

"It pains me most deeply, Dr. Ronnelle, to hear these words from you, for, much as I honour and respect you, I can never be your wife."

The doctor looked at her for a moment almost blankly. He could not believe her capable of coquetry, yet he was confident he had read her love aright. No, she was not trifling with him; he could see that in her mournful eyes, yet those same eyes revealed more than she intended they should, for he said quickly,

"Oh, Florence, Florence, why this cruel answer? You love me; you cannot say you do not."

Florence did not attempt to answer this last statement—how could she?—but as soon as she was quite sure she could trust her voice again, she said,

"Why prolong this interview, which can bring but pain to us both? My answer is final; I cannot change it."

Dr. Ronnelle turned from before her, and with hasty impatient steps paced the length of the bower, his hands clasped behind him, his head bent low upon his breast. He was a man who never did anything by halves. The love he had offered to Florence was not a mere fancy, a passing whim; it was the undivided heart's devotion—a devotion which had seemed of late to monopolize every other feeling, the disappointment of which now wrought upon this strong man, making him take those long strides up and down in such a sorrow-stricken way.

Florence heard that walk—she could not bear to look upon it—and oh, how her heart pleaded for him! Again and again his noble life passed in mental review before her, but sadly she sighed as the path of duty pointed in a way so directly opposed to that which her own heart would have marked out for her feet to tread.

Now, should she tell him the reason of her determination? She felt that should he ask it again she could only act the candid part by doing so.

Suddenly he paused in his march:—

"Miss Walton, I have ever found you frank and truthful, therefore I must accept your answer as final. But one question I have asked—I would ask again: Why this answer? You are not wholly indifferent to my love?"

Her voice trembled violently as she spoke, but without hesitation she told him truthfully the reason he had asked. He listened amazed. Was this religion which he had almost taught himself to believe was so weak that, after all, mayhap, it existed only in name—was this the influence which had induced her to thus sacrifice her heart to a sense of duty? But, suddenly remembering his own as well as her suffering, he resumed his agitated walk as he exclaimed excitedly,

"Is this what your Christianity teaches you—to lightly esteem the heart's holiest affections, to trample under foot a devotion which you may not crush? You have wished that I should become what you call a Christian; and I have sometimes almost wished it myself. But think you I can ever love a God in obedience to whose command I must stand dumbly by and see my brightest hopes in life perish? He took my mother and my idolized sister from me when I was but a child; later he took my father; and now he takes you. Oh, Florence! my Florence!"—and he threw himself upon his knees before her—"I cannot think you realize what you are doing. I am told of 'the joys of religion,' yet I see nothing but constraint; I am told of the 'love of Christ,' yet I see it exercised only in rending the hearts of those who are his followers. If you really would lead me to see any beauty, anything desirable, in your religion, show me a brighter side than this. Recall your answer, and mayhap in following you I may be led to your belief."

Poor Florence burst into tears. The temptation was a strong one; she dared not trust her voice to speak.

Her tears brought the doctor back to a sense of what he had done:

"Forgive me. I should not have caused you this pain. I have no right thus to speak when you have told me your answer is irrevocable. Can you forgive me?"

Florence shook her head, and in silence Dr. Ronnelle escorted her to the house. As he parted with her there he said,

"But remember, Miss Walton, if ever the time comes that you change your

mind in regard to this duty, I will know it at once. You will tell me?"

"Do not hope, Dr. Donselle," was all she could say.

For a time it almost seemed to Florence as if the doctor's words were true—as if to be a Christian was to be constantly under constraint—that one blessing after another must be taken from her, and she must not even murmur.

She was sitting by the window in her own room, feeling almost alone, when a light tap at the door aroused her. She looked at her watch; it was the hour she usually devoted on Saturday afternoon to the instruction of Lottie, who had not only made tolerably rapid advancement in reading, writing, and spelling, but, sitting at the feet of her youthful teacher, she had listened to the story of Christ's life and death until her young heart had been won to him in the days of its childhood—until she who had been found in almost pagan darkness, though in the midst of a so-called Christian family, had now developed into a trusting, happy child of God.

Florence said "Come in" to the tap wearily, almost impatiently, with the determination half formed to send her pupil away this afternoon. How should she know that she whom she had taught had come to be her teacher—that the bread she had cast upon the waters had returned to her after these many days to refresh her weary soul?

Lottie came softly to her side:

"Are you sick, Miss Walton?"

"No, dear, only a headache."

"Won't you let me bathe it for you? I know that will help it."

Without waiting for consent, Lottie commenced arranging pillows on the lounge, and then came toward her again:

"Now, please, Miss Walton, I'm ready."

Florence meekly obeyed, almost staggering to the couch, as much from the pain in her heart as that in her head.

How sweet it was to lie passively and feel those cool little fingers stroking her throbbing temples! and how soft love made the touch of those same hands! Under their influence Florence grew calmer.

The London May Meetings

comprises the Anniversaries of the Missionary Societies of the various denominations as well as a number of other Societies having a general character, and in which all denominations join. A very brief notice of a few may be of interest to many readers.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society anniversary meeting was in Exeter Hall, on Monday evening, the 3rd inst. This year there had been an excess of expenditure of £11,000 over last year, and a diminution of receipts of £9,000. In spite of £25,000 from the Thanksgiving Fund, the Committee had to report a debt of £17,000. The sensation of the morning meeting was a speech from a young converted Zulu, who has come to England for study.

The British and foreign sailors' society's meeting was held at the Mansion House on the 3rd inst. From statements made, we learn that in January last the tonnage of the British Empire had doubled within the last twenty years; that it is now increased to 16,000,000, while that of the rest of the world is but 11,500,000 tons. Thus 58 per cent. of the world's tonnage is owned by British gold. The income of this Society is £4,614.

At the National Temperance League there was the attendance of two hundred soldiers from London garrisons, all abstainers.

The British and Foreign Bible Society's annual meeting was held in Exeter Hall, May 5. The ordinary income was more than one hundred and ten thousand pounds, but the Society had by special funds really received and expended more than two hundred thousand pounds. The total issues of the society from its commencement now amounted to 88,168,419 copies.

The London city mission held its forty-fifth anniversary in Exeter Hall, Thursday morning, May 6, Sir W. Muir in the chair. The number of missionaries is 447. There is a decrease in the income of nearly £5,000. Sir Thomas Chambers, Q. C., M. P., spoke first, saying that much as he liked to see clergymen of all denominations on the platform, he was not inclined to let them monopolize it, as the work quite as much belonged to the laymen. As a judge, he

was thankful to say that the statistics of crime in London were not discouraging, and that was due to the operations of such societies as the City Mission.

The Sunday School Union meeting in Exeter Hall was crowded in every part on Thursday evening, May 6. There was in connection with the society 198 local unions; the total number was 4,488 schools, 168,149 teachers, and 1,012,365 scholars. Over twelve hundred pounds have been received for the Raikes Memorial.

The Church Missionary Society's annual meetings were held on Tuesday, May 4, the report showed an expenditure of two hundred thousand pounds.

The Christian evidence society's meeting was held on Friday, at 142 Harley street, Bishop Perry presiding. The chairman spoke of the importance of ensuring the certainty of scientific conjectures before attempting to reconcile Scripture with science. A considerable amount of work has been carried on during the past winter months.

The religious Tract Society met at Exeter Hall, which was filled to overflowing. The profits from the trade department had been \$22,000. Over £14,000 of this is handed over to the fund for benevolent purposes.

At the London Society's meeting for promoting Christianity among the Jews the Earl of Shaftesbury, now eighty years of age, presided in Exeter Hall on Friday evening, 7th inst. The income last year was £35,000. During the proceedings some hymns were sung by a number of Hebrew children on the platform.

The British and Foreign school society's 75th annual meeting was held in the Lecture Hall, Borough-road. From the report it appeared that there were 386 students in training; ditto in the Kindergarten, 17.

British Society for the Propagation of the gospel among the Jews. The 37th annual meeting was held on Tuesday, 11th inst., in Neumeier Hall, Bloomsbury. The Society seeks by the circulation of the Bible, and by well instructed missionaries, to convert Jews in various parts of the world. One of the society's plans is to establish schools for Jewish and other children.

Pastoral Visiting.

Dr. Armitage one of the prominent Baptist ministers of New York, at a recent meeting of the Baptist ministers of that city gave the following expression, respecting the propriety of ministers constantly visiting their people:

He said that there was a false clamor for this sort of pastoral visitation on the part of parishioners, and that too often it degenerated into the indulgence of ingrained laziness and the propensity to gossip. Clergymen who idled away their time in idle gossip at the houses or business places of their parishioners were sacrificing the most precious opportunities. The less a minister made it his business to study up the family scandals and business difficulties of his people the better. In such matters he should have a deaf ear and a tongue dumb to the root. As for that pastor who deliberately and for no other purpose than the enjoyment of gossip and tittle-tattle made a business of leaving his Bible and going up and down and making his ear the common sewer of all the floating scandal of his parish, for such a man he could feel nothing but righteous indignation and contempt. The notion that our clergymen must be made confessors for all the peccadilloes and frailties of one or both sexes, even to a limited extent could not but be false and pernicious. A lawyer, a merchant, or a tradesman had just as much call to be made the repository of this sort of confidence as ministers. "In nine cases out of ten," added Dr. Armitage, with emphasis, "the shame and scandal which have lain at the doors of ministers of late years have had their origin in this system of pastoral visitation. He denounced in vigorous language the conduct of 'those lounging shepherds,' whose gossipings, and confidences, and familiarities, indulged in under the cloak afforded by the sanctity of the pastoral relation, too often ended in downright immorality. A minister was but a man, and as such had a man's weakness; and in what situation was he more likely to exhibit them than in intercourse of this kind? The sooner that Churches and pastors hustled this

sort of pastoral visitation out of existence the better it would be for the honor of the ministry. 'When we make friendly calls,' added the doctor, 'let us call them friendly calls,' and not something which they are not. The true sort of pastoral calls that the conscientious pastor should aim to make were to the old or to the infirm, who could not go to church, or to those in deep trouble, and, therefore, in special need of consolation. These were

vastly different from that degrading system of regulated laziness—of going from house to house to listen to family gossip, the tattle of the neighborhood, etc. All true pastoral influence took its rise in the overshadowing powers of pastoral preaching, and it was to this, and not to mere rounds of social visits, that the conscientious and honorable minister should look for the maintenance of his influence. The speaker also argued against the practice on the ground that it took up too much of the pastor's time and placed him practically at the beck and call of each one of his congregation.

"Because he is a minister he has not therefore, forgone all the rights of his manhood; you have no right to deprive him of rest or social enjoyment or the society of friends."

A Wonderful Diver.

Mr. Fleuss, a wonderful diver, has been exhibiting at the Westminster Aquarium. He can stay under water for five hours without an air tube or any other communication with the surface; and this absence of incumbrance gives him much greater freedom than other divers possess. He can, for instance, lie down and bend his body in any position without fear of being lifted or floated up, and without suffering from the obstruction of the long pipe which usually connects the head of a diver with a boat above. In short, he possesses the principal advantage which distinguishes an animal from a plant; he moves independently instead of being rooted to one spot. Foreshortened in the water, he presents a curious appearance, with great goggle eyes in his burrished helmet, a strong water-tight dress and water-boots. The spectators amuse themselves by throwing pence for him to pick up, or by writing messages to him on card-board, which he reads and, answers on card-board, always under water. He sharpens his pencil under water, gives and receives signals with a cord, and is to experiment on the submarine use of the telephone. At Ryde he walked for a quarter of a mile under the sea; at Brighton he went down in five fathoms by the chain pier in rough weather. If he could eat under water, Mr. Fleuss says, he could stay for a longer period than the five hours which he gives as the ordinary limit. In a short lecture on his apparatus which Mr. Fleuss gave in the evening immediately on returning to the upper air, he stated that his method is no secret, that it is patented, and that the specifications are accordingly published. In every draught of breath we draw we take in a certain amount of oxygen with four times as much nitrogen. A little of the oxygen becomes fixed in the form of carbonic acid, and the air thus deteriorated becomes unfit to breathe. If, however, the place of the missing oxygen is taken by a fresh supply, the mixture becomes again fit for breathing. According to Mr. Fleuss, he takes down compressed oxygen to supply the place of that which is breathed; in other words, he has invented a set of anti-lungs, which perform a function precisely the reverse of that of the lungs proper. This was confessedly a rough, popular, hasty, and generalized explanation. He carries with him his own supply of oxygen in a compressed form, and has thus been enabled to breathe in an atmosphere in which there is no appreciable quantity of air at all. He states that he has gone through fire-damp (carburetted hydrogen), choke-damp (carbonic acid), and could exist in the charged receiver of a gas factory. In the great helmet and in the hollows of his armour there is room for a certain quantity of air, and this is kept fresh and constantly renewed by a stream of oxygen, the pressure of which he regulates by a tap at will. To refresh himself he increases the flow of oxygen, and when he requires no stimulus diminishes it.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

From Brookfield, Colchester Co.

Dear Editor,—

Knowing how much the perusal of the religious items which you publish from time to time are enjoyed by many, I would furnish you with a little news from Stewiacke and Brookfield, Colchester Co., which I believe will interest not a few of your readers.

We rejoice to know that there is an advance all along our lines. Some have been planting and others watering, and God has given an increase. Not in a revival wave, but by ones and by twos they have been coming through all the year. To God we cheerfully ascribe all the praise.

At Upper Stewiacke, 11 by baptism, and 1 by letter. At Brookfield, 4 by baptism, 8 by letter, one by restoration, and 10 awaiting the baptism of June 13th, by Rev. Dr. Clay. Total number 35. Others are expected soon.

While we rejoice our accessions to our numbers during both years of those, who, so far have not in a single instance appeared to have "made a profession without possession," we are also called upon to mourn, for we have just lost by death a friend and brother of whom I must now speak.

The Rev. James Meadows, the Christian "soldier," Mason, Orangeman, Son of Temperance, and Minister of Christ, has been suddenly called away from us. He immersed 10 persons for the writer on the 11th of April, and they were the last he ever led down into the baptismal waters. The discourses which he delivered on that occasion were also, I am told, his last. One text employed was (Phil. i. 21), "For me to live is Christ," no remarks being made upon the latter part of the verse, "To die is gain." Of all who looked upon the robust, impassioned, and fluent speaker that day there was not one who thought he was then delivering his last message. How true it is that 'in the midst of life we are in death'!

Many of your readers are already familiar with the sad circumstances of Brother Meadows' death. On the 21st inst., he was accidentally struck with an ax in the abdomen which caused, it is supposed, a rupture of the bowels. He lingered in great suffering for about 38 hours, and then passed away without a struggle. A man of God fell that day in our midst, but "He died at his post," he fell in the harness.

Bro. Meadows differed somewhat in his theological opinions from some of his brethren, but he was heartily with the denomination, in the great, cardinal doctrines of the New Testament. His Redeemer was intensely loved by him,—so intensely, in fact, that he must needs see his Master's very name in almost every passage selected as the foundation of a sermon. It was not enough for him to be able to "find a way to Christ," from his text, but he must start with Christ in his text. The gracious and adorable name must be pronounced before a single sentence of his discourse is uttered. In preaching the funeral sermon, Rev. Mr. Goucher chose the 38 and 39 verses of the 8th chapter of Romans as his text, and a most appropriate text it was for no one ever held more tenaciously to the doctrine, "It is not my hold of Christ, but Christ's hold of me," which guarantees my salvation.

The deceased was never distressed or harassed with "doubts and fears." Well do I remember with what fervor he once addressed to me the following words, "Not sure of my interest in Christ! Why, I could not, would not dare, to shut my eyes at night with the stupendous question unsettled! I never doubt. If a doubt crosses my mind, I drop everything, no matter what I am doing or where I am, and carry that doubt at once to Jesus in prayer. How can a Christian live in fear and uncertainty!"

As our Brother lived, so he died. They broke the news of his danger to him carefully, but he only immediately and calmly answered, "as far as I am personally concerned, all is well."—Although stricken down in the bloom of health, and at the early age of 41, deaths blow could not even startle him. Yes, a man of God has fallen, and may the Lord graciously sustain and comfort the afflicted wife and children and friends. Let us stay our tears, for the