

FOR PARISH AND HOME.

### LOVE UNEXPRESSED.

By CONSTANCE F. WOOLSON.

THE sweetest notes among the human heart-strings  
Are dull with rust ;

The sweetest chords, adjusted by the angels,  
Are clogged with dust ;

We pipe and pipe again for dreary music  
Upon the selfsame strains,

While sounds of crime, and fear, and desolation,  
Come back again in sad refrains.

On through the world we go, an army marching,  
With listening ears,

Each longing, sighing, for the heavenly music  
He never hears ;

Each longing, sighing, for a word of comfort,  
A word of tender praise,

A word of love, to cheer the endless journey  
Of earth's hard, busy days.

They love us, and we know it : this suffices  
For reason's share.

Why should they pause to give that love expression  
With gentle care ?

Why should they pause ? But still our hearts are  
Aching

With all the gnawing pain.  
Of hungry love that longs to hear the music,  
And longs and longs in vain.

We love them, and we know it ; if we falter,  
With fingers numb,

Among the unused strings of love's expression,  
The notes are dumb ;

We shrink within ourselves, in voiceless sorrow,  
Leaving the words unsaid,

And side by side with those we love the dearest  
In silence on we tread.

Thus on we tread, and thus each in silence  
Its fate fulfils,

Waiting and hoping for the heavenly music  
Beyond the distant hills ;

The only difference of the love in heaven  
From love on earth below

Is : Here we love, and know not how to tell it,  
And there we all shall know.

FOR PARISH AND HOME.

### THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

#### IV. LONG-SUFFERING.

LONG-SUFFERING may seem to be a negative kind of virtue, but it requires Christian character to produce it. It is not natural to man ; it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit's work and influence. His goodness never fails. It endures daily. His great mercy and infinite long-suffering are ever exercised towards us. The Christian in his sphere is to show the same spirit, and this requires the grace and strength of Christ.

Long-suffering is patience under a sense of injury. Sir Walter Raleigh, the type of an honorable and fearless Englishman, was once insulted by a hot-headed young man, who challenged him to mortal combat. When Sir Walter refused to fight him, the young man spat in his face. The brave

knight, taking out his handkerchief, made this reply : " Young man, if I could as easily wipe your blood from my conscience as I can this injury from my face, I would this moment take away your life." It required great patience to bear such an insult, and the self-restraint shown marked out a high type of character. It is only charity, Christian love in exercise, that knows how to suffer long and to be kind.

Long-suffering is the power to resist anger, to smother hate, and to disarm revenge. It will not quarrel. It will meet harsh, hard, and unkind words, either by not answering them, or by the soft answer which turneth away wrath. It will refuse to meet evil with evil, to fight fire with fire.

Long-suffering is the spirit of forbearance with others. It was constantly shown by Jesus Christ to His disciples. He was met by their want of faith, by the narrowing influences of their early environment, and had to bear with much dullness of understanding, and many shortcomings. " How long shall I be with you ? how long shall I suffer you ? " Yet He ever showed a patience which nothing could weary, and a long-suffering which covered all the shortcomings of men.

Long-suffering makes us approachable and easy of access. There are some Christians who are so impatient of faults in others, or are so quick to discern them, that they keep ordinary people at a distance. They may have many excellencies of life and character, but, to say the least, they are not lovable. But long-suffering brings divine patience with the faults and failings of others into daily life ; it teaches us to suspend our judgments, to hope for the best, and not to be too ready to censure others.

The question now arises, How is long-suffering gained ? It is a plant which grows from a divine seed, in a soil prepared for its reception. But it requires constant care and diligent cultivation. The Christian has often a hard struggle against his natural disposition. There are some people born into the world with such a kind nature that it seems easy ground in which to develop the Christian virtues. Others, again, have a very different temperament. They are high strung, easily moved by passion, perhaps even quick to take offence.

The source of strength is with God, but the means of obtaining divine grace are within our own reach. It was said of Richard of the Lion-heart that when moved to anger by his naturally quick

and imperious temper, he made it a rule to say the Lord's Prayer before he gave utterance to his thoughts or play to his feelings. Long before he reached the " Amen," generally when the petition, " Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us," was upon his lips, his temper subsided, and gave place to a calm and cool frame of mind.

The long-suffering of God shines out in almost every page of the Bible. It is seen in the long record of His dealings with His people. He has ever stretched forth His hands in entreaty, and offered the rich blessings of His love to the children of men. He has borne with all our shortcomings. So the spirit of Christian love which is gained from union with Christ, and is a fruit of His Spirit, is to be shown by the children of God in their daily walk and conversation. Christians need to remember continually that they are the world's Bible. The world does not judge the Christian's doctrine by the doctrine, but from his daily conduct, his everyday actions, his ordinary life. It is not enough to talk about the Christian virtues ; we must make an effort to translate them into action. In *We Too* Edna Lyall pictures her heroine, " Erica," as brought to Christ through the influence of Livingstone's Christian character. Erica assisted her father in editing an infidel journal. She was given the " Life of Livingstone " to review, and told to leave out all reference to his religion. But she found that she could not divorce the religion from the life. She could no more draw a true portrait of Livingstone without his religion than of Cromwell without his Puritanism, or Napoleon without his ambition, or Pitt without his politics. She saw that his religion was a real factor in his life, and when in the darkest hour, surrounded by savages thirsting for his blood, she read that he sought guidance from the pages of God's Word and help through prayer, and was able to come forth with untroubled brow, as if no danger were near, she was compelled to confess that God was behind it all, and to say, " I believe in God." Professor Blaikie, who was the author of Livingstone's life, says that Edna Lyall has since written to him to the effect that when she incorporated the incident into her story she felt that it had such a ring of sincerity about it that " even Mr. Bradlaugh himself would at least pause over it, and, perhaps, ponder."

W. J. ARMITAGE.

St. Thomas' Rectory, St. Catharines.