

# OUR MONTHLY.

A

RELIGIOUS AND LITERARY MAGAZINE.

JANUARY—1872.

ON LAKE MICHIGAN.

BY C. A. C.

IT was on a perfect June evening that we left the great city of Chicago, taking the steamer *Maine* for Ogdensburg. The prospect of a week on the lakes was delightful. Farewell the luxuries of broad halls and high ceilings, and welcome the narrow apartments of a lake steamer, for should we not have those fresh fine breezes which our land brethren would so vainly covet?

Lake Michigan was more grand than she ever seemed on the map when our childish fingers pencilled the outlines, and we wondered if we should ever see her in reality. Here, indeed, we were, quietly moving through the still water, obedient to the beating of the boat's steam heart. Sometimes we looked over the side of the *Maine*, at the foam with its hundred tiny rainbows, dancing, like bright fairies, to keep time with our motion; or we sat on the hurricane-deck in the twilight, and watched the friendly constellations emerge, star by star, from the sun's departing splendor, and looked far away to where the dull eastern sky joined the dark waters; and again, with a sort of relief, to where the bright western clouds clustered over the Wisconsin shore.

How conscious of great thoughts hid-

den in their solemn breasts do these mighty lakes seem to be! To us they reveal an impression of eternity. They have a look of proud, reserved strength. There is a power in their gathered storm fury, before which oaken beams break, and when they plunge in terrible haste off the walls of Niagara, then it is we recognize their tremendous majesty, and acknowledge with reverent awe the great Author.

To us the waters were friendly, seldom even tossing their pretty white caps at us; oftener playing in bright, laughing wavelets, and sometimes smooth as glass, sleeping, dreaming, it seemed, in the happy sunlight.

All sorts of passengers kept us company, but among them was a family which attracted special attention. An old, care-worn man, with bent shoulders and thin face, with the air of a real gentleman, seemed to be the only protector of two bright, beautiful boys, perhaps seven and four years old. Their faces were different. The older one, Harry, had dark, straight hair, brown, thoughtful eyes, and a look of watchfulness and responsibility which was remarkable. Georgie, the younger, was the picture of

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(1)

When the Orient rocks were shaken  
 By a doleful cry,  
 And that strange and lone "forsaken"  
 Burst Judca's sky.

Bluer are the fields above us,  
 Greener those below,  
 Seem the skies bent down to love us  
 And our secret know,  
 Deeper purpled glow the asters  
 By the trodden way,  
 Softer smile the rocky pastures  
 With November gray.

All the little graves are greener—  
 They are holy ground;  
 Sleep the children's forms serener,  
 Waiting for the sound,  
 Waiting till their mothers find them  
 In the shining crowd,  
 Thinking, will the splendor blind them  
 From His regal cloud?

Thanks to thee, O eagle Roman,  
 With the bloody spear!  
 Fainting man and dying woman,  
 Thou hast brought Him near;  
 Leave to us the Galilean,  
 Spare the stripe of green,  
 Take thy Jove and lift thy pæan,  
 Leave the Nazarene.

#### A MINISTERIAL TEA PARTY.\*

BY MRS. JULIA M'NAIR WRIGHT.

THE author of a recent work has given us a charming picture of a clergyman who once ministered in Utopia. The Utopians, after their new pastor had preached to them but one Sabbath, sent him on a pleasure excursion, and while he was gone, furnished a house for him with all modern luxuries. I wish in my heart that our young friends, Rodney Nelson and his wife, had embarked on a fairy ship, and succeeded this minister in his pastoral charge. Instead of this, they were ordained to serve in Stoneton,

\* The incidents narrated at this "Tea Party" are all absolute facts.

which lies at least one thousand degrees to the north of Utopia, and is hemmed in by the Sahara of Humdrum on the one side, and the mountains of Reality on the other.

Rodney, like the generality of the ministers of the present day, was for the most part the product of a theological seminary. After three years—very happy ones on the whole—the seminary declared its work for its neophyte completed; hands were laid in solemn consecration on his head; he was charged to do well the work of the Lord, and so went forth with but a vague idea of what that work might

be, yet certainly with some spiritual yearning to labor faithfully for a Master whom he honestly loved.

Now there are schools for the prophets in all Christianized lands; but except in foreign missionary stations, there are no schools for the training of the prophets' wives. If there were such institutions, it is hardly likely that these embryo apostles of modern days would go to them to choose their wives; for by a singular perversity these gentlemen seem bent on selecting such persons as their congregations—admirable judges—shall decree most unsuited to the position. The fact is, the future pastors must come up to maturity the best way she can, and is then expected to comport herself as if duly instructed for every emergency.

Mrs. Rodney Nelson had been educated in a city, under the joint care of her father and her grandmother. The father measured all men by their intellectual acquirements; the grandmother was particularly impressive on wealth, pedigree, and the manners of good society. The father's sole demand was that his daughter should be a careful student; the grandmother admonished her never to forget that by family and education she was a lady.

The grandmother died just before the marriage of her pupil, the father shortly after. As is customary in such cases, the administrators of the old lady's estate took as their spoils all that she left, while, not to be outdone by them, the executors ate up nearly all the small fortune which the father had bequeathed to his daughter; and when Rodney and his wife went to Stoneton, a few thousands were all their fortune.

Rodney's nearest relative was his Aunt Jane, a sagacious, abrupt, matter-of-fact person; with a peculiarly refreshing way of looking at matters exactly as they were.

Mrs. Rodney Nelson entered upon her new home and her new duties resolved to accomplish wonders. She had an exaggerated view, gathered from popular stories, of the duties incumbent on a pastor's wife; she had also an exaggerated view of the position this individual holds in

the hearts of her people, and the friendly warmth which welcomes and sustains her every effort.

All these aspirations and expectations this young woman poured out in her letters to Aunt Jane. Aunt Jane shook her head in solemn foreboding of a coming disappointment. As time passed on, ardor was succeeded by anxiety; then the chill of discouragement crept over the genial exultation of the young correspondent, as frosts creep over flowers; next came despondency, then almost despair, and a cynical bitterness of spirit. Finally Mrs. Nelson wrote to her Aunt Jane that she wished Rodney had chosen any other profession. She would not distress him by such observations, but she assured her Aunt Jane that she thought her present position most unhappy. Other pastors' wives might be comfortable, helped, and sympathized with, but for herself, she was wearied of Stoneton, and thought it must be the worst charge in all the Church. She wished Rodney would resign, but she did not like to ask him to do so, the responsibility being too great for her to assume. She concluded her letter by saying: "I feel as if I would like to run away from Stoneton, to go almost anywhere else in the world."

Aunt Jane seldom left the home where for forty years she had lived alone with her maid, servant and mistress growing old together. The good woman fancied that she could not sleep well out of her own bed; that her beloved home would fall suddenly to ruin if left to itself; but after reading and re-reading the letter of little Mrs. Nelson, the worthy aunt resolved to make a grand sacrifice of her tastes, and go and visit that disconsolate young person.

After a large amount of packing and unpacking, of admonishing, warning and entreating her ancient servant, Aunt Jane, with fear and trembling, committed herself to the cars and the care of Providence, and greatly to her own astonishment reached her nephew's house safely at the end of twelve hours. Aunt Jane gave one day to recruiting, another day to looking about her, noting the changes

six years had made in the two whom she had last seen on their wedding tour, and playing with her rosy and noisy grand-nephew.

On the third day Aunt Jane and Mrs. Rodney were sitting together in peace, when the old lady carefully settled her cap strings, and smoothing the wrinkles out of her alpaca apron, remarked:

"Niece, I've come to answer your letter."

"I'm glad I wrote it, if it secured me your visit," said Mrs. Rodney.

"And I'm very sorry you had occasion to feel as you wrote."

"I *had* occasion—yes, I *have* it, every day," said Mrs. Nelson, a hard look stealing over the sparkling sweetness of her face.

"But, my dear, you ought to be happy. Rodney, I am sure, has in no way disappointed you."

"O, Rodney,—he's an old darling," laughed the wife.

"And your boy thrives; your house is nicely furnished."

"People manage to thrust thorns even into those comforts," said Mrs. Rodney.

"The fact is, aunt, I am all well enough off, when I am let alone *in* my own home; but as a general thing, I am not so let alone, and I am very unhappy *outside* of my house."

"But, my dear, a woman is not supposed to live outside of her own household."

"But a minister's wife does, practically speaking. I made up my mind, Aunt Jane, to like my people, to do them good, to help Rodney in his work, and be happy in it. I have done what I could, tried what I could, and the result is I am—unhappy."

"The conscientiousness of duty done," began Aunt Jane, in set fashion, but her niece interrupted her.

"Aunt Jane, don't take up the style of the story book. I have been instructed in that long enough. In the moral tale virtue is its own reward; duty done is sweet as the roses of Cashmere; you have such an infinite satisfaction in the right that your soul glories with perpetual content. That is theory, but

what is actual experience? The man who gets his leg shattered marching bravely up to the cannon's mouth does not find amputation any more of a physical luxury than he who was shot running away. I give many a soft answer, settle many a quarrel, deny myself many things to practise charity, because it is duty which I could not be satisfied to leave unperformed; but instead of serenely rejoicing in being kind to the evil and unthankful, it would be the most intense satisfaction to give them all a good shaking, tell them just what I think of them, and have nothing to do with them forever more."

At such a warlike manifesto from a small white handed creature, in blue lawn and blue ribbons, Aunt Jane relaxed into a smile.

"I'll tell you what it is, aunt," said the little woman, "I do a many good deeds which I most heartily begrudge to these people."

"But not to the dear Lord, I hope," remarked Aunt Jane.

"No, I don't," said Mrs. Nelson; but she said it snappishly.

Aunt Jane had come trusting to do a good work, and she now sat meditating on the best fashion for it. Her niece presently resumed her discourse.

"I told you, Aunt Jane, that tales and story books had deceived me, that is, they led me to feel assured of something which I shall never find at Stonetown. The stories tell us how the people and the pastor are one in heart and effort. The minister is thought of *first*; nothing is pinched, begrudged and reflected on; trouble and sickness draw the bonds of union the closer. My experience is that of the Jews—'I looked for much, and it came to little.' I hoped here to find plenty of well developed religious common sense, and I scarcely find a particle of it."

"My dear," said Aunt Jane, "religious common sense thoroughly well developed, is an absolute living up to the Biblical idea; it is perfection; were your people perfect they would not need a pastor; you were not called to minister to a community of saints, but to a congregation of sinners."

"I don't believe," said Mrs. Nelson, moodily, "that any other place is so trying as Stoneton; if I thought I had not the *worst* place, I believe I'd be more contented; but it does seem as if six years were a long enough time to toil in the hardest part of the vineyard."

"Now," said the old lady, confidentially, "I think it might be an advantage to both of us, if you just stated your grievances to me as they have occurred to you."

"I might, if I chose, begin at my disappointment in the ministers themselves. I looked for a brotherhood in fact as well as in the appellation: I supposed there was a freemasonry, an *esprit de corps* among them, a pride in each others' well-doing, a helpfulness, a sympathy that is really the farthest thing from being common. It seems to me that in proportion as they are successful, they become vain-glorious and selfish; the brother is not a brother in spite of externals; he is esteemed in regard to the size of his church, and the liberality of his salary. But we will let that pass."

"Yes, my dear, we will let it pass, remembering that the Lord did not commit the gospel of his Son to angels, to be preached by them; but he gave it to imperfectly sanctified men. We must not expect to find in the ministers more than we expect in ourselves, or in the average of their congregations."

"I don't wish you to think," said Mrs. Nelson, "that I have not found good men, and those we both love and esteem, in the ministry."

"No; I understand you. You are simply disappointed at finding human frailties, the infirmities of the flesh, in a class, all of which, except yourselves, you had resolved should be faultless."

Mrs. Rodney laughed. "Well aunt, in the very beginning I did not find that we were received here, or looked upon as I had expected. I remember that when we first came, our buggy broke down one day, and a man who was passing—one of our people—helped Rodney get a new linch pin in. All the time he helped, he talked in this fashion: 'That linch pin give out awful quick for a new 'un; hope

its owner won't take after it. Our last man wore his kerrige all out here, and he wore hisself out too; 'taint every man will last seventy-five years, though. You're raythur a young man to step into the shoes of such an old 'un. Elder Church, he says there's bad times ahead for our congregation. A very good man is Church, bein' an elder, but he don't like nothin' he don't do himself. Now we'll lift that buggy up with the lady in, there aint much of *her*. Heer'd somebody say t'other day like as how there didn't look to be as much of her as of the old lady in her best days. The old lady wore out too, and I don't think Elder Church took it very kind of her to do it; he reflected on her right smart; but then, Dominy, you know we will wear out, all of us.' Now Aunt Jane, wasn't that a *horrible* way for any one to talk? I never could bear that man since!"

Aunt Jane laughed heartily. "It ought to be a compensation to you to tell the story so well; now what else?"

"O, plenty of things. There is Mrs. Blacksmith, who never enters my house except by the kitchen door; and that without knocking, just to see what goes on in my kitchen. Then when they papered the parsonage, the ladies came to do it to save hiring a paper hanger, and they dragged the affair out, coming when they chose, and delaying and talking. The day Mrs. Blacksmith came to paper the sitting-room I was gone, and that woman deliberately rummaged my house, looked in drawers, explored the pantry and cellar, and *went through* everything as dexterously as a burglar. She even told of it herself afterwards, and I am forced to meet her as an equal!"

"There are other things as vexatious; these people are so different from me, all their ideas are different; they measure everybody by themselves; their standard of excellence is the number of pounds of butter and cheese a person can make. If I were an inveterate slanderer it would not be so much to my disadvantage as it is not to know how to milk; their highest praise is that a person can *work*, and they do not mean intellectual work, nor Christian work, but such things as wash-

ing and scrubbing. They inquire how much I pay for everything, and what wages I give my girl.

"Then; aunt, I am so hindered in Christian work. I had to do a three months' battle to banish the spelling-book and primer from the Sunday-school; they insisted upon teaching 'the alphabet and not the gospel. All the thanks I got was to be called domineering, and have the assistant superintendent at swords' points with me ever since. When I collected money to buy the school a map of Palestine, Mrs. Potipher said I was dunning people continually, though I gave twice as much as she did. I teach a class of young men, and she is constantly striving to make them ashamed of reciting to a woman.

"There was the prayer meeting. It was so hard to go about among these elderly women and ask them to have the meeting established; it is so hard to have always to lead it, and harder still to have somebody always condemning it, saying 'it is hypocrisy, innovation,'—and doing their best to break it up."

Now we must not think that Mrs. Nelson launched all this jeremiad at her aunt on one occasion. It was only by degrees that her excellent relative reached the depth of her niece's troubles.

Said Mrs. Nelson, "Mrs. Whitney told me that when the church met to decide whether they should call Mr. Norton or Rodney, many voted for Rodney because we had no family. Only think of calling a man, not because he has spiritual fitness, but because he has no children! When Freddy was born, one of my friends said she hoped we would not have so many children as the last pastor—a large family was such a burden to a people! Then, when the baby died, one old monster said it was just as well, for if it had lived I would have been at the expense of a nurse."

"Such things are very trying," said Aunt Jane, "but after all, there are afflictions really far harder to be borne. Suppose you were in debt, or that Rodney was unable to buy a decent coat to preach in. You must strive in a Chris-

tian spirit to put up with the imperfections of your people."

"Ah, but to try to do them good and be hindered in all your plans! How was it when I tried to get them to form a missionary society, and to make up a box for some home missionary? Half of them would do nothing. Those that took an interest were worried and over-taxed. I found plenty to *pray* missionary, very few to *give* missionary; and when the box was finished, I was so disappointed in it, I told Rodney I would never try to have them do anything again!"

"Be not weary in well-doing," said Aunt Jane, "for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not."

Even at this gentle admonition from scripture, Mrs. Nelson looked impatient.

"Do you know, I am sometimes so tired out that I can't even bear to have scripture quoted at me?"

"I have noticed in Rodney a fault that I think is too common among ministers," said Aunt Jane. "They are so busy breaking the bread of life abroad, that they forget to dispense it at home, and leave their families to spiritual starvation. But after all, niece, I think the great trouble is, that you have neglected to count up your mercies while you have been making a daily catalogue of your miseries. Is it not something to be thankful for that you can keep a valuable servant, and in sickness have been able to hire first-class nurses?"

"And my affectionate people make no end of talk—that is, some of them do, and say *they* can do without."

"There are fault-finders everywhere—the Lord has to put up with a good many of them."

At this pointed reproof Mrs. Nelson blushed crimson.

"Again, you have been able to furnish your house comfortably without debt."

"Yes, and Mrs. Johnson talks about my using damask instead of brown cotton table-cloths for every day, as if our own family must not care for what is nice. Mr. Johnson complains that the minister's family has more silver ware than himself, and Mr. Newlin was telling

Rodney the other day how much we ought to save out of eight hundred dollars! Why, aunt! I have the greatest trouble, by economy and doing all our sewing, to get through the year with that eight hundred and our morsel of interest."

"Let us go on with the mercies," said Aunt Jane. "You have some very devoted friends here. You feel discouraged about your work in the church, but three of your class have been converted."

"In six years! O aunt, such a long time!"

"Judson worked longer without apparent result. Moreover, think of the scripture—'Let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and cover a multitude of sins.' Did you not yourself tell me that Mrs. Merrit had been a changed woman since she went to the little prayer meeting, and how important that is, especially since she is the mother of a family. You complain of not being sympathized with, niece; do not forget that it is a great blessing to be able to sympathize with others. That lady who visited me last evening, told me that when her twin children were drowned, she thought her heart would have broken had it not been for your sympathy; she can never forget what she owes you. It was not beneath Christ's mission to bind up broken hearts."

Tears sprang to Mrs. Nelson's eyes, but she was not yet in a mood to look at matters in a right light. "I could have done that without being a minister's wife," she said.

"But if Rodney had not been the pastor of Stoneton you would not have had that particular opportunity, and might never have had any other. Then how is it about the young girls? Della Burt told me that none of them could quarrel and be bad friends since you came, because you insisted on their making up."

"O, the girls; they are more easily managed than older ones. Now there is old Miss Nancy coming here; she is so crochetty and troublesome, gossips so much, and stays so long, that she is re-

garded as a nuisance by the whole community; but people, even her own relations, deliberately send her over here to encroach on my time and wear out my nerves; and they laugh to think how they have got rid of her."

"It is not necessary that you should permit yourself to be imposed upon," said Aunt Jane, seeing things as they were, as usual. "No one can force a burden on you which your own sense of right rejects."

"One very great grievance is," said Mrs. Rodney, "that people do not like their pastoreess to have any particular friends. Now, of course, we find in a congregation people that are especially congenial, others who are not. How can one have the same degree of intimacy with all? The myth is, that the minister's wife has a large circle of *friends*; the fact is, that she has many acquaintances, and is condemned to the loneliness of having no intimate friends."

Some people less wise than Aunt Jane would have combated Mrs. Nelson's statements, would have reproved and exhorted her, and convinced her against her will. Aunt Jane believed in practical illustrations in teaching; she laid her plans, and she worked them out in this wise.

A few days afterwards she said to her niece: "A dear friend of mine, Professor Campbell's wife, is to pass through Pineville next week, and as that is so near, I have written asking her to come up here for a day or two. I know you will enjoy seeing her, and will find her a valuable acquaintance."

"Yes, indeed," said Mrs. Nelson, with a great sigh, "I shall enjoy seeing some one not from Stoneton."

"Then there is something I want you to do. There are several ministers settled within a dozen miles of you. I want you to make a tea party, and invite these ministers and their wives to it, while Mrs. Campbell is here. I see your pantry is remarkably well stocked with preserves, jellies, and spiced fruits."

"Yes," said Mrs. Nelson, indifferently, "the people send me in a great deal of such things."

"Ah!" said Aunt Jane, "I suppose



*A Ministerial Tea Party.*

that is their way of testifying their affection."

As if by a revelation, that pantry assumed a new value in Mrs. Nelson's eyes; during increasing despondency she had ceased to look upon these customary gifts as tokens of her people's love.

"I shall be glad to have the tea party, aunt. We can make it quite pleasant. You were always fond of the society of ministers."

But it was not to gratify her own taste that Aunt Jane had projected this modest entertainment.

Several days passed; invitations were given. Mrs. Nelson had completed her arrangements for her mild festivity, Mrs. Campbell had arrived, and our enthusiastic young friend was entirely won by the gentle melancholy of her face—a melancholy that seemed rather the reminiscence of a past than the endurance of a present sorrow. She was lovely too, and full of winning grace. Mrs. Nelson's critical grandmother would have been entirely satisfied with her whole demeanor.

We pass on to the hour when all Mrs. Nelson's guests had assembled. The ladies were in the parlor; their husbands were discussing theology and their labors in the study. Full of her grievance, Mrs. Nelson soon touched her favorite theme. It must be remembered that Mrs. Nelson regarded herself as an ill-used individual, one of the most unfortunate among ministers' wives. As her guests came together, despite her long nourished self-pity, the conviction was forced upon her that they, nearly all of them, looked much more broken and weary with the struggle of life than she did herself.

Said Mrs. Nelson, as she fluently discoursed to her sisters:

"Ministers have elders and deacons to aid them in the discharge of their duties, but who thinks of helping the minister's wife? She is left alone to start prayer meetings and missionary societies, visit the sick, collect for the poor, and canvass for the Sunday-school." Mrs. Nelson had been so left alone, and she thought it a hard imposition.

"I could tell you more than that," said a mild little woman, who sat in a corner knitting a gray sock. "At my husband's first charge we lived next to the church, a dilapidated, cold, barn-like building. We had no sexton, except myself and our one elder, an old Dutchman, who spoke very broken English. I swept and dusted the church, and on Sunday the elder and I lighted the fires and lamps; he superintended the Sunday-school, and I led the singing. In hot weather we had our prayer meeting in the vestibule, to save extra lights. One hot night the door kept swinging shut, and the place was suffocating. At the end of the meeting our elder swore that he would never come to prayer meeting again in summer time."

"Swore!" cried Aunt Jane, horror-stricken.

"Yes, he swore in *Dutch*, and thought no harm of it. When reproved, he replied that it 'Vash so dunder und blitzen hot any man woul't schwear!'"

"And *may* I inquire what salary you received there?" asked Mrs. Nelson, leaning forward.

"Three hundred dollars, and any gifts our people brought."

"And your family?"

"Our three boys."

Mrs. Nelson uttered not one word, but she mentally removed the crown of martyrdom which she had set upon her own unwrinkled brows, and laid it silently on the knee of the pale little woman who was knitting the stout sock.

"For my part," spoke up the youngest of the party, "I say we cannot live on what we get—only five hundred—and if we stay where we are another year, I mean to open a milliner shop."

If she had drawn out a six-shooter and fired it among her ministerial sisters, there would not have been greater consternation. Mrs. Nelson was, as usual, the first to speak.

"That is simply an impossibility, my friend."

"And why is it? I was a milliner, and a very good one, before I was married, and could make a comfortable living by it. Why may I not do it again?"



"Because no congregation would put up with it. Congregations, as a general thing, object to having their pastor's wife earn money. They are sometimes forced to submit to having their unsalaried servant earn her bread and butter by teaching school or music, or by writing books; but as to the millinery business, my dear, the upshot would be that your husband would be forced to leave his desk, and clerk behind your counter. You may call this a prejudice, but it is a remnant of an honorable feeling that the pastor should be able to support his family like other men."

"But," said the would-be milliner, argumentatively, for she was an obstinate young person, "my husband's parents are dead, and we must take care of his sister. I don't see how we are to do it, unless I open a shop where she can help me."

Mrs. Nelson shook her head.

"Cannot she teach, write, draw, copy for lawyers? As far as I know, the congregation would prefer to have her a laundress, far off, than a milliner in *your* shop."

"Her education has been neglected," said the woman of business, flushing. "The parents spent all they could raise in educating two sons for the ministry, and now the elder brother is in ill health, and supported by a Board, and what is the orphan girl to do? In any other line of life my husband would be able to help his sister."

"It is hard," said Aunt Jane; "but these are extreme cases. As a general thing, the ministers are as well or better off than other people. There is hardly a congregation where there is not a laborer, mechanic, artisan, or perhaps professional man, in just such straits as these."

"But, Aunt Jane," said Mrs. Nelson, "he is not galled by knowing that he is not earning the interest on the money he has spent in his education. Then, besides, the training and cultivation of ministers and their wives make some things necessary to them that are not so to the people you mention. Many an artisan would not know what to do with a library, while to a minister's family it is almost as needful as daily bread. Be-

sides, there is the justice that demands high wages for a high order of work."

A lady in brown, turning to the *écervant* milliner, remarked tersely:

"When you are a minister's *widow*, you may keep shop, sew, or go out scrubbing, to support yourself. While you are a minister's *wife*, you must support a certain sort of respectability, if you starve for it."

"Speaking of libraries," said one who had hitherto only listened, "reminds me of Doctor T——'s case. A large family, poor pay, and many troubles injured his health, and his disease affected his brain. For several years he was unable to preach. His four children, during his illness, were entirely deprived of education. Amid sickness and poverty, one comfort after another left them, and their library, the only really valuable thing they possessed, was sold at a great sacrifice, absolutely to buy bread."

"The library sold! Books—dear, precious old friends—books sold for bread!" With trembling haste Mrs. Nelson stole her crown away from under the gray knitting, and sent it by the hand of imagination, to be laid on the distant study table of Doctor T——.

"I don't know as that is any worse than poor Mr. White's history," said another lady. "His family lost all they had in the South, at the beginning of the war, and got up here without furniture or clothes. They called him at Rugby, and he went in debt about four hundred dollars for necessaries. They say his wife was not very thrifty, but it would take amazing thrift to save four hundred, after supporting a family of four on seven hundred dollars. The result was that he was sued, and the unpleasantness caused him to lose his church. They had become very destitute, when the Board sent him far beyond civilization, as a missionary in Arizona."

Our young friend was just considering whether to take away her crown from Doctor T——, who had outlived his troubles, and send it to Arizona in quest of Brother White, when Aunt Jane spoke to her friend Mrs. Campbell—"You have known something of small salaries and great troubles."

"Yes, very much of them," was the answer.

"Perhaps your experience might keep us from becoming selfish," said the knitter.

"I can remember," said the lady, speaking in the even tone of one who has grown accustomed to their grief, "when we had but six hundred a year, and paid one hundred for house rent. We had five children under ten years old, and for two years I was a confirmed invalid."

"I am sure I don't wonder," said the youngest guest.

"My husband can get fifteen hundred a year by teaching, but never more than six for preaching, and yet he was accounted a good preacher," continued the lady.

"And where are the children?" asked the lady in brown.

"They are all gone. All are dead; and when the last one died, we had no money to buy her shroud or coffin; and we had borrowed so often, we did not know where to borrow more. We thought of a little iron "bank" where our children had been used to put their stray pennies, and breaking it open, there were fifteen dollars; just what we needed to bury our little child."

There was a sudden hush in the room; all eyes had grown dim; the knitter unconsciously wiped her's on the gray sock; and Mrs. Nelson, in tremulous haste, brought back her crown of martyrdom from its last award, and reverently laid it as an offering on the deep mourning robe that fell about the sad-faced woman with the golden hair.

A silence still; then she who had thus hushed them all in sympathy, spoke again. "These light afflictions endure but for a moment."

The pause had grown painful to Mrs. Nelson, who had the unfortunate ability to suffer in other people's woes. She looked from the window and saw a gray-haired man coming in at the gate. At the same moment the maid announced supper.

"There is Mr. Smith," said the hostess, and went out to bring him in.

"I suppose you are surprised at such an assemblage, and imagine it a new-

fashioned Presbytery," said Rodney Nelson, going forward to greet Mr. Smith.

"No; I'm past being surprised at anything," replied Mr. Smith, despondingly, dropping into the place assigned.

"Where are you settled now, Brother Smith?" asked Rodney.

"Nowhere, and don't believe I ever will be. My gray hair, as I have no particular fame united to it, is against me. I've taken my wife and daughter to stay with my brother-in-law, and what to do I do not know."

"Cheer up!" said Rodney's wife, as she poured tea and coffee, "you will get a charge, all in good time."

Her prophecy was fulfilled in the space of six months.

What was our discontented young friend thinking of as she waited on her guests? She was sincerely thanking God that her lines had fallen to her in such pleasant places; that her sky had been so bright, her way so clear, her burden so easy; no homelessness, no shadow of death, no scanting even of the daily bread, no relatives in poverty and distress; vanished probably forever the dream that she was one of the souls under the altar crying, "How long, O Lord!"

On returning to the parlor, Aunt Jane softly asked Mr. Smith's history.

"It is a hard case," said Mrs. Nelson. "He got desperate trying to live on five hundred, and accepted an agency for a religious Board, with a salary of one thousand a year. At the end of the first year the Board ceased to employ agents, and he has been looking for a church this twelve months. There is nothing against him but lack of youth and eloquence—he is really a very good man."

She glanced around the room filled with calm or cheerful faces, and humming with really brilliant conversation.

"Aunt Jane, is it not strange to see such bright looks, when all these have been tried so severely?"

"O, my child," replied the old lady, "trials embitter and crush the world's children, but not the children of our Father's kingdom."

The guests were gone, and Freddy was in bed. Mrs. Nelson went to Aunt Jane

after Mrs. Campbell had left her. Entirely unaware of the old lady's intention of inculcating a lesson in her tea party, but having learned it well, she exclaimed, "O, aunt! do you know all their talk today made me feel so ashamed? Why, I *will not* be so repining any more; we have a great deal less trouble than the rest of these people, and Stoneton is not so bad after all. Indeed, all things considered, it is quite nice;—anyway, the drawbacks to happiness here are trifles."

"If they were not, my child, you could endure as seeing Him who is invisible." Does not Christ say, 'Blessed is the man who endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life?' But, my dear, if one goes on grumbling at his own endurance, and begrudging his own fortitude, it seems to me that he would wear his crown with a blush of shame. If you are going to do anything for Jesus, to make sacri-

fices for Him, do it heartily and uncomplainingly, and be sure you could find no cross better fitted to your need than the very one your Lord has assigned you. It is true, as you said, that the education and daily life of ministers, refining their tastes and cultivating their minds, may render them sensitive to things which would be of small account to many other people. I admit that there is much of great trial and anxiety connected with the profession, but in these no man can reach the bitter fulness of his Master's cup; there are great troubles, and not less great compensations."

Having thus faithfully accomplished her mission, Aunt Jane returned to her own home, accompanied by Mrs. Campbell.

Thereafter, when wearied with the greatness of the way, and tempted to sit down and complain, Mrs. Nelson restrained herself by calling to mind her Ministerial Tea Party.

## GEOGRAPHY AS A SCIENCE.

NO. 1.

BY A. S. R.

**I**F you do not believe that geography changes, wait until your little girl comes home from school with a demure face, and asks you what is the capital of Georgia. Now that is one of the plain things that you *do* know, and you tell her "Milledgeville." Aha! the child has caught you. "It *used* to be that," she says, "but it's Atlanta now!"

The grown people should wake up to this subject, as the children are waking. Few people have the time they would like to devote to the sciences. Cases there are, though rare, of business men and busy men, who seize their spare moments for the pursuit of a favorite subject, finding relaxation in researches which seem but dry to those who have not caught the inspiration that a true science always

gives, luring one on by unexpected paths to ever-varying sources of enjoyment. Such a science, we claim, and simpler than many, is geography. Do you, my friend, who laugh at your infatuated neighbor, with his butterflies and beetles, nets and bottles, if your taste does not lie in that direction, try a science in which it does. You often look up at the Professor's observatory, with the reluctant thought that astronomy is as far away from your reach as the stars it treats of; *here* is a science that is attainable. Carry out some of your youthful plans about improvement, and not allowing your education to be finished.

"But Geography?" you question, thinking with some contempt of a calico-covered book of childhood, where long-