

Family Reading.

THE LOGIC OF THE LIFE.—A TRUE STORY.

There is one way, and that after all, the best way, in which the simplest and least learned believer may meet and put down the subtlest infidel; a way in which he may face the scorner as David did the uncircumcised Philistine, with nothing save a sling and a stone, yet, in the "name of the Lord of hosts," be "bold as a lion." The way I mean is, to contend, not so much by words as by deeds; not so much by the logic of the lip, as by the *logic of the Life*.

I shall best make my meaning plain by a simple account, which shall be quite true, because it will be about what lately happened in my own parish, and partly under my own eye.

John —— is a dyer, who lives in a corner of my district. Some years ago, he was as bad a character as can be well conceived; a drunkard, a blasphemer, a cruel husband, a noted boxer, a practical infidel. And as is usual in such cases, his house was the home of wretchedness, unfurnished and deserted; his wife was in rags, his cupboard empty, and debt and shame were his constant companions. About three years ago, however, he came under the notice of an assistant of mine. His wife was induced to open her house for a cottage lecture, and the husband, after a time, began to steal into the back part of the dwelling during the little services, and to lend a half-unwilling ear to what was going on. It pleased Him, who leads the blind by a way that they know not, to reach his conscience in this manner. He became very uneasy, and, in spite of his mean clothes, began to attend church. For a time his anguish of mind was greater than can be told. But at last that Saviour who came "to bind up the broken hearted," and who died on the cross to save sinners, manifested Himself to him as he doth not to the world, giving him beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Isa. lxi. 1, 3.

The calm morning after a stormy night is not a greater change than that which followed to the life and lot of happy John. All things became new. He set himself at once to wipe away the heavy scores which stood against him at the tavern and the shop, till at last he owed no man anything but love. His house was made clean and tidy, and one piece of furniture after another was purchased till the whole face of his cottage was changed. His wife and himself, decently dressed, were in their places at church whenever the Sabbath-speaking bell bade them to the house of prayer, and ere long they were seen kneeling side by side at the table of the Lord.

A light thus put on a candlestick could not be hid. So striking a change in one who had been so notorious called forth much notice. He became a wonder unto many. Some admired, others mocked, and many persecuted him. His former infidel companions were more especially mad against him. They jeered him, reproached him, enticed him, swore at him, and did all in their power to draw or to drive him from his Saviour. But, deeply sensible of his own utter helplessness, he clung to the strength of God, and thus out of weakness being made strong, his enemies only served to prove his faith, exercise his patience, and increase his watchfulness. The blast of temptation, which lays in the dust the plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted, only roots the deeper every "tree of righteousness" which He has planted in the garden of his grace.

John had most to bear at his daily labour in the dyehouse. It was his hard lot to work amongst a band of Socialists, and they had it nearly all their own way. For a time, indeed, two men, members of a religious body, timidly took the Christian's part; but after a while, even these, worn out by annoyance, and ashamed of the cross, deserted both him and their profession of religion, becom-