

A Year in Tasmania.

BY O. A. CARR.
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Dear Bro. Stanley:

A young man from a village, situated twelve miles from Hobart Town having come on a visit to the metropolis, "heard us." His heart was already open. He had attended to the things which were spoken by Spurgeon in London; (and these things, so far as the "plan of a sinner's salvation" is concerned, do not differ practically from the things which were spoken by Paul, only Spurgeon has some notions about the Spirit's operations and pardon before baptism which Paul did not speak to sinners.) He comes nearer preaching the Gospel outright than any Baptist I know. This young man united with us and was very zealous. He walked twelve miles to meeting. He insisted that I visit his town and provided a room for me to preach in. We had given him tracts and papers which he scattered far and wide, so that the people had some idea of what they would hear. On arriving, a day before my appointment that I might look around, I was aroused from a reverie which had taken me in imagination to my old Kentucky home, by the sound of an immense bell in the tower of the "church of England." This was an old fashioned English church with large yard enclosed, while on either side and back of the building was a grave yard. My mind was up I would wait till the audience assembled, and then go in to "the service." The ponderous doors and front gate were swung open. After about the proper interval in walked a lady and a little girl, and thinking it were full time I went in. We three and the sexton, making "us four and no more," were the audience. The "officiating minister" prepared to officiate. His anteroom was at the front door, so he entered there, donned his surplice and walked in his regalia, bearing the unopen Bible, the whole length of the house, to his accustomed place and kissed the Bible (this was done very gracefully). He read, he prayed, and then read the lesson appointed for the evening in the Prayer-book, where it is ordered that the people shall read turn about with the minister (not whether the people are present or not, but on the supposition that there will be people to read). Yes, he read just as though the house the house were full of people. I admired his pluck. The woman and her daughter couldn't find the place and I didn't want to find it. I was afraid I would make some blunder, not being used to alternate reading, but the sexton was, so he and the minister had it turn about. There he sat reading back at the minister and doing duty for a whole houseful, who were not there. I listened to all with amazement. The reading ended the minister gathered up his surplice and Bible and walked again the entire length of the long aisle and disappeared in a corner. I had seen and heard him, and what next! I determined to watch for him as he came out of his cell and get another look, when he would appear as a man. I found him affable and disposed to talk. So we talked. He invited me to his parsonage. I went. He had heard of the work going on in Hobart Town, wondered at and wished to learn particulars. I just went over it all with him. He offered no serious objection to what I said. Beginning with the earthly ministry of Christ we went on to his exaltation and exemplified the commission by some cases of conversion. He seemed to love the Savior, to love his bible, and to be as free from prejudice as any man I ever talked with. He admitted that he had never before heard it after this fashion. On the subject of baptism he thought I was too stringent and cited 1 Cor. i. 14-17, in proof "Christ sent me (Paul) not to baptize," &c., therefore it was not necessary. He turned to the passage and read it together and agreed that it taught that

baptism is subordinate to preaching and not that baptism is unnecessary. The next evening he came to hear me preach on repentance and expressed his approval.

I had to return, having preached one sermon. I have thought of that man often. As a rule when church of England people get away from their Prayer-book they readily accept the simple truth. But alas! the Bible and Prayer-book with them mean too nearly the same thing. A lively discussion (it is said) arose in a stagecoach on the utility of the Prayer-book. A "clergyman" of the English church insisted that a form is necessary and his the best, claiming that, to prevent mistakes in prayer and to say what we wished in the best style, avoiding repetition, a Prayer-book is a necessity, that we can't pray aright without it. A sleepy passenger lifted up his head as if from taking a nap and wished to ask a question. "certainly," said the Rev. reader of prayers, "if I can give you any information on the subject: I would be most happy." Well, I just wanted to know who held the candle for Jonah while he read his prayers in the whale's belly?

There now! Wasn't that enough?

A Word to Preachers.

Dear preachers, give us a change. It is all right for you to tell us of those wonderful donations made for your benefit, but isn't it possible for you to dish it up in a different manner?

You have probably heard of the poor fellow in the boarding-house who liked *livee* very well for fifty or sixty meals, but after that found it less palatable. We find ourselves similarly affected. We read with reasonable interest the first accounts of these cases where houses were "besieged," "broken into," "taken by storm," and "taken possession of." Where the "strong man of the house was bound," "cane," and otherwise misused; and it was somewhat interesting to note the effort to say something just as funny as anybody else had said; but even that attraction is lost now, and we begin to feel our noses turn up just a little as we read that otherwise interesting column of the *Standard*. It does seem almost like sacrilege to turn up my nose at anything a preacher has said, and I'm sorry it is so. I come of a generation of preachers, and was brought up in an atmosphere in which I learned to regard them as more sacred than other men. I have, as a child, sat in the chimney-corner and listened to the wise words of very many of the old veterans of the Reformation, and I remember that sometimes, to my great delight, they would indulge in telling anecdotes, and laughing heartily, but I do not remember that I ever heard them use slang or make superhuman efforts to be funny. The idea of one of those venerable men writing to the *Standard* about being "pounded with sugar, coffee and tea," of "never resisting," "taking it like a man," etc., etc., and that, too, after somebody else had said almost the identical thing.

Funny men are like poets—"born, not made." A preacher runs a greater risk than other men of appearing badly when he tries a role for which he is unfitted by nature. You remember a very, very great man who essayed to write novels, but wisely gave it up after one trial.

I know when a man is very much pleased he feels strongly moved to say something funny; but if it doesn't come natural to him, he would better content himself to do what the Bible says he should, when he is "merry." Still, if he thinks himself witty, and must give us the benefit of it in the papers, let's have a variety. We've had Danbury style long enough. If we can't have something original, we beg that he will take as a model some of the other funny men.—E. M. S., in the *Standard*.

Selected from a Scotch paper.
King Death.

[ORIGINAL.]

King Death to the castle's portals came,
And he knocked at the bolted door;
But its bars of oak and its iron chain
Were bolted, alas! in his face in vain,
For he snapped them at once, like a thread,
In twain,
And stood on the marble floor.
The knight reclined on his bed in state,
And he dared him with feeble breath;
And he proudly spoke of his great estate,
His noble birth, and power elate;
But it weighed not a feather against his fate,
So he bowed to the grim King Death.

The steersman stood on the wave-washed deck;
The wheel in his stout right hand;
And the wild waves swept o'er the shattered wreck,
And the light-house gleamed like a burning speck,
And warned him off with its friendly beck
From the rock on the bluff head-land;
But Death rode fast on the storm-flood's blast,
And he longed to clutch his prey;
And he hovered around the shattered mast,
Till it fell with a crash to the deck at last;
Then the steersman's life and his hope were past,
And he went with King Death away.

The maiden sat in the garden bower,
Her cheeks like the roses bloomed;
And she seemed in the flush of her youthful power,
As strong as the ivy that climbs the tower,
And fresh as the daisy that feels the shower;
But her life and her hopes were doomed.
King Death had fixed on that maiden's cheek
The seal of his kingdom grim;
And she answered his call in accents meek,
And laid her head on his skeleton cheek,
And clasped his neck with her arms so weak.

And went with the awful King.
The warrior rode o'er the battle plain,
And flaunted his standard high;
His horse was pawing the fallen slain,
The bullets whistled around in vain,
And some even smote on the charger's mane,
As onwards they both did fly.
But the shock of battle came at last,
And the rider to earth went down;
One loving look to the sky he cast,
One long, long, for it was his last—
He heaved a sigh, then all was past,
King Death received his own.

To the home of the peasant, far remote,
The grim King found his way;
And neath the roof of his humble cot
The humble man to the dust he smote,
And bore him away from his earthly lot
To the realms of purer day.
But death to him was in mercy sent,
Relief from sorrow and pain,
And the Christian peasant was well content
To go with the guide his Lord had sent,
And follow his steps wherever he went,
For ripe was the Reaper's grain.

King Death in this fleeting world of ours
Reigns monarch supreme o'er all—
The withered tree and the fairest flowers,
The buds that ope to life's morning showers,
And age in its strong meridian powers,
Must bow to the grim King's call;
And love, and hope, and joy, and mirth
At the summons dread must go,
And everything that we love on earth,
The love of beauty, of power, and worth,
Which grew with our lives from our very birth,
And 'tis well that it should be so.

JAMES L. HERCUS.

Cheap Burials.

The town of Somers, Mass., takes upon itself the responsibility of all burials within its limits, without regard to the circumstances of the person to be buried. Rich and poor, high and low, are treated alike in the matter, and for four dollars, sexton, hearse, and grave, are supplied to all alike; so that for twenty years or more every burial in the town has been performed by the town at that cost to those able to pay.

There is no peace that is not won by strife,
No rest that is not purchased by the sword;

It is no idle hand, no dreaming life,
That earns the blessed guerdon of the Lord.

Wilt thou whose blade is even in its sheath,
Look for the crown that victor-brows have worn?

He who would claim the sacred olive-wreath
Must learn to bear the diadem of thorn.

A Tale of Jerusalem.

Very beautiful was the coming of the sun, one day, over the cities of Judah. The tops of the mountains, which received his first warm kisses, smiled down on each neighboring valley; and the Israelites and dark-eyed women went forth to their tasks with cheerful hearts. The dewy grass, and the olive trees glittered as with countless diamonds. All nature was glad like a laughing infant.

But in a street in a city of Nain stood the house of tears—the house of the widow Unni, whose son, the preceding night, had been forsaken by the angels of Life, and now lay a cold corpse in the inner chamber. And there came a young Jewish maid, early in the morning, and went into the chamber. Her cheeks, as she walked through the fresh air, were like the roses of the plains of Sharon; but when she passed the portals, and entered, and saw the dead man, her face imaged the color of ashes, the emblem of mourning and decay. The maid was Zar, the beloved of Shirval, the widow's son. Her mission was to inquire about his illness; she found it ended.

Noon came. The preparations for the burial had been made, and ere the daylight should close, the body of the youth was to be put in its sepulchre, without the walls of the town.

He looked beautiful in his manly proportions, even in death. The curls of his hair were drawn back from his forehead, and a linen bandage had been passed under his chin, and tied around his face. And on one side stood his mother, and on the other side Zar, his beloved. Unni wept, and rent the air with shrieks of agony; but the maid was silent and tearless.

Twenty-and-four years had Shirval lived in his native city; and it was known that his mother, to whom he was ever obedient, leaned on him as a staff of her declining age. He was her only child.

"O, God of Judgments!" cried Unni, "what am I that thou hast afflicted me thus?"

And her gray hairs were bowed to the ground, and she would not receive consolation.

So the young man's body lay there, the day still waned, and the mourners arrived to attend him to the last resting place. They placed the corpse upon the bier, and set forth.

No one could tell why it was so, that, as they advanced, many spectators, people of Nain, gathered around them, and walked with them on their silent errand. The rich men and the officers joined the crowd; and it swelled to many hundreds. Yet none spoke, or understood what mysterious impulse led him thus to honor the funeral march of the poor widow's son.

Now they came to the gates of the town, and the foremost mourners passed out, and went no further; for a band of travelers was before them, coming inward, and stopped the way. The travelers paused too—all but a small group who approached the mourners of Shirval. Most of those in the group were wayworn and coarse in their appearance; but their look imported strange things—and one of their number, as he walked a little before the rest, fixed all eyes, while the hearts of the wide assembly throbbed, as at the nearness of an undefinable presence, more than mortal.

The being was of middle stature, of fair proportions, in every motion whereof was easy grace. His step was neither rapid nor very slow; and his look more sought the earth than swept around him with glances of pride. His face was beautifully clear, and his eyes, blue as the sky above them, beamed forth benevolence of love. His brown hair was parted in the middle of his head, and flowed in heavy ringlets down upon his shoulders. The aspect of the stranger was

not deficient in dignity, but it seemed far unlike the dignity of princes and captains.

As this presence came in among them, the haughtiest of Nain were awed; and the concourse paused, with the expectation, as it were, of an unwonted event. It needed not that any one should inform the being what had happened. Shirval's corpse was there, borne upon its bier; and the widow was nigh convulsed in her grief; and Zar, the maiden, followed meekly.

A moment only were the compassionate events of the being bent upon this sight of agony and death—bent with a mortal look of sympathy. He stepped forth, and stood before Unni. He spoke—and his voice, musical and manly, thrilled to the fine chords of every soul in that multitude.

"Widow of Nain," he said, "weep not."

And he looked about, and waved his hand gently; and as he touched the bier with one finger, they who carried it put it upon the ground, and stood away. And the stranger bent over the young man's corpse, and gazed upon the face.

O, Nazarine! thou who didst pour the bloody sweat upon the cross, at the Place of Skulls! what feelings of human pity—what yearning for the weal of all mankind—what prophetic horror of the agonies of thine own death—what sympathy with the woes of earth, which the mortality of thy nature gave thee to feel as mortals themselves feel—what soul-tears for that pain and wretchedness, which must still continue through time—what of all these were thine during that fearful minute, it were almost blasphemous to transcribe.

There was a stillness over all the gathering. Even the grief of Unni was hushed. The people had fallen back from around the being, and he and the dead form were together—all eyes bent toward them.

A second time he spoke—and at the awful nature of the command he gave, the hearts of the people paused in motion, and the breathings were suspended.

"Live! thou who art dead!—Arise, and speak to the woman, thy mother!"

At the word, the white vestments wherewith they had bound Shirval began to move. His eyes unclosed, and the color came back into his cheeks. The lips that had been still parted a passage for the misty breath—and the leaden fingers glowed with the warmth of life. The ashy hue of his skin was marked by the creeping blood, as it started to fulfill its circulation in the veins—and the nostrils quivered at the inward and outward motion of air. His limbs felt the wondrous impulse—he rose, and stood up among them, wrapped in his shroud and the white linen.

"I have slept!" said he, turning to his mother, "but there have been no dreams."

And he kissed the widow's cheek, and smiled pleasantly on Zar. Then the awe of the presence of the stranger gathered like a mantle upon him—and the three knelt upon the ground and bent their faces on the earth-worn sandals of the Man of Woe.—Selected.

A church in debt is a church with a mill-stone around its neck. Better be fifty years in building than run in debt. Better worship fifty years in a barn than bar the church door with a debt. But, if the debt has been unwisely contracted, they pay it, if it draws the blood. And hard times are the best times to pay church debts.—Times.

Give us the eye which can see God in all; the hand which can serve God with all; and the heart which can bless him for all.