

"Wait until you hear it," said his cousin, smiling, "meanwhile I am preparing your mind for it. But do you wish to know what the trouble in that house is? You will smile when I tell you my opinion. It isn't a tado in this case, it is only a leak in the nerve reservoir that causes the trouble, and the cause of the leak is the intemperate use of one of God's good gifts—tea. You smile; so should I four or five years ago, but I know of what I am speaking. The mother in that house drinks tea morning, noon and night. She takes it between meals, and takes it strong. She suffers from headaches and then takes more tea, and I believe and have told her that her disordered nerves and uncontrollable irritability are due to drinking too much tea. She laughs at me and says she has taken it all her life, as if that were any reason."

"But here we are at the church," he said, as they drew up at the door of a well-built, little brick church, at the side of the road. "You will have the sermon soon enough now."

Walter sat in the church and watched the farmers, their wives, their sons and daughters, file in for the service. It was a comfortably dressed congregation. The men were ruddy and healthy looking, but many of the women looked pale and overworked. The farmer's wife has no light burden of domestic work to bear, and Walter could see the signs of this in the faces of the women about him. The service began—that noble service in which, at that hour, many millions of the most progressive and moral and devout of God's people were joining. Then came the sermon, and Walter listened with some curiosity to his cousin's Lenten talk. To his surprise he said at first nothing about Lent, but preached, of all things in the world, a temperance sermon. He spoke of God's great variety of gifts to man and of man's abuse of many of them. The intemperate use of strong drink came in for its fair share of condemnation, but he spoke of other things as well, intemperate eating, intemperate money getting and intemperate means of spending. "People are intemperate even in their work," he said, looking into the faces of the hard-working men and women before him. "Many of you have no rest and leisure in your lives; perhaps some of you cannot afford to let it be otherwise. But some

of you can. The balance in the bank is growing larger, but the burdens of the men, and, worse than this, the burdens of the women do not lighten. Many a farmer has seen his wife work herself slowly to death before his eyes. He did not think she was doing this, nor did she, but, none the less truly, she was. O, men and women, this is the season when we commemorate our Lord's fasting in the desert. He denied Himself of food, and He did it for our learning. He also denied Himself of work. There were no people in the desert to minister to, and this too, perhaps, was for our learning. Let us follow Him. Cut off that habit of eating or drinking that makes you a less useful, a less happy man or woman. If it be beer or whiskey that has ensnared you, drink water during Lent. If it be even tea or coffee whose excessive use causes sleepless nights and overwrought nerves, cut them off too, for they mar your usefulness. But even your work may prove a snare. Try this Lent to see if you are not giving your heart to that rather than to God. If you are, cut off just so much of it as stands between you and God. I ask you, strong, brave, manly husbands to think of your wives during Lent. They have been serving you. Do you try now to see if there is not some shortcoming in your service of them. Perhaps they are bearing too heavy a burden. Do you see if you cannot lighten it. The special value of Lent is in this: that it lasts long enough for us to form new habits during it. If you are watchful for the forty days you will have formed a habit of watchfulness that will last for the rest of the year. If you give up excessive drinking or eating, or saving or spending during Lent, you will have learned to do it for the year. With God's help try it *now*. What may be done at any time is often never done. Lent comes every year with its renewed call to the heart. If you have been neglecting or postponing a duty, do so no longer. For these forty days God calls especially to repentance. It may be your last Lent."

The sermon was ended, and then, when the last hymn had been sung and the benediction pronounced, there were handshakings and greetings between clergyman and people. Walter sat by his cousin's side as they drove home, and there was a long pause; then

Walter said, "Do you know, old fellow, I think there is something to be said for Lent after all."

LOOKING BACK

HAVE we not all, amid life's petty strife,
Some pure ideal of a noble life,
That once seemed possible? Did we not hear
The flutter of its wings, and feel it near
And just within our reach? It was, and yet,
We lost it in this daily jar and fret.
And now live idle in a vague regret.
But still our place is kept, and it will wait
Ready for us to fill it, soon or late.
No star is ever lost that once has been—
We always may be what we might have been,
Since good, though only thought, has life and
breath
God's life—can always be redeemed from death;
And evil in its nature is decay,
And any hour can blot it all away.
The hopes that lost in some far distance seem,
May be the truer life, and this the dream.

—*Adelaide Proctor.*

FOR PARISH AND HOME.

Papers on Christian Practice.

III.—SELF-DISCIPLINE.

THE place of discipline in the spiritual life is as a training school for the development of character. It begins with the acceptance of the Gospel. It follows pardon, and in no sense is human merit used as a means of gaining God's forgiveness. It holds a high place in preparing the soul for its walk in the Christian course marked out by the blessed footsteps of Jesus Christ.

Christian discipline is deeply concerned about man's body. A perverted religion looked upon the body as vile, as something to be despised, as unworthy of care or thought. But truer views have prevailed and we remember that it is God's handiwork and designed to be "the temple of the Holy Ghost." The body, however, is to be kept under and brought into subjection to the spirit. It must not be allowed to hamper the life of the soul. The flesh is to be crucified with its affections and lusts. The body is to be sanctified through the power of God. It is for this reason that our bodies have been prepared. "The body is for the Lord." He has its future in His divine power. Death cannot destroy it.

The discipline of the body will teach that it is to be the servant and not the master. This should be made a guiding principle early in life. It is said of Hannibal that when he could have conquered Rome he would not, and when he would have done so he could not. The effect of ordinary