

FORBEARANCE.

FORBEARANCE is a quality of great value. Friends are often lost, both by neglect on the one side, and by want of patience and forbearance on the other. When Jesus beheld the city which was about to be the scene of his murder, He wept over it. When He hung on the cross, surrounded by His enemies, who mocked and derided Him, He prayed for them, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." If He could thus bear with and plead for His foes, what forbearance might we not expect that He would show towards His friends?

It was customary on the arrival of a guest to supply water for the feet and oil for the head. The host also saluted the guest with a kiss on the cheek. These ordinary marks of courtesy were neglected by the rich man who invited Jesus to a feast. The omission was not overlooked, but it was not resented. No notice was taken of it at the time, but afterwards, not in retaliation on him who had given the insult, but in defence of the despised penitent, Jesus said—"Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for My feet, but she hath washed My feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment." Our Lord's forbearance with the discourtesy of the rich man was as conspicuous as His appreciation of the poor woman's grateful homage.

The immediate disciples and special friends of our Lord continually put His forbearance to the test by their dullness of understanding and their want of faith. But He was always patient with them, taking pains to explain what they had failed to comprehend, and allaying their fears by repeated proofs of His power and watchful care. There was one occasion when it might have been expected they would have been specially on the alert to succour Him, and when any failure on their part might justly have been resented. It was on the night of His great agony. Taking three of His disciples with Him, apart from the rest, He admitted them into the inner chamber of His sorrow. They were to be His chosen companions, the friends on whom He might lean for strength and sympathy in this hour of darkness. They were friends on whose constancy He had special claims. He had shown them peculiar favour. They had been with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration. They had seen Moses and Elijah conversing with Him on his approaching decease. They had beheld the radiant glory of His countenance, and had heard the voice of God saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." James, so resolute and strong; Peter, who had avowed his readiness to die for his Lord; John, who had just been leaning on His breast at supper—might not Jesus expect that such friends would not fail Him now? Whatever their bodily weariness, would not intense love and sympathy for Him in this hour of crushing agony be enough to banish sleep? If He honoured them by selecting them to watch and pray with Him, might He not be sure that He would find them ready for any service He might need? But when, after appealing to His Father, He returned to them for such help as they could give, He found them sleeping. O what an opportunity they lost of ministering to the Son of Man! How little they could ever do for Him; but they could have watched and prayed and wept with Him. Yet they failed. And their failure added another pang to the sensitive heart of the Man of Sorrows. Deeply He felt the disappointment. "What! could ye not watch with me one hour?" But this appeal, the utterance of wounded affection rather than of reproof, was at once followed by words of kind forbearance. He did not wait for their excuses. He anticipated their apology. He provided a balm for the wound their own neglect had caused. He was anxious to comfort them in the sorrow He knew they would afterwards feel. "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak."—*Rev. Newman Hall, in "My Friends."*

The good make a better bargain, and the bad a worse, than is usually supposed, for the rewards of the one and the punishments of the other not unfrequently begin on this side of the grave; for vice has more martyrs than virtue, and it often happens that men suffer more to be lost than to be saved.

JENNY'S LOVE.

A LITTLE story was told to us lately, which seems to be worth repeating. Some time ago a child, ill with hip-disease, was brought into a certain asylum in New York—a little girl of five years old, who, from fright or weakness, cried bitterly on her admission. Another girl, a little Swede of about nine, heard her. "Is she crying because she has left her mother?" she asked the matron. "No; she has no mother; she is an orphan." "Her friends, then, maybe?" "She has no friends; she has nobody in the world to take care of her, unless she finds one here." Jenny, the little Swede, stood for a minute or two soberly looking at the stranger. She was not a pretty child, nor attractive in any way, being homely, diseased, and ill-tempered. "I think I will take care of her," said Jenny, gravely. "I'll be a friend to her"; and she went over to the stranger, then and there, and began to soothe and humour her. The matron, thinking it only a passing, childish outburst, paid no attention to it, even when she found that Jenny had secured a seat at the table next to the child, and had managed to have her placed in the bed next her own in the dormitory. But when the story was told to us a year afterwards, the little girl had never failed once in her self-imposed trust. As far as was practicable, she took the place of a mother or elder sister to the child who, still lame and suffering, needed a constant attention and care which the matron and nurses could not give. She cut and prepared her food at meals, humoured her peevish fancies during the day, and at night was in the habit of lying down half-dressed, to be ready to spring up at a moment's warning; and she passed many a night, it was discovered, holding the child's head in her arms or soothing her. On any holiday, or when visitors came, Jenny's first anxiety was to make her little charge presentable, just as a fond mother would do; and when the children were once given an excursion, or an afternoon's romp in the grounds, Jenny had an excuse to account for her not going, and actually, although her tears choked her, she being but a child, would have stayed, patient and cheerful, beside the lame child, who could not go, if her deception had not been found out. The singular part of the story was, too, that the child was not a lovable nor grateful one, but peevish, jealous, and tyrannical towards her poor little nurse, who apologised for and made the best of her to others, after the habit of mothers. There were many other children in the asylum prettier and more winning, but Jenny was true to the one whose only recommendation was that "she had no friends."—*New York Tribune.*

TOO LATE!

HE had spent his youth in folly. The warnings of friends who loved him were of no avail. He gave the reins to his passions, laughed at reproof, drank with the drunkard, followed "the strange woman" to her abode, and was known as a "fast" man. Years have passed, and slowly, surely, retribution is coming on him. His constitution is breaking up; and the money he spends in medical advice is vain. Shaken nerves, trembling limbs, aching bones, show a constitution shattered. And his mind! Ah! the intensest sufferings are there. Would that he could call back the years that are gone, and the vigour that has been wasted! But it is too late! too late! Suffering and remorse now, and a shortened life, will teach him that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Another. He refused to hearken to the voice of religion. There were not wanting solemn calls, kind entreaties, inward strivings. But he gave his heart to his business, his money-making. "Let every man do the best for himself!" In the midst of all death came. There, before the man yawned the gulf of an unknown future. And now his sins rose before him. O that he had sought God and listened to his Saviour's voice! But the hand of death stopped his regrets, and he died wailing "Too late! Too late!"

Many, alas! will utter this when God comes to judge the world. When the heavens are burning and the dead rising from their graves, when the great white throne appears, and the judgment is set, and the books opened, how many will wish they had made friends with Christ! But it will be "too late" for ever!

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