

Flower Basket.

NOT TO BE MINISTERED UNTO.

We hear often about the condescension of the high towards the low; yet how it all fades away in the light of the life of Him "who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor." We are commended sometimes for the few spare hours which we give to the poor; but what are these to his gifts, who always "went about doing good;" who sought not "to be ministered unto, but to minister;" and who closed all by "giving his life a ransom for many?"

Haydon remarked about his pictures, "I was never satisfied with anything I did until I had forgotten what I wished to do." With the example of Christ before us at which to aim, it will surely be long before any of his followers will be able to say of *their* work that they are *satisfied*.—*Rugged Homes, and How to Mend Them.*

SATIRES ON THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

It is not unusual for the polite literature of the time to sneer at, or to satirize and caricature the Christian ministry. I do not remember the worthy portraiture of a single preacher of righteousness in the writings of Mr. Thackeray, or Mr. Dickens, or in those of Mr. George W. Curtis, one of our own rising young authors. They have favoured the world with pictures of the Stigginses, Chadbands, Honeymans, Creamcheres, and Peewees of their acquaintance; perhaps they had been so unfortunate as to possess none other. If so, I am sorry for them. But let us assure them, and all who think as they seem to think, that while there may be unworthy members of the clerical profession—for patient toil and disinterested labour, for self-sacrifice extending through life, for brave and cheerful performance of duty, that profession stands unrivalled, unapproached in the annals of the world. I submit, if it be fair in art, to represent a class by an exception, or to stigmatize those, who, notwithstanding all that has been written against priestcraft, the tyranny and superstitution of the clergy, have, nevertheless, been, in every age the best friends of their kind, and in no age more truly than in our own.

Shall the hire be denounced because it contains solitary drones? or the entire literary profession held up to ridicule, because it may happen

to have lost-hunters or rogues in its ranks? I claim for my brethren no exclusive sanctity; I ask no tribute for them which is not justified by their courage, honour, fidelity, their love of man, and fear of God; and the worst wish I cherish for those who have been, unconsciously or not, their detractors, is that they may die as happily. "Our people die well," said Mr. Wesley. And his own last words, echoed by thousands of his sons in the gospel on the both sides of the Atlantic, in their final hour, were, "The best of all is, God is with us."—*Millburn.*

SWEARING.

Would you *trust* a swearer? Howard the philanthropist was standing in a crowd by the door of a post-office, when a man uttered a volley of oaths. "Look to your pockets!" cried Howard, buttoning up his own tightly; "always take care of your pockets when you find yourself among swearers. He who takes God's name in vain will think little of taking your purse, or doing anything else that is evil."

Would you *employ* a swearer? A worthy clothier in Edinburgh was accustomed, previous to engaging his clerks, to put the question to them directly, "Do you swear?"—if so you need not think of entering my house. I permit none to talk to my customers whose tongues are set on fire of hell."

God abhors this sin. He exercises amazing "goodness and forbearance" towards the swearer, as he does towards all sinners; but he has written it,—and "what he has written, he has written,"—"EVERY IDLE WORD THAT MEN SHALL SPEAK, THEY SHALL GIVE ACCOUNT THEREOF IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT." If therefore he never punished a swearer in this world, we should be confident that he was allowing him to "heap up wrath" for himself "against the day of wrath."

OBLIGATION AND PRIVILEGE.

How insipid and foolish a thing were life, if there were nothing laid upon us to do! What is it, on the other hand, but the zest and glory of life, that something good and great, something really worthy to be done is laid upon us. It is not self-indulgence allowed, but victory achieved, that can make a fit happiness for man. Therefore we are set down here amid changes, perils, wrongs, and miseries, where, to save ourselves and serve our kind, all manner of great works are to be done. Besides, we practically admit the arrangement much oftener than

we think. Tell any young man, for example, who is just converted to Christ, of some great sacrifice he is called to make,—as in preaching Christ to men,—going to preach him to the heathen; and that call, set forth as a sacrifice of all things, will work upon him more powerfully, by a hundred times, than it would if you undertook to soften it by showing what respect he would gain, how comfortable he would be, and how much easier in this than in any other calling of life. We do not want any such *caresses in the name of duty*. To let go self-indulgence and try something stronger, is a call that draws us always, when our heart is up for duty; nay, even nature loves heroic impulse, and oftentimes prefers the difficult.

It is well, therefore,—all the better that we are put upon the doing of what is not always agreeable to the flesh. And when God lays upon us the duties of self-command and self-sacrifice, when he calls us to act and to suffer heroically, how could he more effectually dignify or ennoble our liberty? Now we have our object and our errand, and we know that we can meet our losses, come as they will. Before every man, and in all his duties, there is something like a victory to be gained; and he can say, as the soldier of duty, Strike me, my enemy! beat upon me, O ye hail! Mine it is to fulfil God's statutes, and therein I make you my servants.—*Dr. Bushnell.*

THE DYING SABBATH SCHOLAR.

THE last night of her life [she was in a hospital] nothing was heard to break the silence, but the ticking of the great clock in the hall, as the pendulum swung backward and forward. Then it would strike the hour, c-l-e-r-e-n, t-w-e-l-v-e, o-n-e o'clock, when there came from the couch of the little sufferer a voice of sweet melody. It was one verse of a Sunday-school hymn—

"Jesus the name to sinners dear,
The name to sinners given;
It scatters all our guilty fear,
And turns our hell to heaven."

Then all was silent again, and nothing was heard but the ticking of the great clock in the hall, until she broke out after a while in another verse:—

"Happy, if with my latest breath
I may but speak his name;
Praise him to all, and sing in death
Behold! behold the Lamb!"

The nurse hastened to the bed side of the little sufferer, but she was too late. The angel's