

gaze and slight nod, she had glanced at the girl indicated.

"She sings a little—like the rest," she answered at last. "But—we have some fine singers here, Dr. L. Perhaps you have not heard them all yet."

"No, but she is the best of them," he persisted obstinately. "And the best in my Church, and we have some fine singers, too,—a whole choirful. But they can't help me out, as she does."

"What does she do?" asked the principal, beginning to guess at his meaning.

"Well, she can start the tune!" laughed the pastor, leaning back to laugh at his own definition of a good singer. "You look amused, but that happens to be exactly what I want. Many a time I have come into my prayer-meeting to find the organist tardy, and a row of people sitting stupidly silent instead of singing themselves into a proper prayer-meeting frame, and all because—no body could start the tune!"

The good doctor's emphasis on those last three words was enough to raise a rousing good laugh even within the pensive walls of a young ladies' seminary.

"This is why I am so appreciative of her musical talents," he continued, nodding again kindly in the young girl's direction. "She lets them be of some practical account in the world. She is always ready to do the thing that is wanted of her. I have cottage and school-house prayer-meetings two or three times a week in different parts of the town. Usually there is no piano, organ or melodeon. I get over the difficulty by taking along my little 'singer.' I get out the big carryall, and pack in as many girls as I can pick up to keep her company, but she goes, whoever else doesn't. She can do more than I can to keep the meeting going."

It was a small talent. Dozens of other girls sang better than she did. But they could not all—did not all—do, instantly, without apology or preface, the thing that was wanted of them. They were not quite "available." How is it with your talents?—*Selected.*

"AS WE ALSO FORGIVE."

Luke xi. 4.

Very unthinkingly we often pray these words. Very low sometimes is the standard of forgiveness which we, as Christians, teach and hold up before the world. How often can those with whom we come in contact glorify God in us owing to the patience and gentleness which we exhibit in dealing with the faults of others? Like our Lord Himself, we should bear long with the sinning, and when we hear others condemning those who have fallen, our hand should be held out to them, saying, as He did, "Neither do I condemn." We should try to believe in them as much as we can, and trust them for the good we see in their character, endeavouring to help them by our sympathy and prayer.

Are we not apt to be vague and unpractical in this matter, even though we forgive some personal injury or some great wrong? Even though we forbear to speak of the failings and weaknesses of others, is there not often something in the manner of our doing it which "vanquishes, not crowns" the forgiven one? And what do we know and practise of the divine patience, which never grows tired, which reaches beyond the "seventy times seven," and only sorrows over the wrong that is marring the life of the erring one? Yet our Master expects nothing less from us as His followers. He Himself prayed for those who were misunderstanding and crucifying Him, and He calls upon all His disciples to prove their belief in His divine forgiveness of their individual sin by their treatment of others, (Ephes. iv. 32).

This is our high calling of God—to represent Jesus Christ in the world, and to be living witnesses that He has "forgiven us all trespasses" by our readiness to think the best we can of others, to help them in every way that lies in our power, and to resolve, as Goethe's mother did, to "pick out the good, and leave the rest to Him who made mankind, and knows how to round off the angles."

To fulfil this ideal is not always easy; but is it not the measure of our love to our Lord and the test of our appreciation of what He has done for us? To some it seems almost impossible. They have strong likes and dislikes; little things worry and irritate, and they so easily forget to be patient as He was.

But is not the greatest reason of our failure to be found in the fact that we have never realized the power of evil in ourselves, or we have only striven but very little to resist our own besetting sins?

Surely, the more we know of Christ, the nearer we get to His light and see ourselves in it, the deeper will be our sense of the extent to which He has forgiven us, and the more ready we shall be to forgive others.

This is a solemn thing to pray, "Forgive us, as we forgive." If God were to answer literally, where should we be? Perhaps we all must acknowledge that we have hitherto come short in this respect.

THE TRUE IDEA OF A SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday-school has its place and should fill it; has its work and should do it.

1. The Sunday-school is the teaching department of the church. The Scriptures require not only that the gospel shall be preached, but that the truth be taught. Matt. 28: 18-20; Acts 13: 1; Rom. 12: 7; 1 Cor. 12: 28; Eph. 4: 11. Therefore every church should not only have a preaching department, but a teaching department. Being a department of the church, it should originate in the church, and be managed, supported, and controlled by the church.

2. The Sunday-school is a school, and with only one text-book, the Bible. And since the Bible is the text-book, none are too old or too wise to become pupils. And since it is a school, school methods should be adopted as far as may be necessary and practicable.