

who does not grasp, but ever gives, may appeal to us to moderate the tragic endeavor.

If the routine of life become unbearably monotonous, with its endless round of homely duties, or the drudgery of "business," there is respite to be found in the "sweet enveloping thought" that can for the moment wing the soul for glimpses above and beyond the present.

When, instead of wearying work with the hands, places of trust and responsibility make human wisdom seem altogether insufficient, and the soul would falter in its uncertainties, then the illuminating Presence shines steadily on, only waiting access for its light.

Or, if life be like a glad summer day, the soul satisfied with the sweetest companionships, the hands never too weary, nor the heart overweighted with cares, then the shadow of death may fall over all this gladness and content. In hours of such desolation, only the "sweet enveloping thought" of Divine Fatherhood and Motherhood, embracing in all-sustaining strength the humblest child of the universe, can lift up and revitalize the stricken soul.

O, it is the very breath of life to believe that like the atmosphere enveloping the earth, is the spiritual presence encompassing the soul! It may be difficult to impart to the little child a spiritual conception not weighted with the material, but it will be a blessing unspeakable to him all his years, if, by the wisdom of father and mother, his physical life is made to minister to the growth of the spirit. Then, in the progress of development, the unseen things which we believe are the eternal may become to him even the most real. The soul thus "open on the Godward side" is equipped for life. Its joys will have no adulteration of unworthiness; sorrow and disappointment cannot quench its aspirations; love will give wings to its noblest endeavors; service will be its unwearying motive, and in

crucial hours, in gardens of Gethsemane, when the soul must wrestle alone, without book, without priest, the Father will himself be the ministering, the sustaining spirit.

"Spirit, Eternal and Divine; informing Earth and sky and striving human hearts. Flood thou our soul with light and warmth till they

Shall fructify all germs of heavenly growth. Wing thou our souls with aspirations pure, To bear us up and on from lowlands of The earth, to heights serene whose breath is God!

Then, from these heights of God, stirred to new life,

Lead us all gently back to do thy work To make our vineyards gardens of the Lord!"

THE SILENT MEETING.

¹ Paper read by Edgar M. Zavitz, at the Religious Conference, Swarthmore, 1896.

The members of our Society, as well as those of all other denominations, have a habit of congregating together. What does this congregating mean, and what does it involve? It means worship, and it involves a God. This it does for all religious bodies; and furthermore, regarding the restriction imposed by the subject, meetings held in silence, which is the basis of Quaker worship, marks us off from all other denominations.

Meetings for worship mean a different thing to a Friend than to others. Our distinctive faith-belief in divine immediate revelation makes them to mean a very different thing, and also makes them to present a very different aspect outwardly.

What worship means to people who believe that God cannot be approached in this age of the world, I know not. What worship and prayer mean to people who think the avenue between God and man to be closed, I cannot conceive. Worship, as Friends practice it, may seem to some mystical, but it presents no inconsistency and no unreasonableness. Our worship is more inward or spiritual, and therefore can be conducted best in silence.

We do not employ any man to be