

THE CONTRAST.

A STORY FOR WOMEN.

No contrasts are more striking than those which describe the condition of women in heathen and in Christian countries.

The *Religious Herald* thus speaks of women in China, India and Japan: "They carry coal in baskets for the supply of steamboats lying in the harbor; they carry baggage and heavy loads of merchandise on their heads; they gather offal and remove sewerage from the open streets of great cities; they creep in mud and water six inches deep, pulling up weeds between rows of rice in the paddy fields, and breathing the odors of sewerage with which the grain is watered from the town. They even carry strong men in chairs, supported by bamboo poles resting upon their shoulders. They climb, panting for breath, under such burdens, up the steep sides of mountains and receive a small string of copper cash for the hard service."

The condition of women among some of our still savage Indian tribes is no better. There she is counted, and is called a "dog," she is a beast of burden: she must build, plant, she must walk, carrying a load of blankets while her lord and master proudly rides his pony, she may not sit at his table, although required to prepare the meal, but must take the remnants with the dogs when he has finished.

Christian woman "who maketh thee to differ" from these? And what art thou doing to give to others that gospel which has done so much for thee.

THAT GREAT BLUNDER.

A LAWYER made a serious blunder during the great fire at Seattle, Washington. A local journal says that when the fire was raging and it became evident that the building in which a prominent lawyer had his offices must be consumed, he ran up to his office to save what he could. He had a very valuable library and some manuscript volumes which represented the hard work of many years. He rapidly gathered some that he was most anxious to save, but there were more than he could carry and he picked up first one and then another only to discard them for some that were still more precious. While he was hesitating between them, the firemen raised a cry that he must get out of the building instantly or he would lose his life. In the excitement of the moment he seized the first book within reach and ran for his life. He rushed down the stairs and did not look at the book until he was safe on the pavement. Then he looked at it and found that he had saved the city directory! His chagrin may be imagined as he thought of the valuable books that could never be replaced, left to burn, while he had brought one of little value. What he did in those moments of terrible haste, men are doing all through their lives, in securing the world's prizes that are valueless in eternity, and neglecting the one thing needful, this in spite of Christ's warning: Seek not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink neither be ye of doubtful mind. (Luke 12: 29, 31.)

THE OPEN DOOR.

"I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven." A door—swinging back on musical hinges before the discouraged wanderers of earth, inviting them to hospitalities glimpsed beyond, inconceivable to the heart of man. A

door? Those are not unfolding portals; they are outspread arms, and above them is the glory of a face, and from within there floats the tenderness of a voice—"I am the door!" It is he, the Lord of life himself; and we, who are so weary of our vain efforts to conquer evil, the pettiness and unlovingness of our natures, are uplifted, upborne to his heart, and its mighty throbbings become the inspiration of our own. He does for us what we could not do for ourselves, and we are saved. Henceforth there is no life for us but his.

"I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." To every soul of man this message comes, and the soul which turns at the call of the angel who brings it, will bear witness that the message is true. Only we ourselves can shut ourselves out of heaven. The door of a heart, as human in its sympathy as it is divine in its love and power, stands always open and waiting with welcome for the repentant child who would fain return to his Father's house. "By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."—*Lucy Larcom.*

AT THE SWITCH.

"Yours must be a very responsible position," said a traveller to a switchman, who had charge of the switches at a junction where five lines converge.

"Yes," was the reply; "but it is as nothing compared to yours as a Christian."

A railroad manager may sit late and rise early, and bring out excellent system and splendid rules for the government of his road. But that is only the frame; the filling in must be done by the individual employee. So with the work of any pastor, church, convention, or teachers' meeting; liberal things may be devised and the best of resolutions adopted, but the work itself remains still untouched, and, if done at all, must be done by the units, individually.

Seeing, then, that every word and action of the Christian has an eternal significance, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and burning zeal for our common Master? Seeing, also, there are trains in the life and heart of every man we meet, let us do our part to forward them to the great terminus—our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—*Selected.*

A MOTHER'S HEART.

We ought to watch closely the character of the memories we leave in our homes. One person has left this testimony: "Many a night, as I remember lying quietly in the little upper chamber, before sleep came on, there would be gentle footstep on the stair, the door would noiselessly open, and in a moment the well-known form, softly gliding through the darkness, would appear at my bedside. First, there would be a few pleasant inquiries of affection which gradually deepened into words of counsel. Then, kneeling, her head close to mine, her most earnest hopes and desires, would flow forth in prayer. Her tears bespoke the earnestness of her desire. I seem to feel them yet when sometimes they fell on my face. The prayers often passed out of thought in slumber, and came not to mind again for years, but they were not lost. I willingly believe they were an invisible bond with heaven that secretly preserved me while I moved carelessly amid numberless temptations and walked the brink of crime. Is it not worth while for every mother to try to weave such memories into the early years of her children's lives?"