

satisfactory. In the past we have heard a great deal about the Church's duty in this respect, now it is high time, as individuals, that we *did our duty*. It is not enough to rest on resolutions of Diocesan or Provincial Synods. We must get the people interested in the work, and this can be done most effectually by telling them what it is.

I remain yours &c.

T. R. Davis

Brantford, May 16th, 1881.

Family Reading.

BEHOLD I COME QUICKLY.

"COMING"—Brothers, heed the watchword
None may slumber on his post.
Foes throng round, and *He* is coming
With His saints, a mighty host.

"Quickly," yea, e'en now his footsteps
On the wrapt attentive ear.
Through the world's mad hum and hurry
Thrilling, echo faint yet clear.

Brothers! who in faith stand watching,
Looking for the dawn of day,
Ye shall hear the welcome footfall,
Ye shall see the cheering ray.

Lie your hearts all bruised and shattered,
By the rude turmoil of life?
Brightest hope that watchword kindleth,
Heralding the end of strife.

Or is life's sweet cup embittered
By the loss of those you love,
He is coming soon, to take you
Where they rest with him above.

Courage then! like soldiers quit you,
Sins and sorrows trample down.
Ye are weak, but *He* is mighty,
None can rob you of your crown.

TIDINESS.

An officer, who commands one of our best regiments, has been laughed at for his strict notions about order. He is said to have condemned more than one young man, as sure to make a bad officer, because his boots were not arranged in a straight line in his barrack room. This seems absurd, but there is much to be said for the colonel. He knows the importance of small things, or rather that nothing is trifling; and he knows that what are called trifles help to form character, and show what a man will be likely to prove when there is much at stake. Life and life's work are made up of small parts. The power to make a great effort comes commonly from habits gained by many lesser ones. The doing of an act of heroism is often but the end of a long course of careful doing well in things that draw no man's eye.

The old rule says, "a place for everything, and everything in its place." To this may be added "a time for everything, and everything in its time." Neglect of these two rules makes much of the working power of the world useless, spoils the comfort and hope of countless lives, multiplies temptations, and hinders the religion of perhaps most so-called religious people. What a vast number of people need to have said to them is this, "Be tidy, do what you do in order: look on your whole life as serious; do not get out of the habit of order in half your life, while you try to gain and show the habit in the other half."

To come to particulars. Be tidy in dress. Some scorn care in this, as if they were above such thoughts. Some have even measured goodness by slovenliness. Tidiness does not mean expense. The cheapest dress may be clean and in order. Clothes put on well, and well cared for, last longer, and so cost less. If a man have no respect for his body, which is the "temple of the Holy Ghost," he has no right to show disrespect for those with whom he must live; nor ought he to show such confidence in his worth as to take for granted that others will overlook his slovenliness for the sake of it. Everything in its place. The place for dirt is not on a man's clothes or person. Who can imagine the Pattern Man being slovenly?

Be tidy in your house. Who can tell how much time is lost, how much temper spoiled, how many

bad words passed, because nothing can be found when it is wanted? There is, also, a sure constant influence in the look of a well-ordered house, and in the look of a disorderly one. Thus tidiness is not only an effect but a cause of what is good.

Be tidy in your use of time. Have a time for work, and a time for rest, and keep to them. Do not mix them up together, so as to enjoy neither, and do neither well. Many wonder that time goes by so vainly. They have never set themselves to work by rule, nor have they any free time in which they can feel they have earned the right to rest.

Religion is a matter of all life, and the "little things" of every day are part of religion. Even our harmless pleasures have their place in making and keeping us what God would have us be. But want of order, untidiness, is made great use of by Satan to hinder men's growth in holiness, and spoil the devotion and work they offer to God. The same habits, the same character, show themselves. Why do so many groan for fear that they get no higher, no farther on? In most cases they have no rule or method, no care for place or time, no order, or tidiness in their religion. They have no fixed time for prayer or self-searching, or reading of the Scriptures. They make a great effort, and then fall back into almost neglect. They have no system of watching for besetting sins, and following on them till they have destroyed them. They seek for growth in Christian graces in a haphazard, scrambling way. They do their work for God and the Church without any rule as to time or manner.

Happiness and success in this life come very much from habits of order, rule, tidiness, showing and influencing what a man is and does. Those same habits may not be treated lightly by those whose aims and hopes are beyond earth. They are among the duties of religion, and among its greatest helps.

THE PARSON BIRD.

In the far-away country of New Zealand there is a little bird which the natives call the Tui. It is about the size of a small pigeon, and a spruce, handsome bird of a deep green colour, and sometimes looks black, and sometimes bronze. A tuft of fine, white curly feathers hangs down from each side of its neck, and looks so much like the little white linen bands clergymen formerly wore, that the English people in New Zealand have named the bird the Parson Bird.

Moreover the little creature has a way of sitting on the branch of a tree, and moving its head about, while sending its voice far and near, just as if it were preaching, and trying its best to make every one interested. It is one of the parrot's rivals, for it can learn to imitate the human voice, and utter not only words but sentences. It can imitate also the songs of other birds, the barking of a dog, and, indeed, almost any sound it hears, resembling in this respect the mocking bird which belongs only to America.

Dr. Buller, a magistrate in New Zealand, and a great naturalist, was once addressing an assembly of natives, and especially an old chief in the Council House, upon a matter of importance, and urging his views with great earnestness. The instant that he finished his speech, a Parson Bird in a cage hanging from a rafter overhead burst out with, "*Tito!*" (false). Of course every one laughed, and the old chief, Nepia Taratoa by name, said good-naturedly, "Friend, your arguments are very good, but *mokai* is a very wise bird, and he not yet convinced."

The Parson Bird belongs to the honey-eating family of birds, and, like all the true honey-eaters, has, at the end of its tongue, an exquisitely fine brush. It dives into certain flowers for honey, and eats also berries and insects. In December and January it goes from the woods to the flax-fields, which abound in the country, to enjoy the honey. [It must be remembered that it is summer in New Zealand when it is winter with us. January is the hottest month of the year in that part of the world.]

When at liberty, this bird is one of the liveliest of creatures, always in motion among the trees and flowers, whistling or singing for its own cheer; while, in the early morning, it sings in concert with other birds of its family, and the little parsons have a regular chime of five notes. If caged for a pet, the Parson Bird is not quite so gay, but still cheerful and active, and keeps on singing.

The nest of the wild Parson Bird is rather large; carefully made of dry twigs, moss and grass, and usually placed on a low shrub, but sometimes hidden near the leafy top of a forest tree.

Surely this bright and beautiful bird that can not only sing charmingly, but also repeat words of human speech, is worthy of special notice, and may well be remembered among the many wonderful winged creatures who are gathered into one class, when the Church praises God in the words of the grand old hymn:

"O all ye Fowls of the Air, bless ye the Lord; praise Him and magnify Him forever."

UNDISCIPLINED TEMPER.

Of all things which are to be met with here on earth there is nothing which can give such continual, such cutting, such useless pain, as an undisciplined temper. The touchy and sensitive temper, which takes offence at a word; the irritable temper, which finds offence in everything, whether intended or not; the violent temper, which breaks through all bounds of reason when once roused; the jealous or sullen temper, which wears a cloud on the face all day, and never utters a word of complaint; the discontented temper, brooding over its own wrongs; the severe temper, which always looks at the worst side of whatever is done; the wilful temper, which overrides every scruple to gratify a whim—what an amount of pain have these caused in the hearts of men, if we could but sum up their results! How many a soul have they stirred to evil impulses, how many a prayer have they stifled, how many an emotion of true affection have they turned to bitterness! How hard they make all duties! How they kill the sweetest and warmest of domestic charities! Illtemper is the sin requiring long and careful discipline.

WHO TOLD LITTLE ANNA? I WONDER.

Mrs. K. has had many troubles. And she is able to trace them all to their source. She married against her parents' wishes, and her husband was a drunkard. I have written part of her story, and can give you an extract in her own words:

I ran out of the house from her husband, and to the squire's place, by a lonesome road. The clock struck twelve at night. Then I came back again. My eldest child [a girl four years old] was in the next-door neighbour's, telling her she was going to have such a pretty white frock the next day. She said, "Who told you you was going to have a pretty white frock?" She says, "Nobody."

Next morning we got up. I forget whether we had any food or not. I got my work ready to go to market. My husband seemed in wonderful low spirits; he hardly knewed where to go or what to do. Anna she picked up every bit of straw about the house, and told him not to play with fire, for fear he'd get burned. When he was a-going out, she caught hold of him as well as she could, and said, "Father, wherever you go, don't spend your money, nor get drunk." When I got almost home, I met one of my neighbours of the name of Mrs. Knight, and she stood and looked at me, but never spoke. I thought to myself, I wonder what I've done to Mrs. Knight, that she don't speak. She was a very intimate friend of mine. I came on, and met the publican of the "Old Chequers." He said to me, "You musn't be frightened. He said to me again, 'You musn't be frightened.' Your biggest girl [Anna] is burnt to death in the house."

PIETY AT HOME.

It was a good counsel which Paul gave through Timothy with regard to providing for aged relatives that people should "show piety at home." In a great many ways this is the home duty, and by its proper fulfilment large good may be wrought.

Many homes are not happy homes because, whatever piety its members may shew in the church and society they manifest so little of it within their own dwellings. Many seem to act as if without they wore a mask which they were at liberty to throw off at home, yet nowhere ought there to be more consideration of the feelings of others, more exact justice, or forbearance, than among those who are bound to each other by the ties of human relationship. A great deal of injustice is frequently done by want of proper thought. Even children are misunderstood and their words and actions misrepresented, while their explanations are not received with the proper courtesy and faith they should command. Some persons are grossly and habitually unjust, and manifest most unworthy prejudices. In the discussion in households an argument frequently leads to a war of words which results only in anger and tears. Far too often it is to be feared that a hasty and ill-considered word is defended or excused when its injustice should be frankly acknowledged. Many a parent, in a moment of anger, makes an unjust allegation against a child, which is a long-life memory of wrong, because he has not Christian grace enough to confess his own fault.

To strive to make others happy is one of the best ways in which we can show piety at home. It may call for self-denial, but it has a rich reward. It is well when the memory is used to retain the story which will bring a smile around the table, when praise is given without stint where it is deserved, when a word of kindly appreciation heard outside the family, of any one of its members, is mentioned with pleasure. In many homes the mutual holiday gifts do much to cement affection, and if there were throughout the year more of this kindly feeling, how good would it be.