

and retains nothing but the dregs. The third to a sieve, which, by being shaken, raises the chaff to the top, and lets the dust fall to the earth."

Christ, in the parable of the sower, makes a different comparison, as all will recollect.

A STORY FOR OUR OWN TIMES.—A venerable old Dutchman, after having occupied all the offices of one of the principal cities of the republic with great honor, and having amassed a great fortune in the most unexceptionable manner, finally formed the resolution of going to terminate his days tranquilly at his country seat. But before retiring he wished to take leave of his friends and connections, and accordingly invited them all to a feast at his house. The guests, who expected a sumptuous repast, were much surprised on going into the eating room, to see there a long oaken table barely covered with a rough blue cloth. On being seated they were served on oaken plates, with salted herring, rye bread and butter, with some cheese and curdled milk. Wooden vases, filled with small beer, were passed round for each of the guests to serve themselves. This extreme oddity of the old gentleman caused murmurings among the company; but, out of respect for his age and wealth, instead of showing discontent, they pretended to relish his frugal fare; and some of them even complimented with him for the cordiality of those good old times which he had brought to remembrance. The old man—who was not duped by this feigned satisfaction—did not wish to carry the joke any farther—but at a signal which he gave, some servants, habited as country-women, entered, bringing the second service. A white cloth succeeded the blue one, and some pewter plates replaced the wooden ones. Instead of rye bread, dried herring, and cheese, they were served with good brown bread, fresh beef, boiled fish, and strong beer. At this unexpected change, the secret murmurs ceased; the polite invitations on the part of the old man became more pressing, and the guests ate with a better appetite. Hardly had they time to taste the second service, when they saw a butler enter, followed by half a dozen servants in brilliant livery, bringing the third.

A superb table of mahogany, covered with a beautiful flowered cloth replaced the oaken one. A side-board was immediately covered with the richest plate and most curious china; and the guests charmed at the sight of a profusion of rare and exquisite meats. The most delicious wines were passed round, while a melodious concert was heard in an adjoining room. Toasts were drank, and all were merry. But the good man, perceiving that his presence hindered the guests from giving themselves to their full joy, rose and addressed them thus: "I give you thanks, ladies and gentlemen, for the favour which you have granted me. It is time that I should retire, myself, and leave you to your liberty. But before the ball commences, which I have ordered to be prepared for those who love the dance, permit me to acquaint you with the design that I proposed to myself in inviting you to a repast which has appeared so odd. I have wished thereby to give you an idea of our republic.—Our ancestors rose to their high state, and acquired liberty, riches, and power, by living in the frugal manner which you saw in the first service. Our fathers preserved those great blessings only by living in the simple manner of which the second service has retraced an image. If it is permitted to an old man who is about to leave you, and who tenderly loves you, to speak freely what he thinks, I must say, I fear that the extravagant profusion which you have remarked in the last service, and which is the present style of living, will deprive us of more than our ancestors have acquired by the sweat of the brow, and our fathers have transmitted to us by their industry and wise calculation."

ASPIRATIONS OF MIND—Fix thine eye upon a star,

in the infinite distance and depth of heaven. What beam is that which visiteth thee from far? If I were to pause now for the brief space of only eight minutes, a ray from the sun would, in that brief interval, have traversed about a hundred millions of miles to reach us! What beam, then, is that which visiteth thee from far, far beyond the precincts of solar day! Through the slow revolutions of years—I speak the astronomical fact; for aught thou knowest, before thou wast created—I speak the astronomical *doubt*; for aught thou knowest, before the world was created, that ray of light left its native sphere, and, through distance awful and inconceivable—through the silent lapse and slow revolution of years unknown, that ray of light has been travelling onward and onward, till it has fallen upon thy poor weak sense. Now follow it back on the line of its immeasurable progress, to its original sphere, its home, which it hath left to reach thee; and does thy mind stop there? No: not there, nor any where does it stop, but beyond, and beyond, to infinity, it wanders: and can that mind say that it is "well enough" in a little earthly comfort, and a few worldly possessions? Can that soul that spans the universe and measures ages, be content with a grain of sand upon the shore of time? No: hold thou the measureless ocean in the hollow of thy hand, and then mayst thou curb the swellings of thought, passion, and desire, to that narrow compass. Garner up treasures of infinite worlds in thy coffer, and then mayst thou lock up in that coffer the affections that are expanding to the grasp of infinity. No, mistaken soul! thine eye spans the arch of heaven—thy soaring thought rises to the eternal stars; thine aim must be broad and boundless as those pathways of heaven. As surely as thou livest, thou must live righteously, virtuously, wisely. Life is an argument for piety. Sense is a good guide to faith. Time should bear our thoughts, as it is bearing our souls to eternity!—*Devey*.

KINDNESS IN CONVERSATION.—There is no way in which men can do good to others, with so little little expense and trouble, as by kindness in conversation. "Words," it is sometimes said, "cost nothing." At any rate, kind words cost no more than those which are harsh and piercing. But kind words are often more highly valued than the most costly gifts,—and they are always regarded among the best tokens of a desire to make others happy. We should think that kind words would be very common they are so very cheap; but there are many who have a large assortment of all other languages except kindness. They have bitter words, and witty words, and learned words in abundance—but their stock of kind words is small. The churl himself, one might suppose, would not grudge a little kindness in his language; however closely he clings to his money; but there are persons who draw on their kindness with more reluctance than on their purses.

Some use grating words because they are of morose dispositions. Their language, as well as their manners, shows an unfeeling heart. Others use rough words out of an affectation of frankness. They may be severe in their remarks—but the claim that they are open and independent, and will not be trammelled. They are no flatterers, they say—and this they think enough for all the cutting speech which they employ. Others wish to be thought witty—and they will, with equal indifference, wound the feelings of friend or foe, to show their smartness. Some are envious, and cannot bear to speak kindly of others, or to them, because they do not wish to add to their happiness. Others are so ill-bred that they seem to take delight in using unkind words when their intentions are good, and their feelings are warm. Their words are rougher than their hearts—they will make sacrifices of ease and property to promote comfort, while they will not deign to employ the terms of courtesy

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