

W A N G A N U I.

(From an occasional correspondent.)

THE LATE MRS. WM. MEEHAN.

It is with sincere regret that I record the death of Mrs. William Meehan, of Ohingaiti, who had been ailing in health for some months past. The deceased, who was well known in the Rangitikei district, where she was universally respected, was the daughter of the late James Hackett, of Kinalty Burr, King's County, Ireland, and had been in the colony for the last 18 years. Suffering acutely from Bright's disease of the kidneys, Mrs. Meehan sought medical advice, first from Dr. Smith, of Hunterville, and then from two of the leading Wellington doctors, but all to no purpose. About two months ago she came to Wanganui, and has been assiduously attended by Drs. Connolly and Saunders, who did all that science could tell them, but unfortunately with no better results than their colleagues of Hunterville and Wellington. The deceased bore her sufferings with great fortitude and was constantly attended in her illness by her husband (Mr. William Meehan) and their children, as well as a large number of sympathetic friends, who did all they could to cheer her up and alleviate her sufferings. On Tuesday morning the crisis came, and after having been administered the last Sacraments by the Rev. Father Tymons she passed peacefully away in the presence of her sorrowing husband and six children. There were also present at the death bed Mr. James Meehan, deceased's brother-in-law, and Mr. William Delinay, an old schoolmate—as well as several other friends. The funeral took place on Thursday afternoon, and was attended by a large number of the deceased's friends, both of Wanganui and the Rangitikei district, and their presence was indicative of the universal respect in which Mrs. Meehan was held. The general opinion seemed to be that the most appropriate epitaph over her grave would be, "A faithful wife, a loving mother, and a good and staunch friend; may she rest in peace." After the usual service had been held at St. Mary's, the cortege wended its way to the Catholic cemetery, where the Very Rev. Father Kirk, S.M., assisted by the Rev. Father Tymons, conducted the burial service in the presence of a large number of sympathetic friends. Mr. Meehan and bereaved children have the sincere sympathy of all in their sad bereavement.—R.I.P.

DR. LAMONT'S STRONG FINGERS.

"I was afraid you were going to slip through my fingers," said good old Dr. Lamont.

The writer was a boy of about seventeen, then. While a student at school, more than 300 miles from home, I was taken down with pneumonia. I had a tough time, and for two or three weeks my life was despaired of. But youth and good care won the fight, and one bright morning I was ready to go home with my dear father who had come for me. I was weak still, but well and happy clear up to the brim. Oh, what a ride! Oh, what sweet air! Oh, what a glorious world I had got back into! and what a reception from mother and sisters at the familiar house, Oh, life! Oh, health! Oh, *dulce, dulce domum!*

But when a man with most of his days behind him has to write a line like this "*All my life*" I have suffered more or less from disease"—why that is another and sadder story. It is the odds between an occasional thunderstorm and a sky always covered with clouds.

We quote what he says, reminding the reader that in this matter Mr. William Hodgkinson voices the experience of millions. He says: "I always had a bad taste in the mouth, no proper relish for food, and after eating had pain and fulness at the chest."

These sensations are symptoms of acute indigestion. In the stomach there is marked loss of power. The food is neither rolled over as it should be so that the whole of it in turn may be presented to the digestive fluid, nor is it duly moved on towards the outlet into the bowels. As a result it ferments and gives off irritating acids and gases, hence the patient complains of pain, weight, distension, acidity, and flatulence in that region. Thence the poisons proceed to every other part of the body, and headache, vertigo, gout, rheumatism, depressed spirits, and a score more of evils follow; among them, possibly, nervous prostration, progressive anaemia, locomotor ataxia, and more or less complete paralysis.

"Frequently," continues Mr. Hodgkinson. "I was sick, and as time went on I became very weak and feeble. I consulted one doctor after another, and took various medicines, but obtained no real or lasting relief from any of them. This describes my general condition until the fortunate day when I read about Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. I was impressed by the statements others had made concerning it and proceeded to try it. After taking one bottle I found relief, and was soon entirely free from my old complaint. Since that time (now eight years ago) I have enjoyed good health. Knowing personally of its virtues, I have recommended this remedy to hundreds, and have never heard of its having failed to give relief. But for Mother Seigel's Syrup I should have been in my grave years ago. (Signed) William Hodgkinson, Hollington, near Uttoxeter Staffordshire, August 11th, 1893."

Mr. Hodgkinson is well known and highly respected. He is a local preacher in the Methodist church, and by employment a quarry master. Had he gone into the grave, as he feared he should, he would have been missed and lamented by the community in which he has long been useful, and will live to be useful, we hope, for years to come.

Now let us repeat our leading thought. Short illnesses, even though sharp and dangerous, may result in good rather than harm. But a disease that drags its victim through decades of lingering distress—what shall we say of it! The trouble and suffering it inflicts is beyond estimate, and its name is indigestion and dyspepsia.

And the name of the medicine that cures it, Mr. Hodgkinson has done you the favour to mention with clearness and emphasis.

"When 'e sez that," explained James to his companions of the servants' hall "then I know 'e were the master; it were only a real bloomin' face whose face could run soft into a look like that, when 'e sez: 'Take me to 'er instantly.'"

That day had been for Margaret one of unusual suffering; and the Fraulein, tenderest of sympathisers, had passed every unclaimed moment at her bedside, telling her lovely old German tales and legends, full of the rush of the castle-bordered Rhine and the hoarse tree-voices of elf-haunted forests; and for the twentieth time repeating one of which the child never tired—a sweet story, running thus:

"Once there lived far away, in a tiny white cottage on the edge of a great brown wood, a dear little girl named Erma. Neighbours called her a 'joy child,' her nature was so full of sunshine and summer. Her long, thick braids of hair were silken soft and golden; and her blue eyes always smiling until her mamma died, and then life changed to tears. For after a short while her father married again" (there Margaret always sighed)—"a woman without heart or religion; who, unloving herself, envied Erma every sign of affection others bestowed upon her. When her own fretful little girl was born she grew still more cruel, imposing upon Erma all household tasks, besides the care of her baby sister.

"Through the longest, hardest day she never murmured: but every night, up in the lonely, dark attic, she sobbed herself to sleep. And once, as she lay praying there, she heard a voice calling, 'Erma, Erma,' softly as her mother used to call; and, lifting her head, she beheld a figure all in white standing by her, and the darkness became light.

"Don't go away!" she cried aloud. "I'm not afraid,—not afraid, though I never saw you before."

"Dear," replied the vision, "you never *saw* me before, but I am always as close to you as now. Every soul has its guardian angel; I am yours. Many a time, as we walked together, I have caught your hand in mine to keep you from falling, and whispered words of good counsel. This night I am permitted by the Blessed Mother to reveal myself to you as a reward for your meekness and piety."

"And where is my own mamma? Do you know her, too?" asked Erma.

"I see her every day," responded the angel. "She is near heaven, but has not yet entered. She waits for you."

"Oh, can I not go to her now?"

"Such is not God's will, dear. Be patient, and when your wings are done I will come for you."

"My wings?" echoed the child, wonderingly. "Shall I ever have wings, broad, and white and beautiful like yours? And when will they be done?"

"My child," replied the angel, "the two wings on which every soul some day mounts to heaven are labour and prayer. Each time that you have performed an act of self-denial or devotion, returned good for evil, gentleness for harshness, you add a long, soft, white feather to your wings. Thus it is that some finish theirs sooner than others; for a host of sweet deeds may be crowded into a few years, if every day be filled with them. That is the consolation those mothers have whose darlings have gone from them while their lives were yet rosy with the hues of morning. They can look up and say, 'My child was good and pure and beautiful of soul; her wings were finished before we thought, and she has flown to God.'"

"Ah, dear angel!" murmured Erma, clasping her little hands. "dear angel, please help me to get mine finished soon."

"I will try. Now good-night! Sleeping and waking, dear, forget not that I watch over thee ever."

"And with these words, smiling, the vision faded. But a great happiness abided from that night in Erma's heart, and she thought: "Perhaps it I told little Katrina what *my* guardian angel said she would not grieve for so constantly." But the naughty child would not listen. Thus several years passed. Erma's gentleness won its due tribute of love from all save the cruel step-mother and Katrina. One wintry day Erma, returning from the forest with a load of fagots she had been sent to gather, saw scarlet tongues of flame and long, gray plumes of smoke darting forth from the cottage eaves and waving high above them; while the mother—shrinking to the assembling neighbours: "Save her,—save her, my little Katrina!" pointed to a white child-face at the upper window. Dropping her burden, Erma flew forward; and, unheeded in the tumult, disappeared through the smoke outpowering from the open door.

"Katrina was unharmed, but dear Erma lay dying. 'Blessed child!' said the priest: 'you have given your life for Katrina's.'"

"Ah, Father! I am so glad,—so glad!" murmured Erma. "She is not ready to die, you know; I'm afraid she hasn't any wings. Pray God that she may live to be an old, old woman."

"As her eyes closed in death she beheld the shining face of her guardian angel, the sweet voice saying: 'But, Erma dear, *your* wings are done. How broad and white and beautiful they are! I have come to affix them so, so. True of heart, 'pure of heart,' in another moment you 'shall see God.'"

"Thank you, Fraulein darling—thank you!" said Margaret, tightening the thin hand's clasp. "I love that story; but what can I ever do to get any pretty white feathers for *my* wings? Confined to my bed or chair, 'just a trouble,' I can't save anybody's life or help anybody or make anybody happy—why, listen! that sounds like papa's voice in the hall. He's come! O papa,—my own, my dear papa!"

Mr. Marvin was kneeling by his daughter's bed, her arms around him, her cheek against his; and as, looking backward with filled eyes, the Fraulein glided swiftly from the room, she heard him sob:

"O God, my Margaret, my helpless child! What will become of you? Your papa is ruined, ruined, ruined!"

(To be continued.)