

majority of those who adopt law as a profession. He was a clear-headed vigorous-minded man, whose powers of concentration and grasp would have ensured success, not only complete but brilliant, if that unfortunate and unconquerable diffidence had not deprived him of fluent speech. He might have risen to the greatest heights of the profession, said his legal friends, if only he had been able to speak for five minutes without breaking down from sheer nervousness. He was a sound lawyer, they said, but would never take the position his talents entitled him to.

He had no private fortune, and the livelihood he earned in England did not satisfy him; so he cast about for an opening in the East, and Mr. Pringle's offer to share his practice with him, on advantageous terms, came at the proper time. He sold off his furniture, packed up his library and clothes, bade his only living relative farewell, and took passage for India, feeling certain that a man of his temperament would have a better chance of success in courts where the presiding judge and a few European officials replaced the crowded halls of justice, in which he could not accustom himself to argue freely at home. He was popular among men. Those who knew him well were wont to say that Dick Warren was one of the few people whose acquaintance repaid cultivation; for life was too short to spend much time in getting at deep men generally.

He had mixed but little in ladies' society, for the overweening modesty, which was his most patent characteristic, did not conduce to his popularity among women. He was well known by report as a clever man, and laughter-loving girls who took it for granted that he must of necessity be "amusing," that being synonymous in their vocabulary with cleverness, prepared disappointment for themselves when they sought to have him introduced. Dick Warren's talents were not of a superficial order, and did little to recommend him to the favourable notice of those who base their judgment more on manner than character. He was certainly very awkward in a drawing-room. He never knew what to do with his hat, and those big hands of his always seemed to be in his way. He was not ornamental, nor, in that sphere at all events, useful; so it came about that invitations to at homes and dances grew gradually fewer and farther between. His name disappeared mysteriously from ladies' "lists," and the owner from their ken. And Dick Warren smiled at it, put on his old coat and slippers, lit his pipe, buried himself in his book, and was happy. For several years prior to his departure for India he had given up most forms of gaiety, and sought congenial associates among men and women of his own cast of mind.

Small wonder, then, that Mrs. Macdonald's breezy affability made his lack of worldly ready-wittedness appear in the strongest light, and gave Meerut society the false keynote to his real character at the outset. Like every other new arrival, he paid the usual round of formal calls upon the residents, and though he was everywhere received with Anglo-Indian cordiality and kindness, the knowledge that his first interview with the Collector's wife was common property soon came home to him, and did nothing to enhance the very slight avidity with which he carried out the task.

"Have you seen Mrs. Macdonald yet?" his hostess would ask, in accents which betrayed that she knew he had, and wanted to hear what he thought of her.

"I met her at Dr. Harrison's the other day," he would reply, with a shudder at the recollection.

"She is a little peculiar in her manner, as you no doubt discovered, Mr. Warren," was the remark which, in slightly varying phraseology, invariably followed his admission. And when, with his natural caution, he declined to be "drawn" on the subject, he was consoled by the information that that was merely her way, and that she treated everyone alike. Then Dick Warren would say good-bye, climb into his gharry, and drive away to the next house, weighed down by the thought that he had initiated his

appearance in Meerut by making a fool of himself, and that everybody knew it.

"Kate, my dear," said the Doctor, one morning, "you must fix an evening for Warren to come and dine with us, and ask a few people to meet him."

"It will be rather an undertaking, papa; he is fearfully heavy and silent."

"That can't be helped, child. I am anxious to show him attention on his father's account, and I am much mistaken, moreover, if that young man is so stupid as he is thought. Pringle has a very high opinion of him, and I like what little I've seen of him myself."

"He has never thought it necessary to come over to our rooms of an evening at the club," said Mrs. Brent resentfully. "I have never even spoken to the man yet. And, considering that we know his belongings, I think it shows a want of manner on his part."

"Well, well, Agnes, you will be able to judge him for yourself ere long. Suppose you make up a little party for Friday week, Kate."

Miss Harrison accepted the suggestion as a command, and when breakfast was over adjourned with her aunt to decide upon the people to be asked. It was of a difficult matter to make up the party, inasmuch as it was to be a somewhat formal affair, whose object was to introduce Mr. Warren to Meerut society. Mrs. Macdonald, the Strachans, the Tenterdales, the Pringles, and Major Brooks, the Brigade Major, completed the list; and Kate felt that if she could only arrange to keep the "burra mem-sahib" away from Mr. Warren she would be able to pull through the dinner somehow in spite of his terrible heaviness.

She was a good hostess, and when she found him committed to her care for the meal devoted herself gracefully to the task of entertaining him. She tried him upon light topics first, but found that his tastes were not of a frivolous order; he did not dance, could not play or sing, and had never been in the saddle since he was a boy. He intended to try and get some big game shooting if he could manage it, and had Kate been able to talk "shikar" with him she thought he would have come out a little, but she knew nothing of such matters and had to fall back upon her favourite books. Here she found common ground with him at last; he had read everything she had read, everything she could suggest, and a vast number of books she had never heard of. At the beginning of the meal she had done all the talking, but long before it was half over she was listening attentively to him; he forgot his shyness and did not notice that their conversation was hearkened to by all the guests at their end of the table. Kate had referred to her last favourite, "The Story of an African Farm," and he was discussing the marvellous truth of Lyndall's speech upon women's place in the world. His sympathies were all with her, and he dwelt upon the difficulties and temptations by which women, condemned by social custom to pretty idleness were surrounded, with force and point. How few succumbed to those temptations proved the greater strength of their moral nature as compared to man's. The far greater and better influence women might wield were their restraints relaxed. He spoke with a vigour and freedom which astonished her, and commanded Kate's respect. This man was not the dull clown he had appeared to be, far from it. There was mental power here, and a mind of no ordinary class; she drank in his words as he spoke, and promised herself many long talks with Mr. Warren in the future. He was a different stamp to the men she was used to meeting; he drew her out of herself, and brought out in speech what had hitherto been dormant thought. She felt new ideas taking birth in her mind, and so absorbed was she in the man's conversation that her aunt had to send a servant round to remind her that it was time for her to give the signal for the ladies to leave the table. She gave it unwillingly, and rose from her seat, with an opinion of Richard Warren which was very different to that she had held when she sat down.

(To be continued.)

THE CHURCH AND THE RIVER.

It was an interesting sight we witnessed from the Thames embankment a month or two ago, when the Bishop of London dedicated to the service of God the new steam launch that had been acquired for the work of the Thames Church Mission. The weather, to quote a hackneyed phrase, was

very inclement—that is to say, the rain was coming down in torrents—and as the proceedings were to take place in the open air the prospect was not encouraging. But Dr. Temple is not the man to be easily turned from the path of duty. He donned his robes in a pier shelter, and proceeded

on board the launch, closely followed by his footman, who held over his lordship a large carriage umbrella. Surrounding the Bishop, at the stern of the vessel, were a number of clergy in surplices, while the congregation was made up of friends and supporters of the Thames Church Mission; the ladies, amongst whom was Mrs. Temple, rivalling the gentlemen in their courage to face the storm on the open deck. A small crowd looked on from the Embankment and Waterloo Bridge in wondering astonishment at the strange spectacle.

It may well have been that the unpropitious weather was in some degree symbolical of the difficulties the agents of the Thames Church Mission have sometimes to encounter in their daily visitation of the ships. The attitude of the sailors, however, towards the Mission is very different now to what it once was. It is not so very long since that the missionaries were rebuffed by the men, often with rudeness, and sometimes with violence. This very rarely happens now. The difficulties are of another character. In the course of their work the missionaries come across all sorts and conditions of men; some openly profess infidelity, others are indifferent and prefer a life of sin; others, again are gospel-hardened—that is to say, they have heard the “good news” so often and rejected it that it falls now as seed upon stony ground. These three classes of men present difficult problems, but it is encouraging to know that they are in many cases being satisfactorily solved.

The district, or parish, as it is sometimes called, of the Mission extends from Richmond to the Nore, a distance of more than 70 miles, and it is computed that there are afloat within this area somewhere about 300,000 souls. The peculiar circumstances of these men is worth more than a passing thought. In far too many instances they are by the very nature of their calling cut off from all the means of grace. They have no church and no ministry, and unless they can be reached when they are in port there is little reason to suppose that they will ever come under good influences. No one can well deny that in the past these men were shamefully neglected; they felt, as one “old salt” put it to the writer a short time ago, that no one cared for them. But this reproach has happily been rolled away, and there is to-day probably more work being done for the sailor by religious agencies than for many other class of men similarly situated.

It will be useful to enquire what is being done in the Port of London. The Thames Church Mission employs three chaplains and twenty lay agents, a number far too small to do anything like all the work that is ready to their hands. But this is not their fault, nor does the blame rest with the authorities of the Mission. The need for an extension of the work is abundantly recognised, and it is for those who feel that the poor sailor should have some share in the spiritual privileges that they enjoy to supply the requisite means. It must be remembered that the Mission has not one halfpenny of endowment; it is entirely dependent on voluntary contributions. Perhaps some day an opportunity will open for the Church in her corporate capacity to do something to supply the

needs of the seafaring population; until then, individual members of the Church whose hearts are stirred must do the work. But small though the staff be, the Thames Church Mission can show a good record. The statistics for 1888 are not, we understand, available for public use; we hear, however, that they will show an increase in almost every department of labour over the previous year. Here are some of the figures for 1887: 79,059 visits to individuals, 16,326 visits to barges, 19,839 visits to ships and steamers, and 2,385 visits to foreign vessels; 538,260 English and 18,452 foreign tracts distributed, also 1,277 English and 2,813 foreign “portions” of Scripture and 17,573 copies of the New Testament; 641 Bibles and 5,845 New Testaments in English and 105 Bibles and 104 New Testaments in foreign languages sold; 450 Prayer-books either sold or given away; 603 total abstinence pledges taken; library bags placed on 269 additional ships, and last, but by no means least, 5,065 services held with an aggregate attendance of 130,727 persons.

The full spiritual result of all this external labour will never be known on this side of eternity, but the Mission is not without strong evidence, even now, that its labours are, by the blessing of God, having an appreciable effect upon the lives of the men amongst whom it labours. “If the ladies and gentlemen who send you on the river,” recently remarked an inspector of the Thames Police to the missionary who works amongst the bargemen, “only knew the difference in our sailors, fishermen, and bargemen since I joined the force 15 years ago they would hardly credit it. They could never believe what a different class of men we have now, and do you know what I believe has led to this change for the better? The Thames Church Mission!” Equally striking testimony on the same point has been borne by the Bishop of Bedford, than whom there is hardly a keener judge of men and things. “I have been long enough in the East-end,” he said lately, “to see some proof of the good work of this society and other kindred institutions. . . . Through their instrumentality seamen have often become more sober, more thrifty, and now, I believe, at the same time more godly.” It would be impossible to go afloat in any district of the river with any one of the agents of the Thames Church Mission without coming across many a bright and pious Christian on board ship. The conduct of some of the men at the service the missionary generally tries to hold in the foc’sle during dinner hour is very encouraging. They are reverent, earnest, and devout, and testify in no uncertain terms to the influence for good the work of the Mission has had upon them.

But, as we pointed out above, although there may be, and undoubtedly is, much to encourage, there is still more to depress. Where we find one Christian, there are sometimes as many as half-a-dozen who are living in careless indifference of, if not in open hostility to, religious things. It is in order that the Mission may continue its beneficent labours amongst these, as well as seek to enlarge the border of its operations, that the committee appeal to their fellow-Churchmen for that sympathy and support which Churchmen are never really backward in extending to a good cause. H. C. H.

AMONG SOLDIERS' CHILDREN.

THE Duchess of Albany visited Hampstead on the 18th, to distribute prizes to the pupils of the Soldiers' Daughters' School, an institution which was founded thirty-four years ago, in great part through the exertions of the late General Boileau, and has during that time trained 1,041 girls for domestic service or teaching. The school does not let the girls go wholly out of sight when their education is finished; they can come back when out of work, and find a home there. At present, there are 164 girls in the school, and during the last year there has been only one death among them (from rapid consumption), and no other serious illness. It is to be regretted that there are between twenty and thirty beds vacant for a lack of funds, though the school is on the

whole well supported in military circles, both by individuals and regiments.

The ceremony took place in a marquee in the pleasant and spacious garden behind the school, in front of which the girls were ranged. They presented quite a military appearance in their red frocks and hats trimmed with royal blue; and they had enough of manly spirit to welcome Her Royal Highness with three ringing treble cheers. Very well trained are they, too, for they received their prizes with a deep courtesy, and backed out of the royal presence as gracefully as any lady could do at Buckingham Palace. Two very touching points there were in the day's proceedings. One was the singing of the “Soldier's