

A SUNDAY IN AMSTERDAM.

BY MISS L. MACDONNELL.

(Written for DOMINION CHURCHMAN.)

In the year 1882, one Sunday morning I found myself sauntering through the Streets of Amsterdam wondering what place of worship I should attend; I had the choice of half a hundred. The Lutheran, the old Calvin or the Reformed, the Positivists or the Remonstrants, the Mennonites or the Walloon, the Greek or the Jewish. I passed along the Singel Gracht and came upon an ugly building; it took some small intelligence to discover that it was a church; I entered, Her Britannic Majesty's arms over the Consul's pen showed me that it was the Established Church of England. When the small congregation came in their English-Dutch physiognomy plainly told me their nationality. Most of the weaker sex looked like English women, who had married Dutch husbands; perhaps their early training in some God fearing English home had brought them to church, instead of setting aside the Lord's day for a pleasure party the Zuider Zee or a country excursion, or an afternoon at the Artis. Presently the clergyman entered. "This is an old Curie" thought I, I wonder where they found him, quite an extraordinary specimen of the "genius Clericus." He began the prayers but was scarcely audible, his voice going quite out of hearing at times, and then shooting into a small shrill squeal until there was a visible smile on every face in the congregation. Whenever possible he sat down. He gave out the hymns in a reclining posture, in the great arm-chair which stood beside the altar. He seemed not able to resist the luxury of repose. Once or twice I thought the threatened collapse had arrived, but no; he gave himself a moment to revive, and then started off again. The congregation seemed to look upon the whole thing as a huge joke; I felt that only his age and feebleness, prevented my bursting forth with either laughter or indignation. It was terrible to me to think of such a creature having the cure of souls, and the assurance to attempt to conduct a church service. He wore black kid gloves much too large, with the ends of their fingers protruding far beyond where his hands finished. In one hand he held a large white pocket-handkerchief, which he kept putting to his face as if he momentarily expected his nose to bleed. The gloves became a special annoyance to me; as if, I thought, his hands were too good to touch God's Word with, and then when he began turning over the leaves, using only the tips of his little fingers; and, indeed, not even his little fingers, but the tips of his long black gloves, all desire to laugh had passed away and my indignation grew boundless.

At the sermon he started off fairly well at what seemed to be rather a well put together discourse, something about the Corinthian games, but after struggling on for a few minutes he gave a little sort of a whisper, and came to a full stop. After a minute the little quavering voice began: "Dear friends," he said, "I must ask you to forgive me, and when you hear what befel me but yesterday, I think you will, as you know your chaplain is taking his holiday, I had promised to take his duty for him during his absence. Knowing myself to be a bad sailor, and disliking crowds, I left London early yesterday intending to get on board the steamer some hours before she started so as to rest and enjoy the sea breezes. I did so, taking a book with me, and going to the far side of the deck so that I should have nothing but the sky above me, the sea before. I am, I regret to say, most absent-minded, and was soon lost in my book. Presently, I heard the cry of 'fire! fire!' The wharves were one sheet of flames stretching towards the sea, and had already caught the sails and rigging of the ship I was on. I tried to find the gangway, but was beaten back, I cried for help, but the roar of the flames drowned my voice. No one thought of looking for passengers on the ship at that early hour. Every one thought the decks clear. I knew not what to do, the flames behind me; the sea before. At last with a prayer sent on high, I took the plunge. For one hour I managed to keep myself afloat, calling with all my strength for help, at last exhausted I gave up, and remember no more until

I found myself on the shore, with a kindly sailor leaning over me. On recovery I ascertained that there was a later boat sailing for Flushing which I took, and hurried here so that you should not be without your service this morning. With the exception of some painful burns on my hands and a slight one on my face, I have escaped unharmed from peril by fire and water. Forgive me, my friends, for taking up so much of your time in telling you about myself, and I now ask you to join with me in giving my thanks to the "Great Deliverer." He knelt, we all followed his example, and when the trembling old voice piped out "we bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life," I thought I had never heard the grand words of our magnificent liturgy sound with such impressiveness. I looked around at the congregation, many had their faces buried in their handkerchiefs, but I do not think that this time it was to hide their laughter.

THE NECESSITY OF ENTHUSIASM.

The Church must believe in the work, and accepting the great responsibility which her Master lays upon her, must send forth her children in the spirit of the old Spartan mothers who bade their sons farewell as they went forth to battle, telling them to return either bearing their shields or being borne upon them. She must have supreme confidence in the success of this great enterprise. Her missionary meetings should be convocations of great joy, her songs should be full of exultant hope and confidence, and her prayers should ascend unceasingly for the consummation so long hoped for, so distinctly promised, so faithfully assured, that all the earth shall be the Lord's. And the missionaries who go to these distant fields should go in the same spirit. They do not go to try an experiment, they do not dream of going in the spirit of adventure, like the tourist wandering in the ruins of antiquity, they do not go because they fail to find congenial employment at home, they do not go to spend a term of years that they may return again to an honourable rest at home, thus bringing their ripe experience and throwing away the very best years, perhaps, of their possible service; but they go to live and labor and die among the people to whom God sends them. They love the work which God gives them; they love the people among whom they dwell; they love the associations by which they are surrounded; they are full of hope and confidence; their songs are songs of victory; and while they live in the days of small things, they see their triumph from afar and bring it nigh by the power of a vivid faith which never for a moment fails them.

The value of such enthusiasm cannot be estimated too highly. It is easy to disparage it. It is easy to say its possessors are too sanguine, that they are rash and impetuous, short sighted or otherwise, but the men who win upon moral battle fields are, in nine cases out of ten, men of this very kind. —The Rev. J. M. Thoburn, M.D., D.D.

A KIND DEED.

Give me the avow'd, the erect, the manly foe
Bold I can meet—perhaps may turn his blow.

—Canning.

The late Duke of Portland was a nobleman who contrived to pass through life without much noise, but reaped happiness and respect in abundance, and, while gratifying his taste for rural occupation, conferred the most lasting benefits on the country. The following, among many stories, is told of him:—

"The duke found that one of his tenants, a small farmer, was falling, year after year, into arrears of rent. The steward wished to know what was to be done. The duke rode to the farm, saw that it was rapidly deteriorating, and the man, who was really an experienced and industrious farmer, totally unable to manage it, from poverty. In fact, all that was on the farm was not enough to pay the arrears. 'John,' said the duke, as the farmer came to meet him as he rode up to the house, 'I want to look over the farm a little.' As they went along, 'Really,' said he, 'everything is in very bad case.

This won't do. I see you are quite under it. All your stock and crops won't pay the rent in arrears. I will tell you what I must do: I must take the farm into my own hands; you shall look after it for me, and I will pay you your wages.' Of course there was no saying nay—the poor man bowed assent. Presently there came a reinforcement in stock, then loads of manure, at the proper time seed, and wood from the plantations for repairing gates and buildings. The duke rode over frequently. The man exerted himself, and seemed really quite relieved from a load of care by the change. Things speedily assumed a new aspect. The crops and stock flourished; fences and out-buildings were put into good order. In two or three rent days it was seen by the steward's books that the farm was making its way. The duke on his next visit said, 'Well, John, I think the farm does very well now. We will change again; you shall once more be tenant, and, as you now have your head fairly above water, I hope you will be able to keep it there.' The duke rode off at his usual rapid rate. The man stood in astonishment; but a happy fellow he was, when on applying to the steward, he found that he was actually re-entered as tenant to the farm, just as it stood in its restored condition; I will venture to say, however, that the duke himself was the happier man of the two."

He that doeth good enriches his own heart with unspeakable blessings—

Better a fountain in the heart
Than a fountain by the way.

THE LITTLE COMFORTER

A little girl of ten discovered, through sympathy born of love, that one dear to her was suffering pain. Without one word by which to probe the gaping wound, she wrote the following lines, and gave them without comment. May Jesus ever bless her for her silent sympathy!

TRUST IN JESUS.

When the sky is cloudy,
And seems to have no sun,
Just trust in Jesus alway,
And say, "Thy will be done."

When the sun is long appearing,
And darkness will appall,
Just trust in Jesus alway,
Notwithstanding all.

When it seems thou art forgotten,
Do not think on this,
Just trust in Jesus alway,
And He will send you bliss.

Think of Him who gave
His life to save from sin;
Just trust in Jesus alway,
For He on earth has been.

And when the clouds go away,
And the sun shines bright at last,
Just trust in Jesus alway,
And He will bring you past.

And when it all is over,
He'll bring you to your home.
Just trust in Jesus alway,
Whatever else may come.

—Tod in Parish Visitor.

OUR HERITAGE.

- 1st, The Holy Scriptures.
- 2nd, The Holy Sacraments.
- 3rd, The Historic Creeds.
- 4th, The Historic Ministry.
- 5th, The Historic Liturgy.
- 6th, The Christian Year.
- 7th, The Christian Nurture of Childhood.
- 8th, True Reverence for Sacred Things.

ILL TEMPER is more rapidly improved by relief from physical suffering than in any other way. Step on your friend's corn, and the impulse to strike is strongest. Putnam's Painless Corn Extractor, by quickly and painlessly removing them, insures good nature. Fifty imitations prove its value. Beware of substitutes. Putnam's is sure, safe, painless.