

ing the history of a nation in stone. Here, at Corfe Castle, unspeakable atrocities had been committed. "All," one writer tells us, "that malignant hate and fiendish cruelty could do was done within the walls of Corfe Castle." It had been a strong keep in Stephen's time, held by Baldwin de Redvers for the Empress Matilda, and besieged by the King in vain; but in the time of John it was not only a royal castle, but a royal treasure-house, and a state prison. Its dungeons had been filled with unhappy victims, doomed to die of starvation, the steep hill to the castle being their last look upon the outer world.

King John placed, for sinister guardianship, his own wife within the walls of Corfe Castle and also Eleanor, the Damsel of Brittany, whose brother Arthur had been "done to death" previously, both of them having such claims to the crown as rendered their existence inimical to his interests. King Edward II. was another of the prisoners of Corfe, with many others whose names appear in its archives.

During the Civil War, when most of the strong places of Dorset were held by the Parliament, Corfe Castle remained loyal to the King. "The Roundheads had used the church and its tower as the most advantageous port for their batteries, and, in their wantonness, amongst other things, had turned the organ pipes into cases for powder and shot, cutting the lead off the church to make it into shot, without casting in a mould, so dismantling it that, for three years afterwards, there could be no assembling of the parishoners within its walls for the service of God.

The true story of its siege, in 1643, by the Parliamentary forces, "armed with a demy-cannon, a culverin, two sakers, and other ordnance, both from the church tower and adjacent hills," and of their defeat by a woman, Lady Bankes, the Chatelaine, makes interesting reading, her men servants and maids being her only garrison. This little company within the walls never yielded an inch, either to the roar of the guns or to the honeyed words of the gallant commander and his captains from without. From the scenschal to the scullery-maid, they remained true to their mistress, the stout walls of the castle and the tireless courage of this brave and ingenious woman defied them all. Perhaps in these days, when one of the strongest arguments used against granting to woman the right to have a voice in the election of the law-makers of her country is that she would be incapable of bearing arms in its defence, it may, perhaps, be inadvisable to recall this and many similar instances of woman's patriotism, courage and endurance, which are recorded in the history not only of Corfe, but in that of many another ruined castle or keep in this dear old land. H. A. B.

"Ourselves."

The first number of "Ourselves" is before us as we write. No need to tell you much about its editor. You have laughed over the ebullitions of his brain in The Globe or The Star, and we trust you will laugh over them again in the coming Christmas Number and other issues of "The Farmer's Advocate," for Peter MacArthur is nothing if not humorous. No need to tell you, either, that his fun is but the ripple on the surface of a deep and serious undercurrent, for you must know, if you know anything of him at all, that Peter MacArthur is also nothing if not serious. He is a man with a purpose. He is, moreover, a man of courage, who fears not to face odds with all the stubbornness which may be associated with a patronymic so redolent of the "land o' cakes." And, in "Ourselves," he hopes to obtain just that absolute freedom in regard to crying out upon the wrong of things that he has heretofore been unable to attain as completely as he has wished.

"Ourselves," then, is to be an in-

dependent magazine—a magazine in which the editor or any other man will be at liberty to express his thought. It is also to be, as it progresses, "a magazine for cheerful Canadians," with a spice of fun to the foreground. In form (form only, remember!) it resembles somewhat Elbert Hubbard's Philistine—pocket size. We commend "Ourselves" to you. It is published in St. Thomas, Ont., issued monthly, and its price is \$1.00 per year.

Hope's Quiet Hour.

Spread It Before the Lord

Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.—2 Kings xix: 14.

The King of Judah was facing a terrible danger. Rab-shakeh, the leader of the Assyrian army, had come up "with a great host against Jerusalem." He had spoken to the people in their own language, telling them how he had triumphed over other nations, and could easily conquer them, too. He had scornfully offered to give Hezekiah two thousand horses, if he could find riders for them. The king of Judah had turned to God for help, and had received a message of hope from Isaiah, the prophet. Rab-shakeh seems to have been checked for a time, but he sent a letter of defiance to Hezekiah, which was full of contempt for the God in Whom he trusted. He declared that the gods of other nations had not been able to save the people who trusted in them, why then should the God of the Jews be able to deliver Jerusalem out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

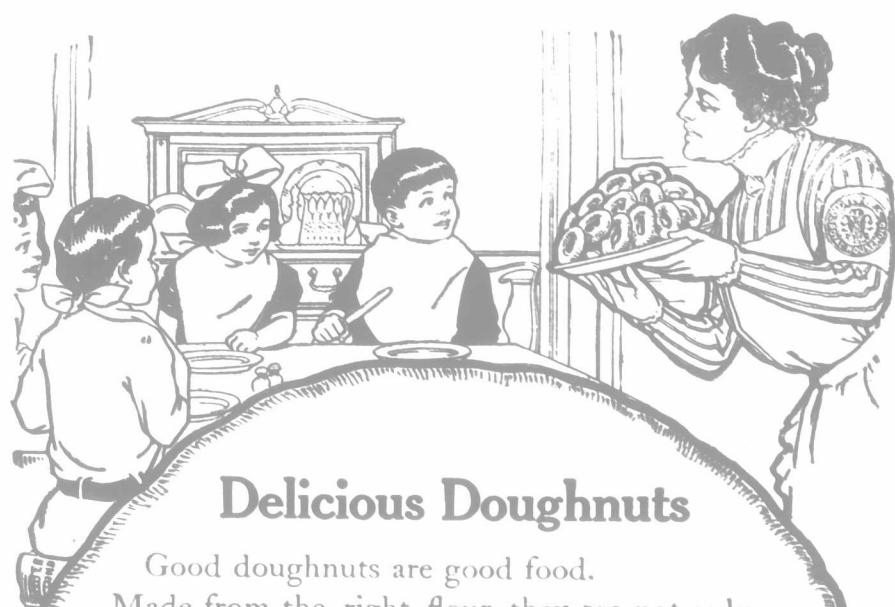
Hezekiah had served God for many years, and knew that the cases were not similar in any way. He was willing to own that the gods of other nations were helpless—what help could they give to anyone when they were only wood and stone? So he took the letter to the house of the LORD, calling on Jehovah to make it plain that He only was the God of all the kingdoms of the earth. And Hezekiah's splendid faith saved his people. Isaiah sent him a message from the LORD God of Israel: "That which thou hath prayed to Me against Sennacherib, king of Assyria, I have heard. This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him: The virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn . . . for I will defend this city, to save it."

I am afraid we are apt to read the wonderful story of the destruction of the Assyrian army by the angel of the LORD, as if it were a fairy tale. Perhaps we believe that God answered the trustful prayer of Hezekiah in marvellous fashion, but we have no expectation that He will do great things for us. And yet Hezekiah's prayer would have been of very little use if it had been faithless and half-hearted. He might have believed that Jehovah had saved Israel from Pharaoh, long before, but have thought—as we sometimes do—that the age of miracles was past.

I think if he could have looked ahead to our age, he would have said that miracles were everyday affairs. If man can use mighty natural forces to work wonders, can send messages flying like lightning under the water or through the pathless air, straight to their mark, is it not foolish to imagine that the God who made all the natural forces is powerless to use them?

Let us begin, like Hezekiah, by feeling sure of God's power and willingness to help His children; then let us take the natural course and spread all our troubles and perplexities before Him.

Yesterday I was in church when the larger part of the congregation had begun to stream out. The first part of the service was over, and only the celebration of the Lord's Supper would come next—ONLY THE LORD'S SUPPER! It was a congregation of Christians, and Christ the King was standing there, offering Himself to each hungry soul. He offered life and courage and peace—just what each soul needed for its own special difficulties. A friend who was with me whispered, "Would you like to stay for the Communion?" The question startled me.



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