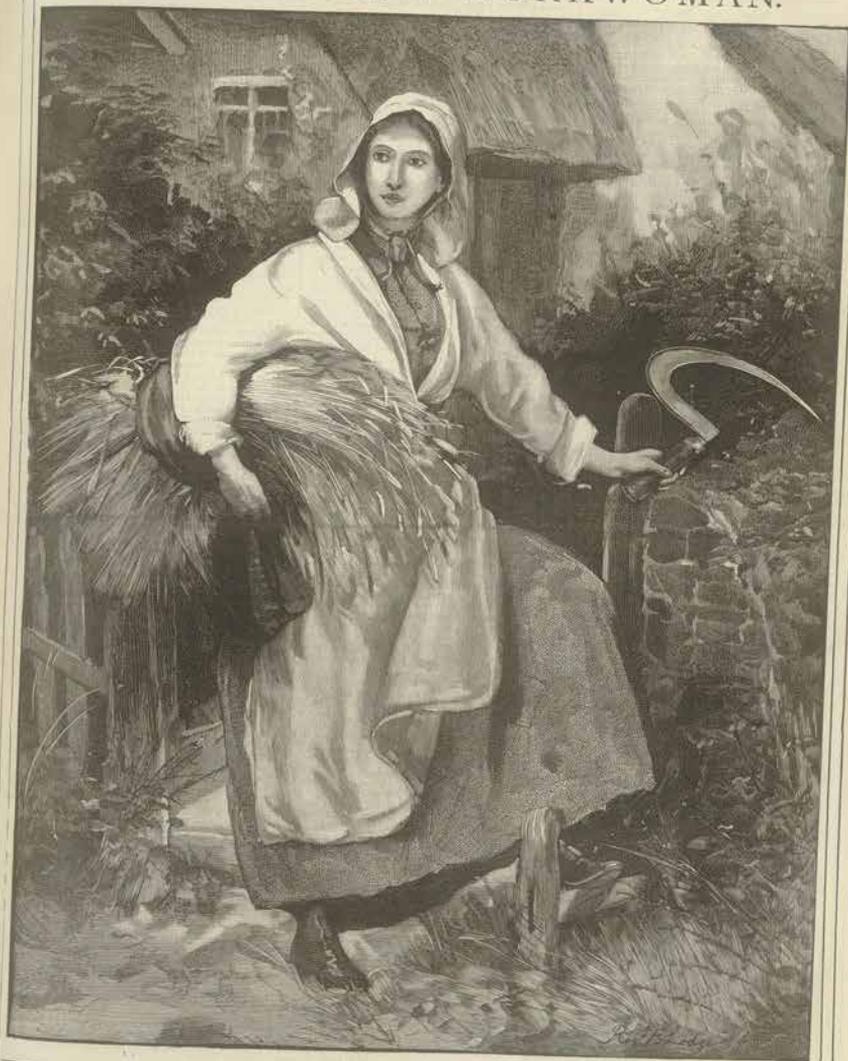


# THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN.







## The Parable of the Sower.

IV.

## The Good Ground.



It has been seen that the *ergatide* would not do for the sowing of the seed. It has been seen that neither the rocky ground nor the thorny ground would answer for the seed. What then will do for it? If these can't grow, and where will it flourish? If the ground is to be

"good," there must be preparation and cultivation.

It is with no little interest, considering the heavenly meaning of such things, that I have not long since watched the preparation of a large field for the putting in of crops. The farmer had means at his disposal, and it seemed as if neither means nor pains were spared in all that was done for that field. At first two powerful steam engines worked their way over the surface of the soil deep into the ground. It seemed a truly painful process; yet what good work did those sharp iron teeth do as they forced their way into the rough earth, rending and tearing away the hard and heavy clods, and making thus an entrance by-and-by for the seed. Then there was the time of harrowing. Then a time when many busy hands pulled every weed and stalk and the ends of every kind into little heaps for burning; until scattered over the field small fire slowly consumed the refuse into ashes. The field seemed purified then. Later on there came a time of ploughing and re-ploughing; until the carefully prepared earth, with its long, straight furrows, was at length ready for the sowing — "good" indeed! The preparation of that field cost a large sum of money. No farmer reckoned it doubtless fully worth while, for he looked for a rich and valuable harvest.

If the Word of God is to become a power in any heart, it is a necessary, a great necessity, that the Holy Spirit of God should rest upon that heart. He must be the instrument who will "break up the fallow ground." It is the power of the Holy Ghost alone that the Word of God becomes a "hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." The unchanged heart of man is for hardness as "a rock." No human power can move it, no earthly love, however winning and desirable, can touch and melt it, unless the Spirit of God takes the next step, and uses the earthly voice to break, in His power, the "rock in pieces." Then it is that tears come into eyes unused to weeping, then it is that the refined manner melts, and the pride gives way. Once he turned away his head in careless indifference, or contempt, from God's message, now he is humbled and meek, and he will be saved? "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" This is the beginning of the "good ground." The heart has begun to yield, and the rebel will to give way. God's harvest is being sown over the hard clods of the soil, and the proud man becomes a little child.

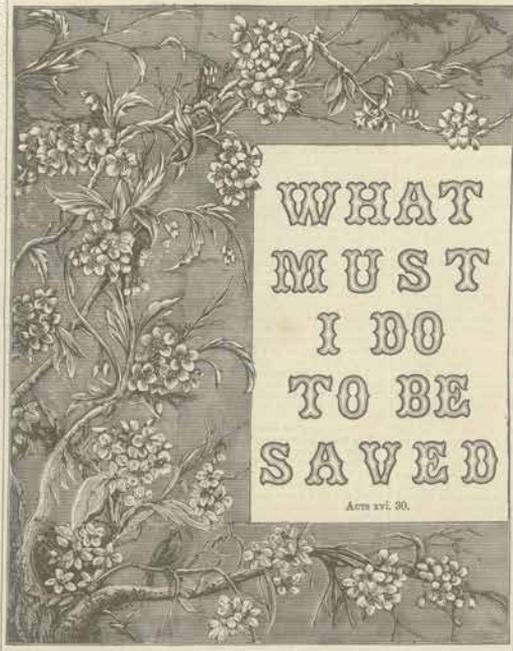
It is a blessed thing—more blessed than words can say—to be a child of the kingdom of heaven. But the gate of "the narrow way" is "strait," and, with some souls especially, it is a painful process that goes on in the heart when the Holy Spirit begins His work there. There is a rooting up of the stubborn will, and there is a painful gathering out and burning of the ill weeds that choke the heart. But how otherwise could there be a "good" ground, how otherwise a harvest for the Master?

It is a beautiful thing to see the springing of the young wheat in "good ground." "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." First green and delicate, and at last golden and glorious, ready for the harvest home. And it is a beautiful thing to see God's work growing and

Master! He counts the "thirty-fold" of a child, a poor widow, unknown to us as *fruit* in the "good ground," if it springs from love to Him. Even the cup of cold water given in His name is not without its reward. If these hearts now have been won from the wilderness by the power of the Holy Spirit to be a garden for the Lord, let us long and pray and strive that we may bear "much fruit" to the glory of God. M. E.

WHITE WAX INSECTS.—The object of a recent expedition was to collect information on the subject of the white wax given by certain insects in China, and to procure for New Guinea specimens of the trees on which the insects live, and of the wax they produce.

This object seems to have been pretty completely accomplished. The chief wax-producing district in China is that western end of the province of Szechuen which Mr. Home traversed, and especially the districts of Owei, Chinong, and Lashan. It is a double product. The wax insects are produced in Chian-shan and carried over the mountains to the wax trees in Chinong, of which Owei and the other districts named form a part. The insect tree is an evergreen, with short downy leaves, and wax spring from the branches in pairs. On the bark of its rough and twigs small incisions or galls are found in the early summer, and these galls on being defoliated are seen to contain swarms of minute insects, and in some cases a small seed. The insects make a hole in the shell and into the insects' masses. The Chinese collect the galls in the early part of May and convey them to the district where another evergreen called the wax tree grows. The galls are attached to the tree and the insects were cut and others to its branches. They appear to suck the sap and to deposit it in the shape of white wax. In the course of three or six to a hundred days the branches thus become thickly coated, and in good years the wax thus formed attains the thickness of a quarter of an inch. At the proper time the branches thus coated are cut off by the hand, and washed in water. It is then heated to the surface, it is skinned off and run into moulds, and thus forms the white wax of commerce. The Chinese mix some of this wax in tallow usually to give their former consistency. The needles are dipped in white wax, and thus acquire a sheath which prevents "gutting." An inferior kind of wax is secured from the *Colletia* tree-thorn, and is used in sending home to Kee Gardens some specimens of the tree on which the insects originally grow, as well as the wax. The wax is transferred. He had not with him any microscope powerful enough to enable him to discover how the wax insects fed, or in what way they deposited the wax. He found, however, that they construct galleries or passages in the wax deposit itself, which reach from the bark to the wax, and are very close set. He has seen them thickly studded on the bark and apparently motionless. Sir Harry Parks, in forwarding his Report to the Government, praises Mr. Home for his successful research and the readiness he showed in overcoming the difficulties of travel.



WHAT  
MUST  
I DO  
TO BE  
SAVED

Act. xvi. 30.

## The late Earl of Shaftesbury.

THE death of Anthony Ashley Cooper, seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, leaves a great gap in the religious and philanthropic world. Innumerable societies—we might say every society which had for its object the amelioration of the condition of the human race, the moral and social ad-

vancement of the people—will miss the grave, earnest face of one deeply interested in their work, always ready to take a prominent part in their debates, and to offer to them much wise counsel and generous support.

No good cause ever lacked Shaftesbury's good word and open hand. In a world that is bright and garish and full of temptation to men of high talents, he pursued the even tenor of his way, and shone forth a "white light amongst the tilted crowd"—his name and face were more familiar in the east of London than the west

—he was poor, preacher, and philanthropist in one throughout his long and worthy career; he was consistent and persistent in well doing from youth to an honorable old age; he was the true aristocrat in the highest and best sense of that much misunderstood word; he was "the best"

the good Earl—the hero of a thousand fights against sin and shame, and poverty, and ignorance—a man much loved and trusted by the people. In the literature of the working-classes, too, he was always a watchful sentinel and keen critic, and his interest in the rise and progress of

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN dates from very early times, and will remain with us as a fair and grateful recollection. Lord Shaftesbury was born on the 25th of April, 1760, and at 80, on October 1st, 1855, terminated his career, unexcused, uncomplaining, unbusiness life.

## The Missing Ship.

CHAPTER I.

BOSSY'S CHAIR.

IT was Autumn time, the sickle had been busy and the wheat had been stacked, a party of girls were blockberrying in the woods. The youngest was seventeen, the elder one two or three-and-twenty; and three of the number were shortly to be married, an important fact which gave a special turn to the conversation.

look of remembrance coming upon her face she half-sighed again as she said:

"Oh, yes, I remember. I am fired in one way—tired of thinking how sorry I am to have to leave mother and father, and all I can, and our dear old village."

Another of the party looked round quickly from a mass of bushes she was clinging to, half-way up a little hillock. She also was engaged, and for her lover came before everything and everyone, an entirely as almost to shut all else completely out of view. Her face and voice looked a good deal of reproach in them as she exclaimed—

"But, Lou, you must not sigh for him now. You will have your husband always with you."

Louie's pretty brown eyes brightened at the reminder. "Yes," she said, with a glad accent, "there is a great deal in that. I really shall have Robert always with me. There is nothing like having a shop for that. We shall be working together, and helping each other all day long. It will be very happy and pleasant for us both."

"Of course it will," put in the shrew Missy Wing, "of course it will, especially if you sag at each other, and squabble— with each other all day long."

Louie shook her head. "Robert could not sag and squabble if he tried," she said, confidently. "And, as for me, I have not been in the way of doing so till now, and"—in a lower tone and softly—"please God to help me, I shall not be so in the future."

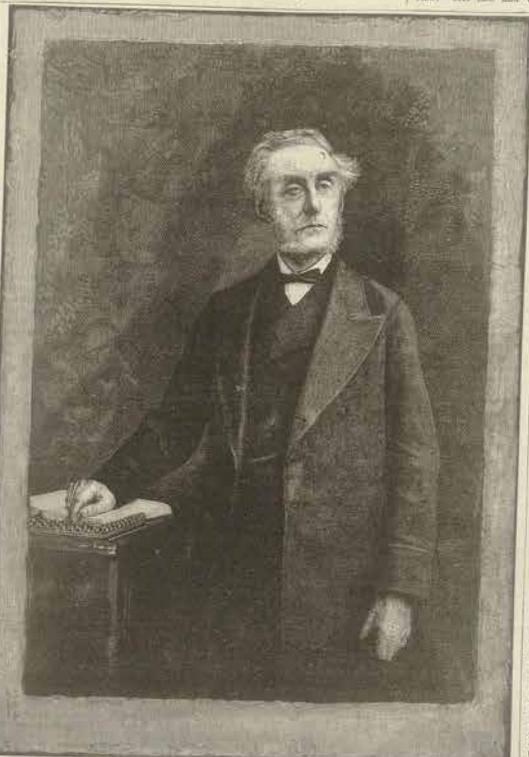
The prayerful tone and earnest manner hushed all the other voices for a few moments, but Bossy Wing's tongue was one of those that were usually unable to be long at rest.

"Well," she ejaculated after a short pause, and with the energy of very decided conviction; "let those who like it go in for stay-at-home husbandry. I don't say it is a sort of thing to suit some folk's taste, but it wouldn't be my choice. I can tell you I should just think not, indeed! A man peering around one, working, noon and night. No, thank you, not for me."

The others laughed at the ill-timed remark on the ill-timed occasion. "What's your choice, then?" asked Farmer Grinn's tall daughter Doll. "Out with it, Bossy's color deepened, but at the same time she hesitated some moments before replying, as though for the first time she had to consider what she really would choose if she had full power. At last she said with an appearance of slow, thoughtful deliberation—

"Well—if I could have what I wished—I—I think—I would choose—yes, I would choose a sailor."

Until the very last word was spoken the eagerly attentive silence had been perfect, but now peals of



THE LATE EIGHTH EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, E.G.

EDUCATION ABROAD.  
—Germany fully deserves her reputation as the best-educated country in the world. Statistics which have just been published show that out of 100,000 Germans who in the course of last year did some kind of military service, considerably less than one and a half per cent. were illiterate. Of the whole both read and wrote, and it was only in the southern provinces and districts of Prussia that any-thing approaching to an unsatisfactory educational average was observed. Elsewhere the proportion of among the Badenese to seven, among the Saxons and eight among the Bavarians.

The holiday rattle had been got up, indeed, by way of farewell to one of the engaged maidens whose future home was distant nearly three hundred miles from her native place.

A deep sigh from her attracted the attention of one of her companions.

"What is the matter, Louie? Are you growing tired?"

The girl gave way to a laugh. "Tired! What of—loitering along here and eating blackberries?"

"Then, if you are not tired, what were you sighing for?"

"Was I sighing?" asked the girl. Then with a





