

THE MINISTER'S WIFE.

We may say often as we please, and the minister may as confidently assert it in his turn, that the congregation has no claim upon the minister's wife. She is heirloom to her husband, not servant to the church. She receives no salary, and nobody has a right to call upon her for service not exacted from, nor expected of any other woman who belongs to the particular church in which her husband officiates. She is not at the beck of any one. No one has the least occasion to comment or criticize if she takes an obscure place, and devotes herself wholly to her family, and not at all to the parish. When she is the mother of little children, it is absurd as well as unreasonable to so much as think of her bearing in any way a relation to the church societies or affairs, or doing anything beyond the precincts of the parsonage.

Yet people do unconsciously look to her for certain phases of example and certain acts of leadership, and where she can and does graciously and tactfully adorn her necessarily conspicuous position, she is a great help to her husband. That this sort of help is a gratuity on her part, that it can not be demanded, and that she is within her rights in declining to give it, adds only to its worth when freely given.

A winning personality in the pastor's wife is like sunlight on the congregation. Her gentle word, her womanly discretion, her notice of the shy and the lonely, her freedom from censoriousness, her kind hospitality and the popularity which is her province, strengthen the minister in his church, straighten out some of the tangles which twist around him through no fault of his, and are elements in whatever success he gains. Whether she desires it or not, the pastor's wife is first lady in the congregation, just as the President's wife is first lady in the land, and she can not slip away from the loving watchfulness, which in the younger women is an engaging flattery, and in the older ones a benignant approval. As a rule the wife of the minister deserves everybody's regard, and is justly held in honor for her unselfish and sensible devotion to the parish as well as to the pastor.—Christian Intelligence.

THE ORDER OF THE SMILING FACE.

We've formed a new society—

"The Order of the Smiling Face";

An honored member you may be,

For every one may have a place.

The rules say you must never let

The corners of your mouth droop down;

For by this method you may get

The habit of a sulky frown.

If playmates tease you, let your eyes

A brave and merry twinkle show

For if the angry tears arise

They're very apt to overflow.

If you must practise for an hour,

And if it seem a long, long, while,

Remember not to pout and glower,

But wear a bright and cheerful smile.

The rules are simple as you see;

Make up your mind to join to-day.

Put on a smile—and you will be

An active member right away.

ENLARGING LIFE.

I am quite clear that one of our worst failures is at the point where, having resolved like angels we drop back into the old matter-of-fact life, and do just what we did before, because everybody does it; and because our fathers and mothers did it; all of which may be the very reason why we should not do it. There is no station of life and no place of one's home, where, if he wants to enlarge his life in caring for people outside himself, he may not start on a career to enlargement which shall extend indefinitely. And yet the man who enters upon indefinite purposes lives the infinite life.—Phillips Brooks.

LETTER-CARRYING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

Twenty-seven native postmen were killed and eaten by tigers and other wild beasts last year in India, while no fewer than one hundred and thirty-five met their deaths through being bitten by poisonous snakes. But then, says Pearson's Weekly, India is a large country, and the ordinary rural carrier will not take precautions.

He insists on going barefooted and barelegged in regions known to be infested with venomous reptiles, and he will calmly lie down for a nap in a tiger-haunted jungle. Nor can he be induced to arm himself properly. All his forefathers carried, when on similar errands, was a small spike stick, and that is all the true native postman will consent to carry to-day.

There are several post offices in Switzerland as a height of seven thousand or more feet; and a letter-box on the very summit of the Languard, from which four collections are made daily, is nearly ten thousand feet above the sea-level. Near here, some few years ago three letter-carriers were crushed to death by an avalanche. In an adjacent canton, in the summer of 1863, a postman fell into a crevasse while crossing a glacier, his two full bags on his back. All efforts to recover either the body or the mails were fruitless; but thirty-four years afterwards, in 1897, the glacier cast forth its prey many miles lower down the valley, and the long-lost letters were delivered to as many of the addressees as could be traced.

Not infrequently too these Alpine postmen are attacked by the huge, fierce eagles that soar hungrily above the least-frequented passes. Usually the men are able to beat off their feathered assailants, but not always.

In July, 1899, a postman who carried the mails on foot between the villages of Sospello and Puget Theniens was fatally mauled by three such birds. Of two men who attempted to avenge his death, one was killed outright, and another injured so severely that his life was for a long time in danger.

The camel postman of the Sahara hinterland is another letter-carrier who has need of plenty of pluck. The wild tradesmen of the desert look upon him as their natural prey, so that he never knows, when he sets out in the morning, whether he will reach his destination at night. But he trots his eighty miles a day, and regards a stray shot from a lurking "sniper" or an ambush of spearmen as part of the ordinary routine incident to his business.

In Japan the rural post-runner still swings his baskets across his shoulders precisely as his ancestors did centuries ago. In Formosa also the mails are carried to this day by a man on foot, who jogs along with a paper lantern and an umbrella.

Siberia, except along the line of the new railway, has to rely on post-sledges; and there are towns, and fair-sized townships, where more than two deliveries a year would be exceptional.

The postmen of the Landes, in southwestern France, stride across the waste on gigantic stilts, their feet a fathom or more above the ground.

In the interior of China, except in a few districts, there is no regular letter delivery, and consequently no postman. But many of the mandarins and taotais maintain semi-public services of their own, and keep their runners up to the mark by the simple expedient of beating laggards.—Youth's Companion.

"Every day is a fresh beginning.

Every morn is the world made new;
You who are weary of sorrow and sinning.

Here is a beautiful hope for you—
A hope for me, and a hope for you."

AN ORANGE SECRET.

Grandma has learned a little secret connected with the orange, which I believe you would like to know, too, so listen and I will tell it. If you look at the stem end of an orange you will see the scar where it pulled away from the stem is like a wheel, spokes going out from the centre. If you will count the spaces between the spokes you will find that there are just as many of them as there will be sections in the orange when you open it; and so you can tell how many "pieces" your orange has. Perhaps you think every orange has the same number, just as every apple has five cells which holds its seed; but you will find it not so. Why not? Well, I do not know. But, perhaps way back in the history of the orange, when it is a flower, or perhaps when it is only a bud, something may happen which hurts some of the cells or makes them outgrow the rest. Then the number of cells is mixed; and no matter how big and plump and juicy the orange becomes, it has no more sections than it had when it was a little green button, just beginning to be an orange. The next time you eat an orange, try to find out its secret before you open it.—Christian Work.

A SURPRISED BIRD.

Another day, toward twilight, while the schooner loafed along in no hurry whatever to reach an anchorage, I was standing at the bow watching the shoals of fish and the circling gulls, when a whale broke water and lay resting on the sea. Close about him were some black rocks, breaking the surface as the tide fell; and as the Leviathan scratched himself leisurely, like a huge sea pig, against the rough surfaces to rid his skin of the clinging barnacles, or lay quiet, with his black lump above the water line, he might easily have been mistaken for one of the rocks, about which the tide was swirling and ebbing. A big herring gull, heavy and sleepy with too much feeding, came flapping along. As he saw the inviting rock, he set his broad wings and dropped his heavy feet to alight. The toes had barely touched the huge back when—plunge! kuk-kuk! There was a lightning swirl and a smother of soapy water. The whale was gone, and a frightened and wide-awake gull was jumping upward humping his back and threshing the air and kuk-kuking his astonishment at the disappearance of his late landing-place.—From William J. Long's new book, "Northern Trails."

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