

and hidden far down hundreds of feet below the earth's crust, lay revealed. The outline of every leaf, the delicate veining, the thread-like roots, everything was perfect; and now it was appreciated. The long waiting while it lay apparently useless had enhanced its value. It could now speak to man of those remote ages in which it had flourished. It told him that centuries ago these pillars of coal had been forests; and gave him the history of their overthrow. With voiceless tongue it spoke to him of the majesty and omnipotence of the Creator. None could now say the tiny fern had lived in vain. Perhaps the application of this bit of natural history may not be too obvious to admit of appropriation in detail. We may feel that there is no definite career apparent to us, but this may enforce upon us the oft-told truth that nothing was made in vain and that nothing passes out of existence without having accomplished a mission. Some people are inclined to ignore their own individual responsibility. They forget that the aim of every one is, or should be, so to live that the world may be thereby benefitted. One great fault in the education of many young ladies is a sort of tacit understanding that they are expected to fall into a pleasant home and be comfortable. The idea of benefitting mankind, of accomplishing a work in the world never occurs to them; or if it does, they say, "I can do nothing. In what way could I benefit the world? I can't be a Sister Dora, Grace Darling, Baroness Bunsen or a Florence Nightengale, and to go out as a missionary to heathen lands is equally impossible." Notwithstanding this, which may be true, there is a field of usefulness for every one. The tiny fern could not be the asterophyllite which towered far above it, but it nevertheless accomplished a glorious mission. We may not be able to face the stormy ocean and to "rescue precious lives from a watery grave;" but we may face a frowning world, and, upheld by principles of justice and truth, extend a helping hand to those who are battling with waves of injustice and oppression. Though our "Society world" be comparatively small and our influence limited, by a spirit of true womanli-

ness, quick perception and tact we can make that influence felt as certainly as did the Baroness in a wider field. Our lives have indeed been cast in pleasant places in that our land is for the most part that of peace and prosperity. There are no wounded soldiers calling to us from a field of battle, yet if we but seek we shall find countless suffering ones to whom we can administer. Go into any of the children's hospitals with flowers, toys, or pretty picture books, and see how many wan little faces will brighten and how many eager eyes will watch for your coming. Or go into the back streets or alleys of your own town or city and see if you can spend an hour without finding plenty of opportunities for administering both to the physical and spiritual ills of suffering ones. We need not go to foreign land in order to become missionaries when fields of labor lie at our door. We may remember, too, that "they also serve who only stand and wait," and though like the little fern, unconscious of our mission we may rest assured that we should not be here if the world had no need of us.

L. S.

#### IS THERE ANY WORK TO DO ?

W. G. B.

What has capital done for labor? It has done everything to take advantage of it, so labor claims. Its possessor looks around him with a self-satisfied feeling, and says, "I am able to give so many men work," as if that were all they needed or wanted; and that "I am deserving your thanks almost for permission to you to live." He forgets that his capital would be perfectly valueless but for labor. His men, not understanding this, were accustomed to think that they possibly owed him homage for his wondrous philanthropy; all the more so because men were and are virtually unable to make a bargain for their own flesh and blood, capital always taking advantage of the competition of labor arising from necessity. What makes it worse, the workingman is not able to get the necessaries of life at proportionately reduced prices. Capital, commanding the situation, practically says: "Take so much