

Family Reading.

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE WITH THE WORLD.

There will arise in the Christian's course from time to time, many occasions on which he will be in doubt as to some points of his duty, especially in the case of social intercourse with the world, and of a participation in its amusements and recreations. Of course, in very many cases his duty will be plain, *i. e.*, if he be honest and sincere and consistent. And perhaps the experienced Christian will seldom find any difficulty; I aim now rather at the case of the newly awakened, the inquiring Christian. Well, in such cases, *he turns to his CHART*, and on that chart (HIS BIBLE), though he finds not every rock and shoal, and quicksand marked down by name, he finds it laid down plainly and decisively that *the whole coast is dangerous*. In plainer words, he finds a general principle though perhaps not in so many words, a specific statute, and that principle is "Be not conformed to this world." "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." By whom is the amusement in question patronized? Whose equipages throng the door, who make up the crowds that frequent it? Are they those who are the votaries of other and less dubious pleasures? Are they those who wear the world's badge and have its mark stamped on their foreheads? Then let the Christian pause, let him fear to find himself surrounded by crowds of wordlings sympathising in their pleasures, joining in their laughter, drinking with them of the same cup. It must be at best, but a suspicious cup that meets tastes which should be opposite; it must be at best a suspicious path in which even for a moment the Christian walks hand in hand with the man of this world. Be quite sure of this, the world would not be drinking of that cup if it were not in some way spiced to their taste. Alas, it is far more likely that the Christian should have stepped out of his narrow path, than that the worldling should have forsaken his, to walk even for a moment with the Christian.—*Rev. J. C. Miller.*

KNOWLEDGE NOT WISDOM.—There is a heaping up of knowledge just as amenable to this censure as the ignorance of the unlearned, not indeed so censured by man, but equally worthy of it in a true judgment. The intellectual fool, full of knowledge but without wisdom, whose way is right in his own eyes, is no less a fool, nay, more so than the ignorant fool, and as far from true wisdom. For knowledge is a very different thing from wisdom; knowledge is but the collecting together a mass of material at best, whilst wisdom is the right perception and right use, leading to further riches. The mere heaper up of knowledge digs, as it were, ore out of the earth, working underground in darkness; whereas the wise man fashions all his knowledge into use and beauty, praising and blessing God with it, and receiving from Him a fuller measure in consequence. Wisdom is knowledge applied to life—a thing of the heart; the heart controlling and using all the head gathers; knowledge by itself is a mere barren store of the head, quite separable from goodness and love, a thing capable of being possessed by devils. For this we must mark, the humblest good heart which loves God alone can attain to the knowledge of God. No mere intellectual power and pride can do that. And hence we may see why the man whose way is right in his own eyes is a fool. Nothing but pride shuts out knowledge. Who is not conscious, taking only the merest intellectual work, how little really depends on himself, how many thoughts are direct gifts, how much precious material comes into his hands—is given—not his own; who will not admit, if nothing more, that a headache, a qualm, may destroy his cherished hopes, so little can he rely on self?—*From Sermons delivered at Uppingham School, by the Rev. E. Thring.*

THE FINAL JUDGMENT.—"We must all appear," or, as now it is generally admitted, the words with slight variation should be rendered, "we must all be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ"—a far more searching thought. If we were to employ a homely expression, and say, "turned inside out," it would, I believe, exactly express the intention of St. Paul; all that is inward now, and thus hidden, becoming outward then: every mask stripped off; every disguise torn away; whatever any man's work has been, that day declaring it; and not according to its outward varnish, but its inward substance.—*Trench.*