crowded as if no such thing had occurred, and the mourners of the day shared in all the revelries of the night. Such a satire upon "the fashion of this world" helped no doubt to intensify the sadness of his sudden death, and from that time the brilliant life of London, with all its triumphs and successes, seems to have palled upon her. With a woman of her nature this was no mere "phase," resulting from the painful emotions of the time, but a gradual deepening of an innate piety, for which thousands have had reason to be thankful. Never again did she enter a theatre, even when Sarah Siddons was taking a prominent part in "Percy" and we cannot but admire the consistent striving after the "highest," which is the keynote of all her subsequent career.

In 1785 we see her installed as mistress of a tiny house called "Cowslip Green," about ten miles from Cheddar; and when in 1789 her sisters gave up the Park Street school and settled in Pulteney Street, Bath, she spent part of every winter with them, and part with Mrs Garrick, for whom she retained the greatest affection and respect. John Wesley much deprecated her retirement to the country, and sent her a message more emphatic than grammatical, which runs thus—

"Tell her," said he, "to live in the world. *There* is her sphere of usefulness. They will not let *us* come near them."

But retreat did not mean idleness, and, from the quiet village of Wrington, year by year issued pamphlets and tracts, which circulated in millions, and were instrumental in counteracting the torrent of infidel and licentious literature which threatened to inundate and undermine England—her religion and her government. Realising the enormous influence wielded by those in the van of society, she published an anonymous pamphlet on 'The Religion of the Fashionable World,' and, in spite of the absence of "original thought and happy phrases" which Mr Birrell deplores, its authorship was speedily discovered by Dr Porteous, Bishop of London, who at once declared "Aut Morus, aut angelus!"

Her 'Village Politics' by "Will Chip" was published by Rivington, instead of by Cadell, in order to divert suspicion from its writer, and, to her amusement and gratification, it was sent to her by every post with laudatory reviews recommending its propagation in her own neighbourhood. It sold by thousands, and the following letter from her staunch friend Dr Porteous speaks for itself:—

> "MY DEAR MRS CHIP,—I have this moment received your husband's dialogue, and it is supremely excellent. I look upon Mr Chip as one of the finest writers of the age: this work alone will immortalise him, and, what is

better still, I trust it will help to immortalise the Constitution. If the sale is as rapid as the book is good, Mr Chip will get an immense income and completely destroy all equality at once. How Jack Anvil and Tom Hod will *bear* this I know not, but I shall rejoice at Mr Chip's elevation, and should be extremely glad at this moment to shake him by the hand and ask him to take a family dinner with me. He is really a very fine fellow. I have kept your secret most religiously.

"Your very sincere and faithful

"B. LONDON."

In these days when "Quo Vadis" and "The Sign of the Cross" are fashionable plays, it is strange to think of Mrs More's 'Sacred Dramas' having been debarred from the stage by a strong outcry of Propriety. There must have been a sterner sense of Propriety (with a very big P.) in those "irreligious" days than there is to-day, when even a halfpenny daily can say of the former, "The tawdry and irreverent could no further go," and *yet* —"the audience cheered itself hoarse in praise of play, playwright, and players."

Comment here is superfluous.

It was in 1789 that William Wilberforce visited the sisters at Cowslip Green, and during his visit an immense impulse was given to their work among

the poor of the neighbourhood. After visiting the magnificent gorge known as "Cheddar Cliffs " he was observed to be unusually silent, but in the evening he exclaimed, *a propos* of the amazing ignorance of the people there, "Miss Hannah, *something must be done*—if you will be at the trouble, I will be at the expense." This was practically another turning-point in the life of Miss, or, as she now styled herself, *Mrs* Hannah More; and her familiarity with the cottagers, her own tireless energy and abounding sympathy, enabled her to write as powerfully of "Tom White the Postilion" and "Black Giles the Poacher," as she had written before in 'Hints to a Princess' and 'The Manners of the Great.'

But the schemes of Wilberforce and the More sisters for benefiting the population met with no response from the people of that benighted region. The very poor lived in a world of their own—less than half-civilised; and even among the farmers, the only argument for the better education of the children that had any effect was that "while they were at Sunday-school they could not be robbing orchards."

But these women worked on undauntedly—through evil and good report—with the energy of the Old and the sweetness of the New Dispensation, until schools and scholars were alike established, and out of a seeming Chaos order and discipline were evolved

"Something must be done," Wilberforce had said, and "Miss Hannah" *did it.* She aimed at the highest, but protested most strongly against making the poor into philosophers. Her desire to keep them in their proper place is now out of fashion, and the School Boards of 1906 would scoff at the short and simple lessons of 1799. Her theory was, "suitable education for each and Christian education for all," and the wedding-present for a girl who was married from Hannah More's schools was "a pair of white stockings knitted by herself, five shillings, and a Bible."

The world that now is and that which is to come were thus fairly represented, and many a Society bride goes out into her new life less well equipped than did those old-fashioned maidens of the Cheddar Valley. Truth and honesty are out of fashion too. A "smart boy" generally means a young scamp who has not been found out; a "smart man" is the polite synonym for a clever rogue. Education and knavery keep well in step nowadays. There is not much Bible knowledge in offices, but there is plenty of cheap literature; and boys and girls alike can gloat over it, and leave the "Old Story" until eyes and heart are weary and seared.

From 1799 to 1802 she was subjected to every kind of malicious calumny at the hands of the curate of Blagdon, who succeeded in making her life a burden. From his gratuitous scandal-

mongering she was at last delivered by the efforts of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, to whom she had appealed for redress,—having been, in her own words, "battered, hacked, scalped, and tomahawked for three years."

After the petted life which she had led in London, the change must have been doubly trying, and it is no wonder that a serious illness at last laid her low. But her zealous attempts to make her bit of the world better were by no ordinary illness to be thwarted, and after her removal from Cowslip Green they were renewed with fresh vigour.

In 1802 the house now known as Barley Wood was finished, and thither the five sisters repaired, living happily together as they had done in the old days, to the admiring surprise of Dr Johnson—"Abyssinia's Johnson, Dictionary Johnson, the Rambler's, Idler's, Irene's Johnson," — whose acquaintance she had so coveted nearly thirty years before.

The state of the villages round Bristol at that date seems almost incredible.

"Thirteen adjoining parishes without so much as a resident curate. Mr G----, incumbent of Axbridge, intoxicated about six times a-week, and frequently prevented from preaching by two black eyes—honestly earned by fighting."

Bristol itself was stigmatised by Horace Walpole

as "the dirtiest great shop I ever saw"; and the merchant princes of Bristol battened on the unholy traffic in slaves, which was not altogether abolished until 1833. Men of colour were then declared *free*, and £20,000,000 of compensation money was flung forth by the English nation; but the worse slavery of ignorance and vice still continues, in spite of all the heroic efforts that have been made, and are being made, to promote the "lordlier chivalry" that would reclaim the boor, the drunkard, and the libertine.

To Barley Wood often resorted many leaders of the "Clapham sect." Henry Thornton, Zachary Macaulay, Wilberforce, and others were gladly welcomed to its old-fashioned hospitalities by the five ladies, now no longer young, who had permanently fixed their abode within its walls.

Thence issued the series of "Cheap Repository Tracts" published by the S.P.C.K., which had an enormous circulation, and which show that "Patty" also had a sprightly fancy and a ready pen. This sister we may fairly suppose to have been the most akin to "Miss Hannah," as hers is the name which occurs most frequently in connection with the social and literary interests of the latter; but all the five, in their devotion to one another, are perhaps unique in domestic annals. Of these tracts the most popular was 'The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain,' the hero of

which was modelled on a man whom she herself had met. The extraordinary sale of 1,000,000 copies shows its admirable suitability to, and popularity with, the class for whom it, as well as the other tracts, was written.

The atmosphere of Barley Wood was often enlivened by visits from Zachary Macaulay's son, little Thomas Babington, afterwards Lord Macaulay, and on one occasion he was accompanied by Henry Sykes Thornton, his juvenile friend. The latter, when revisiting the house in his old age, pointed out with considerable amusement the respective corners to which he and "Tom" had been consigned for conspiring to tell a lie to their gentle entertainers. What the lie was he did not proclaim, but the facile wit of Tom Macaulay was probably more than half responsible for its inception. He told many less innocent lies afterwards; and Mr Birrell's criticism this time is just when he says, "Macaulay's style—his much-praised style—is ineffectual for telling the truth about anything. It is splendid, but *splendide mendaxe!*"

Another reminiscence of H. S. T. is amusing. On one occasion the two hoys were again staying at Barley Wood, and, having regard to their probable tastes, an apple-tart was prepared for them. Hot pastry was Thornton's special delight, and, boylike, he set it aside as a *bonne bouche*

to be enjoyed at leisure when the fruit was devoured. His discomfiture was complete when Mistress Hannah said to her sister, "See, Patty, what a good hoy Henry is. He knows that his parents would not wish him to eat hot pastry."

Oh, the misery of being misunderstood! "Disappointed, unanneal'd," the soul of Henry Thornton could but submit to fate, and the coveted morsel found its way either to the maw of the scullery-maid or the dust-bin. Sixty years later its ghost confronted him in the old dining-room at Barley Wood!

This same Henry Sykes Thornton, son of the leader of the "Clapham sect," had a quaint habit, in his later years, which will commend itself to all our younger readers and to some impecunious children of a larger growth.

Every Sunday after the midday dinner it was the custom for the footman to bring in a tray, upon which were two piles of coin—one of shillings, the other of half-crowns. Each person dining at the table was requested to repeat either a psalm or a hymn, and after its repetition every member of the household received a shilling and every visitor half-a-crown. Some children who had a visit to Battersea looming before them, learned Psalm cvii., which they duly repeated in parts, to the great delight of their host. When they had finished, he said to their teacher with much

approval, "I see that you agree with my friend Mistress Hannah More. She used to say, 'Henry, if ever you commit the Psalms to memory, be sure it is the Prayer-Book version.'"

When it came to the turn of the children's father he could remember nothing but two verses of the "Old Hundredth," but he also received half-a-crown, Henry Thornton saying with his beaming smile—

"Never mind, Samuel, you have done your best!" which seems a sort of paraphrase on the parable of the punctual and unpunctual husbandmen.

It was Hannah More who first started Lord Macaulay's library, writing to advise him, when only six years old, to "lay a little tiny corner-stone" for the same. Trevelyan says that she had the rare gift of knowing how to live with both young and old, and she often kept Macaulay with her for weeks together, the youthful prodigy meanwhile declaiming poetry and reading prose by the hour; and it is probable that the Stanleys in 'Coelebs,' who gave up childish books at eight years of age, are drawn from the precocious Thomas, who devoured good literature wholesale, and assimilated it as readily. His subsequent appreciation of moral goodness and his persevering energy in acquiring knowledge may be fairly traced to the influences of his childhood; but his