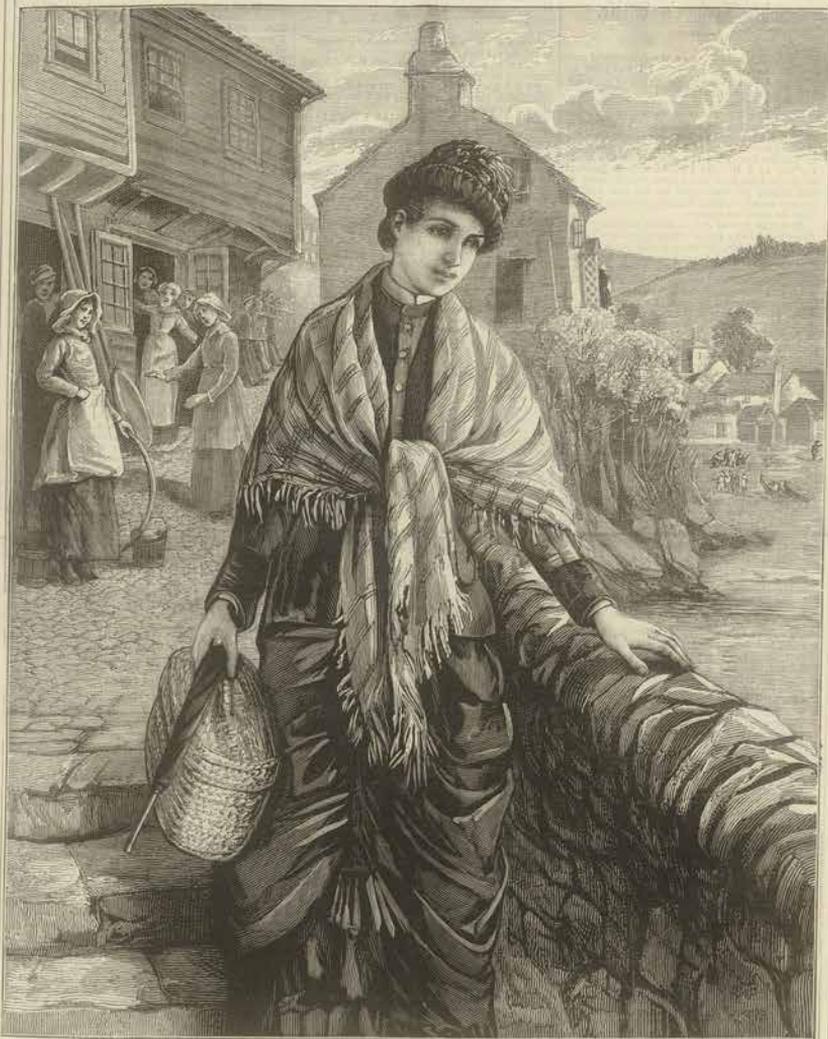


THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN.



Thoughts on the Life of St. Peter.

V.

St. Peter's Confession (St. John vi. 66-69; St. Matt. xvi. 12-30).

An important time had come in the life of our Lord—men were meeting in their minds as to who He was. There were varied opinions held. Some said He was John the Baptist, others

Elia, or one of the prophets. Our Lord insisted it was necessary that the belief of His disciples should be corrected. It is a vain

word to say it does not matter what we believe. What a man believes will shape his whole life.

For instance, to say, if a man believes there is little or no harm in any one sin, into what pitfalls may he be led?

And if a man has no belief, he is as a ship without an anchor, a rudder, drifting on to wreck and destruction.

The question of belief is therefore a most important one, and it was so when His followers

to a point in this matter that Christ put to them the question, "Whom say ye that I am?"

But there was another circumstance as to the time of Peter's confession. St. John tells us that after the long and beautiful discourse of our Lord given in chap. vi., "many of his disciples

creed back and walked no more with Him." What a great sorrow this must have been to our Lord. Can we enter into it at all?

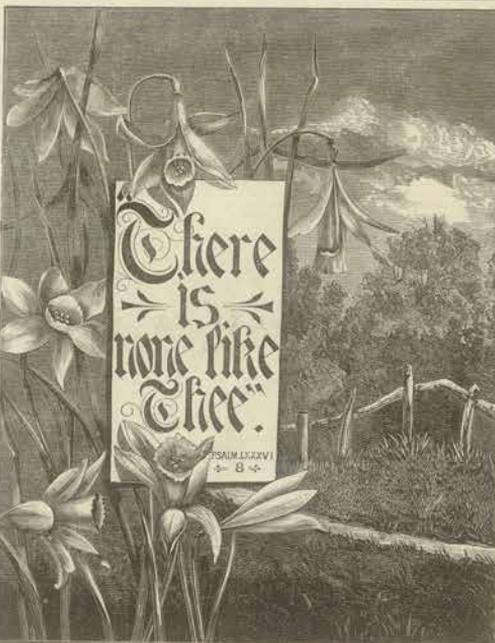
We are reminded of the Parable of the Sower. Some of the seed sown fell upon rocky ground, and it sprung up there at first as if it would

last, but afterwards, having no root, it withered away (St. Matt. xiii. 6, 21, 23).

There was a bright promise, but this was followed by sad disappointment. St. Paul knew that such disappointment was when he wrote, "Demas

hath forsaken me, having loved this present world" (2 Tim. iv. 10). In the history given in the sixth chapter of St. John, Christ's words had been too much too deep for some of His disciples. They could get a little way with Him, but they would not go all the way; they were not willing to be wholehearted for Christ, and they "went back." It was then that Christ appealed to the twelve: "Will ye also go away?" It was a test to which Christ put His disciples. How well they stand the test? It was the eager, warm-hearted Peter who answered, "I will; for the same man who wished to walk on the water that he might go to Jesus. He makes here a great confession, "Lord, I believe, thou art God." It is as if he would say, "There is none like Thee" (St. John vi. 12).

St. John does not give us the words of blessing that Christ pronounced upon his believing disciples. St. Matthew, however, gives us the striking



words spoken in the sixth chapter of St. John had been full of eternal life. Everlasting life was a blessed word for the ears of dying men. Christ the Lord was so great to Peter, because he looked to Him for ever through Him. Have we sought this life eternal yet? It has been said, "This world is good enough for me, if it would only last." Ah! but it will not last. How important is it, then, to seek life for evermore in Christ.

Peter's confession takes in much. He was able to say, "We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the son of the living God"—the Christ, the Anointed. As such Peter speaks of the Lord Jesus as man. Men were called, King, priest, prophets, were all anointed, and Christ as a King, a Priest, and a Prophet, was the anointed. But

passage that begins with the words, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona" (St. Matt. xvi. 17). Christ declares how it was that Peter had learnt all he knew: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." God had taught him. Such teaching is the only kind of teaching that will abide. Men and women may get up a good deal of knowledge on divine things, but if this is learnt from men only, it will never save them. It is not only the Jew who has a veil upon his heart (2 Cor. iii. 15, 16). It is the man with every unbelief in heart and every evil hand can take away that veil, and enable the soul to see and lay hold of the truth. The conclusion of the passage, as given in St. Matt. xvi. 18, is conclusively a difficult one. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." The name

Peter means a rock, and Peter's confession was a great foundation truth. It might be said to be a rock-life word. Upon this great fact spoken here by Peter, that Jesus is the Christ or God, the Church stands, and building, here, is safe for ever.

What is the Church? It is, we are told in our 10th Article, "a congregation of faithful men" (see also 1 Cor. xii. 12). Each one in this company each "member" of this "body," whether great or small, must stand on the Rock for safety. They shall it be true of each member and of the whole body that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. "The gates of hell" did not "prevail" against Christ. Satan could not overthrow Him. Angry men were bent and torn themselves against the Rock, but the Rock stands unmoved. Therefore every soul standing upon that Rock is in safety. The important question is whether we have as yet reached the place of safety. With the storm clouds gathering in the sky, the sailor puts on all sail that he may reach the harbor in good time. To run his little craft round the rocks of the storm-breakwater is his one thought—if he delay, he will be dashed to pieces at all. It is just such a resolve as that which is needed. God's great storm will come, how soon we know not. If we are not in the place then, it must "prevail against" us.

It was "fully pronounced" in St. Paul was 12 Tim. i. 12. Christ was honored by this testimony, and may we not also say that Christ's heart must have been comforted by such words of confidence and trust from the lips of St. Peter? St. John does not give us the words of blessing that Christ pronounced upon his believing disciples. St. Matthew, however, gives us the striking

he was also the "Son of God" member. This two-fold nature of our Lord of very important—Peter seemed hard to grasp it. He saw before him the man, yet he saw more. No man could have wrought the miracle of the draught of fishes—no man could have walked on the sea—Peter had seen this, he had seen the glory of the Son of God (St. John i. 12). And Peter was sure that what he believed was the truth. He was not "easily persuaded" as Agrippa was (Acts xvi. 18). He was "fully pronounced" in St. Paul was 12 Tim. i. 12. Christ was honored by this testimony, and may we not also say that Christ's heart must have been comforted by such words of confidence and trust from the lips of St. Peter? St. John does not give us the words of blessing that Christ pronounced upon his believing disciples. St. Matthew, however, gives us the striking

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Just Belle.

CHAPTER I.

JUST BELLE had never been very strong, and so long as her little nephew and niece, Bobby and Tiny, could remember, had looked white and tired, and lain very often on the bed, with their shins covered sola in the nursery.

She was as young, sweet, and pretty too. Tiny and Bobby were puzzled to see why her face was often so white, sad, and weary.

They were always as merry as two frisky larks, and loved the little home-made play they remembered—the "Cottage by the Sea," a dearly

Essexborough was a quaint old fishing town, built on a hill, beneath which was a valley, and then the sea. The wild, black moors flanked the sea, the old-fashioned streets and houses, the lofty cliffs, gave it a picturesque, old-world look. It was a little fair-haired, blue-eyed, four-year-old mite, a dear modest little maid, with soft winning ways. Bobby was seven, straight-lined, handsome, with the vivid colouring and flashing eyes of dark brown—a jolly, happy, dot little man, full of mischief and merriment.

Their father, whom Bobby—intensely "superior"—thereat—could remember, had been dead a year, and when he had gone, Aunt Belle had come to the cottage to live, with them. Mother, whom they in their childish fancy could only picture and speak of, as something very good and beautiful, who had passed away, whose name they spoke in a soft whisper—as we are wont to speak of our dear, but dead—but of whose sweet face they had no recollection, however dim—mother had lived here when a girl, she was now in heaven. Father and Aunt Belle had told them that, though her body lay at rest in the pretty calm-looking cemetery, with green flower-spit fields all around, and the blue sea near, singing a low sweet dirge to the dead.

The children knew the pleasant pretty cemetery well, and had no mortal fear of the phantoms; rather, they looked upon it as some sweet fair garden, with many many seeds sown in the earth; seeds which would presently be changed by God's hand, and bursting into radiant flowers, bloom for ever in a garden above.

And, truth to tell, this cemetery was no fearsome spot. Bright, gaily-coloured flowers blossomed around, the summer winds played softly, it seemed as if God bade His Angels of the elements to move gentle there. There were winding pretty walks, arches covered in ivy, and sweet tender blossoms blooming. Roses, carnations, silver bells, lilies and palms, grew lovingly together. There, the birds' songs were passing sweet, and a world of dead lay sleeping peacefully in nook of the blue smiling sea which in life mayhap had caused their doom.

On fair summer June days, when Aunt Belle felt strong enough, she used to go with them to take flowers to the grave the children loved so well, and speak to them in soft, sweet tones of their mother, who had been so good; of the sailors whose many graves they saw, the sailors, who going down to the sea in ships, and doing their business in great waters, had sunk to rise no more. They and Bobby led a very happy life, in their cottage house by the sea. Aunt Belle was so kind, "never cross" as they confidently expressed it.

Isabelle, too, or Aunt Belle, was but twenty-one when, at her dying brother's request, she came to guard and care for his children, to replace to them their dear mother. Aunt Belle had never known a parent's love;

her father and mother had died when she was almost a baby, and till she came of age, she had lived with her aunt, often visiting her only brother. On attaining her majority she received the small fortune left for her by her parents, and, almost immediately after, in answer to her dear brother's dying summons, she came, young as she was, to nurse and comfort him in his last hours, and to be a mother to the orphan children. Two years had passed, and she has faithfully fulfilled her duty. Very pleasant to her has been the guiding of these baby-minors, the tending of their soft childish fingers; very sweet, yet sweet in her eyes, in this responsibility. Unfortunately, she is not at all strong. Her mother's death was a great shock to her sensitive nature, after which she had

and gained through trouble, shone on the face and these very trials render it attractive.

And, may be, the cause of that look of "perfect peace" and content, of serene and heavenly calm, Aunt Belle's face, lies in her remembrance of, and earnest faith in the words of One who said: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world!"

CHAPTER II.

Nor always to us is it our duty so pleasant as to Aunt Belle was the training of the two pets, her dear brother's legacy. And oh! how deeply responsible, yet divine a charge, is the teaching and moulding of infant souls and minds of Christ's little ones! Sweetly and sensitively Aunt Belle performed her office. Here was a useful, well-lit life. Daily lessons of truth, wisdom, and culture—tiny seeds of religion—sown with the grand all-sufficing truths, simplified for baby-minds, sown with an nurturing, loving hand—words of goodness, meekness, gentleness, spoken even in a true, kind, loving spirit, two little souls to train, to care for, to make room for God, these were her night tasks. In doing these services, which easy seems small in the daily self-denial of her life, for she had given up much for her brother, she was very contented, and happy. Fully recognizing the nobility of her high task, though to some the duty may seem very humble, loving God and little children with all her heart, the completion of the work given her to do was a source of pure pleasure to her.

Often, had Bobby, who was of an inquiring, precocious turn of mind, said to her: "Bobby, Aunt Belle, why don't you get married, and have a big man with black whiskers to take care of you like mother had?"

Why? Oh! the question these boys, curious little people, pose as with the questions which often strike so near home.

Bobby little knows, and would understand it still less, that not so very long ago a bright handsome fellow, soft with black whiskers—an indispensable appendage in Bobby's eyes, inasmuch as father was the proud possessor of them—but with fair hair and mountainous blue eyes and a sunny smile, had spoken every word of love to Auntie, and asked her to be his own dear wife.

That story seems to Auntie as the thoughts of heaven, and she so often does—a beautiful dream which has faded away. Just then, she had received a letter from her father, written on his death-bed, saying: "Come to us at once, I and he as mother and father too, to the children. I have left money for them and you; come and live with them in the cottage. This is a solemn, head charge, my time is short—I want your promise, the sight of your face, before I go. Come!"



"THEir dear mother, who had been so good; of the sailors whose many graves they saw, the sailors, who going down to the sea in ships, and doing their business in great waters, had sunk to rise no more."

low nervous illness, which left her brain so weak and her whole frame so delicate, she is able to do very little walking, and must lie many hours a day on her sofa. Here is a sweet, speaking, more than pretty face; her hair is dark with tiny ripples in it, and gathered high up to the top of her head in a coil into a coronal; her complexion is very pale, her eyes, which are dark, innocent, and tender, have in their depths, a sweet, serene, significant gaze—in a word, there is thought and a calm, sweet gravity in her face.

Though so young, illness and sorrow have left here and there faint yet just perceptible lines of care on the front open forehead; a capacity for suffering, and a token of strength which has been given to bear that suffering, of peace perfected,

of the fire, towards the wide-downs which lay beyond Sussex Road. As I was coming home I saw I was near Mr. Cross's house, and I went into the shop and asked if I could see my aunt.

Mr. Cross was at the desk, and looked over his spectacles at me.

Yes, Mrs. Cross was at home, I might go through the shop. "Whose little maid is that?" he asked.

"It is Adam Lee's little girl," I said.

"Well, she would make a pair to our Edward, I declare. Here, she has nice sugar-candy and waffles!"

My uncle came down from his elevation, offered a paper full of candy to Cherry and a box of crystallized sweets, with a gay picture on the cover.

The child's eyes brightened, and as she was on a cross with her presents, I loudly told Mr. Cross the story of the fire. As I was doing so, Edward came in from school. He was, as I have said, a very fine, handsome boy, and I can fancy I see him now as he suddenly stood still.

"Who's that?" he said. "Who's that, Phil?"

"I am Cherry," I said in the dear little musical voice. "I am Cherry."

And then she laid out the box of sweets to Edward.

He took a liberal helping, giving, with his mouth full, "Father never gives me these sort of goodies. Ain't they good?"

"Yes, I'm going to take the rest to father. Father is—hurt—by—the—"

"Come, come, we ain't going to talk about the fire. Take the candy home to your father. I dare say he'll give you a bit of dinner."

"We found my aunt in a gracious mood, and she was the first to give me and I and Cherry waffles."

"It was not to be the last."

I suppose no one who looks back on a long life, can think of certain days and times, when improvement points to some turn in life's journey.

This day of the fire was one in mine. I came back it more to the knowledge of myself—or, I should say, a better knowledge of myself—and within me was a desire to go back to the Father's House, instead of staying on the banks, as Adam Lee said. So much so, that some weeks came before me at this time, and I felt as if I had never thought highly enough of him.

The doctor examined Adam carefully again, and again, and at last decided that there was some internal injury—that he might live—but would never be the same man again.

About a week after the fire he ordered a bed, and went down to the hospital, to have an interview with old Jonathan. "The poor old miser was dying, but held on tenaciously to life as to his gold. He insisted on it being brought to him, and Adam obtained leave to take it from the superintendent of police, in whose custody the box was placed.

Surely it was an awful lesson to any who could lay it to heart, this story of the miser's life of selfishness, closing in the ward of a hospital, and the ruling passion strong or stronger than death.

I went up to Mr. Watts, on the evening of Adam's visit, and he related what had passed. The exertion of going there had given him great pain, and he was weak and exhausted.

When little Cherry had been taken up to bed by her mother, Adam called me to come and sit near him. "Phil," he said, "this has been a hard day's work for me, and more tired than if I had done the work of a dozen men in the yard yonder. But, I want to tell you about it. I am Jonathan's history expurgated to some extent, but my story is so concise, you know you always thought Jonathan and your stepfather had some sort of connection.

Phil, they were uncle and nephew. I was his father's boy another name, and carried on his bad practices under it. It seems, his old uncle pecked up what he calls the crumbs, and by dint of starving and roasting the dealings of his own he scraped his big ear together. The gains are

big-gotten, and no blessing, I fancy, can go with them; but they are lawfully your stepfather's, if ever he turns up, and if not then your little brother's."

"After I had heard Jonathan's story, I committed with the chaplain, and the good house-wives, and the two gentlemen took it down in writing, and wemake the poor old man set his mark to it. He begged to keep the box under his pillow till he died, but then the money will be paid into the bank. The gentlemen will be trustees for it."

"I knelt down and prayed by the poor old creature, Phil, and I think he sobbed a bit; but I can't ever wish to see the like again. We must leave him to the mercy of God; and we know that He can, even at the death-hour, speak peace to the penitent sinner. And now, Phil, bego about my own affairs. I shall never get over this hurt—I shall never be the same man again. I have, thank God, saved a nice little sum—not enough to keep us all for long—but there is my clock, and while I am disabled, I shall have a payment from it, and when I am dead, Meg and my darling Cherry will have a widow and orphan's pension. It is a misfortune for us that Greystone is dead yet, and our good lady abhors it; but I shall get you to write to her, Phil, and tell her how it stands with us; and I wish you to look for it for a little place, where we can sit ourselves up—until I must leave them. But that will be in God's time—not mine—and I can wait."

He put out his hand to me, and I said,

"Will you let me come and live with you again? I get good wages at the shop. I have more than I want; you will let me come?"

"Phil, Adam said, very earnestly, "I think I hear him now—you know why we parted. That was a wise gulf set betwixt to them. Is it there still?"

"Oh," I said, "I want to get back to God—I want to love Him—but I sometimes feel as if there was a wall which I try and try to climb, but I can't."

"Phil, Adam said, "don't try. Go in by the door—the Lord Jesus will open it for you. You see with us men, and let it be true, as in old days, Phil, 'LITTLE AND GOOD!'"

(To be continued.)

Here in their peaceful village fane, the ferry children nest,

Highly prized granular bent his feeble, merrily stepping.

The steady dame, the honest squin, the rustic youth and maid,

With pleas'ure live in days of yore their simple homage paid.

Years rolled on years, with rapid stride, and wrought BAUMY a change.

To cluster' health thy oaken bosom, both face and fashion strange.

So flourish on, thou ancient pile, in thee the carmen hoards,

Be knitted by the heavenly fire, to choose the letter part;

In thee, the flowers of faith unfold, in thee are meet many a well,

And gentle Hope with golden rays, earth's tamped clouds dispel;

The Lights of Life, who once for man the lonely desert trod,

With glory glad thy hallowed fane, thou temple of our God.

ELIST.

CHARACTERS.—Some pictures appear best in one light, some in another; some most excite our admiration in strong clear lights; some touch our hearts in soft and shadowy dimness. And thus it is in characters. Some stand more boldly out in development, their noblest qualities strengthened, advanced, by the necessity which calls them forth—qualities which had slept, perhaps long corroded in the recess of propriety, whilst others who have delighted observers in their harmony with a sunny life, shrink into littleness when the storm drives away what had made their happiness.

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The Old Parish Church.

FLEXER be there, thou stately pile, with ancient

honours cheer.

The radiance of the "Morning Star" fill thee with

beauty glad.

Long may thine aisles resound loud the joyous

notes of praise.

That grateful hearts with willing lips in sweet

adoration raise.

With reverent throngs in coming years thy

portals will be trod.

To breathe the prayer, and hear the word, thou

temple of our God.

Thou relic of another age, what changes hast thou

seen.

How shone in summer's burning sun, and leaved

the winter snow.

Thy airy bells have gently pealed on many a

festal day.

Or rung the knell to sadly note a soul had passed

away.

A proudly hand, asleep in how, in slumbering

years thy walls.

White on their snow-dusted resting-place thy non-

chalaz shadows fall.

When first thy turrets reared its head, with high

impetuous hand.

Another crowd triumphant rally, this pleasant

place have seen.

Thou marked by many a gloomy scene of prison,

banish, and death.

Adorned with beams of light and truth, across the

passage fair.

Thy grey walls stood, when tyrant kings the

songster sang with peals.

When stern religious ruffians swept both church

and throne aside.

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