

There seems to be less and less family reading of the Scripture every year. In thousands of Christian families there is no attempt at any such thing. Even individual members refer to the Bible very occasionally, if at all. It is not regarded as a book for everyday use. Like encyclopedias and dictionaries, it is a book of reference that everyone ought to have, merely to keep on the shelf. The poor, fragmentary knowledge of the Bible that a great portion of people have has been gained chiefly in childhood at school, or later on through the reading of Scripture at church, and from the occasional references to the Bible in the literature of the day. But it is a most disappointing knowledge. It grasps nothing completely, and understands nothing thoroughly. Facts, names, dates, characters, events are often in a most hopelessly tangled mass. Why not treat the Bible as you would treat any other book? Why not read it through from beginning to end, respectfully, attentively, earnestly?—*Selected.*

COMELINESS.

There are very few faces in the world which can be pronounced absolutely beautiful, but there are very few faces that cannot be made more beautiful by proper effort. There are passions which are fatal to beauty: anger, wrath, rage, malice, jealousy, discontent—all these chafe and wear and impair human beauty. Everything which is injurious to health is also injurious to beauty. Evil ways of living, close dressing, unhealthful eating and drinking, may ruin the fairest complexion and destroy the comeliness of the most beautiful face.

On the other hand, there are certain elements of beauty which are within the reach of all. Features may be irregular, the complexion may not be the fairest, the varying tints and hues may not blend in the most harmonious manner, but if persons live simply, use healthful food, dress healthfully and neatly, maintain good digestion, attend to personal cleanliness, keep their hearts free from discontent, anger, ambition, malice, envy, and hate; if they spend their days in doing

good and their nights in peaceful rest; if they have kind words for the weary and the sad; if from the friendliness of their hearts spring up smiles and sunshine; if they deal tenderly with the erring, and frankly but firmly and honestly with those who go astray—the plainest face will have beauty when illumined with the light of affection, and through the clouds which may overhang it will shine the tender loveliness of a heart that sympathizes with the sorrowing, and that has tears for those that weep.

If we follow the paths of wisdom and uprightness, integrity and Christian love, we shall soon see that there is something more lovely than mere beauty of face or form or feature, something which endures when roses fade, and which, when the flash of beauty has gone out in darkness and disease, shines on with added brightness to life's latest hour, and shall revive and bloom again when this body of humiliation shall be changed into the likeness of the glorious body of the risen Lord, and, in the perfection of all love and loveliness and beauty, we who have borne the image of the earthly shall bear the image of the heavenly and "be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

SPARE THE CHILDREN'S FEET.

A ragged woman was crossing the corner of a public park in London where the children of the poor are accustomed to play, many of them barefoot. A burly policeman stationed on the corner watched the woman suspiciously. Half way across, she stopped and picked up something which she hid in her apron. In an instant the policeman was by her side. With gruff voice and threatening manner he demanded:

"What are you carrying off in your apron?"

The woman seemed embarrassed and refused to answer. Thereupon the officer of the law, thinking that she had doubtless picked up a pocket-book, which she was trying to make away with, threatened to arrest her unless she told him at once what she had in her apron.

At this the woman reluctantly unfolded her apron and disclosed a *handful of broken glass*. In stupid wonderment the policeman asked: "What do you want with that stuff?"

A flush passed over the woman's face; then she answered simply: "If you please, sir, I just thought I'd like to *take it out of the way of the children's feet*."

Blessings on the kind-hearted caretaker who was so thoughtful of the children's needs and the children's feet. And should not we imitate so good an example, and take out of the path of the little ones anything which can wound them, injure them, or cause them to stumble? There are many things worse than broken glass in the paths which little feet must tread; let us gather them up and, so far as it is in our power, put them out of the way, and obey the apostle's command (Heb. xii. 12, 13), as it comes to us in the beautiful Syriac version of the New Testament:

"Wherefore strengthen ye your relaxed hands, and your tottering knees: and make straight paths for your feet, that the *limb* which is *lame* may not be *wrenched*, but may be healed."—*Christian.*

PARENTAL THORNS.

"That woman in the corner of the car who is nudging her boy to keep his seat and not give it to the woman with the big bundle of tailor work who just got in the car—is making bad trouble for herself, and so is that other woman—the one who has just lifted up her little girl with her muddy shoes, so that she can stand on the seat to look out the window."

"Yes," said passenger "L.M." to passenger "V.W." "I've been looking at that youngster. His natural impulses are right and generous. He sees that tired-looking woman with the heavy bundle ought to have a seat, and once he got down to give her his—but his mother—he calls her 'ma-ar'—pulled him back. All he needs is to be guided right, or to be left to follow his natural impulses, and he will make a manly fellow—a natural gentleman. But his mother, if he stays long with her, will spoil him.