

that name is to take Jesus for Saviour, Teacher, Master; and to be an epistle of Christ. Naturally she may have been amiable and attractive or the reverse; but because she was a true disciple of Jesus she was a blessing to all.

How did she show that she was a true disciple of Jesus? By the good works and alms deeds which she did. One of the characteristics of christianity is its splendid development of those beauties of character which are the chief glory of womanhood "The quiet and lowly spirit, chaste modesty and silent loving patience." But it also fosters the active functions of female energy. By quiet feminine handiwork Dorcas wrought for Christ. Some sneer at those women who are never so happy as when thinking of calico and children. Let them sneer—Dorcas was very much that kind of woman, motherly, benevolent, practical; not indulging in grand day dreams of impossible sentiment, but with a warm heart for widows and orphans and all their necessities. And she did not show her interest in them by proxy, she ministered to them with her own hands. Nor was her work easy; it called for great care, discretion, prudence. She needed a judicious head as well as a warm heart. How wisely to deal with the poor is a difficult problem. Who to help, when to help, how to help, are sometimes very difficult questions to answer. Dorcas grappled with them and with good success. The church has still much to learn from Dorcas.

Yet the hour came when Dorcas died. The busy beautiful life came to an end and loving hands arranged her body for its last long sleep. The loving heart no longer beat in sympathy with distress. The patient ear no longer listened to the tale of woe. The bright eye no longer brimmed with sympathetic tears. The busy brain was no longer filled with loving plans. The loving fingers no longer went stitch, stitch, stitch, in cheerful rhythm of busy love. There is a great blank in that little seaport. There is a dark cloud resting on that little church.

In the extremity of their distress they sent for Peter of whose great miracle they had heard. He can at least comfort them and advise with them. At once he came. With weeping eyes they told him all, and the widows showed him garments they were wearing as the proof of her great love and their great loss. Peter was deeply moved. Like

his master he wished to be alone in this solemn hour and in this solemn chamber; therefore he put them all forth, and kneeling beside the dead body he prayed; he prayed till in fellowship with his unseen but ever present Saviour his faith was so strengthened that as he had said to Æneas "Jesus Christ health thee," so he said to her "Tabitha arise." Immediately she opened her eyes and seeing Peter sat up. Again has Jesus proved himself the Resurrection and the Life. Again has faith triumphed over death. Peter gave her his hand and raised her up, called for the saints and widows who were waiting and presented her alive. What a glorious victory over the king of terrors. What a glorious proof that Christ has abolished death and brought life and incorruption to light. The glorious news spread through Joppa, and many believed in that Lord who could work such a wonder. It was a glorious gospel to them and it was a new opportunity for Dorcas. She could do something here she could not do in heaven, and she was brought back to do it. Dorcas is the only christian worker whose labor was continued in spite of death. How highly does the Saviour prize such work. Do we?

#### ADDED POINTS.

1. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee. All the wrath of Christ's enemies carries out his purposes.
2. We can do nothing against the truth but for the truth. The bitterest opponent of the truth is not only powerless to hinder it but actually helps it.
3. The Lord reigneth why should we ever tremble for his cause.
4. When Christ gives peace let us give ourselves to work.
5. A loving and wise visitation of weak congregations is an apostolic practice too much neglected.
6. Christ is the Saviour of the body; when we are sick let us not forget to call in the good and great Physician.
7. The best proof of the cure of Æneas was the work he did. So with us.
8. The root of all good fruit is faith in Jesus. Dorcas was his disciple.
9. Dorcas was a great and honored worker but she was no deaconness. Neither was she a preacher.