

pered with the good tempered, irascible with the irascible, sucking in its mother's very heart with its mother's milk. See how willingly it imbibes instruction, either good or bad, learns quickly and remembers tenaciously, learns with faith implicit and reverential love, not tired until it has learnt nearly all the entertaining, the interesting, the heart and soul stirring knowledge which the nurse possesses.

"Like new born babes," says the apostle, "desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby;" and surely if ye are born children of God ye should feel towards him like the new born babe towards its mother—ye should have a love, a desire, a natural passion for him and for every thing that is his; have a relish for his company, his conversation, his instruction, his ways, feelings, likings and dislikings. And ye should above all be willing and heartily desirous of becoming like him in every respect. Ye should therefore surely desire his very word, his will which gives you a knowledge of him and leads you to resemble him—just as the new born child longs for its own mother's milk. It is by the word of God that ye become acquainted with and hold converse with him, and therefore ye should love it just as the child loves its mother's society. And, moreover, as the child desires its mother's milk that it may be strengthened in body, and its mother's teachings and talkings and converse that it may be satisfied in mind with convenient nourishment, so should the christian desire the word of God, the heavenly food, the bread of life, that he may grow up a *fitting specimen* of the household of God, a child of whom his Father in heaven will not be ashamed, with whom his Elder Brother will love to associate and sympathise.

But continues Peter, "if ye desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby—lay aside all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies and evil-speakings." Not only is it needful that a child drink of its mother's milk in order that it may grow thereby. It is moreover needful that the child's body be in a healthful state, in such a condition that it draw nourishment therefrom. Else it will drink of the milk without being ever satisfied, without deriving any nutriment, and gradually pine away and sink into an untimely grave. Not the less needful is it, if a christian hope to profit by the word of God, if he hope to grow in grace by its use—not the less needful is it that his mind be in a fit state to receive it. Take warning therefore from the old proverb, "no man casteth pearls before swine," lay aside the lusts of your old nature, the filthy, worn and tattered furniture with which the Devil had furnished the home of that old man, your former self, or you can never expect the Holy Spirit of Jesus to take up his abode with you and teach you of the things of Christ and make you grow in his likeness.

Lay aside therefore "all malice," which scathes and burns up even things the most chaste and honest, and beautiful and lovely and attractive; and "all guile," falsehood, delusion, the very poisonous vapour of hell, which blackens and scorches whatever things are pure and holy in the sight of God or man; and "hypocrisy," that "burden of villany" which the great deformer transforms and pawns on the world as a treasury of virtue; and "envy," that misanthropic, infectious, brooding plague of the soul, which stifles with its suffocating breath every virtue and every praise; and "evil speaking," which cometh out of the abundance of evil in the heart, and by which the tongue of the wicked sets the world "on fire of hell." Now, if these vices fill the soul, even the "sincere milk of the word" can give it no nourishment—the heart is in a state of mental atrophy. The evil desires must be purged out, all malice and all guile, and envies and all evil-speakings laid aside; and hypocrisies, for no mask or covering of the thinnest tissue is authorised