

For the Monthly Record.

A WORD FOR THE POOR.

These chill October winds make us draw our chair close to the fire and hug our comforts. Sitting by the fire in a comfortable room, as the daylight is fading into dark, one is very apt to fall amusing on the great world outside in cities, villages and homes. At such a time, in obedience to the law of contrast, we begin to think of those who are not so comfortable as ourselves. The soothing warmth of the rosy embers, the sensation of comfort enjoyed as we watch the shadows of the busy flames dancing round the room, the feeling of safety and independence afforded as the wierd blast vainly attempts by its artillery of rain and hail to storm our well shielded dwelling, all help to summon before memory's presence, cold and cheerless faces, shivering thin-clad forms, and homes whose every corner is haunted by the grim ghost of poverty. In the lull of the storm we seem to hear a still small voice whispering, "Pity the poor," and on the face of the merry fire to see engraved the words, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?"

This is to many the season of plenty, the season of storing up the good things with which God has crowned this harvest, and He has crowned it with no sparing hand. In many a store-room and cellar there is already a whole winter's supply, enough to laugh at want and care for six long months to come, and at this season too, many a dainty delicacy goes upon our table welcomed alike by old and young. But in many homes stores and delicacies are great strangers, while the provisions on the table fall far short of the cravings and necessities of nature.

God has cheered us with His loads of benefits, godlike let us seek to cheer and benefit those who fear to face the coming winter, knowing as they do, from sad experience that it will bring nothing to them but privation and suffering. A little from a store would scarcely be missed, while it would certainly be a great blessing to an ill-clad, ill-fed family. Give something, do something to relieve the destitute even though it be but a little. But, why should charity so commonly be content with no higher a standard than a little—a crust of bread, "old shoes and clouted" and old garments of a very transparent texture. Such is not the manner of God's dealing with many of us, verily no. He has given to us "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together and running over." Never, since the hour we were born have we known the horrible feeling of being hungry and having nothing to eat, or of being cold and having no clothes to warm us. Let us give then with a generous hand for we know not the good it is in our power to do and the happiness we may be the means of conferring by a timely gift at this season.

The widow struggling hard to bring her fa-

mily through in a decent way, may be enabled to thank God and take fresh courage, the family of the thriftless squanderer will esteem your errand of mercy as the breaking of the bright sun in a cloudy day, a heart soured and hardened through misfortune, may be drawn by your kindness out of itself, and enabled to recognise a gracious purpose in the discipline of a hard lot.

Some seek to be excused from helping the destitute, because so many of them are unworthy and ungrateful. True enough. Can it be then that our paths drop fatness because we are worthy and truly thankful? No. Those who receive many tokens of God's favour oftentimes forget to give God thanks. Every vain and selfish plea for withholding help may well be silenced by the humbling truth that as objects of God's mercy, we are all brothers and sisters. Ingratitude may well be put to the blush, and love stimulated to a generous and practical benevolence by the grand example of Him who died for us, "while we were yet sinners." The love of God in Christ truly appreciated and experienced, reproduces itself to a certain degree, in loving feelings and actions. If we sincerely believe that all we possess has been given to us, that our fortunes have been made by God and not by ourselves, and have been entrusted to us as so many talents, of which we must render an account when the master returns, our charity would be more spontaneous and generous. The common mistake is to consider things as our own, practically ignoring God's hand in the disposing of the events and circumstances of our lot. Though a common mistake, it is not the less a very selfish one. Of course, it is not expected that a man is to starve himself or his family in order to bestow his goods upon the poor, but it is binding upon every Christian to make it a matter of duty, if he cannot of privilege, how much he can do to help the needy; and, having determined that point, to let no after selfish consideration frustrate his charitable designs. Sitting by the fire on a cold stormy night, one is very apt to feel very charitable and to frame noble resolutions and schemes of benevolence which to-morrow finds exploded through the "impotence of thought." It is this vague dreamy way of building castles of kindness in the air of a comfortable room, as the winter wind howls outside, that weakens our power of doing good, robs the poor of many a comfort, and converts what would be a blessing into a mere bauble of the brain. Better not to vow than "vow and not pay," and better still to offer a dove on the first promptings of pity, than to sacrifice an ox on the altar of a good intention.

There is no lack of altars whereon we may present to the Lord our free-will offering of love and gratitude. Not a great many steps from each of our dwellings are hearts and homes, waiting to be cheered and blessed, and if we will, ours may be the delightful privilege