

over, and common life has to begin again. Yet you are sadly disinclined to take up the old everyday work afresh. It is an awfully blank time. You are listless and sorrowful, and it is easy to spend a good deal of time in looking back and dwelling on the past.

Mary had nothing to do. She looked sadly into the grave of her dear Lord, weeping as she did so. Perhaps it would have been better if she had looked away from it. For we must ever look onward, not at the past. "Onward and upward" should be our motto.

True, she saw the angels in the tomb. But a little way off there was One more glorious than the shining angels—the risen Lord Himself!

Perhaps her eyes were blinded with tears and so she did not know Him quite at first. But when He called her by her name, "Mary," then she knew Him. And then her grief was all changed into joy.

Has sorrow or trouble ever kept you from seeing Jesus? He is at hand, ready to call you tenderly by name. Only you turn away and dwell on the sad past. Ah, in doing so you are turning away from Him!

Christ the risen Lord changed Mary's sorrow into joy. That is a type of what He can and will do now at this very time.

So don't be hopeless and out of heart. That is the last thing a disciple of Christ ought to be. Look up with a bright, brave smile on your face, and you will plainly discern Him very near.

Then He gave Mary something to do for Him. What was it? To go to His brethren and give them a message from Him. She was to act and do, not only gaze and adore.

Will not Christ give you some work to do for Him this Eastertide? Perhaps you have been rather desponding lately—well, now is the time to begin afresh. A new, vigorous, active life of service may be before you.

What can you do for the Lord Jesus? Ask Him to show you. Say—

"Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

"Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love;
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

"Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King;
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee."

Your hands can work for His poor willingly. Your feet can move quickly. Yes, quickly; for, remember, dawdling is a waste of the Master's time. Did not Mary go swiftly on her Master's errand? Yes; we are sure she did. And was not her face full of earnest purpose?

So you will not be listless and half-occupied any more, but every minute will seem precious because it can be used in the Master's work.

Thus Easter may be a happy, fresh, bright time of beginning again.

For Christ our risen Lord is very near us in His glory and beauty, and He has something for each of us—yes, for each of us women—to do for Him.

Church Terms Explained.

Banner.—A standard hanging by cords from the top of a staff, which is commonly surmounted by a small cross. It is generally embroidered with some appropriate design or figure.

Baptism.—The initial Sacrament necessary to salvation, whereby we are regenerated or born anew in the Kingdom of Grace.

The congregation should stand during the service until the Lord's Prayer.

Baptismal Shell.—A scallop shell, either real, or of precious metal, used by the priest for pouring the water on the head in Holy Baptism.

Baptistery.—A portion of a church set apart for the administration of Holy Baptism; or a large receptacle for water, in which adults can be baptized by immersion. Baptisteries exist in various English churches.

Bidding Prayer.—A long prayer ordered by the

50th Canon to be said before all sermons which are preached apart from other services. It contains petitions for royalty, nobility, lords, commons, magistrates, and also for the faithful departed; and is quite distinct from the Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent, which is sometimes repeated without authority, before a sermon, and erroneously called the Bidding Prayer.

Easter Grace.

The Easter Collect breathes the Church's glorious triumph song. In a dying world we see the Risen Saviour who has "overcome death." In the might of His Divine power He stands by the grave of humanity; and as He utters those words, which no mere human tongue could ever have framed,—"I am the Resurrection and the Life"—"He opens unto us the gate of everlasting life." But beyond this easter triumph in the resurrection, the Collect is richly full of the doctrine of "Grace," which is our great need in a sinful world, before we pass through that "open gate of everlasting life." "Special grace preventing us," going before us, "putting into our minds good desires," and "continual help, that we may bring the same to good effect"—how bountiful and complete the provision, how complete the supply for "all our need!"

Oh for wisdom and watchfulness to avail ourselves of this fullness of Easter grace; "so that through the daily renewing of the Spirit, we may rise daily from the death of sin" to the "life that is hid with Christ in God"—the earnest of the life above, where those who "awake in the Divine likeness" shall be eternally "satisfied."

Miss Alcott's Life Story.

Louisa M. Alcott is said to reveal herself in a most interesting way in a number of letters (written to five little girls), which are to appear in the April *Ladies' Home Journal*. These letters were written during the busiest period of Miss Alcott's life, and present a pen picture of the author drawn by her own master hand. In these she talks with singular frankness of herself, her work, her aims, her home, her spiritual belief, and of the influence that directed her to literature. She never saw any of her five correspondents; but their youthful frankness, intense interest in all her writings, and their love for the author, and for the character of her creations, impelled her to turn aside from her work and cares to find diversion in chats with such eagerly enthusiastic, admiring and sympathetic friends. Miss Alcott's first letter is dated 1872, and the others were written at intervals up to within a short time of her death.

"The King's Business."

The first recorded words of Christ declare that he must be about His Father's business, and among His last words He declares that He has finished the work which His Father gave Him to do. If the Christian is to follow Christ in everything, let him not be slow to learn that God has a work for him to do which no one else can do. The most important business of every man is to serve the Lord his God. In this service, as in every other, there are certain great rules to be observed.

The first of these rules is diligence. Many a man who is diligent in his daily work does the Lord's work with a slack hand. Instead of being "instant in season and out of season," he is lukewarm on Sundays and frozen all the rest of the week. Instead of taking as his motto in the Lord's work, "Not slothful in business," he is content to live on the principle, "Take thine ease." Instead of being willing to "spend and be spent" in the Lord's service, he counts it a task to do more than he absolutely must. Instead of doing all things as unto the Lord, he lives for himself alone.

Another rule in the King's service is that the servant should be faithful. It may be that we are not brilliant, but we can at least be faithful. "It is required," especially of the stewards of God, "that a man be found faithful." As a help to faithfulness, "consider Christ who was faithful," and remember His command and promise, "Be thou

faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

But in order that these rules should be obeyed, let the work be done heartily. Without this element the secret of success is lacking. If all things whatsoever we do, are to be done heartily as unto the Lord, how much more the work which is distinctively Christian work. Christ who hath made us free wants no convict labour. Only the man who serves God with a joyful, willing heart is in the royal service; all other servants are working out their own salvation—by the job. Our Lord Jesus Christ saved the world because He loved the world. If our work for Him is to be of any value, let it be glorified by that same thrilling force—love.

If these rules are to be carried out, then let us begin speedily. "The King's business requires haste." It is now or never with most workers. To-morrow the opportunity will have passed; to-morrow the worker will be past working. "The night cometh."

We are doing the most important work in the world, therefore let us be diligent. We are dignified by being made co-labourers with God; therefore let us be faithful. We are serving the most tender of Masters; therefore let us work heartily. Our service is short at best; therefore let us work speedily. The King seeketh such to serve Him.

The Charm of Cheerfulness.

Think a moment of the charm of cheerfulness. Addison tells us that "Cheerfulness is that which keeps up a kind of daylight in the mind, and fills it with a steady and perpetual serenity." For the man himself there can be no more valuable endowment. It enthrones a man in self-mastery. "The joy of the spirit indicates its strength," says Emerson. If one be in cheerful temper, the faculties work well and easily; the imagination is clear; the judgment is quick and strong; there is no huge, distorted shadow of forebodings; the evils of life only spot it here and there, like shadows of clouds flung down upon a landscape during some day in summer, but constantly overcome by the stronger sunshine. So the soul is masterful. "Be of good cheer!" Paul said to the shipwrecked mariners, and with Paul's good cheer within their hearts they were mightier than the tempest. A man bravely cheerful compels the clang of external circumstances to chime with his strong and ordered heart.

But when you look at a man in his relations to others, such inward light gains an added value. There is no help like its help. A sunny heart is like the sun—light itself and shedding light. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine," says the proverb. All of us have met people whose simple presence was inspiration and benediction. They changed the blue to brightness. When they came the east wind would veer round into a refreshing west wind. How sunny such a sunny heart makes a home! You may have the most beautiful home possible, you may make it enticing with luxury, but you cannot keep your children from going to the bad unless you somehow light up within it a genial cheer. There is no home magnet like a cheerful heart. I remember a brilliant woman, fascinating in company, but at home moody and pining and glum with discontent—and the result was an alienated husband and a shattered home.

And there is many a wife working away with dull heart and listless hands at the long routine of household care, whose home and duty have become a kind of prison, chill and damp, because the husband brings but ashes to the household hearth instead of a glowing cheer. A few thoughtful, appreciative words from a kindly heart, with a loving cheer, would change that prison to a palace. Cheerfulness is like Christ, it goes about doing good. And when you think of a man not alone in himself, nor only as he stands toward others, but also as he stands toward God, this bright cheer of heart gains an added value still. For cheerfulness toward God is thankfulness. It is habitual gratitude. It is contentment with the divine allotment, and thanksgiving for it. It is impossible to be thankful unless the heart be cheerful with the faith that what God does is right and best and wise.

Let us, every one, try to make toward this inward daylight—cheerfulness!