

WHO KNOWS?

BY J. T. MORRISON.

Who knows what life is o'er the silent river,
What fertile brain can guess of the beyond;
Are pains and heart-aches known no more forever,
Does sympathetic soul to soul respond?
Do flowers bloom beyond the silent river,
Their fragrance fill the air with sweet perfume;
Are loving friends united there forever,
Are there no broken ties beyond the tomb?
Are hill-tops green beyond the silent river,
Do cooling shadows rest beneath the trees;
Are clouds and darkness banished there forever,
And tempest changed to gentle fanning breeze?
Are there no tears beyond the silent river,
Will only gladness from their fountains flow?
When we have crossed life's path to tread forever,
That now we hope we then perhaps shall know.
ITHACA, N. Y., July 1, 1878.

AN OUTSIDER IN "QUAKER MEETING."

BY AUGUSTA ALLEN.

It is Sunday morning in the glorious spring-time. The air is balmy and sweet with the breath of buds and blossoms, as I bend my steps toward the place of worship. It is a half hour earlier than the time named for service to begin, but I wish to look about, without seeming rude. As I open the wicket gate, and step into the yard I am struck with the contrast between this and other churches. No massive columns, no graceful arches, nor pointed gables excite the admiration of the beholder and no steeple points skyward. The church is one story in height, brown in color and as plain as a building can be made. It is half surrounded by a wide porch, at each end of which is a dressing room, where superfluous wrappings may be left. One of these rooms is furnished with chairs and a stove. I ask the janitor the use of the little sitting room, and he tells me, that it is for the accommodation of mothers, whose crying children disturb the peace of the meeting. This is a revelation to me, and as I think of the unfortunate infants who, doubtless in the seclusion of this spot, have been religiously spanked into proper "First-day" silence, I smother a sigh, and pass out to view the surroundings. There are several gaps in the plain board fence, and each of these is filled with a platform just high enough to enable the dear old people to step with ease from the vehicles in which they come. From the platform are steps leading down into the yard. Outside, are hitching posts, and over many of these, sheds are built for the protection of the horses from hot sunshine or pelting storms. "Surely," I think, "A merciful man is merciful to his beast." Just back of the church is the grave yard, with a feeling of solemnity I enter it. Where are the snowy marble slabs, the richly tinted monuments, and the costly vaults that we are wont to see in the silent cities of the dead? Where the epitaphs, in which stricken ones seek to make known the loving appreciation, which too often finds upon the cold stone its first expression. Grassy mounds and uncarved, unlettered stones, mark the graves. Loving hands have planted flowers upon some of them; and old mother Nature has here reared many monuments in the form of great trees, among whose branches the spring breezes softly whisper. Perhaps they breathe the names of the departed; there is missing that distinction between the graves of the rich and poor, which is so painfully apparent in other cemeteries; for the grass is just as bright in tint above one as another, and the golden sunbeams lend their radiance alike to all. I find here much food for thought, but my meditations are cut short by carriage wheels, the noise of which tells me that the congregation has begun to assemble. No bell with

its deep, solemn tones, tells these people that the hour for worship is at hand. Worldly, indeed, they think, must be the Christian, who require an outward call to the house of God. Thoughtfully I retrace my steps to the church and humbly take a back seat, where, unobserved, I can satisfy the curiosity which, I confess, has brought me hither. The interior is as barren of ornament as the exterior. The walls and ceiling are white as snow, and the pine floor vies with them in purity. The wood work is painted drab, and the seats are clad in the same sombre hue. The glass in the windows is unstained, and no dark shutters exclude the rays of the sun. There is no pulpit; but, facing the part of the room to be occupied by the main congregation, are eight benches reaching clear across the room, each rising one step higher than the preceding one. These seats have high backs, and are cushioned with grey cloth. Reaching lengthwise through the centre of the room is a wooden partition arranged to slide up or down at pleasure. At present, it is thrown open as wide as possible, and reaches from the floor just to my shoulder as I sit. But the congregation is assembling, and claims my whole attention.

I notice that the young people take the back seats nearest the door; the middle-aged, the front seats; while the old folks occupy the slightly elevated seats, of which I have spoken. All take their places with a silence befitting the occasion. There is no restless turning of hymn book leaves, for no books are here; no impatient waiting for the music to begin, for choir and organ are alike unknown in this place. I notice that the partition of which I made mention, separates the men from the women. The old ladies are clothed in plainest colors—drab, brown and black. The dress is full and untrimmed. Over the shoulders is pinned a snowy kerchief, which is folded and crossed upon the breast, extending to the waist. Over this is worn a shawl or cape the same shade as the dress. The hair is put smoothly back beneath a white cap, and over this is worn the drab bonnet, made of silk, shaped very much like the shaker sunbonnet, worn a few years ago, and still occasionally to be seen. The bonnet is lined with white silk, and forms a fit frame for the placid face which looks calmly from the depths thereof upon the things of the outer world. I take the liberty to peep over the partition, and notice that the men, too, are clad in drabest drab, with cutaway coats and high vests, something after the style of one hundred years ago; while upon their heads the broad-brimmed hats (unremoved during worship, exactly like the pictures which I have always supposed to be caricatures. But here they are before me, painful realities, wholly lacking in beauty and comfort; there is but one redeeming trait about them, and that is their color, which I confess, does not dazzle the eyes with its brilliancy.

The bonnets worn by the matrons and young women are not so deep as those already described, more flaring in form and shirred. The hair is plainly coiled or braided. The dress is plain in color and innocent of fluting, ruffle or overskirt, while a neat linen collar finishes the neck. No jewelry of any kind is to be seen, and the brightest color visible is in the cheeks and eyes of the pretty girls, some of whom wear their cunning little bonnets with a jaunty grace, which betrays the worldliness of the wearer in spite of the Quaker garb.

Right before me sits a rouguish Miss from whose auburn tresses gleams a scarlet ribbon, which I know to have

been smuggled there when father and mother were not observing. At the throat of a black-eyed maid, with dimples on cheek and chin, I see a knot of pink, the envy of her neighbors, as their little frowns tell me, and the admiration of the youths just over the partition, as their stolen glances testify. I look out of the window at the green grass all a-sparkle with gems of dew; at the wild rose turning their bright petals to the blue sky, and I wonder what would be the effect if God had made the grass black, the flowers drab, and the sky sombre brown. A robin, with the brightest sunshine on his red breast, hops upon the porch, and a golden hemp bird sways upon a twig near by. I turn to look again at the girls, and to thank our Father that this heaven-born love for the brightly beautiful cannot be crushed out of young hearts. There is perfect silence in the room. As I look about on the down-cast eyes and thoughtful faces, something of that same spirit of quiet and rest steals into my own heart, and as I realize that we are a people waiting before the Lord for his blessing, the feeling deepens into solemnity, and I feel that the King of Glory is indeed in our midst. The very atmosphere breathes of love, and tends to lift us nearer to the Author of holiness. A mother in Israel rises, and removing the bonnet from her head, breaks the solemn silence thus: "The swords shall be beaten into ploughshares and, the spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more." With her bands of snowy hair, her sweet placid face, she seems the very personification of Peace, as her soft voice rises and falls in that musical, half-singing tone. She says naught of the horrors of war, but the discourse is all concerning the joys of peace; and she tells us of the bright world, where there shall be no war or strife, but perfect and everlasting peace, for "The Lamb is the light thereof." Again the deep silence falls upon us, and it seems to me that the wings of the Angel of Peace are hovering above us, that the very stillness breathes the exquisite harmony of the glorious old anthem, "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

I hear the birds among the branches just outside, pouring out their little voices in glad praises to God, but I feel that here, each soul is in communion with its Maker, and that such worship transcends any which the tongue could offer. At last the solemn stillness is broken by a tiny rustling sound, and looking up, I see that the venerable couple, who occupy the highest seats nearest the partition, have turned each to the nearest friend, extending the right hand; and now all through the little church, such a handshaking begins as I never before witnessed; and the air is filled with the subdued murmur of cheery voices.

In this social feast even "the stranger within the gates" is not forgotten; but many are the warm hands which grasp mine in cordial welcome, while soft voices ask, "How art thou?" And one after another says, "Thou art a stranger in our midst, wilt thou go home with me and have dinner?" As the congregation lingers, loth to depart, I miss the young people, and looking out, see the youths and maidens gathered in little groups on the green, chatting and laughing with a freedom which I am surprised to see upon a "first day," and at meeting. But why should it not be thus? Our Heavenly Father has implanted in young hearts this love of innocent mirth, and so I rejoice with them that the cruel partition does not extend outside the

church door. At last the carriages are brought to the platforms, the farewells are exchanged, and I realize that for to-day "meeting" is over. As I thoughtfully turn my face homeward, I contrast what I to-day have seen with the Sunday worship in our fashionable churches—where poor people dare not go, where piped organs and hired singers praise the Lord for the congregation, the members of which vie with each other in costly style of dress and studied grace of posture, and who after service hasten from the church as if its very atmosphere proves stifling, spending not a moment in friendly interchange of sentiment; leaving strangers, who have wandered in, to feel that even among so-called Christian brethren exists an indifference, and a coldness, which chills the heart.

I shall carry to-day's revelation with me through life, that the thought of it may afford a spiritual feast, when for a moment I am tempted to believe that the world holds naught that is pure and real. And so my heart swells with praise to God for this sweet experience of an outsider in a "Quaker meeting."

THE EATON SETTLEMENT, CLARKE COUNTY, W. T.

To those who design settling upon railroad or government lands in this county, I know of no better opportunities than may be found in and around the Eaton settlement. It is situated on the north side of the East fork of Lewis river, and is about eight miles east of La Centre, and five miles northeast of Stoughton, the nearest trading point and steamboat landing. Here the pioneer is not compelled to grapple with the huge and stubborn fir tree in the work of opening up a new home. There are extensive tracts of swale land in its stead, covered with a dense growth of brush, which, being slashed and burned at the proper time, is comparatively easy to clear. The soil is remarkably rich and productive, free from rocks and gravel, and easily drained and brought under cultivation. The prairie and beaver-dam land is still more readily brought under subjection, and the advantage of securing even a small portion of these lands described must be obvious to everyone acquainted with opening a farm in this country. There is a beautiful little stream called Rock Creek, flowing through this settlement, that should not be passed unnoticed. It rises in the neighboring hills, and being fed by numerous springs, it never dries. During the larger portion of the year, it has sufficient volume of water to afford good mill privileges, and a sawmill will doubtless be erected here at no distant day. But these are not the only inducements that are held out to the settler here. It is a quiet, peaceful and prosperous neighborhood, remarkably free from those prejudices, jealousies and personal animosities, that blight the prospect, mar the peace, and stifle the growth of some communities. The school advantages here are also comparatively good. A Sabbath school, well attended and having about fifty members is another evidence of the morality and public spirit manifested here. If any should wish to go to this locality in search of land, I would respectfully refer them to Jos. Eaton, who will cheerfully give them all the information desired. He is an old resident, a reliable man, and will verify the statements in this article.—*Car. Vancouver Register.*

A SALEM chap dreamed for twenty consecutive nights that he was out carriage riding, and couldn't imagine any reason for the fact until he discovered that his bed was a little buggy.