

vinced that no such idea is in the Bible, but rather they must be doing good to keep from being bad. This is the only way to keep out of harm's way, by keeping right in the way of good. The only possible way to overcome evil is by doing good. A friend said to us not long since, "They had a hard life; so many trials and evils with which to contend that it was quite impossible for them to maintain their Christian integrity." We soon found why life was so hard with them. They had forgotten to pray, or to study the Bible, or to take any special interest in the work of the church. They, like many others, did not understand the only way to keep out of sin was by keeping in the work of God, and that their greatest sin was the sin of doing nothing for God.

The history of the barren fig tree well illustrates the evil of nothingness. It was not condemned because it bore evil fruit, but because it bore no fruit. It was cursed and doomed because it was fruitless, and therefore useless. However harmless we may be, we are useless unless "doers of the work." The reason why Bro. no-harm is undisturbed and still remains in his place is because he is considered quite good. If there was a bane placed upon nothingness as upon aggressive evil, we would be obliged to remove them. Here is seen the difference between the "tares" and the "thorns." While the former was no good, the latter was a positive harm. The "tares" were allowed to remain among the wheat because in taking them up they would take up the wheat also. Our own observation teaching us this, that many who are considered good, because like the tare, they are not considered bad, and if removed would destroy many of the good. But the "thorns" have the opposite effect. They destroy the wheat and therefore must not be allowed to remain. While they have not the same effect they come to the same end; they both are burned. There is as much difference between the "tares and thorns" as between the sins of omission and the sins of commission—one passive, the other active. Our labor to check the tide of sinful practices will amount to nothing unless there is faithful service for God. Let us ask ourselves—"What are we doing?" "Are we working for God?" "Are we seeking to save others, or are we seeking our own ease, and forgetting the wants of the church and humanity?" "How will the past look to us when life's journey is ended." "Are we happy now with our past record; if not, will we be happy in the great future in looking upon the past.

H. MURRAY.

"THE FELLOWSHIP OF SUFFERING."

Paul's letter to the Philippians is one of the most remarkable of his literary productions. Although it contains but four short chapters, the Apostle has crowded into it a large amount of good advice to the brethren, as well as considerable Gospel truth, and has given us, in addition, an insight into the workings of his own remarkable mind, and has spread before us the aspirations of a heart thoroughly imbued with the love of Christ, and a desire to be conformed to him in all things. After recapitulating the many reasons which he had for glorying in the flesh, had he felt so disposed, he declares that he counts these things as less than nothing, if he may only win Christ, and be found in him, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which comes through faith in Jesus Christ; and then he continues with holy fervor: "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Paul did not desire to figure merely as a fair-weather worshiper of the Son of God; on the contrary, he was prepared to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," and if needs be to seal his devotion with his blood. "The fellowship of his sufferings." How many of us, dear readers of THE CHRISTIAN,

realize the depth of meaning there is in those words? How many of us know anything about what it is to suffer for the sake of Christ? How many of us would be willing to endure even a small portion of the contumely that was heaped upon the devoted head of the great Apostle of the Gentiles and his fellow-laborers, in their efforts to persuade men to embrace the new and better religion that the Saviour had died to establish? Many are delighted with the religion of Jesus Christ while it offers them a happy home after death, and holds up to their admiring view a crown of glory that fadeth not away, but when you talk to them of bearing the cross, of enduring hardships, of partaking of the "fellowship of his sufferings," they beg to be excused, and fall back into the ranks of the unregenerate. It is only a man's best friends who can sympathize with him in his sufferings. And it is those, and those only, who sympathize with a man in his sufferings, who are worthy the sacred name of "friend." Paul desired to be thoroughly identified with his Redeemer, not only in the delightful part of his great work, but in the disagreeable and sorrowful part as well. His great mind had grasped the fact that the early Christians were destined to enter the kingdom of heaven through much tribulation, and he shrank not from the trying ordeal. "Brethren," he declares, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." It was all one to Paul whether it was pleasure, or sorrow and suffering, that was his portion here below, so long as he could look forward to the coming again of that Saviour who was to change his vile body, and fashion it like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." Here was the secret of Paul's steadfastness in the faith and of his determination to cleave to his Saviour through evil as well as good report. He had asked for and received strength from on high to help his weakness, and as a consequence he felt that nothing could now separate him from the love of God, not even all the sufferings that he might be called on to endure. Brethren, this same unflinching source of strength is open to us as it was to Paul. "Ask and receive, that your joy may be full." And may God supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

W. H. E.

Montreal, August, 1884.

THE FAMILY.

LITTLE THINGS.

It was only a trifling thing to do, but Robbie Grey could not conscientiously pass on and leave that piece of banana-skin lying on the sidewalk. So he paused on his way, and sent the skin spinning into the gutter near by.

"Come on, Rob!" shouted his companion, who had gotten a few yards ahead. "Do come on, and leave the old skin alone! What's the good of all that?"

"What's the good?" repeated Robbie. "S'pose I'm going to leave the chance of a broken leg lying around loose? Some one would have slipped on that thing, like as not, and I'll always kick 'em out of the way."

Yes, it was a trifling thing to do; but did it not show the boy's home training, and betray a noble, unselfish and thoughtful nature?

It was only a little thing when Willie Brown paused in his game of marbles to pick up the old beggar-woman's cane, which had slipped from her shaking hand as she hobbled lamely along.

"Pooh! an old beggar!" laughed his companions.

But Willie replied:

"I'd be ashamed of myself if I couldn't do that little thing for anybody, poor and old."

And somehow this game seemed more than

ever enjoyable, after the beggar's low-spoken: "God bless you, little master!"

Down the street on his new velocipede came Alec Woods—a boy of ten years. He was racing with another boy, and just a little ahead. Very sure was Alec of winning the pocketful of marbles, which his big brother had jestingly offered the winner of the race.

But a lady coming up the block, laden with parcels, chanced to drop one, as Alec's quick eye noticed, and in an instant he was off his steed, and, picking up the parcel, restored it to its owner, while, with a shout of triumph, his playmate rode on and won the race.

"You goose!" laughed the big brother, who had seen the whole thing.

"I don't care!" said Alec. "I'll bet mamma would have been glad if any one had picked up a parcel for her!"

Well, little gentlemanly Alec didn't win the race, but he didn't lose a prize either, for the big brother decided to "reward merit," as he called it, and Alec's pockets soon knew no lack of marbles.

A messenger-boy stood waiting for a car. He was tired and warm, and longed for a rest of a few block's ride. Hardly had he seated himself when a lady entered. He had a right to his seat without question; but he or the lady must stand, as every seat was occupied. Without a moment's delay the boy rose, and the lady thanked him as she took his seat.

Only a little thing, you will say, perhaps? Yes; but a "straw will show" which way the wind blows," and that boy had the instincts and breeding of the future *real* gentleman.

When the poor blind peddler came through the crowded streets the other day, and straying a little from his beaten path, grew confused and timid, it seemed a little thing for rough Irish Johnny, the bootblack (only a little street Arab, in fact), to spring from his blacking-box, and scamper after the peddler simply to take the man's arm and guide him safely through the crowd to the right corner.

Johnny knew nothing of polite society, and could neither read nor write, but his heart was in the right place, and its manly, generous impulses would be sure to guide him toward the right path, and his kindly hand had turned the peddler from danger.

"Little things" make up our lives, remember, children, and whether human eyes note the kind actions, or whether they are done in secret, yet the heart is happier for the doing of kind deeds or the saying of kind words.

Great endings from small beginnings, and it is, after all, the little things which make the sunshine of life.—*Golden Days.*

SAD DOWNFALL OF A MAN WHO FOUGHT IN THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG.

"You have indeed fallen low," was the sad remark of Justice Solon B. Smith at the Tombs the other day to an aged man, who showed every indication of a tramp.

"For God's sake forgive me, Sol," pleaded the man. "Liquor has been my curse. For ten years I have been its slave. But from this day forth I will be a changed man. I will quit drinking, and make a solemn vow that not another drop of that poison will pass my lips again."

"It has now such a strong hold upon you that you couldn't stop it if you tried ever so hard," remarked the Judge. "And, besides, where could you go? You have no home, your wife won't recognize you any more, and your friends pass by with horror and disgust."

"Well, what of that?" said the prisoner. "I can live on forty millions, can't I? What need I care for them?"

"Forty millions? Why you haven't got forty cents," said Justice Smith.