

still greater calamity which followed it.

THE FIRE.

"At Tehama Street I saw the beginning of the fire which was to sweep all the district south of Market Street. It was swirling up the narrow way with a sound which was almost a scream. Before it the humble population of the district were fleeing, and in its path, as far as I could see, frail shanties went down like card houses. And this marks the true character of the city's agony. Especially in the populous district south of Market Street, but also throughout the city, hundreds were pinned down by the debris, some to a merciful death, others to live hideous minutes. The flames swept over them, while the saved looked on impotently. Over the tragedy the fire threw its flaming mantle of hypocrisy, and the full extent of the holocaust will never be known, will remain ever a poignant mystery."

The hopeless fight of the firemen, baffled by the lack of water (for the mains had burst), went on for three terrible days, the dazed multitude meanwhile escaping along the streets, "with heads bowed, eyes dead, silent and stupefied." One poor old couple, a blind wife led by a crippled husband, fell as they came wailing down the steps of their porch, and refused to be raised, for they had made up their minds to die without

further struggle. It was thus Mr. Hopper closes his graphic description: "It was as if I walked through a dead city; not a city recently dead, but one overcome by some cataclysm ages past, and dug out of its lava. Fragments of wall rose on all sides. Columns, twisted, but solid in their warp, as if petrified in the midst of their writhing from the fiery ordeal. Across them a yellow smoke passed slowly. Above all a heavy, brooding silence lay. Contortion of stone, smoke of destruction, and a great silence—that was all."

A MESSAGE FROM MOLLIE.

In a private letter, our Mollie, who has been silent too long as a writer in our Home Magazine columns, tells us of a day spent at the Golden Gate. She says:

"We had a long day in San Francisco. I had read all about the disaster, had heard many personal experiences related, had seen many pictures, but I was not in the least prepared for the awful scene of desolation and the miles and miles of ruins that met my eyes as I entered the stricken city. It was truly awful. The half has not been told. Doubtless much has been suppressed in the telling, for how could the whole truth have been written in papers which almost in parallel columns spoke in hopeful prophecy of

a new San Francisco rising out of her ashes, greater, grander, more majestic, even, than before? Well, she may, but I doubt it, at least in our day, for at present she lies dead, almost as Pompeii of old. As yet they have not commenced even to remove the debris, hardly a fallen brick being lifted, no definite action being resolved upon until the decision of the several insurance companies is known. One wonders how, amidst such surroundings, anyone who has gone through such frightful experiences can have the courage to think of beginning life anew in a place where small quakes are going on all the time, two hundred 'tremblers' having been reported since the opening disaster, throwing down tottering walls, and shaking the ground alarmingly. The only houses left standing fringe the old-time city. During my one day's sojourn I lived like a refugee, taking my tea and coffee, ham and eggs, in an old wagon made into a tent, with canvas sides and top, a few steps leading up to a screen door, the chef and his assistant serving from behind a small, improvised counter. Afterward I spoke to several poor women who were cooking their simple meals in the street. They were, in nearly every case, bright and cheerful, and seemingly too thankful for escaping with their lives and the remnant of their belongings to utter murmur or complaint."

A LATER ECHO STILL.

"San Francisco does not seem to have been steadied or sobered by its fearful visitation. It has had to exist hitherto wholly without drinking resorts. Now 2,000 saloons have been licensed. Some, already with their doors wide open, jammed with thirsty throngs, long lines of drinkers, awaiting their turn, as not long ago they waited for their loaf of bread.

"Poor women and children, with no shelter but their canvas walls, have next to no protection from the drunken men and roughs. Many of these women have already armed themselves with revolvers and knives against possible attacks from intoxicated marauders. The vanguard of a new 'tenderloin' is fast drifting back; Chinatown will be rebuilt, and the old-time revels in full swing again. Evidently, something more," says the writer of this last quotation, "than the worst that nature can do, is required to reform San Francisco."

A sad retrospect, and perhaps a still sadder foreshadowing of what may yet come to pass; but as we are bidden not to judge others, lest we should be judged ourselves, let our last echo be a reminder of the lesson taught by One who, when called upon to utter condemnation, simply replied, "He that is without sin among you, cast a stone at her."

H. A. B.

The Quiet Hour.

Common Friendliness.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.—Rom. xii.: 10.
Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted.—Eph. iv.: 32.

"He was a friend to man, and he lived in a house by the side of the road."

"There are hermit souls that live withdrawn,
In the place of their self-content;
There are souls, like stars, that live apart
In a fellowless firmament;
There are pioneer souls that blaze their path
Where highway never ran—
But let me live by the side of the road,
And be a friend to man."

"Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by—
The men who are good, and the men who are bad,
As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorners' seat,
Nor hurl the cynic's ban.
Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
And be a friend to man."

"Be ye kind," says St. Paul, and the three little words are very plain and matter-of-fact. Only three syllables, and yet what a paradise this world would be if everybody obeyed them every day. Are we always kind to the people we live with, careful not to be rude to them or hurt their feelings needlessly? Are we watching for chances to do little kindnesses to the friends and neighbors about us?

Each age of the world has its own peculiar spirit; there are always certain sentiments in the air which seem as infectious as disease-germs. If there is one sentiment which this age is struggling hard to perfect, it is the feeling of brotherhood. In spite of class distinctions, in spite of those tremendous "strikes" which generally produce most unbrotherly conduct, the spirit of brotherhood is in the air. People are roused to the fact that union is strength, even those who do not accept the Fatherhood of God as a living reality are ready enough to own the brotherhood of man.

This recognition of brotherhood has sprung from Christianity, though it is held to-day by men who disown the

Christ. He is our Brother, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. His life-blood is pulsing in our veins, His humanity thrills us through and through. Just because He is your Brother and mine, we are brethren and one with each other. He who is the King before whom the greatest kings in the world bow in lowly adoration was once a poor Carpenter in a despised village. He rules over the rich, and is linked hand-in-hand with the poor. We must own this as a matter of theory, or else renounce our Christianity altogether, but the practicing of it is not such an everyday matter-of-course. Those who are in any great trouble find that the world is a very kindly world. Friendly words, spoken or written, cheer and comfort them, until they feel that the trouble was a good thing, for it revealed depths of friendliness unsuspected before. Everyone can be kind and friendly at such times, but there are some people who are always kindly affectioned, with brotherly love. Do we not all know and like such people? Their faces may be rugged, their English may not always be exactly correct, their table-manners may not be according to the latest book on etiquette, but it is always a pleasure to be with them. It does one good simply to meet such people in the street, or to run in at the back door to borrow a little baking powder for a cake, or half a loaf of bread, or some other little thing that has unexpectedly run short. They are so genuinely pleased to lend or give what is needed that the borrower goes home with the pleasant feeling of having conferred a favor rather than asked for one. To be kindly and affectionate, one must, as St. Paul says, be "tender-hearted." A gushing manner and a pretence of being pleased to see everyone is not friendliness, and is seldom pleasing to anybody. We read thoughts far more than words, and are seldom really deceived by mannerisms. Wireless telegraph—or telepathy—is no new thing. Affection—especially an affection of affection—is always harmful and seldom deceives anybody. Never cultivate an outward friendliness which is only a sham, but let us all earnestly try to be really affectionate at heart, towards disagreeable as well as agreeable people—anyone can get on with "nice" people, we should attempt harder tasks than that. It is so easy to say that a certain person of our acquaintance is uninteresting or objectionable, and to consider that we have a right to be unfriendly and "standoffish." We don't stop to consider that such people are very dear to our Master, that their battles against sin and struggles after holiness are intensely interesting to Him and to themselves, and would be interesting to us, too, if we only tried, with real kindness, to get into touch with them.

Oh, let us make a persistent, prayerful, daily effort to come down from the place of our self-content, where we have been dwelling alone and apart from our fellows, let us "live in a house by the side of the road" on a level with our brothers and sisters. It is never good for a man to live alone, the nearer we get to people, the more we know their difficulties and temptations, and the more interesting we shall find them.

When I called this paper "Common friendliness," it was not because friendliness was to be found everywhere, but because it ought to be found everywhere. And let us remember that the little things always count more than the big things in life, because they are so common—there are so many of them. A friend who would sacrifice great things for us may cut us to the heart continually with sarcastic or unkind speeches, or may hurt us every day by careless neglect and forgetfulness. Some people are kind and thoughtful in hundreds of little ways, and how "nice" such people are. Well, we can be nice too, if we steadily practice the habit of considerate kindness, and conquer any bear-like grumpy ways.

"A good-bye kiss is a little thing,
With your hand on the door to go,
But it takes the venom out of the sting
Of a thoughtless word or a cruel fang
That you made an hour ago."

"A kiss of greeting is sweet and rare
After the toil of the day,
And it smoothes the furrows plowed by care,
The lines on the forehead you once called fair,
In the years that have flown away."

"'Tis a little thing to say, 'You are kind;
I love you, my dear,' each night,
But it sends a thrill through your heart, I find,
For love is tender, love is blind,
As we climb life's rugged height."

"We starve each other for love's caress,
We take, but we do not give;
It seems so easy some soul to bless,
But we dole the love grudgingly less and less,
Till 'tis bitter and hard to live."

Love is a wonderful sweetener of life, and heavy burdens are far more easily carried if some friend really cares. Then why do we so often hide real affection for friends and relations under an indifferent manner which seems to imply that we don't care in the least for them? Why are we so ready with blame, while we deal out praise—in our own homes at least—as though we were shipwrecked sailors, and there were not

sugar enough to go round? Praise, if really deserved, is good for anybody, though flattery is a sweet poison. A kind heart is not all that is needed to make friendliness a success. We must try to look at things from the other person's point of view. The other day a small boy of my acquaintance suggested that his mother should spend a birthday present she had received on a horn and a mouth-organ. The fact that he thought these articles would be very desirable by no means proved that she would care to possess them; and, if we don't cultivate the habit of real tact and sympathy, we may—with the best intentions—make just as great mistakes.

And one thing more, let us look on the bright side of life—or "polish up the dark side." I once belonged to a Society called "The Bright-side Club." Most of the members were invalids, and one strict rule was that they were never to talk about their ailments. Troubles always seem greater if we drag them to the front where we have a good view of all their sharp points. The habit of always looking smiling and cheerful can be cultivated, and a smile cheers up the people on both sides of it—the man behind the smile as well as the man in front of it.

"A busy, bonny, kindly place
Is this rough world of ours,
For those who love and work apace,
And fill their hands with flowers.
To kind and just and grateful hearts
The present grace is given
To find a heaven in themselves,
And find themselves in heaven."

HOPE.

The Friendly Hand.

When a man ain't got a cent, an' he's feelin' kind of blue,
An' the clouds hang hard and heavy an' won't let the sunshine through,
It's a great thing, O my brethren, for a feller just to lay
His hand upon your shoulder in a friendly sort o' way.

It makes a man feel curious; it makes the tear-drops start,
An' you sort o' feel a flutter in the region of the heart.
You can't look up and meet his eyes; you don't know what to say,
When his hand is on your shoulder in a friendly sort o' way.

Oh, the world's a curious compound, with its honey and its gall,
With its cares an' bitter crosses; but a good world, after all,
And a good God must have made it—leastways, that is what I say
When a hand rests on my shoulder in a friendly sort o' way.

—James Whitcomb Riley.