

The throne of grace has to be incessantly visited. We must go "again, again, and again" into the audience chamber of the King of kings. The seed of the Kingdom has to be sown with unwearied heart and hand. Not once or twice has the testimony for Christ to be borne; not once or twice has the vineyard to be tended, the tender plants trained, and the weeds uprooted: "again, again, and again" we must go about our Master's service. He cries to us, "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." "Pray without ceasing, and in everything with prayer and

supplication make your request known unto God."  
"Be thou faithful unto death."

"Come, labour on:  
No time for rest, till glows the western sky,  
While the long shadows o'er our pathway lie,  
And a glad sound comes with the setting sun,  
'Servants, well done!'

"Come, labour on:  
The toil is pleasant, the reward is sure;  
Blessed are those who to the end endure;  
How full their joy, how deep their rest shall be,  
O Lord, with Thee!"

### DOWN THE COWGATE.



"Three very modern worthies."

"AND that handsome spire up the road is—"  
"That is the Chalmers Memorial Church," answered Mr. Fraser in a rather important tone.  
"Oh, I thought his work lay more in the Cowgate and its suburbs."  
"Of course it did; but there was no actual necessity for perpetuating his memory exactly on the same spot."

"I suppose not," I said, turning round from the window to confront my host. It was the first time he had acted in that capacity, and it was also my first day in Edinburgh. "I suppose not; only one always associates his name with that famous locality. It seems somehow quite out of place in such a respectable neighbourhood. You must know all those old places well?"

"Not any more than I am obliged to; but if you would like a turn through them, I could take you down to-morrow afternoon—only it's not by any means a romantic locality now, let me tell you."

Perhaps not to him. Mr. Fraser, I had already found out, was an exceedingly practical and business-like personage; but for people generally, who had not attained to that altitude, there must still be a visible story graven into the very stones of those ancient streets.

The grey November day was already darkening down when we crossed the Grassmarket the next afternoon, and began our pilgrimage through the busy regions that once folded in such a different scene. There was a venerable house before we had

taken many steps, where one could almost fancy some enthusiastic Jacobite conference was still going on, but instead of the gay gallants who ought to have thronged the pavement in front, three very modern worthies were standing with their backs against the wall, two of them holding forth with great power upon the shortcomings of one Tam



"Bagpipes mean pretty hard work"—p. 277.



Tampson, who appeared to have recently raised his tariff for sleeping accommodation.

"I'd no have believed it of ony ither body, but there's no a mean trick he wadna condescend to for siller; man, he told me aboot it his ain sel."

"And a miserable hoose at the price—never a blink of a decent fire; he'll no find it pay in the long run, I'm thinking. There's mair hooses than his to be had for the seeking."

The third man took no part in the discussion, he was staring dejectedly down the street, that unmistakable stamp of better days in every feature. His companions looked quite capable of standing up for their rights, real or imaginary, but he belonged to a different class, and the silent sufferers

incomprehensible music that only a Scotchman ever thoroughly appreciates.

We did not help him in his efforts at a living; it would have seemed quite a liberty to interrupt him even for his own benefit. In the presence of a genuine artist one has need to be respectful.

"If you want a garment of any sort, shape, or description, ancient or modern," remarked Mr. Fraser a stage further on, stopping before a second-hand shop just lighting up, "you will be able to get it here either by exchange or for cash down. We have had occasion to deal with one or two shady transactions in connection with this same place."

The frontage was not extensive, but the back stretched away into a dim vista of wearing apparel,



"Either exchange or cash down."

are usually those who stand most in need; there was a loose shilling in my pocket, and I slipped it into his hand.

"I am afraid you are not very well; will you take that and get some hot soup or coffee."

He did take it, with an astonished face certainly, but without any attempt at thanks. Mr. Fraser hurried me on rather grimly.

"Come, come, that sort of thing won't answer in this neighbourhood. The fellow is just an idle loafer; he ought to be out looking for work instead of lounging about at this time of day. If you really want to be charitable, here is the sort of man who deserves encouragement—he is doing something for his living. Bagpipes mean pretty hard work, though you might not think it."

They belonged to a stately, dignified old pensioner slowly stalking past, his whole attention concentrated on his screeching pipes, the shouting juveniles about him, the rattle of carts, and shrill cries of fish hawkers, alike unnoticed, in the swelling,

suspended from the ceiling as though the owners had with one accord committed suicide by hanging themselves. Smaller trifles in the way of shoes, bonnets, and mufflers were exhibited in bundles outside, guarded by a grim old woman on the step. A wizened, sharp-faced man in a Kilmarnock bonnet had opened negotiations for a pair of boots, and was dealing out disrespectful comments upon them with great freedom.

"And how mich wad ye have the conscience to want for them?"—after diligently pointing out their weak points.

"Twa shillings."

"Twa bawbees, ye mean."

"Twa shillings; pat them doon if ye dinna need them."

"Ma certes! I'm thinking ye'll look lang for a buyer."

Close by were standing two Highlanders, their gay uniforms making quite a dash of colour in the place. They were busy complimenting two



bare-headed girls, and offering gratuitous advice upon the boot bargain.

"Our present-day heroes," I remarked sedately to Mr. Fraser.



JESSIE'S FATHER.

"Yes," he returned as sedately; "they have both the Afghan and Egyptian medals—the big fellow has four of them, I see."

With that the conversation lapsed. The man went away in triumph with his boots; the matter had ended in a compromise on both sides; and we slowly threaded our way along the crowded pavement. It was growing rather difficult to keep up any vivid impression of the Stuart glories. There was one deep carved stone doorway, crowned with curious little pepper-caster turrets, that had doubtless been the abode of brave knights once. A sickly, broken-down man was sheltering under it now. He shuffled out a pace or two as he saw us, with a pitiful request for a copper.

"It's unco hard to git wark the noo, sir, or I'd no be asking it."

"What is your work?"

"Onything I can get, maister; carrying things hame frae the sale-rooms maistly," he explained, with a hoarse fit of coughing.

"Does that child belong to you?" demanded Mr. Fraser, suddenly.

It was a tiny, ragged damsel, further back in the doorway, watching us from under a mop of tangled dark hair.

"Aye—Jessie, mak the ledly a bit curtsy."

Jessie made her "bit curtsy," and slipped up closer behind her father, tightly clutching a battered tin can. Mr. Fraser had a tender spot somewhere in

his practical composition for the bairnies, and surreptitiously dropped a sixpence and a sweetie into the tin can. He gave the father an order on some lodging-house for the night—"though I doubt you'd do better in the Infirmary," he said, as he handed it to him.

"Maybe; but I canna leave the lassie; they'll no tak her in too."

"Is there no person you could leave her with?"

He shook his head, and dragged himself back to his doorway. Mr. Fraser made one more inquiry as we left him.

"Doesn't this close lead into the High Street?"

"Aye; straight on."

Straight on, indeed! It was a veritable corkscrew, with here and there a flight of steep steps and a slippery gutter across; but it did lead us into the High Street, where a little higher up—outlined against the sky—we saw the ponderous crown of the old Scottish Cathedral, St. Giles.

And there for two hours or more, past all extension for that day, we suspended our Cowgate pilgrimage; we argued and discoursed, with a fair amount of personal one-sidedness, of that worthy but undoubtedly obstinate divine John Knox, of the great Montrose, of the "bluidy Mackenzies," and the Covenanters' struggles against the powers that were. In one of the side chapels a thinly attended service was going on, and a middle-aged man with a strong, deep voice was reading the lesson; we sat down out of sight behind a distant pillar to listen.

"Behold, a sower went forth to sow, and some seed fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured it; some fell upon stony places; some fell among thorns, which sprang up and choked it; and other fell upon good ground, and brought forth fruit, some sixty, some an hundredfold."

There the reader ended, and we went softly on to another aisle; presently the tiny congregation melted



JESSIE.



away. As the minister passed on his way to the vestry, Mr. Fraser stepped forward and greeted him as an acquaintance of his own, and a rather useful one he proved himself, taking us through parts of the building we might not have seen otherwise, and expounding its grandeur with considerable eloquence and length. When he finally let us out into the deserted Parliament Square, it was too late for any question but that of finding our way home without delay.

Still, the nearest way took in a portion of the Canongate—indeed, the cathedral windows look right down it. A brilliantly lighted public-house adorned the first corner, and a disturbance of some kind was taking place in the doorway.

"Just putting out somebody who has taken as much as is good for him," observed Mr. Fraser philosophically, as we went out into the roadway to avoid it; but either we miscalculated the distance, or affairs inside had reached an unforeseen crisis, for when we were exactly opposite the door, the offender was suddenly propelled into Mr. Fraser's arms, where he remained perfectly indifferent to his exceedingly chilly reception. Limp and helpless though he was, it struck us oddly that his face had a familiar air. Light flashed upon us both at the same moment.

"Why, that is my reduced gentleman!" I cried.

"And your shilling has helped him into this plight," returned Mr. Fraser. "Where are the police? Missing, as usual."

"Here! I'll tak the chairge of him," put in a broad voice behind; "it's no that often he gets the chance of a bit pleasure."

"Does he live with you?" demanded Mr. Fraser, cheerfully relinquishing his burden to him of the anti-Tam-Tampson league.

"Whiles, noo and again; he's no great things, ony way, puir feckless body."

We hurried on, a little downcast at the incident. A heavily laden waggon of bales and packages was lumbering along beside us down the street. Presently it tried to turn sharply off up some side opening, and whether the strain was too great for the horses to manage, or the check too sudden, we could not

distinguish, but the ponderous mass quivered and slipped, the cords that held it snapped like threads, and, before anyone had time even to realise the danger, nearly the half of it had toppled over into the road.

Cries and shouts rose up on all sides. In that crowded thoroughfare many had been too close at hand to escape. I stood on a step alone, while Mr. Fraser lent all the help he could. A few minutes—though it looked long enough at the time—and he came back with a shocked, startled face.

"There are only two dangerously hurt," he said; "a man and a little child—and they are the two we spoke to in the gateway this afternoon."

"Oh, dear!" was all I could ejaculate.

"See, they are bringing them up: they will both get into the infirmary together, after all."

We watched the shutters go by in silence—the sickly father, who would never need to shelter from the November wind in any doorway again; the little ragged child, who would be quite sure of a reception in those wide wards now—and then, as silently, we walked back to the respectable neighbourhood where stands the Chalmers Memorial Church. Somehow the Stuart memories seemed a little overshadowed now by this later hero, who had fought for others—not himself.

"My shilling was lost, your ticket for that poor man's lodging was lost, possibly the child's sixpence, too," I summed up rather mournfully, as we waited for the door to open; "for any good of it, it might as well have been left undone."

"And perhaps not," was the response. "I fancy there was a lesson for us all in that parable of the sower this afternoon: he has to go on sowing all the same wherever the seed may fall—that is his part in the matter; and, with all the failures, still some did come up the right way, remember."

Months afterwards came to me a line from the old grey city: "You will be pleased, I think, to hear that little Cowgate Jessie is in one of our orphanages, and growing up a bright, bonnie lassie. Even if she should not turn out among the hundred-fold, she will surely rank somewhere among the sixty-fold."

SARAH PITT.



THE END OF MY MISAPPLIED SHILLING.