

## Children's Department.

### THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

FIVE miles to the north-east of the venerable city of Durham lies the extensive parish of Houghton-le-Spring. It contains about 17,000 inhabitants, but they are not maintained by the surface of the soil. The riches of the place lie underground, and underground its children pursue their daily toil; it is in the centre of the Durham coal-field. Thence comes the fuel to light up many an English hearth, and to speed many an English steamship through the ocean waves.

To the Churchman, however, Houghton-le-Spring is chiefly interesting as having been the earthly home of Bernard Gilpin, one of the truest sons of his dear mother and the most active of her ministers.

Bernard Gilpin was born in Westmoreland, A. D. 1517, and possessed in an eminent degree the strong will, high spirit and powerful intellect of the sons of the north, as well as the warm heart and strong affections often found among them. There was scope for all his gifts in the life of a parish priest, to which he devoted himself in early youth. The age, however, was one of strife and disunion; for the Church of England was casting off errors and abuses, and her ministers were divided between a desire to be quit of the evil and a fear of parting with what was good. So, shrinking from setting himself up as a teacher till he was thoroughly persuaded of the truth in his own mind, he remained at Oxford till the age of thirty-five, preparing himself by study and prayer to become a preacher of the Gospel. He went abroad at the beginning of the troubles in Queen Mary's reign; but after a time his uncle, the Bishop of Durham, persuaded him to come back and take the living of Houghton-le-Spring, then containing fourteen villages and inhabited by an ignorant, lawless people. Bernard Gilpin came and at once devoted himself to them. He led them to church, he prayed with and for them, he preached to them. He built a school for their children (a rarer blessing then than now); and when the young ones flocked to it from all parts of the country, and lodgings could not be found in the place, he received twenty or thirty of them into his own house, taking care of them as if he had been their own father. Every Thursday through the year he gave orders that a large pot should be set on the rectory fire and filled with meat for all who needed it; and on other days too he used to take poor people home with him and clothe and feed them. He would often return home from a day in his parish without a penny in his pocket, all having gone in almsgiving; and, like St. Martin of old, he was known to take off his cloak and give it to a half-naked traveller. The following instance of his kindness of heart has been preserved.

One day while he was making a journey with his servant, both riding on horseback, he saw several persons crowding together in a field at some little distance. Judging that some accident had happened, he rode to the spot and found that one of the horses in a team had just dropped down dead, and that its owner was grieving over his loss and calling himself a ruined man. Mr. Gilpin turned to his servant and told him to get down, unsaddle his horse, carry the bridle and saddle to the next town and leave the horse in place of the dead one. "Alack, sir," exclaimed the countryman, "I am not able to pay you the price of so good a horse." "Be of good cheer," answered the clergyman, "thou shalt never pay for him till I demand it. Meanwhile go on with thy work."

But it was not Bernard Gilpin's charitable deeds, nor his care of his own parish, which gained him the name by which we generally know him, the Apostle of the North; he won it thus. The country was in his days very ill

supplied with clergymen, not one third of the parishes possessing one. The neglected state of these destitute places moved Bernard Gilpin's heart; so, placing a curate at home, he began to visit the darkest spots in the neighbouring counties, spending two or three days in every village calling the people to church, and preaching earnestly and plainly to them. They crowded to hear him, and paid much heed to his words. For example: once when he was explaining the duty of honesty and the sin of stealing, a man who had lived by theiving rose up and in the face of the congregation confessed his past sins and his resolutions to do better.

But Bernard Gilpin's warmest compassion was roused in behalf of Reedsdale and Fynedale, lonely districts to the west of Northumberland, forming part of what was once called the Debateable land, and inhabited chiefly by marauders and cattle stealers, who lived by plunder, selling in England what they took in Scotland, and in Scotland the spoils of England. Among these fierce people the good missionary spent part of every year, usually Christmas-tide, when they were in general at home and more disposed to be taught. He did not mind the severity of the cold, the wildness of the country or its bad roads, though it did sometimes happen on his journeys that he had to pass the whole night in the snow out of doors. The natives of this district owned no law, but when a quarrel broke out among them, they used to muster their friends on each side and fight it out whenever they met, with swords and javelins. Such a quarrel was once raging in the village of Rothbury when Bernard Gilpin came to it in his missionary tour. One party came early to church, and while he was preaching the other entered; and stood fully armed, glaring at each other, one in the chancel, the other in the body of the church. The sight of their enemies inflamed them, and they began to clash their weapons and threaten each other; on which the preacher came down from the pulpit, and, stepping between them, got the ringleaders to promise they should be quiet while he finished his sermon. He then went up again into the pulpit and preached to them so earnestly the duty of meekness and forgiveness of injuries, that when the sermon was over they freely promised him to forbear all fighting, at least while he was in the neighbourhood.

On going early one Sunday into another church, he saw a glove hanging up from one of the arches, and, asking the sexton what it meant, was told it was put there by a man in the parish as a challenge to fight any one who should touch it. He begged the sexton to take it down and give it to him. "Not I, sir," said the sexton, "I dare do no such thing." So Mr. Gilpin sent for a long staff, took the glove down, put it in his bosom and went into the pulpit. The people soon flocked in and he began with reproving them for this custom of challenging and fighting. "I hear," he said, "that there is one among you who even in this sacred place hath hanged up a glove to this purpose, threatening to enter into combat with whosoever shall take it down. Behold, I have taken it down myself." And at that word, plucking out the glove, he showed it openly and taught them the Christian duties of forgiveness and charity.

Bernard Gilpin's labours were not thrown away. He won the love of a noble though neglected race to himself and then to his Master. "He was esteemed of them," says an ancient writer, "a very prophet, and all but adored." One old marauder, we are told, stole his horses, not knowing whom they belonged to; but on finding it out he brought them back at once, trembling with fear and begging forgiveness. He said that had he stolen them knowing whose they were, he should have expected to drop down dead.

The fatigue of these journeys wore out Bernard Gilpin's strength, still he worked on as he could. His last days were given to his own poor people and

his school children and he died on the 4th of March, 1583, aged sixty six.

Surely not in vain was the parable of the Good Samaritan (the Gospel for to-day) studied by Bernard Gilpin; and not in vain let us hear of a life so devoted to the best interests of his neighbour. Rather let each of us, according to his respective calling, go and do likewise.

A WELL "CURED" EDITOR.—At No. 80 King Street East, Toronto, Ont., are the editorial rooms of the *Sunday School Manual*, edited by Mr. Withrow, of 240 Jarvis St. in the same city. Conversing recently with several gentleman—one of them the representative of the largest advertisers in the world—Mr. Withrow remarked; "As to advertising, I consider St. Jacob's Oil the best advertised article by far. It is a splendid remedy too. Besides the many cases of rheumatism it has cured right amongst us, it has rendered me most efficient service in curing a severe soreness of the chest and an obstinate headache. It does its work satisfactorily."

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According to Edwin Alden & Bro.'s American Newspaper Catalogue, just issued, there are 12,158 newspapers published in the United States and the Canadas. Total in the United States, 11,522; Canadas, 636. Published as follows: Dailies, 1,152; Tri-Weeklies, 80; Semi-Weeklies, 150; Weeklies, 9,078; Bi-Weeklies, 23; Semi-Monthlies, 202; Monthlies, 1,290; Bi-Monthlies, 12.

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