



I'm sure you knew old Betty Kew the washer-woman. Anybody—the highest in the town—would have entrusted Betty with clothes to wash; and she told the funniest of all stories, with which to keep you alive at nights, when the work was done. There were people, too, in Temple Lane and Solomon's Temple who had lived neighbours for forty years and more. You will remember Mrs Simpson and Mrs Waugh, and many others, and you know Fumbleley's Ale-house, three doors from the top of the lane, and Anthony Sewell's, and Edward Tierney's. You perhaps don't remember my little friend George; I have a letter of his yet—the only letter he ever wrote. You don't know how much I think of it, though it is now old and yellow, and as faded as many of my early hopes. He was brought up a Catholic, and I a Protestant; and one day, before I knew what he was doing, he sprinkled me with holy water, to "keep the bad man from getting me!" We were very young then—rivals for "Agga Dize;" but, sir, that holy water did the good. It has often helped me to remember that, Catholic and Protestant, we are all and ought to be brothers. I followed my friend to a lowly grave; I heard a service I did not understand; I have never touched holy water from that day to this, but I hope I shall ever feel that no creed should stand any more between living human hearts than our different creeds did, between George Tierney's and mine. We were rivals and friends; why cannot you newspaper editors be the same?

One thing more, sir, did you remember "Old Snip," the sugar boiler? Your correspondent of last week talks about the sugar boiling; does he know anything of Old Snip? It used to be rare fun to ring at the sugar yard gates, and bring the poor old beggar up from his house at the bottom of the yard; and then about "Old Snip," and run away to the music of the old gentleman's maledictions.

I shall say a great deal more on these subjects some day. Let it suffice for the present to remind you that Solomon's Temple did not always deserve the bad name your correspondent has given it. I hope it was never quite so bad as he makes it, but at all events it never was so in my early days; never till it became the property of the Earl of Lonsdale. I remember it, as it was; I know there was scarcely a dirty house in it. I am sure there were some houses in it that could not be surpassed for cleanliness in any town in England. I know it was not the habitation of vagrants and thieves. I remember kind old neighbours and friends, ready to run in a moment, night or day, to each other's help, when affliction fell, as affliction does fall on the poor. I remember the old man who came round every Saturday with his two asses, to sell clean sand for the clean floors; I remember the many rides I had as a child on those asses, and how when the old man died I was only pacified by being taken day after day to seek my "cuddies" on Harris Moor.

You will judge, then, how I felt when I saw your correspondent's letter. I said to myself—"Is this to be the funeral oration—this the final and only chronicle of the home of my early childhood, where I lived and died some of the warmest hearts that ever bent in human breasts?" I resolved it should not. I dare say your correspondent intends no ill, but he does not know Solomon's Temple as I remember it from the days forever gone. He cannot see there, as I can, one old friendly family fireside, occupied by friends the nearest and dearest of all. If he could, he would, I am sure, touch a poor man's home with a gentler and kinder hand. I suppose he thinks that Solomon's Temple, as it lately was, is fair game for any one who wishes to draw a picture; a game for lady visitors and town missionaries; a place to be talked about at Sunday school ten parties. But I could point him to higher things in connection with Solomon's Temple. A thousand old pictures and memories rise before me to-night, under the influence of your correspondent's letter, and if they have made me a little angry, they have also calmed me, and left only one large picture full of peace and friendliness to all mankind at the close.—I am, sir, your obedient servant.