

Now the question is, what are we doing for each other? and how many people in this world are the better and happier for our living in it? "Ah, it's all very well," says somebody, "but we must look to number one." Indeed, where should you have been, dear friend, if others had acted thus selfishly towards you? In your childhood's days your parents thought nothing of themselves in taking care of you; in your sickness your friends have nursed you tenderly; but above all, has not God in His mercy been very kind to you? If you must begin with number one, then take your poor selfish heart to Jesus, and ask Him to cast out of it these wretched and narrow thoughts, and help you to think for others now.

But what can I do? Well, if you set about doing your duty, the Lord will soon find you employment. Don't say you cannot afford to be kind—just read this story. During the cotton famine in Lancashire, when so many were reduced to starvation by the stopping of the mills, a poor spinner, who was a Methodist class leader, thought he would go out and call upon some of his distressed members. He opened the cottage door of a widow, and found her sitting by the bare table, her two daughters by her side, slowly starving to death. Another moment and he had run to the baker's shop over the way, and bought a twopenny loaf, which he placed before them, not waiting for their tearful thanks. A few days afterwards a gentleman was talking to these poor women, and they told him the story, adding with touching point, "It was very good of him, sir, and it saved us from death, for we were well nigh 'clemmed;' but we wouldna ha' taken it if we had known what came out afterwards, that it was his last twopenny, and he had tasted no food for two days."

Now, what do you think of that? I tell you it makes my eyes fill with tears as I write it, and depend upon it, when the Lord makes up His jewels, and His saints are received into the glory of His presence, this poor cotton spinner will find a high place. Let us do what we can for one another, whether it be in money, or kindness and sympathy (which are very precious); and bear in mind that the best and kindest act we can ever do is to bring poor sinners to the feet of Him who "though He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich." The Lord loves a cheerful giver, and to all who come to Him He cheerfully and lovingly gives a new heart, a right spirit, and a happy life of service for Him.

Jesse Page.

PRECEPT—PROMISE—PRAYER.

PRECEPT.—Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Philippians ii. 2.

PROMISE.—He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.

John xiv. 21.

PRAYER.—O continue Thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee; and Thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

Psalms xxxvi. 10.

A SPRING FOR LIFE.



GREAT events from little causes spring. Once, over a steep and precipitous cliff rising from the River Wye, a passing bird flew by; and it dropped a seed upon the brow of the rock. The seed took root, and became a plant. And years went past, bringing summers and winters, and golden suns and fresh breezes to the little seedling; and God who causeth it "to rain on the earth where no man is, on the wilderness wherein there is no man, to satisfy the desolate and waste ground, and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth," made it grow and flourish so that its young vigorous shoot began to spread around, while the winds and storms of winter only served to strengthen its root in the earth.

And many years after, two young men walked at the bottom of the steep cliffs; and one related to his friend how there was a story handed down among the country folk of a man who had gained the summit of the height by a perilous ascent from the spot whereon they stood.

"It doesn't look so very great an achievement," said his companion; "I think I could climb it."

"You had better not attempt it," replied his friend; and after a time they separated.

But a spirit of daring had been aroused in the heart of the younger of the two; and at first, merely as a kind of experiment, and then, as he grew keener in the adventure, with more ardour, he began the ascent.

But, after a time, and as his strength became somewhat less, the rocks proved steeper and the shrubs grew farther apart, and the young man asked himself whether it would not be better that he should even then try to return. But, no! that return would be attended with great difficulty.

And that descent would be perilous. Already his knees were beginning to knock together, and his breath was beginning to fail; while above his head the cliff took an overhanging form, and the steep rock sides afforded neither slender shrub nor foot-hole for his aid.

With a violent effort he planted his foot upon the spot where a single projecting spur of rock offered a last momentary stay. There was room for one foot only, and for that one a bare possibility of support. He looked down, and shuddered at the depth from which he had blindly mounted.

He looked up; and the frowning rock bending over him seemed to menace him for having so audaciously attempted to scale its brow. Then he thought of home and his mother, and of what might soon meet her eyes and ears. And then his trembling knees began to fail, and he knew that he could barely support himself for another minute, and that when that minute should come to a close all would be over.

Once more he looked up. A slender bough from a tree-plant on the edge of the cliff quivered in the