

## The Rona Lighthouse.

BY MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

A woman stood at a cottage door—  
A crofter's cottage and mean and small;  
But her heart was rich, if her home was poor,  
For her sons were kindly and strong and  
And her own good man was as brave and true  
And as handsome as even a king could be,  
And she did not envy the queen; for who  
Could be better cared for and loved than  
she?

The wee green island was all their own  
(While they paid to the factor the laird's  
fair rent),  
Little it bore but a crop of stone,  
Yet the Rona people were well content.

They had a sheep or two on the heights,  
And a few cats grew in a sheltered place;  
And they had at sunset such glorious lights,  
That it seemed Heaven came to their little  
space.

They gathered at need, in their own Scotch  
right,  
The bountiful harvest that grew in the seas,  
And they worked in the day and rested at  
night,  
Thankful, contented, and quite at ease.

So the woman stood at the door with eyes  
That scanned the sea for the little boat,  
Since all that she had in the world to prize,  
Her brave, bonnie laddies, were there afloat.

The dark came rapidly down that night—  
A deep, thick darkness without a ray;  
There is almost always a gleam of light  
On the sea, but then it had passed away.

"They are very late," the woman said,  
"And in the mitch the water is rough;  
But they're in no danger"—she raised her  
head—  
"The men are true and safe enough."

She lighted no candle, for there, within,  
Was nothing to do, and naught to see;  
She steadied herself, and would not begin  
At first to yield to anxiety.

And the hours went by as she waited there,  
But her heart grew heavy with dread at last,  
And she shivered with fear, as she cried in  
prayer,  
"Oh, God, let the terrible night be past!"

The morning broke on the sullen sea,  
And over the cliffs the woman peered,  
And round the island in haste went she,  
Till at last she saw the thing that she  
feared;

For there on the rugged rocks she found,  
Cold and lifeless, her dearest ones,  
Baffled by darkness, wrecked and drowned,  
Her noble husband, her bonnie sons!

And, oh, the pang of the vain regret,  
The deepest trouble, the worst to bear!  
She saw that they might have been living yet,  
If only a light had been burning there.

They had sought in the dark for the landing-  
place,  
But no gleam had shone for their anxious  
gaze;  
Ah, weeping widow, with covered face,  
It is, this that will haunt your nights and  
days.

But out of the sorrow one blessing arose;  
She would do for others, though strangers  
they,  
That which she ought to have done for those,  
Her best and dearest passed away.

So ever after when gloaming came,  
In her upper window there shone a light,  
And many a man's wife blessed the flame  
That feebly gleamed on the sea at night.

"I do my best, but the light is small,  
Oh for a beacon that could not fall!"  
The eager woman spoke to all,  
In the earnest tones that must prevail.  
Soon a great light shone o'er the western sea,  
Tended ever with loving care,  
And the lighthouse-keeper was none but she  
Who had lived and loved and suffered there.

Alas for the good that we might have done,  
For lamps unlighted, and help forgot!  
Yet peace and pardon and hope are won  
If we lighten the gloom of another's lot.  
Let us throw some gleam on the troubled sea,  
Let us save our sisters some pang of pain;  
For if their journey may lighted be,  
We shall not have suffered and prayed in  
vain.

—London Christian World.

## A Helping Hand.

"If you cannot keep up with this  
class you had better go into a lower  
one."

The country schoolmaster spoke  
harshly, and Robert Gates' heart sank  
lower than before, if that were possi-  
ble. He was the biggest boy in his  
class now, and how could he bear the  
shame of going among boys still  
smaller?

But there was no denying the fact,  
that the master had had a great deal  
of trouble with him, and that it did  
seem as though he were hopelessly  
dull. Mr. Hardy delighted in figures.  
To be bright at figures, he thought,  
insured a boy for success through life.  
Every boy who came to him was tried  
by the one test, and if he failed in  
that he had no opportunity of showing  
whether he was bright at anything  
else.

So Robert, whose talents did not lie  
in figures, was having just the hard  
tug at school which, if well endured,  
wise men tell us, gives the discipline  
which makes the best and noblest men.  
He had struggled through the miseries  
of notation, numeration, addition, sub-  
traction, and multiplication, each of  
which had been a separate hill Diffi-  
culty to him. And now long division  
stood up before him like a dead, black  
wall. There was no getting around  
it, no getting under it—he must climb  
to the top.

The boys were dismissed, leaving  
the school-house with a whoop and a  
rush—all but Robert, who, with his  
book and his slate, slowly walked  
away. A cheery-faced boy stopped  
and looked back at him, then ran to  
him, saying:—

"I'll give you a lift, Bob—"  
"Come on, Jack Brand," shouted  
half-a-dozen voices.

"I can't come now," he replied.  
"We're going to make up the base-  
ball club, and you'll lose your place.  
We're going to put you in for pitcher."

"You'd better go," said Robert.  
"I hate to have you miss the fun."  
"Never mind," said Jack, heartily.

"I've plenty of time for fun yet. See  
here, now—let's go out behind the old  
barn and cipher away at your examples  
for a while."

They settled themselves on a grassy  
slope in the quiet of one of the rare  
days of early June, and Robert opened  
his book with a heavy sigh.

"It's a perfect tangle to me," he  
said, with a rueful shake of the head,  
thinking of the days in which he had  
watched the slow placing and working  
of the examples on the blackboard.  
The why and wherefore of the curved

lines had never dawned upon him;  
the guessing how many times it would  
"go," and then setting down a figure,  
and the long straggling column of  
figures gyrating off to the right and  
finally ending in nothing, so far as he  
could see, was a fearful piling up of  
mysteries. "Why," he went on, "I  
can't even remember which is divisor  
and which is dividend when he ques-  
tions me about the rules."

"Oh, that's easy enough, if you only  
think a moment," laughed Jack. "The  
divisor's a thing you do something  
with. This way now—mower, a thing you  
mow with. Reaper, a thing you reap  
with. Divisor, a thing you divide  
with—don't you see?"

"Why, yes, of course I do, now you  
give me something to remember by."

Then they bent themselves reso-  
lutely to conquer the difficulties of  
the process before them, and it was  
fortunate that Jack was blessed with  
the gift of patience, for days passed  
before Robert could see anything in  
it except a huge and frightful puzzle.  
The shouts of the boys at play came  
to them from a distance, but no sound  
more disturbing than the soft whisper  
of the summer wind or the pert in-  
quiring "ke-chee! ke-chee!" of robin  
or wren disturbed the droning murmur  
with which Jack untiringly went  
through the lesson over and over again,  
little dreaming that he was securing  
for himself a valuable exercise in pa-  
tience and self-denial.

"I see it!" at last exclaimed Robert,  
springing up with a shout of triumph.  
"I never expected to see daylight  
through such a muddle, but I do.  
Now, let's be off and have a glorious  
play. But," he added, very earnestly,  
"I never can pay you up in the world."  
"Never mind that," said Jack;  
"but," he added, "maybe you can  
sometime."

And his words came true years later.  
When the boys went to prepare for  
college under the mild teachings of the  
village pastor, a strong contrast to the  
rough schoolmaster, Latin and Greek  
came to Robert almost as a pastime.  
He revelled in the line of study now  
opening before him with all the de-  
light which comes of finding some-  
thing in the world of learning exactly  
to his taste.

Jack's troubles began where Robert's  
ended, for his mind was of a different  
order, and now Robert was able richly  
to repay all his kindness.

"But I've got enough of languages  
now," said Jack, after two or three  
years of blundering among moods,  
tenses, and roots. "I am worse at  
classics than ever you were at figures,  
and a man can be a man without  
Latin and Greek, although he can't  
very well without arithmetic. So go  
your way, old fellow—heap up the  
learning and come out a grand scholar.  
I'm going to dive down into one of  
those grimy, noisy, whizzing, buzzing  
machine shops, where I can figure till  
the end of my days. But we can help  
each other all the same."

In after years, when Robert became  
the pastor of a large, struggling,  
working church, Jack, a successful en-  
gineer, was his right hand in every  
enterprise for good. And the two  
often laughed as they recalled the days  
spent behind the old barn.

"I've never thought life had a diffi-  
culty to overcome which appeared so  
terrible as long-division," Robert said.  
"But for your help in just the right  
time, Jack, I think I should have  
given up trying to get an education.  
Our old schoolmaster made me believe  
it was useless for me to try to learn  
anything, because I did not take to  
figures. Yes, Jack, if the Lord blesses  
me as an instrument of good, how  
much of it will be your work!"

"Help each other, boys. Hold out  
strong, willing hands to the weak and  
stumbling, and with cheery heart and  
voice encourage them. Keep them  
side by side with you in the battle of  
life, and then rejoicingly mark how  
their successes will shed a light on all  
your pathway, which will shine more  
and more unto the perfect day."

## A Noble Confession.

WHEN J. Coleridge Patteson (usu-  
ally called "Coley"), afterward the  
martyr bishop of Melanesia, was a boy  
at Eton, like many other boys, he was  
enthusiastically fond of cricket, and  
not only was he fond of it, but he was  
also an unusually good player. At  
the cricket suppers at Eton, it was the  
custom to give toasts, followed by  
songs, and these songs oftentimes were  
of a very questionable sort. Before  
one of these suppers Coley told the  
captain that he should protest against  
the introduction of anything that was  
immoral or indecent. His protest ap-  
parently had no effect, for during the  
evening one of the boys got up and  
began to sing a song which Coley  
thought was not fit for decent boys to  
hear. Whereupon, rising from his  
seat, he said, "If this sort of thing  
continues, I shall leave the room." It  
was continued, and he left the table.  
The next day he wrote to the captain  
of the eleven, saying that unless he  
received an apology he would withdraw  
from the club. The apology was sent,  
and Patteson remained; but those who  
knew how passionately fond he was of  
cricket knew what a sacrifice it must  
have been to have risked the chance  
of a withdrawal. Now that Eton boy,  
by his conduct, confessed Christ. It  
was a great temptation to him, doubt-  
less, to be silent, and to allow the evil,  
ribald thing to pass unnoticed. But  
silence in such circumstances would  
have been disloyalty to the Master  
whom he served; for him, at least, it  
would have been to deny Christ.

WHEN the state authorizes men to  
sell intoxicating liquors as a beverage,  
it authorizes them to do that which in  
its known practical results defeats the  
very object of all good government.—  
O. J. Chubbuck.