

"How can they, oh, how can people be so cruel!" she repeated to herself. "I am ashamed of them; I am ashamed of them," and alone by herself Helen indulged in another passionate burst of tears. "I am sorry it has happened, but I cannot help it, and I'll try not to think of it any more;" so she wisely resolved, and prayer aided her in keeping her resolution.

That there was any truth in the insinuations respecting Dr. Waldemar, Helen never for a moment thought. She had too humble an opinion of herself, too high and exalted one of him for such a fancy to find lodgment in her mind. She cried herself to sleep that night, but the tears were like a cleansing, softening rain; and the eyes with which she looked forth on the world and her neighbours next morning were purer and lovelier than ever.

(To be continued.)

THOSE WHO NEVER DO WRONG.

'Tis hard to labour from morn till night,  
To plough the furrow and pluck the weeds,  
For those who poorly the task requite,  
And care but little for all our needs;  
But the hardest work is to get along  
With those who never do anything wrong.

You're sure to meet in the course of life  
With men and women who freely state  
Their own opinion, with yours at strife,  
And you may endeavour to set them straight;  
But you'll find it wiser to jog along  
Than argue with those who never do wrong.

They go their way, with a smile, no doubt,  
At us who suffer such pains and aches  
And mental torture, at finding out  
That we've committed some grave mistakes;  
With pride unbroken, erect and strong,  
Are those who never do anything wrong.

You may note their faults and attempt to prove  
Wherein they err, but as well essay  
With a cambric needle that rock to move  
That fills the passage and blocks your way;  
You may talk by the hour with tears in your eyes,  
But they'll never confess nor apologize.

They never come with a tearful face,  
And tender kisses, to make amends  
For wounds inflicted; or say with grace,  
"I'm sorry I forgive me, and let's be friends!"  
But stern and unyielding they move along,  
Convinced they have never done anything wrong.

This is a work-a-day world we're in,  
And toils and troubles their round repeat;  
But out of the tangles some gold we spin;  
And out of the bitter extract some sweet;  
But the hardest work is to get along  
With those who never do anything wrong!

TENNYSON—MACDONALD—LOWELL.

BY REV. A. McLEOD, D.D., OF DIRKENHEAD.

A sense of the spiritual realities and chances for doing good, as present and near to us, is a favourite mood with Lowell. It pervades his early and beautiful poem, "Sir Launfal." And as this poem gives me an opportunity of bringing American and English poetry into companionship—at least, at one fair testing-point—I shall dwell for a little over it. The subject is the search for the Holy Grail. This Grail is the cup out of which Jesus drank at the Last Supper. According to the legend, it was brought into England by Joseph of Arimathea, and was kept by his descendants for many generations, until, in the lapse of years, through the infidelity of its keepers, it disappeared. Then it became a favourite enterprise of heroic people—knights of Arthur's Court and the like—to go forth in quest of it. We have three descriptions of this quest—one by Tennyson, one by George MacDonald, and one by Lowell. It is these I mean to compare.

Tennyson's first poem on the theme is "Sir Galahad." And this is what the blameless knight describes:

"Sometimes on lonely mountain meres  
I find a magic bark;  
I leap on board: no helmsman steers—  
I float till all is dark.

"A gentle sound, an awful light—  
Three angels bear the Holy Grail  
With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
On sleeping wings they sail."

He next handles the subject in the "Idyls of the King." And there it is the nun, Percival's sister, who finds it. Coming to her brother one day, her eyes all aglow—

"And, O my brother Percival," she said,  
'Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail.'

Then she tells of a heavenly music she had heard at the dead of night:

"And then  
Streamed through my cell a cold and silver beam,  
And down the long beam stoic the Holy Grail—  
Rose red with beatings in it, as if alive—  
Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed  
With rosy colours leaping on the wall."

Now what Tennyson exhibits is the very "up—changed, glorified, and living, it is true—but still a thing itself. Listen now to George MacDonald:

"Through the wood, the sunny day  
Glimmered sweetly sad;  
Through the wood his weary way  
Rode Sir Galahad."

He rode past churches, through forests, through villages  
with human crowds in them, then—

"Galahad was in the night  
When man's hope is dumb.  
Galahad was in the night  
When God's wonders come.  
Wings he heard not floating by,  
Heard not voices fall,  
Yet he started with a cry—  
Saw the San Greal!"

The vision passed. Galahad gave up, and then resumed the quest:

"But at last Sir Galahad  
Found it on a day,  
Took the Grail into his hand  
Had the cup of joy,  
Carried it about the land  
Gladsome as a boy."

But what had he found? What did he hide from all human seeing in his bosom? What did his friends search for when he died?

"When he died, with reverent care,  
Opened they his vest,  
Seeking for the cup he bare,  
Hidden in his breast.  
Nothing found they to their will,  
Nothing found at all;  
In his bosom deeper still  
Lay the San Greal."

There can be no question that this is a clear advance on Tennyson's treatment of the subject. Tennyson's is literal, MacDonald's spiritual. The San Greal with the latter is that Word of God, which the young man in the Psalm, finding, hides in his bosom, that he may, in the power of it, cleanse his way. Let us now turn to the ethical treatment of the theme. Sir Launfal has long vowed to find the Grail. On a bright day in June he dreams that he is still young, and setting forth from his castle to fulfil his vow:

"It was morning on hill, and stream, and tree,  
And morning in the young knight's heart."

But as he stepped out of the gloom of his gateway into the light—

"He was 'ware of a leper crouched by the same,  
Who begged with his hand, and moaned as he sat;  
And a loathing over Sir Launfal came,  
The sunshine went out of his soul with a thrill.  
The flesh 'neath his armour did shrink and crawl,  
And midway its leap, his heart stood still  
Like a frozen waterfall.

For this man so foul, so bent of stature,  
Rasped harshly against his dainty nature,  
And seemed the one blot on the summer morn,  
So he tossed him a piece of gold in scorn."

In Sir Launfal's vision long years of toil and suffering go past. At length, one Christmas, he returns from what has been a bootless search. Winter is on all the land. It is winter also with himself. He is old. A usurper has seized his castle in his absence, and he is turned away from his own gate. But standing there, musing sadly on the past, in the presence of the gate that will not open for him more, he hears a long-forgotten voice. It is the voice of the same miserable leper who sickened him years before when he was setting out, and who now again begs, for Christ's sweet sake, an alms. But Sir Launfal is of another spirit now, and divides his one remaining crust with the sufferer, and breaks the ice at the streamlet near by, that he may bring him a drink, saying as he did so:

"I behold in thee  
An image of him who died on the tree:  
Thy also hast had thy crown of thorns,  
Thou also hast had the world's buffets and scorns:  
And to thy life were not denied  
The wounds in the hands and side.  
Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me—  
Behold, thro' Him, I give to thee."

Then the soul of the leper stood up in his eyes, and the past came back to Sir Launfal, and he remembered with shame how he had loathed this poor object before. But as he mused, a light shone round about the place:

"The leper no longer crouched at his side,  
But stood before him glorified,  
Shining, and tall, and fair, and straight,  
As the pillar that stood at the Beautiful Gate;  
Himself the Gate, whereby men can  
Enter the temple of God in man."

And listening to him, lo! the voice becomes the voice of Christ, and this is what he says:

"Lo, it is I, be not afraid!  
In many climes without avail,  
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;  
Behold, it is here, this cup which thou  
Didst fill at the streamlet for Me but now;  
This Crust is My Body broken for thee,  
This water His blood that died on the tree;  
The Holy Supper is kept indeed,  
In whatso we share with a brother's need.  
Not that which we give, but that which we share—  
For the gift without the giver is bare;  
Who bestows himself, with his alms feeds three—  
Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me!"

Then Sir Launfal awoke from his dream. He had found the Grail at his very door, in his very hand. He acted out the teaching of his dream. His castle became the refuge of the children of sorrow. He shared all he had with the poor.

"And there's no poor man in the north countrie,  
But is Lord of the Earldom as much as he."

Do I require to say that we have here a handling of the old legend, higher than either of the other two?

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

A FUND for an American Catholic University has been started in Chicago, which now amounts to \$300,000.

AT Paris, horse-flesh is more and more used for food; in 1881 the butchers disposed of 9,300 horses, to say nothing of asses and mules.

HERR MOST, formerly editor of "Freiheit," a socialistic journal printed in London, has taken up his temporary residence in the United States.

THE Rev. Francis Close, Dean of Carlisle, died last week. He was widely known and respected for his devotion to evangelical Christianity.

PROF. SWING, of Chicago, characterizes the "Salvation Army in England as bric-a-brac in religion—a harmonious blending of the clergyman and Oscar Wilde."

THE Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Spain, recently held in Madrid, comprises upwards of twenty churches which have adopted a Presbyterian organization.

ON the site of the old post-office in New York city, formerly the Dutch Reformed Church, the Mutual Life Insurance Company is erecting a building eleven stories in height or 154 feet.

THE Protestant congregations in Mexico have nearly doubled within the past five years, now numbering 239 churches, with 10,704 members, 19,000 adherents, and 209 native helpers.

A GIFTED German, Rev. F. Von Schluombach, under the direction of Prof. Christlieb and Baron Oertzen, has engaged in a campaign of evangelistic labours in Germany among the masses.

PROF. GRISLEY has completed a calculation of the orbit of the great comet. The period occupied by the comet's revolution is about 793 years. The comet is probably identical with the very large one seen in 371 B.C., and in 363 A.D.

DR. KENDRICK, in a recent letter to the "Examiner," says that the four supreme incidents of a European tour are, in his judgement, a day on the Rhine, the transit of an Alpine pass, a view of the Roman Forum, and a walk in Pompeii.

EDINBURGH Presbytery on the motion of Dr Begg unanimously agreed to request the Lord Advocate to insert a clause in his new General Police Bill for Scotland, prohibiting the sale of everything on Sabbath "except milk and medicine."

THE following is an approximately correct estimate of the strength of Presbyterianism throughout the world. The population is correct and the membership under rather than over the truth: Churches, 33,000; ministers, 31,500; members, 14,408,000; population, 37,246,000.

THE Central Congregational Church in Brooklyn has voted to extend a call to the Rev. A. J. F. Behrends, of the Union Congregational Church, of Providence, R.I., and decided to pay him \$10,000 a year salary, give him two months a year vacation, and \$1,000 for moving expenses.

THE death is announced of the Rev. Alfred Ollivant, D.D., Bishop of Llandaff. He was the author of a number of volumes upon theological subjects, among them an analysis of the text of the history of Joseph and some letters on the critical examination of the Pentateuch by Bishop Colenso.

ACCORDING to a recent volume of travels, not a single one of the aborigines of Van Dieman's Land is now living. There were once 12,000 natives of New Hebrides; now 2,000. Thirty years ago there were 50,000 Tongese; now not 12,000. The Maoris are reduced from 100,000 to 40,000. The Marquesas Islanders have lost nine-tenths.

THE mutations of opinion in the Queensbury family are singular. The late Marchioness, when she resided in Scotland, was a patroness of revivalism and of Richard Weaver, "The Converted Collier." Lord Archibald is an estimable Roman Catholic priest on the Harrow road, London. Lady Gertrude lately wedded the nice young baker, and the Marquis is "President of the British Secularist Union."

IN New Zealand the Presbyterians have a dash of worldly wisdom, the exercise of which has made their societies strong financially by the exercise of a wise business policy. In all new settlements they send their agents in advance to buy a plot of ground before prices have advanced with settlement. By the time they are ready to build their church they are able to sell a part of the purchase for enough to pay for building.

NEARLY 5,400 cuneiform inscriptions have been recently transported from the neighbourhood of Babylon to England. These tablets formed originally the royal library mentioned by Berossus, the Chaldean historian, and which contains accounts of matters anterior to the Deluge, many of which were copied in the time of Sargon, one thousand eight hundred years before Christ. They will soon be placed in the British Museum.

THE annual summary of British contributions to seventy-seven societies for foreign mission work during the financial year 1881 has just been completed by Canon Scot Robertson, of Sittingbourne. The total is £15,381 less than that of the previous year. The chief items are as follow:—Church of England Missions, £460,395; joint societies of Churchmen and Nonconformists, £15,320; English Nonconformist societies, £313,177; Scotch and Irish Presbyterian societies, £155,767; Roman Catholic societies, £10,910. Total British contributions in 1881, £1,093,069.

CHUMAH, so well known to the readers of "Livingstone's Life and Travels," is dead. He was one of the slave boys whom Dr. Livingstone rescued towards the end of his Zambesi and Nayassa expedition, and who were with him till his death. Their fidelity to him during all these years was remarkable, and the two headed the expedition that carried his remains from Ilala to the coast. Latterly Chumah has been employed chiefly as head man in various African expeditions. He has a great gift of eloquence, and was often employed successfully where difficult negotiations had to be carried on with unreasonable chiefs.