

otherwise, if your Committee think a different decision would be preferable. I remain, my dear sir, faithfully yours, W. E. GLADSTONE." On the motion of the Bishop of Brechin, it was agreed that the sum of £200 allotted to the diocese of Brechin, should be devoted to the foundation of a fund for the maintenance of the Episcopal residences. It was also agreed that £100 should be given to the diocese of Moray and Ross, as suggested by Mr. Gladstone.

FOREIGN MISSION NOTES.

"OLD JOHN is quite a character. He works for Mr. — (the owner of steam power for agricultural purposes); he is very often sent to different farmers to arrange for the visit of the engine, etc. He is much respected by all his master's customers, and very often a farmer will say to him, "John, will you have a glass of beer?" to which invitation John always answers "Thank you, sir, but if you please I will have two pence instead." Sometimes he gets his substitute for beer, sometimes beer and substitute as well: but all the money he gets in this way he puts into a bag, and at the close of the year deposits the amount, being more or less, in the collector's hand at the close of the yearly S. P. G. meeting, at which he is always present."—*Mission Field*.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT.—A Japanese newspaper of Tokio states that the government is now considering whether it is better to permit Christianity to be propagated in the country or to exclude it. It is to be hoped that his Imperial Majesty's Council will be led to a right decision, and not take, or try to take, any backward step in the most important of all subjects which they are called upon to consider. It is true that they have done some things of late, which enlightened friends of Japan regret. They have ordered the repair and restoration of some Pagan temples, and they have enacted very severe press laws. No less than thirty editors and correspondents of the newspapers have been sentenced to fine and imprisonment for criticising the proceedings of government or the conduct of officials, in the course of the past year.—*The Spirit of Missions*.

CENTRAL INDIA. HARVEST THANKSGIVING.—The following account of a harvest thanksgiving comes from Mr. Kruger, one of the S.P.G. Missionaries in Chota, Nagpore. On the second Sunday in Advent I was sent to help the native pastor, Prabhushahy, in the village of Mushu, as it was the day of harvest thanksgiving, service, and communion. I arrived there very early in the morning, and found Prabhushahy practising the choir in singing. About eight o'clock I saw the Christians from all sides coming into Mushu for the service, some bearing sheaves of dhan (a kind of grain) on their heads; others carrying baskets of rice, and showing by their faces that they all were glad to bring some offering to the Lord. The service began about twelve o'clock. All were arranged outside under a tree, and we went in procession to a chapel, singing a hymn. But the chapel was much too small to hold all the people, and when those who came first had laid their offering before the altar they could not move back, and we were obliged to turn out some of those near the door to give the others room to depart. I was much afraid when the people pressed so much, that the walls of the chapel, which are in a weak condition, would break down. The service lasted from about noon till after sunset. Three hundred and thirty-seven persons partook of the Lord's

supper, and twenty-four mounds of dhan, twelve mounds of rice, and four rupees (eight shillings) in pice (half-pence) were given as offerings. When all was over I returned happily to Ranchi."—*The Gospel Missionary*.

AFRICA.—Towards the end of October, 1875, Archdeacon Waters made a tour through the outlying districts of the Franskei. He first went to All Saints, River Bashi, where he spent a Sunday with Mr. Gordon; then rode in company with a Christian Kafir over a dreary country in parts of which are a large heathen population living in coarse plenty and much wickedness. In the little wooded *Kloofs* (glens) are scattered a good many Europeans. How Christianity is kept up at all among them seems a wonder; but the better sort of Dutch make the most of such religious advantages, as they have. He says: "At a Dutch traders where we off-saddled (rested at mid-day) I saw an aged Dutch grandmother teaching children. Her high pointed spectacles were such as a painter would have delighted in. The few opportunities of school-learning and public worship might be made up of the affectionate attentions of grandmothers such as these."

He goes on to speak of the influence of women amongst this rough people. "I rode," he says, "to a congregation on the banks of the Isomo, where a good woman has been the means of holding together a little flock of Church people, as well as keeping up a spirit of religion in her own family in a way which only those acquainted with Kafir modes of living can appreciate. The influence of women for good among the natives as well as Europeans is prominent in Fingeland. Were it not for the fear of offending such good women, I could tell much of the good done by their influence."—*The Gospel Missionary*.

ONE LIFE ONLY.

CHAPTER VIII.

Over the heath-clad hills that surrounded quiet Valehead, the sun had risen on a bright June morning; the air was full of that exquisite purity and freshness which scarce survives the earliest dawn; tender and evanescent as the fair innocence of human souls, which is dispersed for ever by the first breath of the world and its evil knowledge. Glittering dewdrops were on the little heath-bells, while they seemed to bend and whisper in greeting to the faint soft breeze; keen rays of light shot down through the branches of the stately pines, as though they were golden arrows, sent from heaven to wake the darkling earth; one pure pale star trembled and faded in the growing brightness, like the spirit of a saint dying into paradisaical glory; but it alone remained to speak of night or gloom, for over all the clear blue sky was not a cloud; and high up in its crystal vault a lark was losing itself in a very ecstasy of song, while a thousand bird-voices from a lower sphere sent up the joyous tidings that day was come again, and the sunny hours were all before them, full of hope and pleasure.

"How beautiful!—how beautiful this dear world is!" thought Una Dysart, as she stood on the rocky path leading up the mountain-side, and looked back over all the fair glad scene. A vision of brightness she was herself, with the light of youth and hope on her radiant face, and the happy smile of a heart at peace playing on her unconscious lips. But little did she dream that she had reached the last hour of life's sweet dawn; that never again would she know the freshness of a free spirit, untouched, untrammelled by the burden of its own human sympathies; unmoved in

its passionless peace by the knowledge of its true nature and strong capacity for suffering. It was the last hour when she could look up to the blue sky and think only of its beauty and not of the power of appeal against the tyranny of life, which might be found beyond its lucid depths; the last hour when gazing down on the earth in its greenness, she could forget the dark graves that were hidden beneath.

When she turned away at length from her long gaze over the smiling landscape, she knew not that it had been, in truth, a final farewell to the hope-lit scenes of her careless youth.

Una Dysart had never forgotten the glimpse she got of the strange old tower called the "Eagles' Nest," and the history of long-buried agony and crime which had been told her in connection with it. She had made up her mind from the first that she would see it. She knew that the distance from Vale House was not at all more than she could walk, and she had no doubt that her own active little feet would enable her to scale the ascent, steep as she was assured it was; but she had all along been quite determined to go alone. She did not like the idea of visiting a spot where so terrible a penance had been performed, and so bitter a sorrow endured, with the gay companions who were now associated with her in all her pleasure-excursions; and her father, even if she had wished for his society on such an occasion, would have resolutely refused to make the exertion. She resolved, therefore, to go very early in the morning, when she would run no risk of meeting any one by the way, and could return to the house in time to greet Colonel Dysart on his first appearance for the day.

Una found the path very pleasant at first, rocky and moss grown as it was, and she went onwards rapidly, till she reached the foot of the tremendous cliff, on the very summit of which the "Eagles' Nest" was placed. There was a zig-zag track leading up to it, that might have suited a goat or a chamois well enough, but which would have been almost impracticable to one less surefooted and light of tread than Una Dysart, and looked formidable even to her. She was not to be daunted, however, and thinking it best not to look behind her, or give herself time to consider the positive dangers of the ascent, she started off as swiftly as she could, and never drew breath till, by the help of an overhanging branch of a tree, she fairly swung herself up on the little rocky platform which supported the ancient tower. Then she paused, panting and flushed, her limbs trembling under her, and she looked round for some spot where she might sink down and rest, feeling that between excitement and fatigue she could not stand a moment longer. But she soon saw that there was no place outside the building where she could sit down, for it occupied almost the whole space on the top of the high, pointed rock, where it had been perched, and the only thing to be done was to go inside and rest on the ground, if there proved to be no available seat. She turned round and prepared to enter by the low-arched doorway, but as she put her foot on the threshold a sense of shrinking timidity came over her at the idea of entering that unknown chamber in the midst of such absolute solitude, and for a moment she hung back; the next, however, she was laughing at her own fears, for she was thoroughly brave at heart, and accusing herself of expecting to meet the penitent, who so many centuries before had made of this tower a sort of ante-chamber to the grave.

"I do not suppose the poor remorseful ghost would harm me if I did meet him," thought Una, and at once plunged boldly