

Family Department.

"AND WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?"

(Continued.)

[For the Church Guardian]

Our pretty Church was well attended, the body of the building was always well filled with the poor, how far influenced in the right direction by the fact of their patrons liking to see them in their accustomed places, it is not for me to say. The middle seats were free while those in the side aisles were appropriated to the gentry. Rosa-Villa having belonged to a dissenter had of course no seat appropriated to it, and Mrs. Gilbert who, as I became aware was a regular attendant, in consequence took her place among the villagers, usually not far from the door so that she was among the first to leave the Church. Somehow from where I sat in the choir, I always seemed to have a view of that pale, grave face; my eyes seemed attracted to the little dark figure, among the bright clothing of the cottagers' wives, and the white "smocks" of the old labourers.

One of our maids asked my leave one day to go and see her sister, who, it seemed, had recently come to live with Mrs. Gilbert, and I had the curiosity to ask her on her return whether she had seen her sister's mistress. "O yes, Miss," she replied, with quite a pleased look, "and she do seem such a nice lady, though kind of sad looking I thought. She was at work in the garden when I went in, and spoke to me so pleasant like; she said she was glad to know her maid had a sister at Marston, as she would not feel so lonely; and, indeed," she continued, encouraged by my look of interest, "Lizzie would be pretty lonely there, only Mrs. Gilbert is so good to her, and gives her books to read and makes it cheerful for her." "Has Mrs. Gilbert any children?" I asked. "No Miss; Lizzie told me she had a beautiful little boy, but he died at sea when they were coming back to England from foreign parts, and Mrs. Gilbert has his picture hanging by her bed, as beautiful most as an angel, Lizzie says." "Poor thing," I said pityingly, and my interest in Mrs. Gilbert increased. When next I saw the quiet face in Church, I remembered the boy who had died at sea, and whose presence in the little Villa would have doubtless made the lonely woman's life so different. In driving home that evening, we passed her near her own gate. It was a very sultry evening; thunder clouds were piling themselves up above the range of lofty hills, and already there were some mutterings of thunder in the distance, while a faint, livid light low down in the west, gave a weird unfamiliar look to surrounding objects. Mrs. Gilbert was walking slowly, rather languidly, along the little footpath through the fields by the roadside.

For ungloved hands (very white and small I noticed) held a bunch of the wild honey-suckle which abounded in our hedges. She glanced at us for a instant as we passed. "That Mrs. Gilbert seems to fascinate you Jane," said my sister, with an amused smile. "You looked as if you wanted to speak to her." Well, I confess to a sort of fascination; I answered. "I feel sorry we never called on her, though of course not knowing anything about her, and no one here appearing to notice her, one felt—at least Mamma seemed to think"—"And then," said Bessie ingenuously, "taking old Land's house too, one seemed to connect her with those kind of people—still she really looks a lady—and she comes to Church so regularly—it does seem almost a pity." A loud peal of thunder and some heavy rain-drops pattering down upon our bonnets, put an end to our conversation, and made me put Nannie to her best speed. By this time Mrs. Gilbert had been for a year our neighbour, and having occupied that position for so long in name only, it became more and more improbable that our relations to her would ever be different; in fact, I felt now that it would be hard to find an excuse for calling, and, as I said before, our days were such busy ones, so full of pleasure and employment, that there are not much time for reflection or self-knowledge.

There was, however, one great interest for us, apart from Marston-under-hill, for one nearest and dearest to our hearts was far, far away—our only brother—our mother's only son. How we loved him, how proud we were of him, those who have only sons and brothers can understand. A letter from

Stanley was the event which cast all others into the shade. Such bright, loving letters they were, giving us full details of his life, and seeming to bring him into our very midst. Among all the stirring scenes and adventures of his life, he was so true to his home affections, so fond a son and brother.

Stanley was an engineer, and a very scientific and successful one; full of energy, fond of adventure, and possessing robust health, he had already more than once undertaken work which many would have hesitated to accept in spite of tempting pecuniary advantages. For the last year he had been in Brazil, in the employ of the Government. The scenes among which he lived were so utterly foreign to anything which we had experienced, and were so vividly described, that his letters had possessed of late, even more than their ordinary interest. They had been read and re-read among ourselves and our intimate friends, indeed, all Marston seemed to want to hear how Stanley was faring, and every old cottager had a kindly word to say about Master Stanley, whom they remembered from a baby.

It was three whole years now since we had seen him, and we began to be very impatient for his return. The work in which he had been employed was approaching its completion, and in his last letter he had spoken of his strong desire to revisit England before accepting any other engagement. For several weeks past we had been eagerly looking out for tidings, some times indulging the hope that he might himself arrive, and again fearing that his next letter might come from an even more remote distance. But as the weeks grew into months, our anxiety became very painful; there had been ample time for his homeward journey, but he neither came nor wrote. My mother's health was beginning to suffer from the protracted uncertainty, and my sister and myself found it no easy task to appear bright and hopeful.

Pre-occupied, as I was, with anxious thoughts of my brother, my interest in Mrs. Gilbert naturally waned, and I should probably have forgotten her altogether had she not Sunday by Sunday appeared in her accustomed seat. Her face was paler and more grave than ever, and the large grey eyes had a wistful look in them that seemed like a reproach. It was a beautiful autumn morning when the whole earth looked so full of peace and blessing, that there seemed to be no room for pain and care; yet we were setting a melancholy little group in the shade of the verandah. My mother was beginning to look grief-stricken, and Bessie and myself were trying to hide tears of disappointment. Once more the postman had failed to bring the longed-for, prayed-for letter. To-day we did not even try to comfort each other—hope deferred had made us heart-sick.

Sitting there in the autumn stillness, we heard our gate swing open, and presently I saw Mrs. Gilbert's maid coming up the drive. She held a letter in her hand, doubtless she was bringing it to her sister—our Martha. But no, for seeing us under the verandah she came up the steps. "Please Miss," she said, addressing me, "Mrs. Gilbert told me to give you this letter which the postman left by mistake along with a foreign one for her." I took it from the girl's hand almost mechanically, but as my eyes rested on the writing, I uttered a cry and clasped it to my heart. The letter was from Stanley, and I knelt down at my mother's knees and buried my face in her bosom.

(To be Continued.)

Be not almost, but altogether a Christian. The man that was drowned within three feet of Noah's Ark was no better off than those who were drowned a hundred miles away.

O my great Master! may I edify others by my example; dispense the light which Thy grace shall vouchsafe me, and in all humility direct all the glory to God.

SOMETIMES He chooses not to take away our cross, but it is our own fault if He do not help us to carry it, and when once He does that, the worst is over.

THE spire of St. James' Cathedral, Toronto, is 306 feet from the ground, being the highest in America.

"Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." Matt. v. 48.

Children's Department.

THE SWALLOWS AND THE SPARROWS.

It was a beautiful, clear morning, without a cloud in the sky.

The swallows knew it, they had been skimming about in the clear air ever since long before sunrise. Up and down, in and out of the tall, black chimneys they flew; then up and back again in great circles, talking to one another: the while with a soft, musical "chirrup" and "chee."

"Good is good," they said. "The day is fine and clear. We are happy. Chee! Chee!"

The sparrows were busy that morning too, rolling in the dusty road until they looked like fidgety little bundles of ashes, swooping down in great clouds to pick up the crumbs the little girl who lived in the old stone house had scattered for them, chattering all together.

"Cheep!" called the swallows. "Come up here, little birds; come and see how the sun shines, how cool the air is, and how beautiful the world looks from way up high!"

"Twitter! twitter!" called the sparrows. "Come down here, you fly-away things! You can't see the butterfies, nor smell the roses, nor eat the crumbs a dear little girl scatters, way up there."

"The cats will catch you," sang a swallow. "I can see one now, creeping through the geranium-bed toward you. Come up here and see how the tree tops rock in the wind and flags flutter."

"There are hawks up there," chirped the sparrow. "They'll catch you. A cat can't fly; she only bounces. Come down here and see our nests in the lilac-bushes and the snug corners in the ivy where we hide in the cold winter weather. How we pity you, going down out of the sunshine into the black, dark chimneys where your nests are. It must be very, very lonely there."

"Ah! but, you see, we like the quiet," gurgled the swallow; "and in the dark, after so much sunshine, our babies sleep better there. And you just ought to come with us when we fly away in the winter to the land where it is always summer, and the lotus flower is in blossom, and we build our nests in the shadow of great stone ruins, and dip our wings in the Nile."

"But we have such fun in the winter," chirped the contented sparrow. "It's such fun to hurry about in the snow-storms, to cuddle up together in the ivy and all talk together, to all come out on pleasant days to dry our feathers and look for crumbs. There are always plenty of them in cold weather; everybody remembers the sparrows. Then, too, I heard some one say last winter that we helped to keep things cheerful in the cold weather; that is a great deal, you know."

"And we come to let you know that spring is coming," said the swallow. "Well, God knows. He put us here; we swallows to skim about in the clouds and sit on the house tops, and you sparrows to pick up crumbs and live in the rose-bushes. He made us contented, too, in our own places."

"And that's the best of all," said the little girl who had been lying in the hammock, sitting up to rub her eye.

There was a gurgle and a sudden sweeping of long black and white wings over the house-tops, a flurry and a flutter of small brown bodies, and the swallows and sparrows were out of sight; while May was left alone to wonder if she had dreamed of hearing the birds talking.

"It's a lesson in being contented," she said to herself. "I'll remember it when I want to be Bell Foster again and drive her ponies. She hasn't any mother, and I wouldn't give mine for all the ponies in the whole world. She's a swallow and I'm a sparrow, and the dear Lord takes care and loves us both alike when we're contented."—*Churchman*.

WHAT THE WIND SAYS!

"Do you know what the wind says, Grandpa?" asked a little child upon old merchant's knee.

"No puss; what does it say?" he answered, stroking her fair hair.

"Remember the poor," Grandpa. When it comes down the chimney it roars, "Remember the poor!" When it puts its great mouth to the key hole it whistles, "Remember the poor!" When it strides through a crack in the door it whispers it; and Grandpa, when it blows

your beautiful silver hair in the street, and you shiver and button up your coat, does it not get at your ear and say so too, in a small voice, Grandpa?"

"Why, what does the child mean?" cried grandpa, who, I am afraid, had been used to shut his heart against such words. You want a new muff and tippet. I reckon; a pretty way to get them out of your old grandfather."

"No, Grandpa," said the child, earnestly shaking her head; "no, it's the no-muff and no-tippet children I'm thinking of; my mother always remembers them, and so do I try to do."

After the next storm the old merchant sent fifty dollars to the treasurer of a relief society, and said, "Call for more when you want it." The treasurer started with surprise, for it was the first time he had ever collected more than a dollar from him, and that, he thought, came grudgingly.

"Why," said the old merchant afterwards, "I could never get rid of that child's words; they stuck to me like glue."

"And a little child shall lead them," says the Scripture. How many a cold heart has melted, and a close heart opened, by the simple earnestness and suggestive words of a child!—*Orphan's Friend*

The Times.

THERE is no more certain 'sign of the times' than the wonderful development and marvellous growth of the Church in the United States. In every Diocese, new churches are building, new congregations forming, and ministers severing their connections with dissent and Romanism, to embrace the "faith which was once delivered unto the Saints." In the city of New York, the Church population is by far the most numerous and influential, and I learn with great pleasure that large sums of money have been subscribed to build a Cathedral in New York, which will rival in magnificence the new Cathedral lately built by the Romanists of that city. A committee has been empowered to purchase a suitable site in the centre of the city, and which alone will cost not less than one million dollars.

But how about a Cathedral for this Diocese. Is it possible that with so many wealthy Church families in Nova Scotia, enough money cannot be subscribed to build a suitable edifice? I do not think that our Church people are as enthusiastic in church matters, as our brethren in the States. The Diocese of Nova Scotia is one of the oldest on the continent, and yet it lacks a Cathedral, proportionate to the influence and importance of the Church. The fault of this is at the doors of the people themselves. If they were to prove their desire to assist in building a Cathedral to the glory of God, and the honour of His Church, I think I am safe in saying that we would receive very prompt outside assistance. Who will move in the matter?

The suggestion that the Synod of this Ecclesiastical Province hold its next triennial session in Halifax, is a good one. A great many of the clergy of the Upper Provinces would only be too glad to inhale the bracing breezes of Halifax-by-the-sea.

I hear, every day, reports of the disorganization of the Cumminite sect, but very few are really aware that the movement inaugurated by "Bishop" Cummins, and supported for a time by a few restless spirits in the church, is in a sad state of decay. In the United States, the Churches which were built with the expectation of their being filled to overflowing with deserters from the Episcopal Church, have been, in a great many instances, closed for want of both minister and congregation. True, there are a great many Bishops, but these preside over districts, and have little desire to descend from their position of Reformed Episcopal dignity, to minister to the spiritual wants of small congregations. In England, the ties which bind the majority of the people to the National Church, are daily being strengthened, especially since the dissenters have manifested such open and barefaced hostility to the Church of England. Nearer home, in Canada, and even in our own Province, those who were eager to embrace every new religious idea, scriptural or unscriptural, are returning to the faith of their

forefathers. To sum the matter up, the outlook for the "Reformed Episcopal Church" is very black, indeed, and unless some unexpected vitality manifests itself, this most uncharitable separation from Catholic faith will become a thing of the past.

I think it was the late lamented Bishop Selwyn who used the expression, "Error is naturally aggressive, and therefore must attack the truth." The force of this is truly exemplified in the discussions in the Imperial Parliament, relative to the Burials Bill. This debate was used as a shield, from behind which the champions of dissent and infidelity attacked the honour and integrity of the Church. That the Church can withstand their onslaughts, is a proof of how securely she is enthroned in the hearts of the English people. If now, even while both Romanism and dissent combined are in the minority, they should be so unreasonable and arrogant in their demands, what would it be if they were in the majority? The attempts to level all distinctions in England, to disestablish the Church, and to institute a new order of things, are not made with the hope of bettering the condition of the people. They are nothing more than periodical attacks of error on truth. But truth will prevail, and as the sun shines more brightly after being obscured by dark clouds, so when the clouds of error are dispelled by the breath of God's word, the sun of truth will shine forth more gloriously than ever.

NEED.

THE BAGDAD DATE MARK.

Bagdad, says one of our medical exchanges, is noted for a curious and mysterious malady, which affects everybody in the city, whether he be citizen or stranger. It is a sore called a "date mark," because after it has healed it leaves an indelible mark about the size and shape of a date. It generally makes its appearance upon the face, lasts a year, and then disappears. The cheek of nearly every man and woman in Bagdad shows the inevitable mark. Sometimes it settles upon the nose, and then the disfigurement is great; sometimes on the eyelid, when blindness is the result. Strangers are attacked even after a brief residence; but fortunately, if they are adults, the sore is more apt to come on the arm. In every case the attack runs its course for one year. No treatment, no ointment, nor medicine, it is said, has the slightest effect upon it. Once the sore appearing, the sufferer knows what to expect, and may as well resign himself to his fate. The Arabs say that every one who goes to Bagdad must get the "date mark"; or, if he does not get it while in the city, he will be followed by it—have it sooner or later he must. Dr. Thom, of the American Mission, states that he has examined the ulcer microscopically and found it to be composed of a fungoid growth; but nothing that he had ever tried had proved remedial.—*Scientific American*.

OUR CONVENTION.

John Locke, the English philosopher, was a favorite with many of the great noblemen of his age. They liked his robust sense and ready wit, and enjoyed even the sharp reproofs in which he occasionally indulged. On one occasion he had been invited to meet a select party at Lord Ashley's. When he came they were playing at cards, and continued absorbed in the game for two or three hours.

For some time Locke looked on, and then began to write diligently in a blank book taken from his pocket. At length they asked him what he was writing. He answered:

"My lords, I am improving myself the best I can in your company; for having impatiently waited this honor of being present at such a meeting of the wise men and great wits of the age, I thought I could not do better than to write down your conversation, and here I have in substance all that has passed for this hour or two."

The noble lords were so ashamed at the written record of their frivolous talk, that they at once stopped card-playing, and began the discussion of an important subject.

NEVER neglect daily private prayer; and when you pray, remember that God is present, and that He hears your prayers.