

EVERY-DAY MIRACLES.

AFTER all that has been written of the possibility of miracles at the present time, it may be well to emphasize the idea that what is called the natural outgrowth of Christian principles, produces events which are as directly opposed to the sinful heart of man, as any of the miracles recorded in the New Testament are to the established order of physical nature; and these miracles seem in many instances to be the grander and more perfect type, toward which all Christians are striving in outward act, just as they seek to imitate in spirit the nature of the Master. Take the miracle of feeding the multitude. In times of famine, who organizes bands of relief, soup-houses, and all the modern contrivances for the alleviation of misery? We know there is such a thing as philanthropy independent of Christianity; but its exhibition is rare and unequal, not a steady force like that which believes that, "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need . . . how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Again, who seeks to clothe and restore to their "right mind" those possessed of the evil spirits of Dirt, Ignorance, and Want, like the followers of Him who taught, "ye have the poor always with you"? Who uses knowledge to raise the masses but those who realise the promise, "The poor have the Gospel preached to them"? In all ages unilluminated by the light of Christianity, has not wealth been used to gain power over the lower classes rather than provide food for them? Has not knowledge increased the gulf between rich and poor, and been used as an instrument to keep in bondage those who were down? Were not both wealth and knowledge weapons of offence rather than beneficial implements? If, then, love to Jesus changes the rich man to the protector and benefactor of the poor, makes the ruler seek the welfare of those under him, turns natural selfishness into love for others, the miracle is eternal as the grace of God. Surely, those who have seen this regeneration, which makes the vile pure in heart, the proud humble, changes envy to quiet content—in short, makes the child of sin into a son of God, can need no other proof of the miraculous power of God's word. What though the miracle is not perfected in an instant? The life of a regenerate man, lived in our sight, gradually though surely coming to the "perfect stature of a man in Christ Jesus," is a real witness known of all men. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

COMFORTLESS.

A FRIEND of mine sat at the table of a lady friend on which the wine-cup stood. The lady's son was there, and my friend imagined that he sipped it as though he liked it very much. My friend put the question to her, if she was not afraid of her boy becoming intemperate—he seemed to like it so much. The mother was quite offended, though my friend had spoken to her in a Christian spirit. She said, "My Alfred become a drunkard? Impossible! He knows how to control himself and when to stop!"

When my friend wanted to persuade her to let the boy sign the pledge, the mother would not encourage it, but rather laughed at the idea. It was only eighteen months afterward that mother was in an agony of grief beside the coffin of her son, who had died in a fit of delirium tremens. He had been of a very genial disposition, and unhappily, those are the people who fall victims most easily to this vice. My friend went to her to try to comfort her; but, oh! dear, it is a hard case in which to give comfort. My friend was at a loss what to say; the mother almost frantic at one moment, and at another in the most abject grief, amidst floods of tears, said, "Don't talk to me about comfort, when you know here lies my only son, who has died in delirium tremens. Don't talk to me of comfort, when you know that his mother's hand gave him the first glass of wine, and his mother's voice encouraged him to drink it when you would have him abstain." Then came a fresh burst of grief. "Don't talk to me of comfort, when you know it is written that no drunkard shall enter the kingdom of God!" and my friend had to leave her in her anguish and sorrow. God forbid that any dear mother should have to feel that her hand has given the first glass of wine to her child.—*Selected.*

LETTER-WRITING FOR SOULS.

MANY of our readers during the course of the year write hundreds of letters. They usually begin with the cold "Sir," and end with the cold "Respectfully," and all between filled with dollars, cents, per centages, pounds, yards, articles of merchandise. Can it be that you have never in your letter-writing from day to day, expressed your friendship for Christ and for those who love Him. Many of these to whom you wrote are Christian merchants. Do you not greet them kindly and lovingly? Some of them are old, and they want condolence now that the ailments of life have come upon them. Why do you not give them the consolations of Christ? Why do you not recite some of your own experiences, and in some of those business letters tell them of the God of Isaac and Jacob and of Paul the aged, and of all those who put their trust in Him? Why do you not tell them that when the eyesight fails, and the limbs tremble, and the appetite becomes uncertain, and the foot that once leaped like the hart staggers and stumbles along the street—why do you not tell them that there is such a thing as eternal youth, and that those who gain it shall always have good vision and always be strong and always young in the presence of their God?

Then you write to many men in mid-life who are staggering on the verge of great temptations. Why do you not tell them of the God who is willing to be beside them in the fire? You know from the circumstances of those business men that they are tried from day to day. You have heard their credit is not as good as it once was. Why do you not bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ in your business letters to those men.

Then, some of them are young men. They have started out in life, and for the first time they feel the pressure of active business life. They are mightily tempted. You know how hard it is for a young man in this day to start in business and succeed in it. Why do you not tell that young man in your letter to-morrow that you have been through all that struggle, and know all about business life, its disappointments and perplexities. Let us make our correspondence a Christian correspondence. There is no getting away from a pungent, Christian letter.

THE AWFULLY PROFOUND MINISTER.

HE deals in metaphysics—talks about the laws of perception, the system of consequences, hypothesis, peripatetic doctrines and apologetics, until his audience can hardly see their hand before their face. He has a learned way of pushing back his spectacles, a learned way of clearing his throat, a learned way of employing his pocket-handkerchief. I have heard him cough until I could hear the echo of the ages. The audience does not know what he is talking about and he does not know either. The only cheerful part of his sermon is when he gets through. Now, when men are genuinely learned, they are simple in phraseology and manner. I never knew an exception to that. But a little learning will often make a man swell beyond all reasonable proportions. O, drop your sesquipedalian phraseology, and use short, sharp, plain words. I have seen a lake of water twenty feet deep so clear that if you dropped a silver half-dollar to the bottom you could see it. And there is such a thing as being deep and clear at the same time. An Englishman crossed the Channel to France, and was exceedingly disturbed by the fact that he could not understand a word of the French language. He was met at the depot by a Frenchman, and the driver of the cab talked to him in French. When he got to the hotel he found nothing but the French language there, and a man, with French language, took him to his couch at night, and he was almost exhausted because of his incapacity to understand anything that was being said to him, and a sad mind he went to sleep. In the morning he woke up, and he heard the chancicler crow, and he said, "Thank goodness there's some English at last." And what a relief it is after hearing some men talk in learned technicalities, foreign to our capacity, to suddenly hear something the plainest people can understand. I know only of one use for words and that is to let men know what you mean.—*Christian & Work.*