

joyful day this will be for us," said he, as he bade his visitor good-night.

"You won't mind, Ellen," said Mr. Clover to his wife that night, "if the church is not re-decorated this year, will you?"

"No," she replied; "it can spare the paint better than it can the prayers of Deacon Simon."

"You don't think I've fetched my gift off the altar by changing my plan with it?"

"No." And presently she repeated: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."—*M. E. Bennett in Christian Work.*

## Thorns.

**W**HAT do I think Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' was?" repeated Aunt Hannah, looking over her spectacles at her questioner. "Well, now, I don't know, and I'm free to confess that it's been a thorn in my flesh many a time to hear people tryin' to explain all about it when they didn't know any more than I do. They've said it was his eyes that bothered him—that his sight was very poor, and sometimes he was most blind, never havin' really recovered from that bright light that flashed over him on the way to Damascus. Well, now, as I said before, I don't know, but the Lord sent some one to him to 'put his hands on him that he might receive his sight,' and the Lord don't do no half-way work. He never did that kind of healin' when He was here on earth, and I don't believe He began it with Paul.

"Then we're told Paul was a small man—maybe he was; there's many a mighty soul in a little body—and that he stammered and was a very poor speaker. 'Pears to me if he was, Felix and Agrippa wouldn't have been so willin' to hear him talk when he was brought before them—not unless," added the old lady, reflecting, "they was a good deal more interested in hearin' the Gospel than folks are nowadays, when even Christians won't go to church if they know there's to be a dull preacher.

"Some say Paul's thorn in the flesh was neuralgy headaches—and they're bad enough, dear knows! And some say 'twas a nervous trouble that made him twitch and tremble. Well, I can't read nothin' in original Greek nor Hebrew, so I wouldn't like to set up my judgment, but when the Lord lets nervous prostration come on a man or woman now, it's a call to halt. It's a sign that they've been breakin' some of His laws of health by overwork, and they don't get no encouragement to keep on breakin' 'em by a promise of extry grace to help 'em out.

"It always seems to me that Paul must have been a man with nerves and will of iron, whether he was big or little in size, and a winnin' speaker generally, judgin' from the folks that listened to him. But don't you s'pose, young Jewish aristocrat that he was, with his learnin' and his high family, that he had lots of friends, and a good

many ties that were broke when he turned Christian? somebody, maybe, dearer than father or mother, that had to be parted with when he changed all his plans in life? He was human, wonderfully human, was Paul, and it doesn't seem unlikely that many a lonesome, discouraged time some face might look at him out of his past and almost break his heart; some picture of a happy home that might have been his, rise up and torment him, till it seemed like a 'thorn in the flesh,' and a 'messenger of Satan' because it tempted him.

"But it seems to me the thing that concerns us most about that thorn is just that we don't know—that he never told nobody but the Lord what it was. If the rest of us would just learn to do that way with ours—take 'em to the only place where we can get help, and then go about our work, bearin' 'em as best we can without botherin' the world about 'em, we'd get all we're expected to get out of the mention that Paul had one."—*Kate Hamilton in Westminster Teacher.*

## How Moody Kept Them in Church.

**W**HEN Mr. Moody was on a journey in the western part of Massachusetts, he called on a brother in the ministry on Saturday, thinking to spend the Sabbath with him, if agreeable. The man appeared very glad to see him, and said: "I should be very glad to have you stop and preach for me to-morrow, but I feel almost ashamed to ask you."

"Why, what is the matter?" said Mr. Moody.

"Why, our people have got into such a habit of going out before meeting is closed, that it seems to be an imposition on a stranger."

"If that is all, I must and will stop and preach for you," was Mr. Moody's reply.

When the Sabbath day came, and Mr. Moody had opened the meeting and named the text, he looked around on the assembly, and said:

"My hearers, I am going to speak to two sorts of folks, saints and sinners. Sinners, I am going to give you a portion first, and I would have you give good attention."

When he had preached to them as long as he thought best, he paused and said, "There, sinners, I have done with you now; you may take your hats and go out of the meeting-house as soon as you please."

But all tarried and heard him through.

LORD, here's a heart.

Thy temple it should be. Good Master, rout  
All mean intruders, turn the dearest out,  
And only let Thine own true priesthood in;  
Be Thou the keeper; keep from every sin.  
O, take this heart!

Lord, here's a life,  
With all its possibilities of ill  
Or boundless good, as Thou, my Lord, shalt will;  
If Thou dost bless, life shall a blessing be;  
If Thou withhold, Lord, all must come from Thee.  
O, take this life!