

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

THEY ARE ALL GONE. They are all gone into the world of light. And I alone sit lingering here!

AN EPISODE IN DR. MOFFAT'S LIFE.

BY T. P. BUNTING. (Continued.)

Let an old man be garrulous. I cannot help telling about Roby, though I wander a moment from my story. He had been brought up in the 'C'untess's Connexion, and never lost the spirit of that kind of Methodism which she did much to spread.

It was in the presence, then, of this benignant dignitary that Moffat, a plain Scotch lad, without introduction or pretension, found himself that memorable Monday morning. He told his tale, and answered all inquiries. "Well," said Roby, "we must wait and see. I have plenty of gentlemen in my congregation who keep gardeners; I will go with you and get you a situation. Then you must come to me from time to time, until I can form a judgment on the case."

They had scarcely left the shop before a sudden thought startled Jones's brain. "Mary! Mary! Mary! Mary!" he called after the missionaries, and was mad enough about missionaries and all good men and works.

His hand are all the corners of the earth; not exclusively, but at all, its boundaries are limits, for in the eyes of at least

one inspired Psalmist this is a "round world," a flat circle, rather than a globe; not merely "the whole earth," with the winding valley-paths—often, however, turning sharply at some spur of hills, of which "the strength is his also."

Moffat took up his abode at Davyhulme; attended to his gardening; read, as time allowed, the book R. M. prescribed; was happy; tried to be useful; and fell in love with Mary, and she, perhaps more badly with him; but no engagement was formed.

After some time, Moffat had got on well with his studies; and Roby, who had kept a wise and loving eye on him, told him one day that he was now prepared to recommend him to the Directors of the London Missionary Society for acceptance and employment by them.

He went to London to be inspected and examined. One morning he stood before the awful Board, and side by side stood a young fellow who was called John Williams. Both underwent the usual purgatory; both were accepted; both were designated for missions in the South Seas, and were directed to attend again.

Both attended accordingly. But ere the Directors could proceed to business, up stood one of their number, the grand old Dr. Alexander Waugh. I must not wander again to tell about him. Who wants to know may buy his Life at some old bookstall, or borrow it from some one who has known how to buy and keep pregnant biographies. He was the light of English Pre-byterianism in days when it sadly needed it, and one of the foremost leaders in every great Christian project. On this occasion he began with a very meek apology. He could not assign any reason, satisfactory to himself or to others, for the course he was taking; but he was strongly impressed that Moffat and Williams should not both be sent to the South Seas; it would be better that the former should go to Africa. The Directors were much impressed with Dr. Waugh's statement, and adopted his proposal.

John Williams became an apostle and a martyr in his sphere; and Moffat an apostle and confessor in Africa, not without hard labor, constant hazard and much suffering. Ere he sailed he went to say farewell at Manchester and Davyhulme. At this latter place, he asked Mary to go with him. "No," said the father, with prompt and absolute denial. Then the young man asked whether he might write to Mary sometimes; and the father thought it hard to refuse that. The end was, that in about two years Mary went out to marry him. By and by she became the mother of the brave wife of David Livingstone.

Says my dear Methodist reader: "What a pity Moffat did not go out as a Methodist missionary!" He could not. At that time our own Society, in its present perfectly organized form, did not exist. There was no systematic agency which, in the interests of Methodism, could survey the wide field of Foreign Missions, select men, and collect and distribute funds. Up to a year or two before, Dr. Coke was practically what is now the Wesleyan Missionary Society. In 1813 the formation of a Provincial Society at Leeds was the first step as it is commonly reputed—though I believe Edinburgh, of all places was "ready beforehand"—towards our existing organization. And it was a great argument for the establishment of these new Societies, not only that hearty Methodists, for want of them, were contributing to the great Societies already formed by Churchmen and Nonconformists respectively, but also, that our young men, ripe and eager for missionary service, found no fair scope for enterprise.

ALLAHABAD.

The ride from Benares to Allahabad—about three hours—is through an interesting portion of the Gangetic valley, still wide, generally fertile, well cultivated, and full of towns and villages and an immense population. Allahabad is situated at the junction of the Jumna and Ganges. The streams at the junction are nearly equal in volume; the Ganges being the deeper, is of a yellow tint, and reputed more wholesome than the brighter and more attractive water of its shallower and swifter neighbor. The natives call the confluence "Tir Bero," alleging that there is a third river—the Sarasuti or Saraswati—the lost river of the Sindh plain, which flows under ground to Allahabad; and after irrigating the sacred tree of the catacomb of the Fort, issues out from beneath the walls, and joins its more ostentatious sisters. It is the capital of the northwest provinces. The Fort, which was probably the centre of the ancient city, stands at the confluence of the two, or, as the popular belief is, of the three rivers. The castle, still partly standing, was built by Akbar about 1580. The story of the Fort would enlarge into a volume, and read on the spot is interesting, but away from the impression of the surroundings it would be unprofitable and dull. Standing on the parapet, we look over a wide low plain reaching to the junction of the waters. Here is where the pilgrims from all India will spread their tents during the months of February and March to the number of hundreds of thousands, many of whom will die on the shore and road-side. They come to bathe in the water saturated with the invisible Saraswati, whose touch is everlasting life. The scene is described by those who have witnessed it as intensely exciting—the rush of the pilgrims as they near and approach the sacred spot, often furnished and half starved and worn out with long journeys, sometimes made in part upon the hands and knees and in lengths upon the ground. The main part of the city lies along the Jumna three miles away, and through the whole of the sacred season the way is lined with booths and crowded with pilgrims. Temporary shrines are erected, and fakirs ply their trade with the superstitious multitude of half starved and way-worn pilgrims. The melas over, those that can, with the idea that they have performed a work of good merit, and thereby procured eternal life, return to their distant homes, carrying with them the memory of the sacred river and holy fakirs whom they were permitted to see, as an amulet for the balance of their lives. So great are the burdens which false religion imposes upon its deluded victims.

On the side of the way along which the pilgrims throng, not far from the Fort, on a platform stone which is about ten feet square and is raised about three feet high, sits a blind fakir. On this spot he has been sitting for fifty eight years, without a cover or shelter of any kind, through all weathers, day and night, never leaving the spot, except once in twenty-four hours, about midnight to bathe in the sacred river a mile away. This he has done daily for more than half a century without help of any kind. He refuses to be conveyed or assisted. There are four or five tents near by where his worshippers camp and profit by those who come to ask his blessing. He is entirely blind, and has been so for twenty years—the effect of exposure. He has a bland and gentle countenance, and is not begrimed with filth. His voice is mild and kind, and one is impressed with the idea of his sincerity and sanctity. He conversed freely with the missionary who was with me in the Hindostani, and among other pious things said that "he had nothing to do but to commune with the great One unseen," whom he soon expected to behold. He has many credentials from government and worthy persons who have known him for all these years, and who speak in admiring terms of his saintliness. He rarely speaks, and never but in terms of blessing for man and reverence of the Invisible. I should say that he is the most deserving god of the Hindoo pantheon I have yet seen. He cannot much longer sit on his stone throne and roll his sightless eyeballs around as it striving to behold the passing stranger or devotee who chances to address him. May we not hope that sometime or somewhere he will yet find Him whom he has

sought after in the darkness for so many years? He is not poor. He has received fortunes from his admirers, and it is said he has dispensed to the poor and needy. I could but feel emotions of pity as I turned away from the poor old man, and breathed the prayer that his seemingly gentle and kindly soul might find rest in the bosom of the unseen Father of whom he spoke so reverently.—Bishop R. S. Foster, in Zion's Herald.

I WISH I HAD KNOWN IT BEFORE.

A beautiful woman lay on a bed of sickness in an elegant residence on one of the finest and most fashionable of Boston's broad avenues. She was surrounded by every luxury, and attended by kind friends anxious to anticipate every wish, and to relieve the monotony of her weary, painful days in every possible manner. One afternoon she opened her eyes and said, in a low weak voice: "Read to me, please. Oh dear, how I wish there was something new in matter and manner in the literary world! I am so tired of everything!"

Her sister went to the next room for a book of poems, and while she was gone, the professional nurse, who sat beside her bed, took from the pocket of her plain drab wrapper a small Bible, opened it, and began to read in a subdued voice: "And seeing the multitude, he went up into the mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying—"

The sick woman listened attentively until the nurse paused with the words, "And the people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes." "That is beautiful," she said; "that will create a sensation! Who wrote it? Where did you get it?"

"Why," said the nurse, in astonishment, looking with surprise at her patient, and thinking at first she was wandering in her mind; "it's the Bible! Christ's Sermon on the Mount, you know."

"That in the Bible! Anything so beautiful and so good as that in the Bible?"

"What did you suppose was in the Bible, if not something good?" asked the nurse, seriously, yet smiling, in spite of herself, at her patient's tone of surprise and incredulity.

"Oh, I don't know, I never thought much about it. I never opened a Bible in my life. It was a matter of pride with my father to never have a Bible in the house. How did this one come here? Oh! it is yours—your pocket-Bible. It is strange you should have surprised me into listening to a chapter, and that I should have been so charmed, and not know to what I was listening."

"You have certainly heard the Bible read in church?" asked the nurse in surprise.

"Not I; I have never been to church. We have always made Sunday a holiday. Papa got into that way in Paris. We have been to all popular places of amusement, of course, but not to church. I have never thought about the Bible. I did not suppose it had literary merit. I had no idea it was written in the simple, beautiful style of the portion you have just read. I wish I had known it before."

A few hours later her disease took a fatal turn. The physician came and told her that her time on earth was very short. She would never see another sunrise.

"It can not be possible," she said; "I never supposed it possible for death to come to me. What was the prayer you read, nurse? 'Our Father who art in heaven.' Say it with me, husband," and he did so.

"I wish I had known it before," she said, over and over, until she fell into a sleep from which she never woke, and that wall of regret was the last word upon her dying lips.

The nurse said it was the saddest experience of her career, to see that beautiful, gifted young woman, with kind friends, a loving husband and a beautiful home, who had all her life taken pride in ignoring the Bible and the Christian Sabbath, turn, when death came, from everything she had prized to the little despised book, and die with the cry upon her lips, "I wish I had known it before."—Christian Observer.

"BE YOU A LADY?"

We remember reading somewhere an anecdote of the ludicrous consternation of a poor emigrant laborer, who for the first time heard his employer spoken of as a "gentleman." He had been brought up in England, where his only notion of a gentleman was that of a consequential and peremptory being in good clothes, who swore at and kicked him. The New Haven Register tells the story of a poor boy in that city whose idea of a "lady" was quite as unfortunate; and who came by a happy accident to conclude that there must be two kinds. Perhaps he was right in his conclusion. At any rate, the nice girl who gave him his first impression of what a true lady is, deserves all the credit of the story.

As a young lady walked hurriedly down State street upon a bleak November day her attention was attracted by a deformed boy coming towards her carrying several bundles. He was thin, slender, twisted his limbs most strangely as he walked, and looked before him with a vacant stare. Just before the cripple reached the brisk pedestrian, he stumbled, thus dropping one bundle, which broke and emptied a string of sausages on the sidewalk.

The richly-dressed ladies (?) near by held back their silken skirts and whispered quite audibly, "How horrid!" while several who passed by, amused by the boy's looks of blank dismay gave vent to their feelings in a half suppressed laugh, and then went on without taking further interest.

All this increased the boy's embarrassment. He stopped to pick up the sausages only to let fall another parcel, when in despair he stood and looked at his lost spoils. In an instant the bright-faced stranger stepped to the boy's side and said in a tone of thorough kindness—

"Let me hold those other bundles while you pick up what you have lost."

In dumb astonishment the cripple handed all he had to the young Samaritan, and devoted himself to securing his cherished sausages. When these were again strongly tied in the coarse torn paper, her skillful hands replaced the parcels on his scrawny arms, as she bestowed on him a smile of encouragement and said—

"I hope you haven't far to go." The poor fellow seemed scarcely to bear the girl's pleasant words; but looking at her with the same vacant stare, said—

"Be you a lady?"

"I hope so; I try to be," was the surprised response.

"I was kind of hopin' you wasn't."

"Why?" asked the listener, with curiosity quite aroused.

"Cause I've seen such as called themselves ladies, but they never spoke kind and pleasant to me 'cepting to grand uns. I guess there's two kinds—them as thinks they's ladies and isn't, and them as what tries to be and is!"—Youth's Companion.

TOUCH IT NEVER.

Children, do you see the wine In the crystal goblet shine? He not tempted by its charm: It will surely lead to harm. Children, hate it! Touch it never! Fight it ever!

Do you know what causeth woe, Bitter as the heart can know? 'Tis that self-same ruby wine Which would tempt that soul of thine. Children, hate it! Touch it never! Fight it ever!

LITTLE WORKERS.

In the crowd of ladies and gentlemen who were watching the laying of the railroad track over which our wounded President was to be borne to his cottage by the sea stood a little boy. As he watched the work go on, the desire woke in his heart to do something to help. Suddenly he darted out toward the men who were driving the spikes through the rails into the sleepers, and said to one of them:—

"Sir, would you please let me drive one spike into that rail?"

The man looked at him a moment. It was a little arm that was stretched out for the heavy hammer, but there was a big purpose moving the arm, and the

purpose was born in a big, true heart. All this the laborer was wise enough to see, and he gave him the hammer, saying:—

"I'm afraid, me boy, it's a heavy job for you; but go ahead and try."

And so he did. He struck with all his might, and the workman helped him on by striking every other blow, until at last the spike was driven home, and the little boy who had helped run to his father, saying:—

"I've done something for the President, haven't I, papa?"

Yes; he had done something for the President, something for himself in the building up of character, and something for the boys and the girls of the land in showing them that the children can help along, if they only think they can.

God calls the children as well as the grown people to help in the building of his great kingdom. Indeed, there is work to be done which none but they can do. When God called Samuel he called all the children. When Samuel answered, "Here am I," and the Spirit caused it to be written in God's Book, it was that all the world might see the way in which God wants his children to answer to his call. Are you listening, dear children, for his voice? When you hear it, as you surely will if you listen, do you reply, "Here am I, Lord?" If not, there must be some reason for it.

Once, in a children's meeting, the boys and girls were talking this matter over with their leader. Several of them said that they could not be workers with God, and these are some of the reasons that were given:—

"I don't know how to work for him," said one.

"Nobody would listen to me," said another.

"I have tried, and it hasn't done any good," said a third.

And all these who gave reasons for leading idle lives were Christian children!

Now, listen, little people: there are no idle Christians, big or little. Every one who knows God really knows him—works with him, and can't help it.

We hear a great deal said about working for God, and that does certainly look like hard work; but Paul talks, instead, about our working with him, which must be easy and delightful, because, though we are so little and weak, he is so great and strong, and his help is freely given to all who ask for it.

It is very easy to make mistakes about this matter of work, and just here is the place where we are very likely to fall into error—in the thinking we are to work for him. Think how great and rich he is—what does he need of our poor little help! He makes nations to rise and fall. He speaks, and a world is made. But—how good it is of him!—he is so good as to make it possible for us to work with him. And now we want to know some of the ways in which we may do this.

The children we were talking of a little way back seemed to think it was some hard outside work that they were called upon to do, and they shrank from it; quite naturally. They did not see that God only wanted them to do the most natural thing in the world, which is just to look up to him as our great Father, and to let his divine life flow into them, and then flow out toward others in all the sweet ways of love and helpfulness which in Jesus were so beautiful.

We are workers together with God when we let him subdue in us our hot, impatient tempers; when we come to him to be made true, and kind, and patient; when we trust him to make us unselfish, so that we really love to have others first, and it is joy to give up our own good things that they may be made happy.

But some one may say, "We want to really do something to help along, as Willie did in driving the spike." Was it the doing in Willie's case, or the heart to do, that was worth most? He had the love in his heart that made him want to work, and when he saw a chance he sprung to it quickly. Just let God see the love in your heart, and see what chances he will give you!

For "this is the work of God:" to believe him, and love him, and obey him. Ah! if we do that, we shall be workers indeed, and God will be glad, and the world will be brighter and better for our having lived in it, and our own hearts and lives will be full of a deep, sweet joy that no words can tell.—Christian Union.

THE S... THE CON... 1. The Pr... 25) Our... these men... were sore... Their feet... there was... In this sor... But they a... God... The... that they w... ed in His... a good conse... ed a happy... ruler... did... Praying sa... prayers we... find; not a... single act of... chanting (A... ers heard th... sad inmates... sleep. But... sent a won... prayer (ver... 2. God's... the most... mentioned in... the twenty... king of Jud... 3. Korah... destroyed by... the ground... an earthquake... one of the... ed the cr... Mat. 27:34... our text was... but probably... and expect... some divine... place. It... the prison... and saw that... open. He... escaped and... answer for t... despair, dre... would have... saw it. He... to the jailer... never had... He thought... way in which... stripes, retur... word to too... may be too... ing, or of wh... science was... never left be... bo in a grate... the earthquake... of his life... had shown h... this caused h... flow quickly... came (verse... need all to... tense engerr... must all be... vation for bo... and Silas w... word of the... his house... 3. The Chan... was how a ch... before he had... the inner pris... into the stock... tended their... see what he... the grace of... "That very h... implies that... moved to ano... Washed their... their stripes;... he led them... kom). Into... them up into... above the pris... 4. In-tract... trates, Roman... had juridicti... or criminal of... man officers o... ed to carry th... rods, before th... and to indic... scourging and... fials. The... had alarmed... contrary to... could not be... and then ask... the honor of... vindicated by... us, we are not... brought out b... wrongfully ar... were now the... case might be... they fined and... Entered into... as it in dange... entered into th... THE CHA... The chrysan... has an intere... it was brough... and planted in... Chelsea in Lo... it attracted li... towards died... ing to the G... French merc... imported some... France, and th... their way to... were sold at a... in a greenho... a chrysanthe... Mr. Colville's... small and of a... double; the pe... uneven. Foot... varieties were... After that we... one year abou... sort were... however, until... first saved in... much fine blo... duct. In a le... tumens beca...