ANY years ago a young lady just entering her teens said to her maid, "When I am grown up I will found a home, and you shall be the matron."

This prophecy was literally fulfilled. It was uttered by the late Lady Kinnaid, and we had the happiness of seeing our small sheet of paper brought to life by her last. Nearly half a century ago Lady Kinnaid did actually found St. John's Servants' School, and the faithful maid to whom she spoke those memorable words was its first matron. She began it with two children in 1812, and on Ascension Day of this year of grace, 1899, we see the result. It is the period ofUBLICATION of pupils on the young and all who have been educated at the school are sure of a warm welcome home on that day on which we celebrate the return of our dear Lord to His Father's kingdom.

The school is now situated near Westbourne Park Station, in Great Western Road, and is, therefore, easy of access. It has twice changed its location, having originally been in the parish of St. Andrew's, Holborn, whence it migrated to St. George-the-Martyr, and thence to its present site. When Lady Kinnaid succeeded in erecting the large and commodious building which is capable of housing 150 pupils, it was situated in the midst of fields, and might almost be said to have been in the country. Now not only do the children, but oftentimes by their friends still comport themselves on certain insular privileges, of which they cannot be deprived. The canal and railroad circle it like a belt, and prevent encroachments which might interfere with fresh air. Indeed, the said friends flatter themselves that the institution and playground form an island, and so healthy are the small brick servants in this their water and steam-girdled kingdom that a home of health at Brighton has been given up. It is not, perhaps, universally known that a railroad brings with fresh and dry air—we say nothing of its sounds.

But to return to Ascension Day, and the funanes and guests of the training home. In so doing we touch a chord of sadness. All the children, and most of the visitors, are in mourning. Striking and neat as is the costume of black gowns and white aprons worn by the former, it tells of a loss almost irreparable to them as to the daughters of the foundress of the home, who mingle amongst them. The Dowager Lady Kinnaid was taken to a better and more permanent home, "even as a bird of the air when her young wings were not yet able to sustain them," in that other world. And we cannot be surprised, because she then reaped the fruit of her labours. Of her manifold good works she loved the best. Not even the Young Women's Christian Association, of which Lady Kinnaid also founded, could afford her the pleasure of this her earliest philanthropic and Christian effort.

Over 1,500 children, varying in age from one to fifteen years, have been trained in this school, and it is strange and interesting to watch the gathering of pupils, old and young, in the large airy playground. The scholars of the past are accompanied, for the most part, by their offspring; while those of the present are vigorously going through wonder-ful gymnastic exercises, under the guidance of an expert teacher. It is pretty to see the little regiment of domestic soldiers perform all the evolutions of Swedish drill, and if their industrial training be equal to their physical, they will make very good servants indeed.

Amongst the onlookers are four middle-aged women, who were brought up at the school. Three of them are married, and have nearly grown-up children with them, who are watching the drill with great interest. All have held responsible positions in good families, and all unite in lamenting the absence of their benefactress, who "used to greet them so kindly year by year." Their regrets are touching tributes to the virtues of the departed.

Not less touching are those uttered by their youngsters; for all unite in testifying to the happy days spent in the school. Many of them are still in their blindness, and they, too, speak in the very words of the Misses Kinnaid, who carry from them to friend for general admiration, phyitically intu-ducting them as their "grandchildren," their mothers having been their pupils for religious instruction.

It is a glorious day, and the skies smile upon our gathering. They could scarcely bestow a more beautiful scene. The Matron and teachers mingle with the cheerful crowd, and the representatives of the foundress of the institution are here, there, and everywhere, setting aside personal feeling and many memories, in ministering to the pleasure of others. Comparative calm reigns while the drill proceeds; but tongues are well loosened when the large party assembles for tea. One side of the immense school and dining room is appropriated to the children, the other to the guests. The latter must number seventy or eighty, and they thoroughly enjoy themselves.

"I feel at home again. I have no parents," says one interesting girl, "and I would rather be here than at service," another. But all look respectable, and one cannot be too thankful in these ambitious times, to those who will thoroughly train girls for domestic service.

The pupils of St. John's School have come from all quarters, not only from the United Kingdom, but even from India and China. Many are daughter of sailors, thankful to place their children in safe custody while themselves away on the high seas. And the eldest of them, touched by one such as we wander through the large, airy dormitories. In a private room containing only three or four beds, lies a little girl, not more than six years old. She is the daughter of a sailor, who died of the same insidious malady. Her mother is by her bedside, and on a small table are portions of the few possessions left to her. She has a simple, small, round box, which contains a purple rhododendron, and we help her to insert it into the bib of her white apron. Very proud she is when it is so placed, and very happy they all appear as they much off to another scene.

Ascension Day closes, as it should, with prayer and praise. The pupils sing hymns, and their spiritual pastors address them. The neighbouring clergy are most kind in aiding this excellent work, and several are present. We think of the good seed sown, and how it is to come up and bear much fruit in due season. We think of the various means employed to bring the girls to a "saving knowledge" of Jesus Christ their Lord, and while thinking, try to reflect what a spiritual opportunity there is for the true conversion of the children," said Lady Kinnaid, and to aid in this, ladies hold Bible classes, and keep the members of them in view when they have left the school.
They are invited to join the St. John's branch of the Young Women's Christian Association, receive a monthly letter, and are otherwise reminded of their early teaching. Most of the girls belong to the Scripture Union, and cannot easily forget how they read their daily portion, joined in family prayer, and were brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Neither are they likely to forget the hour spent every week in working for some missionary or charitable object, when they learn experimentally to help those who are less fortunate than themselves.

Some sceptical reader will exclaim, "Charity begins at home." So it does here; for the girls make all their own clothes and outits for service, which proves to a demonstration that time may be found in the busiest day for helping our neighbours. And what with housework, tending the little ones, keeping up to the awful educational "Standards," laundry work, etc., etc., the average Boarding School have a very busy day indeed! And as to the teachers—well, they must be busier still.

They all thrive upon it, nevertheless, so it is no work that loads, and to squeeze from the embraces of teachers and taught, the fervent welcomes and somewhat sad farewells, they have had a happy time together, despite "boisterous days." And we certainly have all had a happy Ascension Day, from the morning service in church to the afternoon gathering, and the evening address and tea; a day is not to be forgotten. Perhaps the most notable feature of it has been the mourning garb of the large party and the regrets that have mingled with the mirth. Indeed, some few of the elders had risked impossible, and conclude to us that the blank left by the absence of the one, who had been the guiding-star of the establishment for nearly fifty years, could scarcely be filled for them. Perhaps she is with us in spirit, for, however, the feeling of some, and we all understand, as we watch the scene, the meaning of the text, "and their works do follow them." May the children of the Christian maid who from childhood devoted her life to the service of her Divine Lord, have strength given them to carry on these works and to increase them as they are already striving to do. The motto of their house is "Certa Cruce Salus"—"Sure salvation by the cross"—and they need no safer watchword.

A YOUNG OXFORD MAID.

(IN THE DAYS OF THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT.)

BY SARAH TYLER, Author of "Papers for Thoughtful Girls," etc.

CHAPTER XXII.

A "HALM OF BURST MIDI'S."

Death had not before, within Kitty's consciousness, come and touched her best beloved, so Jack's overhanging blow to her. She was little more than eighteen, and, in her only brother, while sister and mother she had none. So she was so stricken that it seemed as if the whole world had come to a standstill for her, as if she could have no future in this world with her Jackie gone hence without her, even as the outlines of her past were washed out in tears.

The first thing which roused Kitty was the sense of her father's sorrow, inarticulate at first. She awoke from her dreary apathy of extreme crushing grief, to seek to creep nearer to him, to venture to show him her silent, piteous sympathy, and to try to minister tenderly to him in a hundred ways, in which Mrs. Judy, faithful, afflicted soul that she was, could not approach him. Kitty would prove to Dr. Dacre that, though in this life he had lost a son, he had still a daughter. Jack had taken the great step which divides the mortal from the immortal, and carries the wayfarer into infinitely vaster fields of God's universe, and if all is well with him, into an awful unspeakable increase of nearness to the Great White Throne, where none left behind, however near and dear, can follow him. But Kitty was still beside her father, close to him, linked to him more than ever by that strong link of their common sorrow, in addition to their common love, able to commune with him as he was able to commune with her.

This was the first lever to raise the mountain-load of heavy grief. Then in God's great power there were other levers given her, which Kitty, in her dutifulness to God and her father, and the trained reasonableness which balanced her warm, constant affection, was qualified to use, as no man or woman of ill-regulated temper and unbalanced unreasonable would have had the smallest chance of doing. Kitty could take the levers into her trembling young hands, and employ the weapons she was to form herself from the dark prison-house of inordinate mourning. She let in the light of God's hopeful, eternal word, and His no less hopeful world with its golden sunshine, its green earth, renewed year by year, and its mountains, which seem to speak to her of his love for healing to the broken in heart and the bruised in spirit.

Kitty could not do it all at once or without many a pang. For it was one thing to believe with her whole heart, soul, and spirit that her brother would rise again, and that it was well with him; though it was only by an aching stretch of her poor human faculties that she could imagine confusedly and gropingly where he was now, what he was, how long he was delayed. And it was quite another thing to know in happy confidence that he was alive and well on this earth with her, on her own level, ready to come to her next month, or at the longest that he would come to the trials of life. She took them almost as a matter of course, even when her motherly heart was aching most sorely for her nursing, her bright and eager Master Jackie, of whom she had secretly prophesied great things, who was to have been a still more notable scholar than was Dr. Dacre.

Kitty could but feel after the humble thankfulness which, with the woman's inveterate habit of looking round and discovering how God could be praised in all circumstances, lay at the root of Mrs. Judy's cheerful philosophy. It caused her again and again to bring forward what a good, what a blessed thing it was that Master Jackie had taken it upon him, out of his own head, in his integrity and natural affection, to pay that short visit home when he had come into Oxford to see about the exchange of prisoners. What a merciful thing it was, to be sure, that they had seen him who was watching! And did not Mrs. Kitty remember how pleasant and delightful the dear lad, who had grown so fine a young man, had been that windy March afternoon, and how he had departed after evening prayers at peace with his family? What a blessing it would be infinitely worse it would have been if his father and he had not met this once again, been reconciled, and spoken good words like gentlemen and Christians! Master Jackie might have fallen in the beginning of the war, when the last speech he and Dr. Dacre had held together was full of cruel strife and fierce contention.

Kitty had but a vague consciousness how absolutely glad she would be one day to see the hands of loving friends prepared Jack for his rest. Prissy Walton and her mother washed his wounds, smoothed his locks, and crossed his arms on his breast in the attitude of one who is watching and waiting; Alice strewed rosemary on his pillow Anthony lifted him into his coffin.

Another privilege was granted to John Dacre's friends. By dint of urgent representations, which few would have found the heart, even if they had possessed the knowledge in time, to interfere, the coffin was brought by night within the range of the sentries, into the village of St. Clement's, near to the east gate of the beleaguered city,