

Hemstead looked as if a light were dawning upon him. "You spoke of this life," continued Lottie, "as if it were nothing, and that God didn't care—indeed approved of our having a hard time here, that we might be more sure of a good time hereafter. You spoke of God as jealously watching, lest we should love earthly friends more than Him, and that He was bound to be first, if He had to snatch away everything that we loved most. Therefore, even the mother must keep chilling her natural love for her child, or else God will make the little thing suffer and die, just to give the mother a lesson. You said that we should hold all earthly possessions in fear and trembling, and that the harsher our experiences were, here, the better, if they only wean us from earth. If this is true, we had better have no possessions and form no ties. The monks and nuns are right. Let us shut ourselves up, and wear hair-cloth instead of merino, and catch our death of cold by moping around bare-foot at all unseasonable hours. All you said may be good religion, but it's mighty poor sense, and very unnatural."

Hemstead shaded his burning face with his hands.

"There, I knew I would hurt you—no doubt I seem very irreverent, but you have no idea how I am restraining myself for your sake. I'm just that provoked and indignant—well, well, what's the use? As you said, we can't help ourselves, and into the fiery furnace Lottie Marsden will go before long, only there will be nothing left of me but a little cinder. Why couldn't the Being you call all-wise and all-powerful, devise some nicer way, one more in accordance with the nature He has given us? Suppose heaven is a grander place than this world, that is no reason for hating the world. This earth is our present home, and it looks sensible that we should make the most of it, and enjoy ourselves in it. Suppose my father should say, 'Lottie, I want you to hate and despise your present home, because in five years I'm going to give you a palace; and if you can only fall down stairs once or twice, and have a fit of illness so as to get weaned from it, I shall be glad.'

"How strangely and monstrously unnatural all that kind of talk is when you come to put it into plain English," proceeded Lottie after a moment, tapping the floor impatiently with her foot. "If you must preach such doctrines as you did this morning, I am sorry for you; and if they are true, I am sorry for the world, myself included. The trouble is not in you. I am sure you can make almost an orator in time, if you can get a theme that won't give men the shivers, and set their teeth on edge. I never understood religion and never liked it; and now that I do begin to understand it, I like it less than ever."

Hemstead sat down in his chair—indeed he sank into it, and the face he turned toward her was white and full of pain.

"Miss Marsden," he said slowly, "I fear I have given you, and all who heard me, a very false impression of God and Christianity; and yet I thought I was speaking the truth."

"Oh, I knew you were honest. There isn't a dishonest fibre in your nature; but I wish you were all wrong. Oh, how delighted I should be if you were a heretic without knowing it, and we could find out a religion that wouldn't make one's blood run cold to think of it."

"But my religion does me good, Miss Marsden. It cheers, sustains and strengthens me."

"Now you see how inconsistent you are. You preach one thing, and feel and act another."

"I begin to see how I was misled in my sermon, and why what I said was so repugnant to you; and yet my mind is confused. It still appears to me, that I developed the thought of the text. Christ said, 'I am glad I was not there to the intent that ye may believe.' These words would seem to show that He regarded our transient pains as of very secondary importance compared with the accomplishment of His great purposes. Why did He not go to Bethany at once, if it were not so?"

"Well, it's an awful text, or you give it an awful interpretation. Let me take the thought out of the realm of theology or religion, and bring it down to practical life. Suppose you go to New York to-morrow and remain a few days, and to-morrow night the house burns up, and I with it. Would your first thought be, I am glad I was not there to put out the fire or to rescue that naughty girl, Lottie Marsden, because her sudden death, for which she was all unprepared, will be a warning to many, and result in great good? I may be wrong, Mr. Hemstead, but I think you would get pretty well scorched before you would permit even such a guy as I am to become a warning to other naughty girls."

"I can't imagine myself leaving you in danger," said Hemstead in a low tone, and a look that brought the blood into Lottie's face.

"I thought you would feel so," she continued heartily. "You can preach awfully against sinners, but when you come to put your doctrines in practice, you would say as you did to me, 'I wish I could bear all for you.' 'Heaven knows I'm selfish enough, but I can at least understand and appreciate generous and kindly sympathy, and could be won by it. But this cool and inflexible elaboration of character, where only the end is considered, and all our timid shrinking and human weakness ignored—this austere asceticism which despises the present world and life, is to me unnatural and monstrous. I confess I never read the Bible very much, and have not listened when it was read. I have half forgotten the story of Lazarus. You left off where Lazarus was in his grave, and Christ was glad he was not there to prevent his death. But that was not all the story. I think, if I remember rightly, Christ raised him to life. Come, get a Bible, and let us read the whole story, and see if we cannot find something that will not make the 'Gospel' a mockery."

"Won't you read it?" asked Hemstead humbly, handing her the Bible.

"Yes, if you wish me to, though it seems very funny that I should be reading the Bible to you."

"I begin to have a hope that you will teach me more than I ever learned from it before," he replied earnestly.

(To be continued.)

The new French Minister of War proposes to make the Marseillaise the national hymn.

HEARTS OVER-WORKED.

No organ in the body is so liable to be overworked as the heart. When every other part of the body sleeps, it keeps on its perpetual motion. Every increased effort or action demands from the heart more force. A man runs to catch the train, and his heart beats audibly. He drinks wine, and the blood rushes through its reservoir faster than ever was intended by nature. His pulse rises after each course at dinner. A telegram arrives, and his heart knocks at his side. And when any one of these "excitements" is over, he is conscious of a corresponding depression—a sinking or emptiness, as it is called. The healthy action of all the members of our frame depends upon the supply of blood received from the central fountain. When the heart's action is arrested, the stomach, which requires from it a large supply of blood, becomes enfeebled. The brain, also waiting for the blood, is inactive. The heart is a very willing member, but if it be made to fetch and carry incessantly—if it be "put upon," as the unselfish member of a family often is, it undergoes a disorganization which is equivalent to its rupture. And this disorganization begins too often now-a-days in the hearts of very young children. Parents know that if their sons are to succeed at any of those competitive examinations which have now become so exigent, high pressure is employed. Hence young persons are stimulated to over-work by rewards and punishments. The sight of a clever boy who is being trained for competition is truly a sad one. The precocious, coached-up children are never well. Their mental excitement keeps up a flush, which, like the excitement caused by strong drink in older children, looks like health, but has no relation to it; in a word, the intemperance of education is overstraining and breaking their young hearts. If, in the school-room, some hearts are broken from mental strain, in the play-ground and in the gymnasium others succumb to physical strain. "It is no object of mine," says Dr. Richardson, "to underrate the advantages of physical exercise for the young; but I can scarcely overrate the danger of those fierce competitive exercises which the world in general seems determined to applaud. I had the opportunity once in my life of living near a rower. He was a patient of mine, suffering from the very form of induced heart disease of which I am now speaking, and he gave me ample means of studying the conditions of many of those whom he trained both for running and rowing. I found occasion, certainly, to admire the physique to which his trained men were brought; the strength of muscle they attained; the force of their heart; but the admiration was qualified by the stern fact of the results." But, indeed, it is not by overwork so much as by worry and anxiety that our hearts are disorganized. "Laborious mental exercise is healthy, unless it be made anxious by necessary or unnecessary difficulties. Regular mental labour is best carried on by introducing into it some variety." Business and professional men wear out their hearts by acquiring habits of express-train haste, which a little attention to method would render unnecessary.

ANCIENT PLAGUES.

By comparing the mortality of ancient plagues with those of the present day, it is evident that the latter have been much less destructive, and that there has been a general sanitary improvement through the civilized world in modern times. The "Popular Science Monthly" mentions some of the most destructive ancient plagues in the following:

The black death that ravaged Asia and Southern Europe in the fourteenth century spared the Mohammedan countries—Persia, Turkistan, Morocco and Southern Spain—whose inhabitants generally abstained from pork and intoxicating drinks. In the Byzantine Empire, Russia, Germany, Northern Spain (inhabited by the Christian Visigoths) and in Italy, 4,000,000 died between 1373 and 1375, but the monasteries of the stricter orders and the frugal peasants of Calabria and Sicily enjoyed their usual health (which they, of course, ascribed to the favour of their tutelary saints); but among the cities which suffered were Barcelona, Lyons, Florence and Moscow, the first three situated on rocky mountain slopes, with no lack of drainage, and pure water, while the steppes of the upper Volga are generally dry and salubrious.

The pestilence of 1720 swept more than two-thirds of the 75,000 inhabitants of Marseilles, in less than five weeks; but of the 6,000 abstemious Spaniards that inhabited the "Suburbs of the Catalans" only 200 died, or less than four per cent.

The most destructive epidemic recorded in authentic history, was the four years' plague that commenced at Alexandria, Egypt, A. D. 542, and raged through the dominions of Choroos the Great, the Byzantine Empire, Northern Africa and South-western Europe. It commenced in Egypt, spread to the east over Syria, Persia and the Indies, and penetrated to the west along the coast of Africa, and over the continent of Europe, Asia Minor, with its plethoric cities. Constantinople, Northern Italy and France, suffered fearfully; entire provinces were abandoned, cities died out and remained vacant for many years and during three months 5,000, and at last 10,000 persons died at Constantinople each day! ("Gibbons's History") and the total number of victims in the three continents is variously estimated at from 75,000,000 to 120,000,000. But in Sicily, Morocco and Albania, the disease was confined to a few seaport towns and the Caucasus, and Arabia escaped entirely.

This dreadful plague made its first appearance in Alexandria, Egypt, then a luxurious city of 800,000 inhabitants, and Paulus Diaconus, a contemporary historian, speaks of the "reckless gluttony by which the inhabitants of the great capitol incurred yearly fevers and dangerous indigestions, and at last brought this terrible judgment upon themselves and their innocent neighbours." Alexandria lost 500,000 of her inhabitants in 542, and 80,000 in the following year, and for miles around the city the fields were covered with unburied corpses; but the monks of the Nitrian Desert (3,000 of them had devoted themselves to the task of collecting and burying the dead) lost only fifty of their fraternity, who, with a few exceptions, confessed that they had secretly violated the ascetic rules of the order.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

THE Wittenberg church-door on which Luther nailed his famous theses is now in use in St. Bartholomew's church, Berlin.

THE city Council of San Agustine, Fla., are repairing their old city gates. Reverence for antiquity is now so rare that this fact is worth noting.

No less than ten persons claim the chief prize of the great French lottery, so extensively were the tickets forged. Swindling and gambling lead to forgery.

A TEMPERANCE Prayer Union was established in England last summer, each member of which engages to pray for the removal of the national sin at least once every week.

THE English Bible Revision Committee have revised for the first time all the books of the Old Testament except Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastics, and the Song of Solomon.

GOV. VANCE, of North Carolina, in recently signing the pardon of a criminal who is a Jew, said it was the first serious case ever brought to his notice on the part of any of that people.

SIR ROWLAND HILL is to be presented with the freedom of the city of London in acknowledgments of the great benefits derived from uniform penny postage, introduced by him in 1840.

IN the week after the closing of the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance at Basle, the International Federation of Lord's Day Societies will hold Conferences at Berne, from September 8 to 14.

THE Bishop of Rochester, Eng., at the opening of a new coffee-tavern at Greenwich, said that he had been a total abstainer two years, and found that he could do more work without the drink than with it.

DR. KING, of Yonkers, set this sum for the tax payers to cipher out there: "The police appropriations for Yonkers are \$35,000 because we have 100 grog shops. In Vineland they are only \$75 because they have no grogshop."

ST. GILES CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh, is to be restored as nearly as possible to its condition in the 16th century, by removing the walls erected to make the different places of public worship that have been held under its roof.

THE Cleveland (O.) Y. M. C. A. noonday prayer-meeting has increased so much in interest and numbers since the Week of Prayer that it had to be transferred to the chapel of the First Presbyterian church, which is daily filled.

REV. W. FLEMING STEVENSON, who has recently made a missionary tour around the globe, says that while Bombay had not a complete Marathi Bible till 1847, it had ten anti-Christian papers in 1843, and that the commonest book offered in the Calcutta bazaar is a cheap edition of Tom Paine.

THE "Catholic Review" pledges its honour to the absolute truth of this statement, that "if a penitent at the confessional states that he has stolen money or property, and has it in his power to make immediate restitution that restitution must be made to the party wronged before absolution can be received."

ROBERT ARTHINGTON, Esq., a benevolent gentleman of Leeds interested in the evangelization of Africa, has offered the English Baptist Missionary Society to provide a steamer at the cost of £2,000, when required, for navigating the Congo river. He has also offered £3,000 to the American Missionary Association towards establishing a new mission at Equatorial Africa.

THE Livingstone Inland Mission has lost its first missionary on the Congo, Mr. James Telford, who fell a victim to the fever soon after reaching the station. He was converted during Mr. Moody's visit to Carlisle, five years ago. In his address at the farewell meeting, less than six months ago, he said deliberately, "I go gladly on this mission, and shall rejoice if only I may give my body as one of the stones to pave the road into Interior Africa, and my blood to cement the stones together so that others may pass over into Congo-land."

ADVICE TO CONSUMPTIVES.

The celebrated physician Dr. Paul Memeyer, gives the following valuable suggestions to persons suffering from lung affections: "The patient must with scrupulous conscientiousness insist upon breathing fresh, pure air, and must remember that the air of closed rooms is always more or less bad."

No man, however uncleanly, would drink muddy, dirty water. A party which occupies a room for hours, breathing the same air, might be compared to a party of bathers drinking the water in which they bathe. The patient must keep the window of his bedroom open. Night air is fresh air without daylight. In close, crowded rooms, the patient suffering from lung complaints breathes consumptively." By taking these precautions and using Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and Pleasant Purgative Pellets, fully one-half of the cases of lung complaints would be cured in six months. For cough and irritation of the lungs do not always indicate the presence of consumption although it may result in that fell disease, and if consumption has already become deeply seated in the system, this is the most efficient course of treatment that can be pursued outside of any institution that provides special facilities for the treatment of this disease. Dr. Pierce's celebrated Invalids Hotel is such an institution. Send stamp for descriptive pamphlet containing also a complete treatise upon consumption, explaining its causes, nature, and the best methods of treating it, together with valuable hints concerning diet, clothing, exercise, etc., for consumptives. Address Faculty of Invalids' and Tourists' Hotel, Buffalo, N. Y.

JUST PUBLISHED—SENT FREE.

Complete History of Wall Street Finance, containing valuable information for investors. Address Bextor & Co., Publishers, 17 Wall Street, New York.