

propels all activities and deeds of love to our fellow-men. The tree must be known by these fruits; the statue by these beauties; the watch by its true running to the movements of the sun. If a person after uniting with Christ's Church is just as selfish, just as resentful, just as frivolous, or impure or covetous, and worldly as he was before, then Christ's hand has never touched that individual. Under the veneer or the varnish of a false profession, lies the worm-eaten timber yet. The Master's work *no man can counterfeit*.

The single purpose which the Divine Builder or artificer has in view, and which we must keep in view, is the production of a strong, sweet, pure, and Christly character. Before our eyes He places the pattern; now let us work up to it. We cannot finish character by wholesale on sacrament Sundays, or by a single leap of good resolution. Character is built like yonder Bridge-piers, by laying one stone upon another. That is a glorious week's work in which you or I can mend one fault, or put in a single solid act for Jesus or for the salvation of one soul. Nothing must be overlooked, nothing scrimped, nothing slighted. "I don't see any improvement in this statue since I was here last," remarked a visitor to Michael Angelo in his studio. "Don't you?" replied the artist, "I have put a new furrow into the brow, and another fine line about the mouth." "Yes, yes, I see that, but they are trifles." "That is true," said Angelo, "but it is these trifles which make perfection, and *perfection is no trifle*." Nothing is small, brethren, that either mars or makes the character by which this sharp-eyed world forms its judgment of Christianity. A manufactory is known by its products; are we intently and watchfully and conscientiously careful to recommend our Master by daily good works?

One thought one. If we are Christ's workmanship, we must let Him use His own tools in His own way. Ah, how much chiselling we require! And how deep and sharp the chisel sometimes cuts! The Kohinoor diamond was not very slightly when first brought to London; it had to be sent over to Holland for a skilled polisher to grind it, and to make brilliant its thousand flashing facets. If such creatures as you and I are ever to be set in the diadem of our King, then, in heaven's name, let us not draw back from any file of affliction or chisel of discipline

that is needed for our perfecting. Eternity will show a wonderful exhibition of the Master's workmanship. Then let us consecrate ourselves to holy co-operation with Him; Christ working *at us and on us*, and we are working evermore *for Christ*! Keep your eye on the Pattern.

"It is better to weave the pattern of life
With a bright and a golden filling;
To do Christ's work with a ready hand
And a heart that's always willing;

"Than to snap the frail and delicate thread
Of our Christian lives asunder,
And then blame heaven for the tangled web,
And sit and grieve and wonder.

"Better to weave the warp and the wool
With the pattern of Christ's own choosing,
Winning the palm and the tuneful harp
And the crown, with no fear of losing.

"Then alike in the shade and in the sun
Let the shuttles of life fly fleetly:
And the Master's words '*Well, faithfully done,*'
Will fall on us daily and sweetly."

"AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT."

Alas! some were shut out. While the bridegroom tarried they had been sleeping, and when at length he came they were not ready. They did not mean to miss the marriage feast; but they did. At the last moment they were really in earnest. Having discovered that all was not right, they went about, first to one and then to another, in search of the needed oil; but "while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, . . . and the door was shut." When at length they found themselves outside, careless ease and sleep were banished forever, and they prayed in terrible earnest, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" But it was of no avail. "He answered, and said, 'Verily, I say unto you, I know you not.'"

Is this a meaningless parable? Verily, no! It was spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ, and there will assuredly be those who will find themselves in the unexpected but terrible position of those foolish virgins. Reader, what if thou shouldst be among the number?

Not long since, I set out with the intention of catching a certain train. Having reached the neighborhood of the station, and finding there was a little time to spare, I turned aside to make a small pur-