

left at the previous meals, and was told, on inquiry, that this singular custom was observed in obedience to our Saviour's injunction, "Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost;" and also that they might retain the blessing which had been pronounced by a priest upon former repasts; because the service, being in the ancient language, is only intelligible to the clergy, and cannot be properly performed by the laity.

The women did not eat with the men, but, instead of receiving what they left, as is very common in the East, a separate portion was reserved for the females, and, in all respects, they were treated with more consideration, and regarded more as companions than in most Asiatic countries.

Till evening, they were constantly occupied in their various employments, within or out of the house, and in many respects remarkably exemplified Solomon's description of a virtuous woman, even in their method of spinning, (Prov. xxxi. 19) literally holding their distaffs in their hands, while they give their long wooden spindles a twirl with the other hand, and then lay hold of it to wind up their thread: for they use no wheel. They clothe their household, in scarlet or striped cloth, made of wool, and resembling Scotch tartan, of a beautiful and substantial texture.

The women appear to be neat, industrious, and frugal, and they are remarkably chaste, without the false affectation of modesty too often seen in these countries. Two of the young married women in the house came forward in the evening, and, in the presence of their husbands, joined in our social visit. Each of them, at my request, gave me a brass ring from her wrist to show to our American ladies, regarding whose customs they made many inquiries. Like others of their people, they were the most surprised that our ladies should negotiate their own matrimonial engagements, and that their fathers should give them in marriage without receiving a dowry in payment for their daughters. Their dress is neat and becoming; they braid their hair, and wear but few ornaments. Their form is graceful, their expression agreeable, and their complexion (except that it is sometimes affected by more exposure to the sun and the smoke of their dwellings,) as fair as that of most Europeans.

Grapes, figs, and pomegranates I found among their fruits in the lower villages on the river, where rice is also cultivated, to the great detriment of health. Apples, and other Northern fruits, are found in the higher villages. Wheat is little cultivated, for want of space, but it is brought from Amadiéh in exchange for honey and butter.

RELIGIOUS LITERATURE.

For the Christian Mirror.

ON FORGIVENESS, AND THE REGULATION OF THE TEMPER.

BY MRS. J. R. SPOONER.

There is no duty, the importance of which, our Saviour seemed more desirous of impressing on the minds of his followers, than that of forgiveness—commanding us to pray to our Father in heaven, that he would "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." And the reflection that this naturally calls forth—that we have ourselves so much need of forgiveness from God—ought to melt our hearts into forgiveness of those who have injured us, and who are, like ourselves, feeble and erring mortals.

The life of Jesus was a commentary on the precepts he taught—and his example, in the exercise of this principle, speaks to us in every page of his history, urging us to "press forward towards the mark." But the best of us are too prone to neglect the admonition. There is something inexpressibly touching in the meekness and patience our Divine Master manifested, under every species of insult and contumely that the malice of his enemies could invent. He, "when he was reviled, reviled not again—when he suffered, he threatened not." See him on Mount Calvary, about to close his human career, by suffering the

shameful and dreadful death of the cross. Even there, in the midst of agony almost beyond endurance—he prayed for his persecutors, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." What an affecting instance is this of forgiveness to enemies! Where is the heart so callous as not to be touched by the recital? Yet the Jews stood by unmoved, excepting one, on whom this spirit of Christ doubtless had its effect, when he exclaimed, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

The attainment of this duty is by no means easily won, and we are so differently constituted, that to some it is more difficult than others. We are not all equally happy in our dispositions; but let us remember, that human virtue consists in cherishing and cultivating every good inclination, and in checking and subduing every propensity to evil. There are some circumstances under which it is almost impossible not to feel and express some emotions of anger; and the admonition of our Saviour, "Be ye angry and sin not," seems to suppose some degree of that passion allowable on certain occasions. But many passages of Scripture, such as the following,—“let not the sun go down upon your wrath”—“let every man be slow to anger”—and indeed all reasoning upon the subject,—leads us to believe, that to ourselves is submitted the control of this feeling, as well as of others. How elevating is the thought, that when God breathed man into life, he bestowed upon him moral and intellectual powers—thus making him capable of self-government—by the exercise of which, he is most widely distinguished from the lower animals; and he who, like them, is only guided by his passions—who will not listen to the still small voice within—is not true to himself, in thus refusing to make a proper use of the high powers with which his beneficent Creator has endowed him.

There are probably few who will not admit, that on no subject are they so frequently called upon to exercise self-government, as in restraining anger; not that we are very often liable to great and extraordinary trials of this kind—yet, in our daily walk of life, do we commonly meet with trials of temper, by the government or indulgence of which our characters are in a great measure formed. Solomon has said, "He that ruleth his spirit, is stronger than he that taketh a city:" which is as true as that mind is greater than matter; and the conqueror of the kingdom within, ought truly to be more esteemed than he who merely overcomes physical obstacles.

In addition to the motives urged upon by the example of Christ, the injunctions of Scripture, and the noble prerogative of reason, we have another, the importance of which is too much overlooked, viz: our own individual peace and enjoyment. Look at that man whose temper is ruffled by every inauspicious occurrence, however trifling—whose anger boils over into trembling passion, and, like the withering simoon, sheds its baneful influence on all within its power—casting its dark shadows over the domestic altar, and, perhaps, quenching for a time all the hallowed feelings that cling round the family circle! In vain does prosperity attend such a one—the greatest outward blessings cannot afford enjoyment to a mind irritable and wrong in itself. How different is he who possesses "the wisdom which is from above," which is "gentle, easy to be entreated, and full of mercy." Its advantages are well described by the eloquent BLAIR:—"Whatever ends a good man may be supposed to pursue, gentleness will be found to favour them. It prepossesses and

wins every heart. It persuades, when every other argument fails; often disarms the fierce, and melts the stubborn. Whereas harshness confirms the opposition it would subdue, and of an indifferent person creates an enemy. To the man of gentleness, the world is generally disposed to ascribe every other good quality. The higher endowments of the mind, we admire at a distance; and when any impropriety of behaviour accompanies them, we admire without love. They are like some of the distant stars, whose beneficial influence reaches not to us. Whereas, of the influence of gentleness, all in some degree partake, and therefore all love it. The man of this character lives and flourishes in the world without envy. His misfortunes are universally lamented, and his failings are easily forgiven. But whatever may be the effect of this virtue upon our external condition, its influence upon our internal enjoyment is certain and powerful—that inward tranquillity which it promotes, is the first requisite to every pleasurable feeling. It is the calm and clear atmosphere, the serenity and sunshine of the mind. When benignity and gentleness reign within, we are always least in danger of being ruffled from without: every person and every circumstance are beheld in the most favourable light. But let some clouds of discontent and ill humour gather on the mind, and immediately the scene changes. Nature seems transformed, and the appearance of all things is blackened to our view. The gentle mind is like the smooth stream, which reflects every object in its just proportion, and in its fairest colours. The violent spirit, like troubled waters, renders back the images of things distorted and broken, and communicates to them all that disordered motion which arises solely from its own agitation."

I would most strenuously urge the regulation of the temper upon women. It has been said of them, that their physical constitution naturally renders them more capricious and irritable than men—and that it does so, I will not deny; but this I maintain, that they are in the same degree capable of self-government and self-denial. But is not the regulation of the temper too much neglected?

I would that I might impress the importance of this duty on young females—particularly upon those who have lately entered upon the duties of a married life. You are now commencing a new era in existence—you have a new character to form, and sustain. You possess, it is supposed, the affections of your husband; and it remains for you now to retain, nay, increase them, by your daily demeanour and temper. Some women do not seem aware how much their domestic happiness lies in their own power, and forget that the "ornament" prized above all others by the husband, is that of "a meek and quiet spirit." No one can stand more in need of this disposition than the mistress of a family; for under the most happy circumstances, she will almost daily experience many little cares and annoyances, calculated to fret and perplex her, unless fortified by a well regulated temper. The husband, too, has his anxieties, vexations, and disappointments—probably occasioned, in a great measure, by the care of providing for his family. And when he returns to his home, after the labours of the day are over, has he not a right to expect that the wife, for whose support and comfort he has been toiling, will meet him with a smile—endeavour to cheer him, if sad—soothe him, if irritated and perplexed—in short, make his home, as far as depends upon her, the abode of peace and enjoyment?