

"But it is yours, doctor, not mine," she said, with a gasp, as the reality dawned on her. "The picture was yours, not ours. I paid your fee with it."

"Do you think old Zacharias would rob the fatherless and the motherless. Nay, You shall pay the old doctor's fee with kisses, and thank Herman as you can, for you owe it all to him."

What did they not owe to him? Before the excitement had well subsided, before they had decided how the large sum should be invested, before the new dresses had been well aired at kerck and elsewhere, but not before Herman had given Bertha to understand he should expect more than thanks for his fee, there was another convulsion.

From the Hague the picture had travelled to Amsterdam. It had there been exhibited. A wealthy merchant fresh from the East Indies stopped before it like a petrification.

"What got you that painting? I do want to know," he asked, more with oriental heat than Dutch phlegm, of the owner when he had found him.

"I bought it and paid for it," was the stiff answer, "and I mean to keep it."

"Ach," said the other. "It was my grandfather's. My sister did have it. She would never part with it as long—" He stopped. "Pray tell me from whom it was bought, and the price you gave for it. I would double it to have the picture back."

It was a rash promise; but the Indian merchant kept his word. Two days later he nearly sent old Anna into fits with the imperative tune he played on the brass knocker, and the heedless way he set his sandy boots down on her white tiles as he followed the card of "Mynheer Van der Aken" into the presence of Doctor Van Voorst, and laid the recovered picture on the table, along with Herman's receipt for the twelve thousand gulden.

"May I ask, mynheer, where you obtained the picture you disposed of for that sum? It has cost me double to regain."

"I received it as a fee—a doctor's fee," answered Zacharias, deliberately, then adding slowly, as his keen eyes scanned the bronzed face of the intruder, "from a Meisje Westerkholt—for attendance on her sick mother—who died."

Conflicting emotions seemed to turn the bronzed face yellow. The dead woman had been very dear to this man. "And you took from the orphaned girls of my poor sister a picture worth—"

"Mynheer Van der Aken," interposed the white-headed doctor, gravely. "I did take what I thought a worthless old picture as a fee—to spare a most honourable girl's feelings. Who had the gulden you can ask Meisje Bertha herself. She is with my son Herman in my garden, watching the storks rebuild their nest."

The two were discussing with burning cheeks a knotty problem, which seemed incapable of solution.

The coming of the absentee uncle from Batavia solved it for them.

Even for a husband, though she had learned to love and honour Herman Van Voorst above all the world, Bertha would not bear of leaving her younger sisters. Nor would she burden him with their charge. But when Mynheer Van der Aken, who had been searching vainly for their mother, proposed that Joanna and Lena should keep house for him in Amsterdam, Bertha proudly consented to keep Dr. Van Voorst's house at Katwyk. And there, where she reigned even to old Anna's satisfaction, "The Doctor's Fee," which had providentially brought light out of darkness, and proved that the Father of the fatherless never forsook those who put their whole faith and trust in Him, had the place of honour on its whitest wall.

THE END.

THE JUBILEE SINGERS AT GROSVENOR HOUSE.

By ANNE BEALE.

LIKE a wail of ocean at sunset, or a plaint of the breezes at eve, is the strange, wild, melancholy music of the Fisk University Jubilee Singers. It would be as impossible to describe it as the souls of the poor negro slaves that gave birth to it. To see eleven men and women of colour on the platform of the fine music hall of Grosvenor House, surrounded by paintings and faced by their European brothers and sisters, and to hear them pour forth the pitiful strains that they or their parents sang in manacles and chains, is so affecting that hard, indeed, must be the heart untouched by sight and sound. The first plaintive wailing yet heart-stirring chorus seems the key-note and explanation of all that follows. "Steal away to Jesus" sounds strange to us who know that the Saviour is ever near; but to the poor slaves, labouring under cruel taskmasters, it was a singular reality. Those who first sang it lived on the bank of a river which they must cross to reach a missionary, working among the Indians on the opposite side. By stealth, and at night, they therefore "stole away to Jesus," worshipped, and recrossed the river, evading, as best they might, their driver and his whip. Like the early Christians, they risked all to find Christ. They chaunt the Lord's Prayer as they "steal away," and the cadence is sweet and low at first, then exultant, as if they realised their Father in heaven.

The listeners seem to realise what was the condition of the slave in America before their emancipation, by these pathetic melodies, the names of which, even, would tell of hopeless despair but for the "King Emanuel," and the "Massa Jesus," to whom their subjects fly for spiritual power to bear their bodily degradation. We fancy that we see them groping along in bondage when they tell us that their "way is cloudy;" or when they pour forth their complaint in the oft-repeated "Nobody knows the trouble I see," and "I'm rolling through an unfriendly world." Their voices literally "roll" as they sing, and the sound follows the sense. As in all national music, the common estate produces the melody. War, pastoral avocations, or religious enthusiasm have given rise to patriotic songs—here, slavery has bred the melancholy refrain. Yet, such is the consolation of the Gospel, that they can tell us how they "stand on the walls of Zion," and urge their friends not to be too late for "The Gospel Train."

Some of the songs are exultant, and when they "Long to be baptised by faith in the dying Lamb;" or ask whether God "didn't deliver Daniel, Jonah, and the Hebrew children," therefore, "Why not ev'ry man?" we rejoice with them at the hope kindled in their souls by the Divine Word. What else could have brought light to their darkness? What but a Saviour could have called forth a whole chorus on the blissful words, "I've been redeemed, been washed in the blood of the Lamb?"

Redeemed! Bought from the slavery of sin! How apt the similitude! Like the Israelites in Egypt, they groaned under cruel taskmasters, but felt that redemption was at hand, and like them they were enfranchised by the miraculous power of God. For their freedom, though brought about by war, was little short of a miracle. And when free, what was their cry? It was for teachers, schools, books—universities, even—to civilise, Christianise, and elevate the black man to a level with the white. It was then that the Fisk University for men of colour was first thought of, and

then that the emancipated themselves bestirred themselves to found and build it. A song of jubilee sounded from broad Atlantic to vast Pacific, the song of the ransomed slave; and among the singers were the members of the choir now before us. "What can we do to help to found a university for our brethren?" they asked one another. This was the problem propounded by numbers, and it was answered in various ways. First, the manacles and chains by which they had been kept in slavery were brought to the foundry where, perhaps, they had been fashioned; were sold and melted down for the purchase of Bibles. Note this, oh white-faced sceptic! They accepted the "liberty whereby Christ has made us free," not desiring again to be "entangled in a yoke of bondage." Then some of the young, gifted with powerful voices, said they would sing through the length and breadth of the land the songs of their captivity, to stir the hearts of Christian men and women to aid in procuring for the negro race the advantages of education. Thus a choir of youths and maidens under a trained master, like themselves "a darkie," started from Nashville armed only with the hymns they and their parents had wearily chanted in their hours of labour and, too often, of despair.

Few are "prophets in their own country," and for a long time they roamed from town to town almost in vain. Here and there they met with some success, but more frequently with rebuffs. Why? Because they were black. They were turned out of hotels, or refused admission into them, and excluded from train or steamer on account of their colour, and this in a commonwealth, such as America professed to be. They endured contumely and derision, yet they sang on. At last they were received by ministers of the Gospel, and allowed to sing in their churches.

The recognition of their powers as exponents of slave minstrelsy began, and gradually the combination of pathos, sweetness, vigour, and originality discoverable in their strange songs was acknowledged. After having found it almost impossible to pay their way, they began to reap in success the harvest they had sown in tears and prayer. It was recognised that the ransomed slave had a voice as capable of reaching the heart as had the man for centuries free; why not, also, a spirit, a soul, to be refined, cultured, civilised, Christianised? Thus encouraged, the Jubilee Singers sang on till they finally returned to Nashville, having added forty thousand dollars to the fund gathered for the building of the Fisk University, the site of which was purchased.

People of all nations and all creeds flock to London; why not the enfranchised slave? This was their next question, and to London they came. Neither caste, colour, nor nationality prejudices the true-born Briton, albeit he has a queen and an aristocracy. Merit alone is a passport to public favour, and the genius of the Jubilee Singers was speedily acknowledged. They sang before the Queen and her ministers, on public platforms and at private receptions, in secular concerts and at religious gatherings, everywhere they were enthusiastically welcomed. In this land of the free, which was the pioneer in the liberation of the slave, rich and poor heard with emotion the rhythmic cry of the representatives of their class, and aided them to obtain the education they sought.

They visited the provinces, being everywhere well received, and when they finally recrossed the Atlantic they carried with them some ten thousand pounds. The Fisk University and its Jubilee Hall prospered, and thousands of coloured people were prepared in them to go forth and teach their brethren. Encouraged by previous successes, the choir again visited Great Britain, and on this second occasion went through Scotland and Wales,

and so identified themselves with the religious and philanthropic works in progress amongst us, that by singing for them gratuitously they proved their own gratitude and awakened ours. Wherever they appeared they attracted audiences, and we are not surprised that the history of their progress as told in a book called "The Story of the Jubilee Singers with their Songs," should have reached its hundred and fifth edition.

Success emboldens, and their tours through our island induced them to try "the grand tour" of the continent of Europe. France, Switzerland, Holland, Germany welcomed them, and people forgot diversities of creeds and race in the plaintive appeal for learning and Christian teaching. Emperors, kings, and princes, as well as the "general public," testified their love for liberty by speeding them on their way and swelling their funds.

And now they are with us again, and at the moment helping the Princess Louise Home to keep its year of jubilee. The kind Princess, who has given her name to the Home, is seated in front of them listening to their slave songs. But they, the enfranchised children of the slaves of a score of years ago, are now the educated and civilised members of university and school, like ourselves in all save shades of colour. The director tells us that "they have sung thirty thousand pounds out of the pockets of their hearers." May they, and others like them, sing and plead on until the curse of slavery is wiped from the face of the earth, and may we, fulfilling the life-long hopes of a Livingstone and a Gordon, be God's instruments in effacing it. Already at Zanzibar, where Livingstone watched, waited, and prayed, a Christian church stands where the slave market once stood, and where thirty thousand human beings were but a few years ago annually bought and sold, men and women sing the praise of the Lord. It remains for us to work on until the Soudan and the rest of the African continent be also enfranchised. All who wish to do honour to the memory of our national hero, General Gordon, will put their shoulders to the wheel of liberty, and roll it through the world till not only his dear Soudanese, "but all the dwellers on the dark continent, and the still darker island of New Guinea, be ransomed for the Saviour's kingdom," like these our Fisk University Jubilee Singers.*

We feel sure that the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER will give a willing hand. We have again to thank them for their efforts in aid of the Home for whose jubilee year the Duke of Westminster generously lends his house, and the "singers" their voices. Several good friends have sent and promised work for the next bazaar, and our indefatigable "Veronica" has been foremost in the field. That blue-eyed flower seldom quits our hedgerows, and its namesake must be bright and cheery as the wee blossom. And what shall we say of a whole "garden of girls," belonging to the High School of South Hampstead? Why, they have undertaken to make garments for our Woodhouse "garden of girls," and have already sent the first instalment, fashioned during their holidays! May their "labour of love" be equally blessed to "those who give, and those who take." We cannot better end this lengthy sketch than by acknowledging a donation of a pound from Lancaster "In the name of the great and gracious God."

* Since this was written, the Church Missionary Society have resolved to establish a mission in the Soudan as the best and surest means of keeping Gordon in the memory of the Christian world.



GIRL'S OWN HOME.

SUBSCRIPTION LIST.

Collected by Miss Hilda Thorold, £4 4s. 6d.; Miss A. E. Owen, 2s. 6d.; Ella Jeanie W., 1s.; collected by Miss A. E. Kaye, 8s. 6d.; collected by Miss A. F. Wright, 18s. 2d.; A Spring Offering, 1s.; F. L. T., 2s.; F. R. B., 1s.; In Memory of R. D. M., £1; Ida, 2s. 6d.; M. C. S., 2s. 6d.; Ochone, 2s. 6d.; Mona and Mila, £2; Joconda, 1s. 6d.; Miss Mary E. Birkland, 10s.; M., 5s.; Mignon, 10d. Total amount received to April 30th, 1885, £994 16s. 8d.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

EDUCATIONAL.

MISS GIVEMETHINEHEART (Germany).—1. We could not give an average of the relative amount of happiness enjoyed in youth and in old age. The former is credited with much more than the latter, when all things are seen *couleur de rose*. The spirits, from the mere strength of animal life, are greater; the health at its best. But some have unhappy homes in early life, who make better ones afterwards. In old age—if infirmities do not come with it, and loneliness, without any further hope of change—you may enjoy a quiet happiness. With the physical inability for exertion, the taste for fatiguing effort in pursuit of recreation ceases to exist, and trifling things will bring sufficient variety and food for thought for each day's life. Those who can then anticipate through faith in Christ the joy of the approaching change to a more blessed state of existence, are happy indeed in their declining age. 2. Learn recitations to strengthen memory.

ISABEL PEARCE.—Advise for a situation. If one under Government, apply at the office of the Civil Service, Cannon-row, S.W.

MUSIC.

MIDSUMMER CHILD.—We are much pleased with the letter and the article, and are thankful to learn that you derive so much benefit from our paper. We trust you will improve in health; but even in the body's suffering the spirit may make good progress in holiness and peace. "Those also serve who only stand and wait."

AMATEUR.—Consult some of your former masters. We should think an advertisement would answer.

MUSICAL STUDENT.—We can only hope you live in the country, or with deaf people, as "seven hours a day of practising" should not be inflicted on any other unhappy being! If you consult "Work for All," page 347, vol. v., you will find full information about all the musical colleges.

S. C.—Many persons play the piano very well by ear only. Any instruction-book would answer from which to teach yourself.

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC.—The bands of British regiments do not accompany them to the front, but only the drums and fife. The latter, however, remain at the "base" with the luggage and stores. You must have mistaken the name.

WOULD-BE MUSICIAN.—The music you have sent us is correctly written, so far as we can see, and is a creditable exercise; but there is a vast difference between that and the original compositions that would be of value to others.

WORK.

MAY DEW.—You can have the accordion pleats redone. There are many places in London, such as sewing-machine shops, where plaiting is also done. The dress would probably wear better than if you made it up and ironed out the plaitings.

MAGGIE will find full instructions about bazaar articles at page 627, vol. ii.

AN ANXIOUS SISTER will find all the new information given on plain needlework in the articles now going on. See pages 280 and 395, vol. vi.

BERTHA ST. ORME.—You will find the article on book-binding at page 343, vol. ii.

FRANCES BEAUFORT.—Braided dresses are very much worn. We do not know that the book in question is good for very young girls, unless they had an older and wiser person to discuss it with them.

ONE WHO IS TIRED OF SERVICE.—The question of learning tailoring or mantle-making is really one of health. After being used to domestic service, which, under good conditions, is the most comfortable and healthy of all ways of earning a living, you will find the long hours of sitting or standing very fatiguing, and the close air and confinement trying.

A. E. T.—The coral may be washed in soap and water and dried carefully at a short distance from the fire. Do not allow it to become so again, but wipe it each time you take it off.

TOTTIE.—You should refer to our articles on "Dress in Season and in Reason." Jettied trimmings are most worn. Your "dear Aunt Mary" is a young woman, and should be suitably dressed as such. One would suppose her to be a hundred from your way of speaking. You write very nicely.

W. H. T.—The heel of a stocking may be thickened while knitting it by working in a second thread with the wool or cotton, or else by darning the heel when finished. Coloured knitting cottons may be obtained, blues and reds being the best.

MISCELLANEOUS.

CHERRY RIPE.—The lines you send, beginning—"If thou shouldst never see my face again," are from Tennyson's "Idyls of the King"—The Passing of Arthur, line 247.

CLARRIE.—To wear a mackintosh to shelter you from the rain, taking it off immediately after would not be unhealthy. If worn too long, it becomes a kind of vapour bath.

DEJECTED PHLOMENA.—You are very young, and your general health is probably weak. You need good food, plenty of fresh air, and some kind of tonic. Perhaps a doctor would recommend cod-liver oil.

ROSA EVANS must consult a doctor.

MATTY must first write her story, and then there will be time enough to dispose of it. Did she ever hear of "counting one's chickens before they were hatched?"

AUSTRALIAN LILY.—We sympathise with you in your loss, and are glad you should write to us at any time you feel comfort in doing so. Many thanks for all your kind words and wishes.

AN ORPHAN PERPLEXED.—We should not advise you to leave service unless you saw your way very clearly to something better, which you do not appear to do.

CECILIA may take any name she likes, in addition to her Christian name.

A DOGARESSA.—The trouble between England and Russia arise from the fact that England considers Russia's aggressions in Afghanistan bring her too close to the empire of India. We are very glad to hear you like our paper so much.

E. M. O.—You ask whether the harvest moon nearest the equinox means the one before or after the 22nd of September. There is nothing in the least degree scientific in the name "harvest moon," as it defines nothing. But Sir John Herschel defines the harvest moon to be the full moon which happens on or nearest the 21st of September. It is the practice when full moons fall at nearly equal distances on each side of the autumnal equinox to call the one before the harvest moon, and that following the hunters' moon.

ROWAN TREE.—In a question so serious, it is better to consult a solicitor. As far as we know, a woman married before the 1st of January, 1883, has no power over property that was hers at that time.

MARTHA.—The stones of old Temple Bar are in the keeping of a contractor, and will shortly be set up in King's Bench-walk, Temple, E.C.

MARTHA.—Turpentine would clean the wax fruit, but would remove colour.

DAISY.—Delicate people should be cautious in the use of cold water, as we have so often before said.

J. BURREL.—The fungus on goldfish comes from decaying matter being left in the aquarium. Keep a long narrow wooden spoon close at hand. Goldfish feed on plants.

Y.—You must mean crocodiles, not alligators. The story is that the animal moans and sighs like a person in deep distress, and so attracts travellers to the spot, and even sheds tears when devouring them.

GRACELESS DOROTHY.—If you use the dumb-bells and not abuse them they will be a help to you; but remember that a girl's strength cannot bear any great strain upon it. St. Martin's, Canterbury, was built in the twelfth or thirteenth century. The abbey of St. Albans dates from the tenth century.

PUSSIE.—To keep a favourite cat from returning to its old home, shut it up for some days in the new house. Be kind to it, and butter its feet constantly.

REINHOLD.—There is a society now formed for supplying comforts to the soldiers in the Soudan. Apply to Lady Rosebery about it. You can make many things that soldiers require, or send the money you have collected to the society.

M. S.—See articles upon "How to Form a Small Library," October 2nd and November 20th, 1880.

MUSIDORA.—Musidora, Celandon, and Amelia are characters in Thomson's "Seasons." They are introduced in the "summer" section.

MIRIAM.—Washing soda is a strong alkali, and if you take it internally you stand a chance of burning your inside.

MUGGINS.—No woman should consent to marry a man whom she does not love, and no right-minded guardians or parents would try to induce her to do so, and to perjure herself so dreadfully before Almighty God as to vow to love a man whom she does not love. Never consent to taking a false oath; never do so cruel a thing as to deceive or raise false hopes in any man; never sell yourself for position, fortune, or anything else. It is not only degrading, but wicked.