

both Baptist ministers. One was always trim and neat, just as if he had come out of a band-box. The other was rough and uncouth, and, sad to say, he was addicted to the tobacco pipe. The story goes that the precise brother went to call on the ragged brother and found him enveloped in a cloud of tobacco smoke, and he said: "Oh, sir, how much does it cost you altogether in a year for smoke?" And, "Oh," replied the rough and ready brother, "how much does it cost you a year for starch?" I met them both very shortly after, and the story was told and the question was put. "Is it true?" And the precise brother, who was a very metaphysical man, said: "It is true, but it is not a fact; it never happened, but it hits us off to the right."

Now you know what I mean. I don't object to fiction if it be true to life, and if the life it portrays be such as is wholesome for children. My objection is not to fiction itself, but to the quantity of it. Are we so destitute of stirring fact in the history of the Christian Church as to be so much dependent on fiction? Destitute, when we have the adventures of such a hero as Livingstone! Oh, no! far from destitute. The life of Admiral Lord Nelson, by Southey, has manned the English Navy from the time of its publication until now; and the lives of these men, written in a style that shall suit our Sabbath school children, would man our pulpits at home and our missions abroad for generations to come.

But how are we to get these better things in the future? We are not to get them up simply. We are to get them down; and we are to get them by working for the loftiest motives. It seems to me that we dwarf our best works by lack of the highest motives. When I was in Liverpool I remember a fire occurred in the very topmost loft of one of the very tallest warehouses in the borough. They screwed the hydrants and put on the hose, but alas! there was not power enough in the water to reach the fire, because the pressure had been taken off. The highest pressure was not on. And so it seems to me with the fire above. We Christian men and Christian workers fail to reach the spot where the flame is consuming because we are not working with the pressure of the loftiest motives—the love of the personal Christ. "Lovest thou me?" was His question; "not My Word, not My cause, not even My people, but 'me.'" Then "feed My lambs!" Oh, for a deeper love of that divine Master! Then we shall attain to loftier things than we have reached in the past. Nor is this all. We need a deeper and more devout dependence upon the holy Spirit of God. We need not trust in machinery; we need not trust in ourselves.

Who that has read that noble volume by a very noble man, the Rev. W. Arthur, on the "Tongue of Fire," can forget the magnificent illustration with which he has enforced this truth? By a mere repetition of it I will resume my seat. Suppose, he says, you are going to attack a fortress, how do you mean to do it? "Oh, there is the cannon!" Yes, but there is no power in that. A child may sit upon it; a bird may perch in its mouth. "Then there is the ball." Well, but there is no power in that. A child may lift it, unless it be a little too heavy. Suppose twenty men were to take it and throw it against the wall; it would take no effect. "But the powder!" Well, there is nothing in the powder either. A bird may peck it and sprinkle it to and fro, and take no harm. But take that powerless cannon, put in that powerless powder, and put over that that powerless ball, and then introduce a spark of fire. In a moment that powder is a flash of lightning, and that ball a thunderbolt which goes with immense impact to the crushing of the wall. So with this Sabbath school work. We have all the machinery that is needed to-day for the training of our children and for the conversion of the world; but "oh, for the baptism of fire!"

SHALL WE MEET AGAIN?

The following is one of the most brilliant paragraphs ever written by the lamented George D. Prentice: "The fiat of death is inexorable. There is no appeal for relief from that great law which dooms us to dust. We flourish and fade as the leaves of the forest, and the flowers that bloom, wither and fade, in a day, have no firmer hold upon life than the mightiest monarch that ever shook the earth with his footsteps. Generations of men will appear and disappear as the grass; and the multitude that throng the world to-day will disappear as footsteps on the shore. Men seldom

think of the great event of death until the shadow falls across their own pathway, hiding from their eyes the faces of loved ones whose living smile was the sunlight of their existence. Death is the antagonist of life, and the thought of the tomb is the skeleton of all feasts. We do not want to go through the dark valley, although the dark passage may lead to paradise; we do not want to go down into damp graves, even with princes for bed-fellows. In the beautiful drama of Ion the hope of immortality, so eloquently uttered by the death-devoted Greek, finds deep response in every thoughtful soul. When about to yield his life a sacrifice to fate, his Clemanthe asks if they should meet again; to which he responds: 'I have asked that dreadful question of the hills that look eternal—of the clear streams that flow forever—of stars among those fields of azure my raised spirits have walked in glory. All are dumb. But as I gaze upon thy living face, I feel that there is something in love that mantles through its beauty that cannot wholly perish. We shall meet again, Clemanthe.'"

REMEMBER.

In thy time and times of mourning,
When grief doeth all she can
To hide the prosperous sunshine,
Remember this, O man—
"He setteth an end to darkness."

Sad saint, of the world forgotten,
Who workest thy work apart,
Take thou this promise for comfort,
And hold it in thy heart—
"He searcheth out all perfection."

O foolish and faithless sailor,
When the ship is driven away,
When the waves forget their places,
And the anchor will not stay—
"He weigheth the water by measure."

Outcast, homeless, bewildered,
Let now thy murmurs be still;
Go in at the gates of gladness,
And eat of the feast at will—
"For wisdom is better than riches."

O diligent, diligent sower,
Who sowest thy seed in vain,
When the corn in the ear is withered,
And the young flax dies for rain—
"Through rocks he cutteth out rivers."
—Alice Cary.

HOUSEKEEPING AND HOME-MAKING.

In the account of the reception of Jesus in the home at Bethany we have a fine opportunity for studying the peculiar character of each of the two sisters. They are very unlike in temperament and disposition, although both of them are devoted friends of Christ. They represent two classes of female character.

Martha is an active, earnest housekeeper. She provides for the table, and treats her guests royally. She has a fault. She allows herself to be disturbed and perplexed at times by the cares of her life. She allows the things of the outer world to break in, now and then, upon the peace of her heart. She is apt to be a little nervous and irritable, and rather easily vexed when things do not go to please her. Yet she is a noble woman and a queen of housekeepers.

Mary is different in disposition. Perhaps she is not so good a housekeeper as her sister. She reigns less royally in the kitchen. She cannot prepare so many tempting dishes for the table. She would fall far below Martha in giving dinners or suppers to her friends. She entertains them in a different way. She gives more of herself and less of table-serving. She loves her friends no less than her sister; I think she loves them even more deeply. But she would rather sit down and talk with them than spend her time in bustling preparation to give them a sumptuous meal.

I think most guests would like her reception better than Martha's. They would prefer less supper and more hostess; less table entertainment and more heart entertainment. Most people do not go to their friends' houses for the meal they receive, and are disappointed when they get an elegant supper but no quiet communion with their friends. I think I should greatly prefer Mary's way of receiving her guests. Jesus certainly did. A very plain meal with much heart-fellowship is better than a very elaborate repast and nothing else. Martha was no doubt the better housekeeper, but Mary was the better home-maker.

I know that some one may say that Mary's home-making would have been empty enough without Martha's housekeeping. Perhaps that is true. The table

has far more to do with home happiness than some people think. Husbands and brothers, coming in weary and hungry, want more than even the tenderest heart-fellowship. Kindly greetings, affectionate words, soothing sympathies, thoughtful gentleness, will not quench hunger. Hearts will soon starve without love; but men have bodies as well as spirits, stomachs as well as hearts. So Martha's dinners are as important in their place as Mary's loving gentleness and personal attention.

I am inclined to think that it took both these sisters to make a true and very happy home. Martha kept the house well, and looked faithfully after all the domestic affairs, and Mary made the home-life that filled the home with such fragrance. Neither alone could have made the home what both together made it. So it seems to me that it takes both these pictures to make a complete model or pattern, after which young ladies should seek to fashion their home-making. They want something of Martha's enthusiastic house-wifery without her easily-vexed temper. And they want a great deal of Mary's sweet heart-life without her possible inattention or indifference to more prosaic, but no less necessary household duties.—Rev. J. R. Miller, in *Illustrated Christian Weekly*.

EXTEMPORIZING IN THE PULPIT.

They make a great mistake who suppose that extempore preaching has been the law with all great preachers; in fact, we may almost go so far as to say the reverse has been the case. Extemporizing will often be exposed to difficulties which only a very honest mind can overcome and make the best of. When Father Taylor, the American preacher, once lost himself and became bewildered in the course of his sermon, he extricated himself by the exclamation, "I have lost the track of the nominative case, my brethren, but one thing I know, I am bound for the kingdom!" and the frankness of the confession would be sure to save him from suffering in the esteem of his audience. But the more stately and dignified masters, it is very obvious, cannot deliver themselves in that way.

The most singular instance of this kind in our memory is the case of a very distinguished man to whom we loved to listen in our boyhood, a preacher with a wonderful command over every faculty that could give brilliancy or beauty to pulpit exercises. He always preached without notes, and always broke his discourses into divisions; but once, to our amazement and that of the congregation, having travelled through, so far as we remember, two departments of the discourse, he caught himself and said, "I—I forget the third division!" He turned around to the organist, "Organist, strike up a verse." He gave out a line of a hymn, and while the organ was playing and the people singing, he leaned in deep thought over the pulpit; the singing over, he announced the missing link. "But," said he, "is not that singular?" And he proceeded to shew how it was that he lost it, and how he found it proceeded, in a really enchanting way to talk upon the law of association of ideas and the mystery and marvels of retentiveness and memory as a proof of the immateriality and immortality of the soul, until the time was gone, and we really had no more of the sermon after all.

A similar anecdote has often been told of the late Thomas Binney. Dr. Harris, the author of "Mammon," had begged his services for some anniversary, and Binney declared his utter inability to prepare a sermon—in those days he was a strictly extempore speaker. It was urged, "Oh come and preach such and such a sermon; that is ready to your mind!" And so Mr. Binney promised that he would take the service; but he also, having got through two heads of the discourse, became bewildered. "Thirdly—thirdly—I've forgotten what was thirdly!" he said; and he looked over the pulpit to where Dr. Harris was sitting. "Brother Harris, what was thirdly?" Harris looked up and said: "So-and-so." "Exactly," said the discomfited preacher, who pursued his way with ease and happiness to the close.—*Sunday at Home*.

He is the happiest who render the greatest number happy.—*Dismahis*.

ARE ye not to bear one another's burdens? Are ye not to hide each other's shame and disgrace in the spirit of love and kindness? Not only must you not think evil, but always kindness, nor speak evil, but always kind words.