draw them into the Church, but Mr. Ray had bolder and more aggressive ideas and was not so easily baffled. The Church must lay hold upon them. Gently and warily, but not the less firmly, she must claim and keep them. There was something about the rude independence of these people that irresistibly attracted Stephen Ray, just as his artistic sense delighted in their fine physique and their bold, handsome faces. And they recognizing instinctively the indomitable spirit animating the slender frame and worn face of the new person, accorded him from the first an unwilling admiration and respect. "I could break on wif' one hand," said big Ben to his neighbour, wiley Tom, (a well-earned and coveted title), "and a comes among us here as if we was his children."

When the foundation of the little school-house was being dug the operations were watched with profound suspicion, and threats deep, if not loud, were uttered by the 'Coomb' folk. The place selected was about ten minutes' walk from the head of the ravine, on a rising ground, not far from the group of rocks of which we have spoken, and which would supply the building material. So formidable was the reputation of the 'Coomb' folk that it had not been an easy matter to get men from the village to undertake the work, and had it not been for the Squire none would have been willing to do so. When the first stones were being laid in order, the person himself acting as overseer, one of a picturesque, but threatening-looking knot of men, who had been suspiciously watching proceedings from the edge of the 'Coomb,' came forward and laid his heavy hand on Stephen Ray's arm. "What be the meaning of this here,

passon?" he asked, looking round at the workmen with an angry scowl; "what be thes fellows, a diggin' and a buildin' alongside of us? It ain't no sort of place for what you call decent, respectable folks to live. We don't want none sich. And if the Squire be thinking of setting a keeper to spy out our ways, let him look out for his keeper, I say. He'll be sorry that ever he set foot nigh the 'Coomb.'" Stephen Ray looked straight into the speaker's face, and in his own there was a curious mixed expression of kindness and sorrow and amusement. "Come this way, Ben, and I'll tell you all about it," he said, laying his hand in turn upon the motley sleeve of the giant; "come a little apart from your friends, too, and listen to me. In the first place, he went on, when they were out of ear-shot of the others, "although we have not known each other long, I think that you trust me, and believe that I am your friend." Big Ben having by a grunt given assent to this, Mr. Ray went on: "If I am your friend then I must wish to see you happy, and certainly would not join in any plot or plan against your happiness, even supposing the Squire, who is quite as much your friend as I am, were to make one. Now I solemnly assure you that the work those men are about is one in which I am interested heart and soul, because I firmly believe it will add more than you can at all understand to your happiness. It is in great measure my plan, though without the Squire's help I could never have carried it out, and I have not spoken to you of it, because it is not my way to speak of plans until they are likely to become realities." And now Mr. Ray began to unfold his project, sure that in the end he would make a convert of big Ben, so far at least as the school was concerned, for the soft spot in the great burly fellow's nature was his affection for his little ones. Indeed the 'Coomb' folk generally, with all their grievous shortcomings, were not deficient in family affection.

(To be continued.)

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

WHILE not more ancient than the 10th or 12th century, the Festival of the conversion of St. Paul may well be celebrated by the Christian world. He was the Apostle of the Gentiles, and nobly did he preach Christ, but his work, great as it was, cannot for a moment be compared with the vast influence which his writings have exercised upon every age since he lived. How many have been aroused to "fight the good fight of faith," and to suffer for the truth's sake, by his searching and encouraging words, no less than by his brave and devoted life. St. Paul's conversion shows how good God is, how he comes to the sinner, and removes the scales from his spiritual vision, and calls him to a high and holy calling. And St. Paul's readiness to respond to God's calls, his subsequent unselfish life, and his earnest and active service stimulate us to a more self-sacrificing and zealous devotion to the cause of Christ. The Apostle's martyrdom used to be commemorated in conjunction with St. Peter on the 29th of June, but that is now called St. Peter's Day, and has to do altogether with that Apostle. Perhaps St. Paul's conversion is most important to be remembered. Many have died the martyr's death, but such a conversion stands without parallel in its attendant circumstances, and the conversion of such a man at such a time was an epoch in the Church's history which, humanly speaking, contributed more in the hands of God to accelerate its growth than any other possible occurrence could well have done.

THE SEPTUAGESIMA SEASON.

MANY different explanations have been offered respecting the non-nomenclature of the three Sundays which intervene, separating the Epiphany-tide from the Lenten Season. That most generally received is, that Quadragesima being the name given to the first Sunday of the forty days preceding the Paschal Festival, the three previous Sundays were named from analogy in round numbers, denoting the days before Easter. St. Gregory the Great, at the end of the sixth century, ruled our present use, and thus is given us a link like even-