

ABOUT GRUMBING.

Mon., April 24.—Complaining to Moses.
Ex. 14. 11-14.
Tues., April 25.—Complaining of thirst.
Ex. 15. 23-27.
Wed., April 26.—Murmuring in the wilderness. Ex. 16. 2-8.
Thur., April 27.—Neither murmur ye. 1 Cor. 10. 10.
Fri., April 28.—Without murmuring. Phil. 2. 14, 15.
Sat., April 29.—Be ye thankful. Col. 3. 14, 15.
Sun., April 30.—Topic: What God thinks about grumbling. Num. 11. 1-10.

Go right at the root of this common trouble. Why do people "grumble"? Is it not because they are not sufficiently thankful for the common mercies of daily life? A dissatisfied mind is generally the result of an unthankful heart. We are all apt to make our blessings as small as possible and our troubles as large as we can. It was so with the Israelites in the wilderness with whom the story deals. It is so yet. What is the cure for this spirit, then? Is it not an appreciation of daily blessings. (Let some one sing, "Count your blessings.") Truly it will surprise us what the Lord has done when we count them up. Indeed, we cannot do so. They are more than the hairs of our head. What God thinks about grumbling! What can any right thinking person think of it but that it is a very bad habit? What good does grumbling do? Suppose the day is rainy, the dinner late, the roads bad, etc., what relief will come from this trouble by complaining about it? Some time, and sooner by being cheerful over it, the clouds will disperse and the day will be bright. It is easy to say, "Don't grumble," but I expect some one will say it is "easier said than done." Why? Grumbling is a habit. We need not form it if we are careful. It will soon be just as easy to smile as to frown if we get ourselves used to doing it; but the trouble is we don't want to smile. We really feel blue and take pleasure in making other people miserable too often. Children are very apt to do this in the home. There is no place in the world where grumbling is so common, and there is no other place where cheerfulness is so much needed. Especially here should we all join together in making life happy. The habit once formed is certainly hard to break, therefore, do not form it. Look on the bright side. If the Israelites had been true to God and to their real situation they would have seen how much reason they had to give thanks and how little for complaining; but from one to another the spirit of mistrust and rebellion spread and the whole multitude sinned in their ingratitude. That is the way still. Grumbling is very "catching." One starts it and soon many are at it. But so also is cheerfulness "catching." Smile and see how many will smile back at you. Frown and you will get a frown in return generally. Paul learned to be "content." That means to take what we have, be thankful it is no worse, and make the best of it. Suppose your clothes are not as elegant as some one else's. What if you were to live in as grand a house as another? You will not get a carriage or servants! What then? These things in themselves do not bring happiness. "A contented mind is a continual feast." Remember that. There are many wrinkles on many brows that ought not to be there. Many people's mouths turn down at the corners that ought to turn up. Mind yours. Keep your brow smooth, let the corners of your mouth turn up, and above all strive to maintain a thankful heart in your breast at all times. So you will never learn to be a "grumbler."

GIANTS AND GRASSHOPPERS.

Mon., May 1.—The messengers sent out. Num. 13. 1-3.
Tues., May 2.—The marching orders. Num. 13. 17-20.
Wed., May 3.—On the march. Num. 13. 21, 22.
Thur., May 4.—A bunch of grapes. Num. 13. 23-25.
Fri., May 5.—A discouraging report. Num. 13. 26-29.
Sat., May 6.—Be of good cheer. Psa. 27. 14.
Sun., May 7.—Topic: Giants and grasshoppers. Num. 13. 30-33.

The Israelites were within sight of Canaan. Their desert march was over. They might have gone ahead and been out of their difficulty. But they did not. Why? Get that point clear first. They did not, simply because they distrusted God. The spies had been sent out. They made their report. There were giants in the land. They were afraid. They would not go ahead because they did not trust God to give them the strength to overcome their enemies. It is so easy to magnify troubles that we do see and so easy to belittle help that we do not see. That was the way with them. They could see the giants. They could not see God. But for all that they should have known better than to be afraid. Why had God brought them to Kadesh? It was for the very purpose to show them the way into the Land of Promise. But they drew back in cowardice. Explain the difference between prudence and cowardice. It is never wise to rush into difficulty; but it is never wise to shrink from it when it is the way of duty. A prudent person is one who seeks to make provision for whatever may be ahead; but a coward is one who says weakly, "I can't." That is what the Israelites said. They were sadly afraid, "badly scared." See the spirit of Caleb and of Joshua. They did not deny the existence of enemies; but they did deny that they were strong enough to defeat the people of God if these would only enter into the land promised them so long before. It is not wise to shut our eyes to difficulty; but it is a sign of weakness to run away from it. The bravest are those who, though they know there are foes in the way, never turn back, but push right on. And it is this spirit that God honors. What the Israelites missed by their cowardice! For over thirty-seven years they have to toil on in the wilderness because they failed to take advantage of this present opportunity. If we run away from duty to-day we are only bringing suffering and sorrow on ourselves to-morrow, and for many a year to come. The one great lesson for us all is to have a brave confidence in God and an unflinching face to the foes. This lesson is very entertaining just as a story; but we must not let the opportunity for improving the meanest man pass by. We are to-day pilgrims through earth to heaven. There are giants in the way. And they are many. Name some of them. The giant of ill-temper, pride, anger, malice, evil-speaking, lying, lust, strong drink, Sabbath-breaking, etc.—a whole legion of them. What are we before so many? In our own strength we are but grasshoppers indeed. But with the great and loving God to help us we can become "more than conquerors." What shall we do? Trust Him to help us and then do our very best every time we have to fight. No hero is ever made by shirking duty. It is in doing it and often against odds that we are made strong and by this we shall be crowned at last. "If God be for us, he is more than all that can be against us." Have all your members memorize that beautiful verse to encourage them in every fight against sin. (Isa. 50. 7.)

The Sunshine Trust

I wish I knewed
Whah de sunshine growed
I'd pack my clothes an' stah't
An' settle down
When de place was foun'
An' never mo' depart.

Dis stinny way
I'm day to day
Of passin' sunshine out
Has stirred my soul
Beyond control
An' filled my heah't wif doubt.

If I could speak
About a week
Like Congress folks I know,
I bet I'd bust
Dat sunshine trust
An' gib us folks a show!

—Washington Star.

"Billy's Outside, Mum"

In one of the districts of B—, a town missionary and his wife were in their home just preparing for supper. It was a boisterous night, the wind was howling and the door in their little cottage, which opened into their sitting-room, was shaking. The husband said to his wife, "Who is it knocking?" "Why, no one," said the wife; "it is the wind shaking the door." But in another minute or two the knock came louder; then said the husband, "I said so." The wife went and opened the door, and found a poor little ragged fellow standing outside, cold and wet. "Well, my boy, what do you want?" "Please, mum," said the lad, "I'm so starved; could you give me 'sum'at?" "Come in, lad," said the woman, and she sat him before the fire whilst she hurried to make him some bread and milk. In a few minutes she placed it before him. "Now, boy, eat it up, and get warm." But he looked dejected. "Why don't you eat it?" "Please, mum, Billy's outside." "Who is Billy?" "Please, mum, Billy's my little brother." "Do you see what he meant? He was enjoying the warmth, comfort, and now going to enjoy his food, but the thought of his own brother in the cold and wet took all the relish away from him. There are thousands around us who are our brothers, our neighbors; let us not pass them by, but seek to bring them cheer and salvation.

"I wish my little boy would try to be good all the time," said Bobby's mamma, as she was rocking the little fellow to sleep. "I do," replied Bobby. "But I don't think I am big enough to do very well at it yet."

At a school examination the inspector asked a boy why the earth turned round the sun on its own axis. The boy answered, with great promptitude, "Because it doesn't want to get roasted too much on one side."—*Tid-Bits*.

"Ah," said one little girl to another, "my ma gives me a penny every morning for taking a spoonful of cod-liver oil." "And what do you buy with the penny?" eagerly asked the second girl, in a tone not devoid of envy. "Oh," was the reply, "I do not spend it at all; mamma puts it away for me every day to buy more cod-liver oil with!"—*New Idea*.

Sadie was eleven and Alice was seven. At lunch Sadie said to Alice, "If I had you, I wonder what part of an animal a chop is. Is it a leg?" "Of course not," replied Alice, "it's the jawbone. Haven't you ever heard of animals licking their chops?"