

"Doest thou well to be angry" with a young tree of a solitary summer's growth because the fruit doth not appear? Or would it not be more reasonable and wiser to abide patiently, and let it endure the north wind yet a while, for assuredly the south wind followeth such, and it is *then* the garden of nature flourishes and the spices flow forth.

The whole gist of the peaceable "afterwards" depends upon *endurance*. So we gather from Holy Scripture.

Some of us seem almost beyond enduring any more. Life has been so full of funeral dirges, sorrows and vacant places in our hearts and homes, that courage and fortitude to "bear up" (as lookers on so frequently exhort us) is well-nigh exhausted altogether. Well, if the peaceable fruits never fall into the empty cup of the expectant and chastened soul here, may it not be that the exercise of that salutary chastening has not completed its work yet?—the object is not fully attained to the attitude of the "spirit of just men made perfect?"

It is in the lonely wilderness of life that Jesus draws near, and speaks comfortably unto his bereft and sorrowful ones, and no doubt we so often fail to *rise above* our woes and our foes, without and within, that He cannot find the ground clear whereon to produce growth-fruit, or even the foliage of cheerful acceptance, and calmly restful acquiescence.

An injunction closely follows the exhortation (verses 12 to 19): Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down and strengthen the feeble knees, etc.

Let activity and cheerfulness struggle forth—just another effort to be brave-hearted and endure to the end, when all present-time will flee away, replaced by an eternal *weight of glory*.

No more, no more their souls shall faint
With the day's heat and care,
Storms reach not there;
Their life-work done,
Their life-race won;
Only a weight of glory they bear.

Surely the little while before we cross the bar we may strive to follow after peace, and accept

cheerfully the appointment of this disciplinary probation, knowing that, should the "afterwards" stretch onwards outside and beyond the confines of this border-land to Zion, yet, within the portal of that city there shall be no more sorrow, no more shadowed lives, no more death. Till then work, assiduously and bravely, that when the longed and looked-for "Afterwards" glistens across the Heavenly horizon, may be seen written in gold:

"Their works do follow them.
Her own works praise her in the gates."

—Lucy Abrams.

THOSE MIGHTY ATOMS.

"We seldom think that little things
May win or lose a goal;
But many a time a tiny word
Hath made or marred a soul.
So teach thy tongue to speak aright,
And look before it leaps,
That naught be laid unto its charge
Whereat another weeps."

—A. Webb.

THE FAMILY ALTAR.

THE ANSWER TO AN OFT-ASKED QUESTION.

By REV. B. G. MANARD.

"Good night, mamma!"

"Good night, children!"

And the young ones are off on their voyage to "Dreamland." Their evening devotions at the mother's knee have been performed. Brief are these evening services, but they span the ages, and are limited by eternity only. In all the world of speech there is no such pulpit as that about the godly mother's knee. There devotional habits are formed and religious impulses awakened that tide the budding life into destinies of goodness, greatness and glory. It is at these home altars that we hear notes which echo down the years—blessing, exalting, ennobling. Their memory never dies. Who can forget their songs, their prayers, their exhortations, their warnings and their tears? The hopes awakened, the anxieties quieted, the joys experienced, the peaceful sense of security attained—can these ever

fade away into dreamy forgetfulness? Can they die without their living fruitage? No! No!

God be thanked for the family altar, with its hallowing and saving influences and its sweet and soothing memories! Oh, that the flames of these old-time family devotions, with their sacred songs and prayers of faith, could be re-illumed in our Canadian homes! Oh, that all Canadian hearts could be re-enthused with regard for this old-time family relic! Its disappearance is a social, Christian and national calamity. We learn here the answer to the oft-asked question, "Why this alarming decline of religious zeal, of self-denial, of personal sacrifice? Why this declension of the missionary spirit?" Here's the reply: The withering grasp of worldly-mindedness and self-gratification on the family.

Worldliness and pleasure have usurped the place of devotion. Pastime cards have supplanted the Bible on the centre-table, and instead of songs of the Redeemer those of empty hilarity are heard by the fireside. God's name goes unmentioned and God's word remains unopened. The latest novel, the Sunday paper, the mirthful song, the theatre and the social dance, all occupy time and absorb attention; while the awful realities of eternity are forgotten and unheeded. Godlessness in the life, and thoughtlessness and forgetfulness in the mind and heart, are the prelude to consequences awfully tragic. May our country be spared the doom which awaits that land where godless lives and altarless homes bring down the judgments of an offended Deity!

TRUE GREATNESS.

There are many who think that intellectual gifts constitute greatness. Many more regard prominence as the certain sign and exact measure of it. None of this is true by itself; all of it may have truth in it. Large endowments bring the opportunities and responsibilities of greatness, but nothing more. What a man makes of what God gives is the