

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN.



He had been a little odd perhaps about the cottage; he should have said he could stay until November for a consideration; and then he looked at his fine stack to be threshed to-morrow; so earnestly did work with him—no, nor of mind else—except that though he could not know his owner, and his as his master's, he had neither knowledge nor remembrance of Him in whose home were all his ways.

Into his barn the stack was put next morning, as soon as the sun had dried all damp from the outside sheaves, and as the last animal was carried he stood and rubbed his warm nose, and looked with satisfaction while his fine strong horses were attached to the woad that turned his threshing-machine.

A voice at his elbow, saying "good morning," caused him to look round abruptly, and almost to start at seeing Mrs. Bryan.

All right—he knew she would come, but he nervously looked for her so soon; and he reminded himself to be cautious not to hold her in any proposal about the land.

"I'm glad to see you're going to thresh so soon, Mr. Melbridge," she said, "for if you please I'll take you for seed for the six acres I have to sow; you were saying, you could spare some. I know it's a bit high this year, but as it's for really money may be you'll be at moderate as you can."

Never had keen, sharp Mr. Melbridge been so astonished. He had to look at the speaker a little while before he answered her; and she, understanding pretty well how he felt, quietly waited, and then before he said so much about the corn she asked if he had any of those good early potatoes for sale that he got the seed of last year—also had to buy, and might as well get them from him.

Finally he agreed with her about the seed, potatoes and all; and how it was that he was able to pay for everything directly it was received, Melbridge never knew.

This little history is literally true. It has been told simply as a record of that faithful care and love that saw about the land and about the path of all who truly trust in God as a Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, seeking and knowing His truth through the blessed Saviour, through whom alone we have forgiveness of sins, and are so more strangers and foreigners, but are of the household of God.

A thirty way life is to most, and they who live long are sometimes left on a good way alone; while all the company they started with are gone on before; but if they are left alone with God, whether it be in quiet and unforgotten places among the works of His hands, or amid the through and din of working city life, His eye shall see them—His hand shall find them out—His still small voice shall whisper to them peace.

Not again during the years that remained to her was Mrs. Bryan's faith so severely tried as to earthly things. Some persons become acquainted with her who were able in many ways to be of use to her, and they arranged so that by letting her land as a rent to some neighbours better able than she was to cultivate it (but Melbridge there remained a margin over and above what she herself paid, while the cottage, garden, and now a paddock were her own. Not the alone, for it was their delight to employ her with comforts and luxuries such as she had never used before. She lived

to nearly ninety years of age, with mind and memory clear to the end, and then quietly passed away to the presence of the God and Saviour she had so long loved and believed in.

Mrs. GREGG.

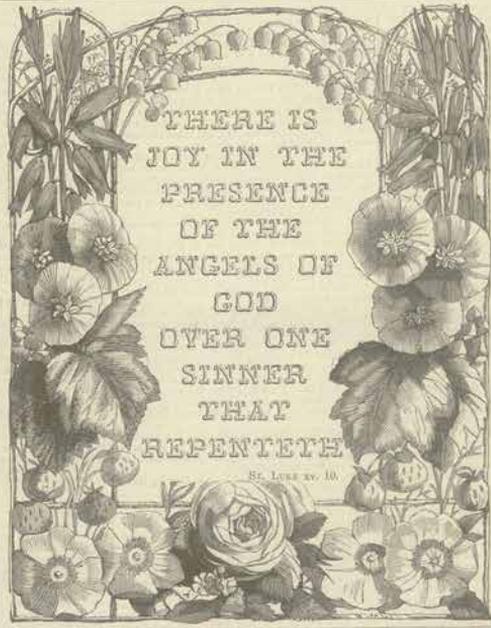
TOTAL ABSTINENCE AND LIFE ABSTINENCE.—Out of 847 claims on the Scottish Life Association, eighty-five deaths only were certified as being caused by heart disease. This is in a great measure attributable to the fact that above a third, or nearly half of those insured are total abstainers, as it is now generally acknowledged that even moderate habitual use of stimulants has a tendency to keep the heart in an unnatural state of excitement. Hence is another very significant testimony to the value of total abstinence in prolonging life.

Jethro had never to learn from Moses (v. 9). He had to hear the story of Pharaoh's hard heart and of God's strong hand. Moses could say to him, "We are a delivered people." *Delivered* means that we do not fall in brick-fields now, and the great thing which held us fast is dead! Now this is just a confession that should be possible for every real Christian. Once a slave, under the bondage of sin and Satan, and now "set free from sin," become the servant of God (Rom. vi. 16, 22). As Moses could tell Jethro that all Israel were a delivered people, so it is true that every Christian has had part in a great deliverance, for the Lord Jesus has "delivered" him "from the power of darkness" and "brought him into the glorious liberty" (Gal. i. 13, Heb. ii. 3). When Jethro heard all that God had done for Israel he "rejoiced."

A beautiful feature in the

character of Jethro comes before us here. Why was he so glad? Had he been himself receiving good things? No, he was not thinking of himself at all. He rejoiced for the sake of others. It is not very often that we meet with this spirit. How many are there whose only thought and only aim is to secure good things for themselves, and if this cannot be done they have no desire that good things should come to others. Selfishness indeed holed up very closely in the heart of man. It is like that little weed, the blue-weed, which we find so very difficult to get rid of from our garden. We pull it up again and again, only to find it appearing afresh, clinging fast, perhaps, around some favourite plant and pruning its strength and beauty. But there does not seem to have been much of this seed in Jethro's heart. He rejoiced in the joy of Israel. He rejoiced because God had done so much for them. We are reminded of the angels of God, and of what it is that causes them joy: "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." (Luk. xv. 10). The angels do not wait only for their own bright heaven; they sing over delivered souls. How do we feel when some one is brought to Christ? Is it a matter of rejoicing with us? Faith in God was the result of all that Jethro heard. Perhaps before this he had served some of Egypt's idols, but now that would be all past now. Would not Jethro be able to see such language as David's, "Answer me, O Lord" (Ps. lxxvii. 3). Then to show that Jethro meant to take this God to be his own God, he brings an offering, and there we see in his hands bread, a holy offering, and there we see "before God." We seem to be led on here to the blessed feast of the New Testament, one part of which is bread and wine, another food for delivered souls "before God." Is it a feast where we are never found?

On the following day Jethro was to see Moses at work (v. 13). Moses was the head of a vast multitude of people, six hundred thousand (Ex. xli. 37). Among that multitude were many who were cold and frozen around themselves. All these things were brought to Moses, who was then hard at work all day long. Jethro saw that the work was not hard for Moses—"I will surely say that thou art a prophet," he said (v. 17, 18). We again see here the smallness of this man. He did not say, "well, it



Thoughts on the Life of Moses.

"Jethro and Moses."

Exodus xxiii. 8 to end.

THE last matter brought before us, chiefly the mourning of the Moses of Moses' two sons, and also that of his own, which latter seems appeared especially important. As Moses was a shepherd man, so may it become true of each one of us, that we are drawn out of sin and out of the ways of this present evil world into the life of devoted Christians. After the happy meeting of Moses with Jethro, his wife and his sons,

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is Moses' own affair; if he chooses to do it, it is no concern of mine." No, he had true feeling for Moses—he had sympathy for him, and the meaning of the word sympathy is in fact *with another*. Moses had a heavy burden to bear, and Joshua desired to help him to bear it. St. Paul would teach us this lesson, "we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak" (Rom. xiv. 1, 2); and again, "bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. vi. 2). "The law of Christ." Ah! that we should find to be the secret of true sympathy. Look at Him. Whose burden did He carry? Was it His own? Ah! no. "Surely He hath borne our griefs,

Christ. We have, however, before us here a great contrast between Moses and Christ. Moses was only to listen to the "great matters" that concerned the people, but we may take all matters to Christ, great matters and small. Not only may we take them, but we are commissioned to do so, "in everything with prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. iv. 6). Do we see this great privilege? Do we feel Christ "everything," and ask Him for all we need? He will never be weary of listening to us, and He is able to help us to the utmost.

MARGARET EDDALE.

after setting a chair for her visitor, ruminated her work.

The caller was a woman of about thirty-five years, with a face that spoke of great suffering, in spite of the ready smile.

"It is nice to sit down," she observed, "for although the weather is almost perfect, I have found it rather trying to walk so far."

"I dare say you have, ma'am, you be so delicate. You looks as if a puff o' wind 'ud berry near blow ye away," she added, with a pitying look at the white face before her. "Can I get you anything, Miss Payne?"



"CAREFUL AND HELPFUL WITH HER BETTER IS IMPROVED." (See page 94).

He hath carried our sorrows." "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses" (Isa. liii. 4, and St. Matt. viii. 17). If we will only look at Jesus we shall learn to feel and care for the troubles of others. What we need is

"To have a heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize."

Jesus's advice to Moses was not only kind, it was wise. He proposed that Moses should appoint a certain number of chief men among the people who should be over hundreds, and fifties, and tens, who should be able to hear and to judge all smaller matters, and that the great matters only should come to Moses (v. 21, 22). The men appointed were to be such as had "the fear of God" in their heart, "men of truth, and hating covetousness," an admirable description of the character of men fit to be set over others. To this advice Moses agreed. It is not every one who will take good advice from others. The wise man writes, "Bow down thine ear to hear the words of the wise" (Prov. xxiii. 17). We need to "hate down" if we are to receive good advice, and that goes against nature. But if we will not sleep, we shall never be filled very high.

We have often to consider Moses as a type of

"As Thy Day."

PART I.



It was a pleasant spring morning. The song of the birds, and the beauty of the freshly robed trees and hedges were enough to awaken a thrill of response; to quicken the pulses of the strong and happy, and still forth a smile even from those in pain and sorrow.

But there was no semblance of a smile on old Christiana Witherlow's face as she was preparing potatoes for her rail-day meal. Her small room was so clean and tidy as it well could be, and so was she herself; but the wrinkled face was careworn and anxious.

Presently there came a knock at the door, and, setting her dish on the table, she rose to see who might be there.

"Good morning, Mrs. Witherlow," said a pleasant voice; "may I come in, please? I want to have a little talk with you, if you will allow me?"

"To be sure, ma'am; and pleased to see you." So saying she led the way into her kitchen, and

"I should like a little water, please." "Would 'st be like a cup of tea better? I'd soon pop the kettle on."

"Thanks, you are very kind, but water will do quite as well."

The cold water appeared to revive her a little, and for a few moments she chatted on indifferent subjects. Presently, when Mrs. Witherlow had turned to put the saucepan over the fire, she said abruptly—

"Do you know what has brought me here to-day?"

"No—how should I? But you know you is always welcome."

"I am come to ask you to find poor Lucy a home as well."

Mrs. Witherlow turned round sharply.

"Wh?" she said; although the words had been spoken very distinctly.

"I want you to give your daughter-in-law a home, Mrs. Witherlow."

"The old woman sat down in her chair, and looked steadily at her visitor.

"I'm surprised at you," she said at length. "Be I falling in with as I should make a home for people as chooses to loggar themselves?"

"You are in doubt," responded her companion,

meeting the three gloves without flinching," and Lucy, the widow of my dear old man, is distressed, and, unless you help her, there is no alternative but the workhouse."

There was a brief pause, then Mrs. Witherslow rejoined:

"It's like this; either Lucy or I shall have to go to the house. As you needn't open yer eyes so wide, ma'am, 'tis the truth, if I take her in and find her a home, as you say, why, the little bit o' money I've put by to keep me in my old age all have to go—and that's their's making before me but the house."

There was a ring of red patches in her eyes, and, as she ceased speaking, she put her hand to her eyes.

"But she's the only friend you have," said Miss Payne sadly.

"She's the only relation!" was the sharp rejoinder; "a friend she ain't nor ever have been. She was Charley's wife, you say? She was—marry's the pity."

"Mrs. Witherslow, you're very hard."

She gave a short, suppressed laugh.

"Hard! why, she never said her nothing but dressing, and getting ready. When my poor Charley had to be distended, did she put on her grand dresses and leave 'em to go off to a rendezvous at the Theatre? And didn't she put her long lady's make-up on her, and she called out—'Lucy? And yet you comes here and asks me to make her home! It ain't in human nature to do that."

"No, perhaps not; and yet," Charley's sufferings long and so kind, heavenly all things, heptah all things, unworldly all things."

Mrs. Witherslow sighed.

"Could you do it yourself, Miss Payne, if you was in my shoes?"

"I don't know, but I think I could—with Divine help."

"If she ain't beloved like a wife, could you do the poor old woman anything?" then I'd do it and welcome, without no asking, but she didn't. And if she'd been as her lady's an' careful about her own home, she'd have done it, 'tis human nature, without wanting her to say no."

She had a little better than that ever I did."

"That is all quite true no doubt," said Miss Payne.

"Then you're taking up your mind with her necessities to do with her, Mrs. Witherslow?"

"She never was a favourite of mine," the older woman went on; "she was the friend of my poor Charley ought not to be married. And she used to laugh and smile at me for being 'near and sorry' as she called it. I had her when my poor boy died as 'would come home to her, and she'd have."

"It has indeed," said Miss Payne, "but I must be going," she added, rising. "Shall you come to see your daughter-in-law today her funeral to the workhouse to-morrow?"

"To-morrow? It is some as near as that?"

"Yes; all the arrangements have been made, I believe; that I would not be content with it had appeared to you. Poor thing! I wish she hadn't gone to live."

Mrs. Witherslow was now with great diffidence knocking back her hair.

"You ain't home," said she, "what a horror! I've always had the house; and how I've pinched and scraped to put by a little to keep me down. I've been a wicker for near upon twenty years, and worked hard, and lived hard—'n' it do seem that you to think o' leave 'em!"

"I found it does not sympathize with your feelings, Mrs. Witherslow, privately. Perhaps I am as near the workhouse as you are."

"You!" was the astonished exclamation.

"Yes, I. We have nothing but my father's pension to depend upon, and that, of course, ceases at the death. We have never been able to lay by anything, and, with my delicate health, I often fear that the poor-house will be my only resource."

"Poor dear! And don't you despair!"

"Yes, I certainly shrink from the prospect; but if it be God's will, I know He will give me strength to bear it."

"I don't say 'Till you die, when I think of the house," responded Mrs. Witherslow. "I've been through many troubles of one sort and another."

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and have been ready to cry out alone now. 'All Thy sweat and Thy blood are gone over me.'

"Yet the Lord will not consume His loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life," quoted Miss Payne softly.

A light glow over Mrs. Witherslow's face, and she stammered—

"Ah! to be sure. He's ever-fulled me yet; and I'm a wretched creature to doubt His word. And Miss Payne, I'll have Lucy here, maybe 'tis to be done, and if so, 'twill be all for the best. If you'll wait and have a mouthful o' dinner with me, I'll go up with you presently, and see about having her moved."

PART II.

ANOTHER sweet spring morning had come, and found Mrs. Witherslow still in her cottage, although five years had passed since the day on which she fell sick so suddenly of the workhouse. And her husband was as busy, and she herself as trim as ever, while the Elches had none remaining, and were a more humble-like look. She was sitting by the window in a well-outfitted arm-chair, knitting a long, grey stocking. A smile lit up the wrinkled face as she worked, and her voice was pleasant when she addressed the other company of the room, a staid young woman, who was busy of the training book.

"Let's see, Lucy, ain't it your day for going to see poor Miss Payne?"

"Yes, mother; but it seems strange to talk of her now."

"Ah, but see how she's come down!"

"I would to you good, though, to see how bright and beautiful she is in the midst of it all!"

"Not thing," replied Mrs. Witherslow, taking off her spectacles, and rubbing them. "Wasn't ever I thought as I'd be just as well to see her in the nation?"

"To be sure, you never see her now, and I don't like to take you in—'twas on her last as a miracle as this, Lucy," she said, she thought that she'd have to have to see her, but it 'twas that she'd help her to bear it."

"I am sure I have need to be grateful to her, and Lucy with a merry nod. "She saved me from the house."

"Ah, she did, no go! If I hadn't been for her I couldn't be 'ere. And I remember and settled, and thought it hard times. You see, I had been kept for years to put enough to keep clear 'n' the parish, though 'twould be 'lone very near starvin' if I'd lived to be a month of a year, and I did grudge 'twas that little store."

"And every penny had to go," said Lucy, with an affectionate look at her mother-in-law. "That was a long, weary illness; and I didn't deserve that you should have done all for me you did do. However, mother, I hope as you'll never have to go the same way now, while I've got health and strength; and, please God, I'll have that for many a year yet."

"I hope as Lucy, for I ain't ever got over the shrinking."

As will be seen from this conversation, Mrs. Witherslow had proved the truth of the poet's words:

"The death of an ungodly man
Are big with mercy, and shall look
In blessings on your head."

She had given her daughter-in-law a refuge, had saved her, miraculously and unassumingly through the remainder of that long and severe illness, sparing an expense; and when she had recovered, Lucy had been able to begin upon her own household, and her boarders with a house and livelihood. So now, when her strength was failing, and the infirmities of old age creeping upon her, she would say all these and take things over, instead of serving. It was living, as she must otherwise have done. Ah, better did she everything else, Lucy had learned the highest lesson, in that they were travelling in hand to their heavenly home. Mrs. Witherslow was wont to speak to her neighbours of Lucy and herself as "Ruth and Naomi."

But upon Miss Payne the dread had fallen fast. For seven twelve months she had been an inmate of the parish workhouse, having found a hard battle with poverty for some weeks before time. It was indeed a terrible trial, for many whom she had classed amongst her friends, and a few whom she had loved were in, really, but failed her in the hour to their heavenly home. Mrs. Witherslow was wont to speak to her neighbours of Lucy and herself as "Ruth and Naomi."

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aged and enfeebled woman sent to her suffering sister in the infirmary.

"But she can't, however; she might be, were allowed her work to interfere with her visits there. She would gladly have had it, in her power to keep her fingers and feet as well as her head, and her feet. But Amy Payne refused to listen, saying with a smile that she was already heavily burdened, and it would be better to leave her."

Lately Lucy had been for weeks, but very cheerful and helpful with her sisters in widowhood. There was a perceptible change on nearly every visit. But she could not find her feet as well as her head, and she was for the gloom "entering into rest" which was drawing so near.

As Lucy had been, and she was surprisingly bright and happy, and had been made a messenger of peace to more than one sick-headed woman in the workhouse, she had, of course, no time to give much, from contact with some of them; every word, look, and gesture, giving scope for sensitive feelings and somewhat fanciful conclusions.

She had had, and she had often to counter this regardance, to see some old, and minister to their wants, and had that been made a blessing.

Lucy found her, on this bright spring day, in tedious suffering; but a smile illumined her face as she welcomed her, and asked after her old friend, Mrs. Witherslow.

"How are you, my dear friend, Lucy?"

"Oh, Miss Payne, can you bear the thought of dying here?"

"Yes," said she, "my soul can go to heaven as well from here as from any other place. The glad you are come, I want you to be near me the moment."

Lucy obeyed. Taking up the Bible, she found the passages she used after another as her friend found them, and although her own voice was hoarse, her feelings were so true, her face so pale, and her eyes so bright, that she was for the moment as if she were a young woman at the farther end of the ward, as Lucy was wont to be when she was in the workhouse.

"I think so," was the faltering reply.

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Lucy obeyed. Taking up the Bible, she found the passages she used after another as her friend found them, and although her own voice was hoarse, her feelings were so true, her face so pale, and her eyes so bright, that she was for the moment as if she were a young woman at the farther end of the ward, as Lucy was wont to be when she was in the workhouse.

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A Meditation on a Mummy.

OF a very attractive title, I fancy I leave you say. Doubtless, but I prefer to let the subject in, in many ways than one, very interesting, and all amidst subjects are very interesting.

But some few weeks past, two of the royal mummies in the museum of the British Museum, London, were discovered to be in a state of decay.

Professor Maspero, late Director-General of the antiquities of Egypt. This problem has raised a most careful report on the subject, and has led to plans for the preservation of the mummies, and the preservation of the royal mummies in the museum of the British Museum, London, were discovered to be in a state of decay.

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