

ence and bask with lazy contentment in the warmth, while we human creatures feel so much more the richness and beauty of our lives when the sun is pouring out on us the wealth of its golden treasury; the little birds flutter joyously about or twitter blithely in their leaf-hidden nests; the graceful trees, laden with rich foliage, catch the gleaming sunbeams in their long, willowy hands and then shake themselves in gentle rippling laughter as the gold slips off their wind-swayed branches, though trying vainly to retain a firm grasp of so treacherous a resting-place. The trees are full of this golden light, yet they cast long, cool shadows on the ground, beneath which, perhaps, some way-worn traveller may come and rest, withdrawing for a time from the too dazzling light of the sun.

Longfellow says: "Life is checkered shade and sunshine." Although sunshine makes life seem so fresh and sparkling, it would not be complete without shadow, and, as in nature, vegetable life is incomplete without the shadow plants—the marvellously beautiful ferns and lichen and moss growths—so the more delicate traits of character are developed in the sad and shady nooks of this world. Some of the best and noblest thoughts are wrought out in the darkest hours of a life, and some of the noblest deeds are done in the agony of the greatest pain. Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" was written within the gloom of prison walls; Milton's "Paradise Lost," for the most part, after the shadow of his blindness fell upon him; Beethoven's sweetest music was composed when the great musician could no longer hear the faintest sound, while under the very shadow of death that glorious "Charge of the Light Brigade" was made. Some people have apparently so many more shady places in their lives than others, their gleams of light are "few and far between." But sometimes shadows are only stepping-stones to some great and glorious lights, for the brightest sunbeams always lie nearest the darkest shadows. And yet, perhaps, in reality the more shadowed life may be the happier; in some cool sequestered spot, "far from the maddening crowd's ignoble strife," and the rush and gaiety of a sunny life, even though it be some great sorrow that shuts us out from the merry throng. A quiet patient content is often the truer enjoyment. But a

dark heavy cloud may be lined with silver, for things do not always show their best sides; and the reason the dark side only is seen is because the cloud is between us and the sun, while often times the cloud is of our own making.

Happiness throws a glamor over everything; even otherwise disagreeable things lose a great deal of their most objectionable qualities in its light. Sorrow saddens and disturbs the harmony of things, and the brightest objects lose some of their radiance, and for a time become merged in the deepest gloom.

Sorrow may be lessened, or, at least, in some degree modified by turning the attention of the mind to some brighter things, just as we can quickly disperse the shadows in a darkened room by opening all the windows to the light. We know we cannot always find sunshine in the things around us, then why not lay up within ourselves resources such as we can fall back upon when the gloomy days come.

FAITH AND FREE THOUGHT.

THIS was the title of a lecture delivered by our Principal, Dr. Burns, at the Central Presbyterian Church, on Monday evening, February 2nd. We regret that space will permit of an abstract of it only.

Rev. Dr. Burns, in taking an inventory of the outfit of man, gave special prominence to the thinking power—that which distinguishes man from the lower animals. "To think, or not to think," is not then the question, but having the power forced upon us, how shall we exercise it. It is a sad commentary on our nature to find in every age multitudes who seem too willing to be the echoes of others—to be mere copyists or shadows; men who would tremble at their own thoughts, or strangle them in their birth, unless satisfied that they bore the stamp of the mint of other men's brains. It is only by way of accommodation that such characters can be said to live. The sponge lives—so do the tree and the oyster—but when a man lives it is because he thinks, and when he ceases to think he ceases to live. The very essence of thought, its soul and its divinity, is its freedom. Take that away and the crown of glory has fallen from our race. A few centuries ago and the world's mind was