

Family Reading.

GRACE IN LITTLE THINGS.

THERE is an old story of a certain minister who, in arranging his toilet for parochial calls, found a button gone from his collar, and all at once the good man's patience left him. He fretted and scolded, and said undignified and unkind things, until the tired wife burst into tears, and escaped to her room. The hours of the afternoon wore away, during which the parson called upon old brother Jones, who was all bowed down with rheumatism, and found him patient, and even cheerful; upon young brother Hall, wasting away with consumption, and found him anxious to go and be with Christ; upon good old grandmother Smith, in her poor, miserable hovel of a home, and found her singing one of the good old hymns as happy as a bird; and upon young Mrs. Brown, who had a few weeks before buried her only child, and found her trustful and serene in the view of God's love which had come to her through her affliction. The minister went home filled with what he had seen, and when evening came, and he was seated in his easy chair, his good wife near busy with her needle, he could not help saying, "what a wonderful thing grace is! How much it will do! There is nothing beyond its power! Wonderful! Wonderful! It can do all things." Then the little wife said, "Yes, it is wonderful indeed, but there is one thing the grace of God does not seem to have the power to do." "Ah, what can that be?" said the husband. "Why it does not seem to have power to control a minister's temper when a shirt button is gone." This was a new version of the doctrine of grace to the parson, but it was such a version as many another religious man needs to remember. The honest servant girl said that the best evidence she could give of her conversion was, that now she swept out the corners and under the sofa, while before she was converted she did not. There is many a man who can stand up before a multitude and "confess Christ;" who can be most meek when insulted in some public place; who can rub his hands and bless God for the power of religion; but who is too weak to keep his temper at home. The value of art is in the fineness of the work; the perfection of music is in the little accuracies. So the beauty and power of our religion are seen when we manifest grace in little things. As it takes greater skill to engrave the Lord's Prayer on a five cent piece than upon a broad steel plate, so it takes more grace to live a good Christian at home than in public.

STONES FOR THE TEMPLE.

WHEN the temple at Jerusalem was being built, no sound of workman's tool was heard near. Each stone was shaped elsewhere, and only needed to be put into the place which was ready for it. So the great building rose up in its glorious beauty. All the parts were perfected, and as they were brought to join those built in before them, they helped to fulfil the great plan of the divine Architect.

In the Jerusalem above there shall be a temple finished one day, which shall stand for ever. It shall be a spiritual temple, built of living stones. In it God will dwell and be adored. How great the glory of those chosen and made worthy to have a place in it! We all hope for the rest and the delight, of which God speaks to us in this figure, as in so many others. We all shrink from the thought of our being cast away with what is unfit to be worked into God's design. Let us learn a lesson from the way in which the temple made with hands was built.

Heaven is not the place for shaping, but for putting that which is already shaped where the right place awaits it. Here is God's workshop; now is our time to be prepared for heaven. This life, with all its cares and joys, and temptations, and means of grace we meet, is meant to form us after God's will. In the Church on earth we take our character; in the Church above it shall be shown. God gives us each a place in the Church now; to fill that well is the preparation for a place in the Church hereafter.

How many are there who never think of this! They hope to be given a place of rest and glory in heaven; they are little careful, or not careful at all, to be living stones, doing God's will and showing forth His glory on earth. They rest on no firm foundation. They take no pains to be sure that they are not parted from Christ the one Corner Stone of the spiritual building. Nothing rests on them, or is upheld or strengthened by them. No firm bond of Christian love unites them to others. Nay more; some even hope for a safe and honourable place among angels and holy ones, where God is, in heaven, while they are content not to fill a decent place even among true-telling and fair-dealing men on earth.

He who is not fit company for honest pure-thinking men of the world has no real place in the Church on

primary-factor, in enlisting the sympathy, and drawing out the energy of clergymen and laymen in Church work. It does not accord with Christian character, neither would it be consistent with the interests of the Church, to send efficient men into the missionary field, with no certainty beyond a year. To do this, when the Canadian Church has the means, would be an abuse of faith and savour of presumption.

Men who have been chosen and set apart for the ministry of the Church are esteemed ambassadors of Christ to beseech their fellow creatures to become reconciled to God, and should therefore be relieved of unnecessary anxiety as to the permanency of their temporal provision. They will have all the trials their faith can endure, without the harassing one of uncertain and inadequate support. The Christian missionary requires to be armed with two essential requisites for success: that of confidence in the support of his Lord and Saviour for all spiritual supplies, which he cannot doubt, and in the Church for all needful and temporal provision. To expect that God would display miraculous power in maintaining the former, whilst the Church dishonours herself in the neglect of the latter, would be a violation alike of both the great Commandments. God indeed needs no gift, but He does desire that His redeemed Church should know Him, by bringing forth fruit to her own account. I shall therefore be glad to put the proposal in another, and I trust equally practicable form. I shall be happy to unite with a hundred others in contributing from one to fifty dollars per year, for one, two, or three years.

Now that I am upon the subject, I might be permitted to express a doubt as to whether any diocesan method will be able to accomplish the work of the Church's missionary commission, at all commensurate with her obligation to God and man. The idea has doubtless presented itself to the minds of thoughtful Christian Churchmen, that our diocesan machinery is inadequate for the work, and that our material sources are sufficiently developed to call into exercise an agency partaking of a Dominion, rather than a diocesan character. Few will question that the missionary success of the Church in the mother-land has to be attributed to the formation of missionary societies of a national character, such as the S. P. G., C. M. S. and others. Could a Dominion Missionary Society be formed, freed from the trammels of diocesan machinery, yet embracing the sympathy of Church members at large? Men of broad Christian sympathies, too great to be bound by any party Shibboleth, clergymen and laymen, could be found to fill the offices of president, vice-president, committee, &c., who from their established reputation would inspire confidence that the end would be ensured, independent of different shades of opinion, and of narrow, contracted ecclesiastical influences. Diocesan prejudice and rivalry would be excluded, and energy take the place of apathy. The officers could be elected annually or triennially by the members, or by such method as would best commend itself.

Something should be done to take "the reproach" from our Zion, which all appear to feel rest upon her, to the dishonour of her Divine Head and herself. She needs a nobler platform for the inspiring of missionary life than any diocesan system can give her, or the scattered fragments of individual Christian character can accomplish. The cementing power of such an organization, having for its foundation supreme love to God, and love for our fellow-men equalling the love we have for ourselves, would soon draw forth the energies of the Church here, and enlist the substantial sympathy of the mother of us all, as to cause a spiritual temple to be reared, which would serve as a beacon for the guidance of the present, and yet unborn generations.

I can see no reason (for the wealth of Churchmen in a nation so highly blessed as ours, is sufficient), why an annual income of at least ten thousand dollars should not begin the work, and increase from year to year, and be laid as an offering of Christian devotion and gratitude on the Church's altar of love to her Lord and her God.

I am yours faithfully,

J. T. WRIGHT.

The Parsonage, St. Mary's May 6th.

MIRTH is short and transient, cheerfulness fixed and permanent. They are often raised into the greatest transports of mirth who are subject to the greatest depressions of melancholy; on the contrary, cheerfulness, though it does not give the mind such an exquisite gladness, prevents it from falling into any depths of sorrow. Mirth is like a flash of lightning, that breaks through a gloom of clouds, and glitters for a moment; cheerfulness keeps up a kind of day-light in the mind, and fills it with a steady and perpetual serenity.

earth, however loud his professions. He who has no living active part in the Church on earth is not growing fit for heaven. No place in the Church triumphant is being prepared for him.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

Oh, the blessed communion of saints! one member has the benefit of the other members' gifts, prayers, and ministrations. One prays for all, and all prays for one. What one has, the other enjoys also. It may be truly said of them, All is yours. There is no envy, no haughtiness, no strife or harm, among real saints; for why should I envy that which is my own? why should I despise that which serves for my necessary assistance? and why should I strive against, and hurt him whose hurt is my own? Is there any strife between the members of our natural body? By no means; they all serve, help, and assist one another; and if one be injured and suffers, all the rest run to his relief, and are neither tired nor angry, if the healing does not follow immediately. O Lord, unite us all in hearty fellowship and tender feeling for each other; and stop and open and subtle divisions which are fermented by lofty spirits, who always boast of mighty things, and to be wise above the rest. Suffer not a self-conceited and party spirit, which is the spirit of the world, to influence the members of thy body; but bless and grace them all with true humility; then we shall live in a solid union and uninterrupted harmony.

A WORD FOR EVERYBODY.

SOME years ago I visited an old man who lived very near my church, and was at the time dangerously ill. He spoke of his hope of recovery, and of his resolve to go to church when he got better.

To the surprise of everyone who knew of his illness, he recovered. And now the question was, Will he go to church?

I was not sanguine about this. I see a great many sick people lying on their beds at home. But I see very few of them kneeling meekly on their knees in church "to give glory to God" for their deliverance. Yet my old friend spoke very positively, and seemed much in earnest. And I had a good hope that he would be an exception to the rule.

I went to see him again and again. One day before he was quite well, I found that he had moved from his house. No one could tell me where he and his wife had gone. I made various enquiries. But all was in vain.

After many weeks had past, I heard that he had moved to a house not far from that in which I first saw him, and almost as near to the church. I called several times, in the day-time, in the evenings, and on Sundays. At last I found him at home, and able to talk to me.

I came to the point soon, and was sorry to hear that he had not gone to church. I reminded him of his good resolutions, and asked why he had not kept them. His answer was nearly in those words: "Yes, I meant to go to church. But I heard the church-bell ringing every day, and often on some days. And I thought to myself, If I join those people, I will have to go to church every time the bell rings, and I can't do that; so I haven't gone at all."

I believe the man was quite sincere in what he said. If so, he was greatly mistaken. The church-bell rings often, that some people may come each time, and that all may have an opportunity. But no one is expected to leave his work or neglect his duty for the sake of going to church. The bell need not hinder the work of the world; it should be a call to Christians to do all their work the better, and "to the glory of God."

It is a common mistake. No more frequent hindrance stops the way of those who, in their hearts, desire to live a godly life. Is it not so? You can't do all; and so you will do nothing.

In this busy world we are all distracted by cares and anxieties. We can't do all that we used to do in happier days. We get disheartened, and "give up everything."

Have you done so? If you have, you are wrong. You are distrusting God. He knows your difficulties; He knows what you cannot do, and He knows what you can do. He will not blame you for what can't be helped. But He does require of you the little that is in the power of everyone.

The best way is to search your conscience, and decide what you cannot do, and quietly give up the idea of doing it. And, on the other hand, ask your conscience what you can do, and "do it with your might."

Pray for God's help, and do what you can. Patiently watch for opportunities of doing more. We are all "unprofitable servants;" but God is a good Master.