

4. Long years ago, on the upper lakes, a beautiful specimen of amethyst quartz was given to me. The play of light and shadow on the lovely violet crystals was wonderful, yet it did not satisfy; there was a flaw. Embedded with the rest was one crystal crusted with a dull, gray sediment; a lapidary could have cleared it away, and then my clouded amethyst would have reflected back the sunlight with the rest. I could not, so the sparkle was hidden, the rich hue lost to sight. Have we no members who are faithfully in their place, who help to hold the branch together, but who never let their light shine? They may not have the gift of speaking, but, alas! they do not even listen with any appearance of interest; they work diligently at the meetings, but their neighbor, stranger though she may be, never gets a helpful word, nor the expression of a hope that she will come again. If branch matters are discussed these hardly seem to hear, and to direct appeals they are as cold as a wet blanket. Yet this is often in appearance only; they are shy, they are reserved, they are humble-minded, or they are like Mrs. Gatty's kitten that did not know how to purr when she was pleased. It takes love and tact to wear away the crust and to make these living stones sparkle among the rest, but it can generally be done, and here is a responsibility for the genial, free-hearted members; let them bring their sunshine to bear upon these hermit crabs, and win them out of their shells.

5. What shall I take for a pattern of giving? What better than our dear old mother earth, which returns tenfold all that we bestow upon her?

"True to her trust, tree, herb, or reed,
She renders for each scattered seed,
And to her Lord with dutious heed
Gives large increase.
Thus year by year she works unfeared
And will not cease."

Your garden repays you well for the wise labor bestowed upon it; you sow the bare grain, and your field waves with golden corn in its season; you plant a sapling apple-tree, and in a few years its branches are laden to the ground with fruit. All this abundant return pictures our own personal responsibility to Him "from whom all good things do come."

"Largely Thou givest, gracious Lord,
Largely Thy gifts should be restored;
Freely Thou givest, and Thy word
Is, 'Freely give.'
He only, who forgets to hoard,
Has learn'd to live."

The above is from the able pen of Miss Osler, of All Saints' branch, Toronto. This being the month when "Diocesan" is one of our subjects, we feel that nothing could be more helpful than the looking into the personal standing of each member in every branch in all our

dioceses. It will, we trust, if the test is prayerfully applied, enable us, with God's help, to be better workers in our parish and in our diocese, while not neglecting those in distant places.

THE COOK AND THE CAPTIVE;

OR,

ATTALUS THE HOSTAGE.

BY CHARLOTTE M. YONGE.

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)



HE odd noises that he heard were, he perceived, the snores of the men, who had flung themselves down to sleep as he had done. It was a curious place in the eyes of Attalus, who had always lived in handsome, well-built Roman houses, with courts in the middle, with well-paved apartments for giving audience, for eating, living, and sleeping, disposed round them, and baths adjoining, with hot and cold water laid on. True, they were of only one story, and had no glass windows, but they were well furnished according to the notions of the time, and had carved bedsteads, like sofas, in the little sleeping-rooms, and in the others tables, chairs, and couches, and a whole library of books, rolls of vellum, which Attalus had once regarded as his enemies, but which he now began to miss. He had been amused at Baldrik's wonder at these civilized appurtenances, and he was now to be amazed at the lack of them. The house was high and large, the elevation being, in fact, up to the height that a sufficient number of trees could attain, their trunks being set close together, and the interstices stuffed with clay, reeds, and heather. The span of the roof was the same, as far as could be safely supported by rafters of tall pine-trees, with beams extending across below them. The roof was fairly weather-tight, but open in the middle over the hearth, whose odors of wood and peat smoke still filled the edifice. There were no windows, but the two ends had wide and open doorways, and there was a wide space down the middle, the sides being divided off by wooden structures that put Attalus in mind of the stalls of horses, only that these were closed in at the top; and far away, near the farther entrance, he heard the stamp of horses, and lifting up his head perceived that they were tied up in rows at that end. A cock, whose crow had first awakened him, gave another summons, and was seen to be perched on one of the beams overhead, with all his family round him; and there were other gruntings and bleatings which showed that there was a considerable live stock all awake.

All this he perceived gradually, while still half awake and coming to a full recollection of