

Choice Literature.

Talks With a Friend.

We all think and speak a great deal of the trial we have to endure because of the hard time; but a friend of mine brought very forcibly to my mind the other day the blessings that are to be gathered from the apparent trials. Perhaps it may help some one, if I tell exactly how she talked to me. We were enjoying a morning together. I knew that my friend had a great deal of real trouble, and especially was almost in want, though, like so many now-a-days, she appeared to be in good circumstances. "Do you know," she said, "I have had a new lesson about trying to save for the future. It came to me while teaching in Sunday-school. Referring to the manna, the fact was brought out that the Israelites could not save it from day to day, as it spoiled, but yet they never lacked. It troubled me a little, after my class was dismissed, to think how differently we act. We, even the most earnest Christians, try to save for our children. So I took my Bible and read that chapter over, and I seem to understand it better. I think if we find that what we lay up spoils, if our investments or savings are lost, it is only a message from the Lord that we do not need to provide for the future. Losses need not fret us, if we think how the fresh manna came and took the place of that which was spoiled. I want to tell you what happened on the Tuesday after I had decided that as my manna had spoiled, I would trust the Lord more fearlessly. Have you ever used the text-book, 'The Soul's Inquiries Answered'? Each day has a question from Scripture answered by the words of Scripture. On that Tuesday I felt, in spite of my firm resolution to trust, terribly perplexed. There was absolutely nothing in the house but bread and butter and tea. Baby was sick and needed crackers. We had only a scuttle of coal left, and for all our needs I had but three dollars. I read aloud at family prayer the story of the manna falling each day, and prayed that we might take just what the Lord provided and be content, but in my secret heart I was not content. I felt as if I could serve God so much better if I were not so straitened. When the children left after prayers, I remembered I had not looked at the text for the day, so I opened my book. See, here is what I read:

"Where dwellest thou?"

"Thus saith the Lord; the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit."

"It came to me like a voice from heaven. Him that is poor, God will look to. How thankful I felt that I was safe. I was cared for by the dear Father, and felt lifted above my anxieties."

How did help come? "Oh, in real life help doesn't always come at once. I had had enough from the Lord—the best gift—the spirit of thankful submission. We ate our bread and tea with good appetites, and baby seemed better. We stayed in the kitchen where we could burn wood, and in a day or two I was able to buy coal."

I do not know that I have given you just my friend's words, but you may catch her spirit. These hard times will work one of two results in us. Either we will grow to think more of money and temporal comforts, or we will be driven in our thirst and destitution, to drink more deeply of the Living Water, and so shall never thirst again for mere temporal prosperity.

Perhaps you would like another of my friend's texts? I was telling her how unstrung and nervous I often felt with my children and servants; how I worried if the work was not done in my way, and at my time; and yet determining as a Christian that I must not let any annoyance be seen. I told her it seemed as if hidden feelings were gnawing away my strength, especially my religious strength.

"Let me give you a text for this year," she said, "a text, or rather a portion of two texts, that is meant particularly for tired, nervous mothers. 'Rest in the Lord... Fret not thyself... Thy strength is to sit still.'"

"Now, for some women, their strength is not to sit still; but such anxious, conscientious, energetic Martha-spirits as yours, need constantly to remember that your strength is to sit still. Then about the fretting. I have found out at last, and I long for you to learn it sooner than I did, that the only way to keep from fretting is to rest in the Lord. Rest in Him. Let yourself go, as you do when you lie down on your bed. If you were constantly fearing lest the bed should give way, you could not rest. So, do not be afraid that the Lord cannot hold you, but rest securely. Do you remember one day, a year or two ago, when you were lying in bed too weak to get up, and I called to sit with you. As I was sitting there, you heard a disturbance down stairs; one child was crying, and another calling out. I knew that sick as you were you must not be worried, and tried to think what I could say to quiet you; but in a moment your face grew bright, and with a little weary but satisfied sigh, you said, 'My sister May will settle the trouble in a moment. I know the children are safe with her, even though they seem in some difficulty.' That made me think how we ought to keep from fretting. It is our Elder Brother who has charge, and even though the dear ones seem in trouble, we know they are safe with Him, so we ought not fret."

"To say just one word more about the sitting still. Do you know I have taken that quite literally of late, and it has been a great help to me. When I get as you say 'unstrung,' and feel as if I speak at all I must speak crossly, I leave everything and go alone and sit down. It reminds me of the better part that one is so apt to lose sight of in the battle of life."

I have written this out as much for myself as for others, but perhaps some other mother will like to take this for her text: "Rest in the Lord—fret not thyself—thy strength is to sit still."—*Hope Ledyard, in Christian Intell.*

A Talk About Olives.

BY ELLEN BERTHA BRADLEY.

"School-girls are like chickens," said Miss Morris, the Principal of the Intermediate Department of Public School No. 4, in the village of Bronson.

"In what way?" asked Miss Grey, her assistant, without looking up from the record book in which she was writing.

"Did you ever see a hen pick up a kernel of grain and say 'cluck-cluck' to her most intimate friend, that half the fowls in the yard did not turn to investigate the matter?"

"I'm lamentably ignorant about hens," said Miss Grey. "But what are those girls doing?" she added, her glance following that of her friend to a corner where twenty or more of their scholars were chatting.

"That's just it," said Miss Morris; "Effie Graves stopped to show something to Clara Dunham, and all that crowd has gathered about them."

"Deliver me from the curiosity of school-girls," said Miss Grey, solemnly. "Let's go and see what they are looking at."

"And be like chickens ourselves," laughed Miss Morris. "All right. Come on."

It was not much, after all, only a little simply-carved cross of olive wood that was passing from girl to girl.

"I wonder how old this is," said Miss Grey, lightly tossing it in her hand; "hundreds of years, perhaps."

"Hundreds may be a good many," laughed Miss Morris; "but olive trees live to be very old. When I was in California last summer, I saw in San Diego a grove that was planted when the mission was first founded, and which is still in good bearing condition."

"Those were mere infants that could not have been more than a hundred years old," said Miss Grey. "There are trees now living that are supposed to have been standing before the beginning of the Christian era."

The girls opened their eyes wide with astonishment, and Miss Morris said she was not aware that the olive was a tree of such an unusually long life.

"I did not think they ever grew in America," said Effie.

"I believe there is a kind that is native," said Miss Morris; "but the ones that I saw were of a European variety introduced by the Spaniards. The tree was brought by them to South America and Mexico as well as California, and wherever they founded missions and the climate was suitable they planted olive groves. The tree was also introduced into the Atlantic States and grows as far north as Virginia. It is perfectly fruitful in South Carolina, and the only reason that it is not largely cultivated is that the fruit needs attention when all hands are busy securing the cotton crop."

"Is it a large tree?" asked Clara.

"No," replied Miss Morris; "it is seldom more than twenty feet high. In France the trees are kept carefully trimmed that the fruit may be easily gathered. The leaves are similar to those of the willow in shape, being sharply lanceolate."

"What's that?" whispered one of the younger girls to Effie.

"Long, narrow and pointed; shaped like a lance," was the reply.

"They are thick and leathery," continued Miss Morris; "underneath they are whitish, though on the upper side they are of a dull green color that gives a somber hue to the groves. The flowers are small and white, growing in dense racemes."

"What's a raceme?" whispered the same small questioner.

"Clusters of flowers growing like the currant and hyacinth," Effie answered.

"I did not know that one of my scholars was to be examined in botany," said Miss Grey.

"She does credit to her teacher," said Miss Morris.

"I saw an olive in bloom in a greenhouse last winter," remarked Clara Dunham.

"How tall was it?" asked Miss Grey.

"Five or six feet."

"Fragrant?"

"Very."

"It was, probably, *olea fragrans*, or fragrant olive, an evergreen plant from China that is highly prized for greenhouse culture. In the open air it rarely reaches a height of more than six or eight feet. It grows freely in the South, and is a great favorite for its beauty and fragrance. The Chinese are said to use the flowers for flavoring the finest kinds of tea."

"It seems that the olive grows all over the world," said Effie. "I always thought it was an Asiatic tree."

"Different varieties grow in different countries," replied Miss Grey. "That with which we are the most familiar and of which such frequent mention is made in the Bible was probably native to Palestine or some neighboring section, and spread thence through Southern Europe. So valuable a tree was not likely to remain long confined to one place. In many localities its fruit and oil are among the main articles of food."

"Did not the Greeks use the leaves for crowns of honor?" asked Clara.

"Yes," said Miss Morris; "the tree was regarded by them as sacred to Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, whose gift it was believed to be. A crown of its leaves was the highest honor awarded to a citizen for any public service, or to a victor in the Olympian games."

"It is strange," said Miss Grey, "that while a wreath of olive leaves was the ancient reward for victory in war, a branch of it should have been a symbol of peace and blessing since the dawn of history."

"In fact, since the days of Noah," said Effie.

"Yes, Effie," said Miss Morris; "it was recognized as a token of peace and plenty at the time of the flood, and holding out the olive branch has never lost its significance. Among the Hebrews the figure of an olive was used to designate beauty or prosperity, and applied especially to those who had the favor and protection of God, though they might be in circumstances of outward adversity. When David fled for

his life from the household of Saul, he said: 'I am like a green olive in the house of God; I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.' When Moses was promising prosperity to Israel, he said: 'His beauty shall be as the olive tree.' St. Paul compared the Church to an olive tree upon which new branches were grafted; and, in one of the Psalms, we are told that the children of the righteous shall be as olive plants about their table."

But the most sacred associations with this tree are connected with the life and death and ascension of our blessed Saviour, with the Mount of Olives, to which he often resorted, and from which he went up into Heaven. The olives that are scattered over the mountain are the only trees that remain, and no one can look at them or read of them without thinking of Him who so often, with his disciples, "went unto the Mount of Olives."

"Look at the shadows!" cried one of the girls, catching sight of the long lines of shade on the grass.

"The sun is almost down," exclaimed Miss Grey. "Who would have thought it was so late! Come, you young olive branches, hurry home to your parent trees."

—N. Y. Observer.

Mistress, Mother, and Wife.

There would be fewer bad servants if there were more good mistresses, and you might hear young girls say of such a one: "She was like a mother to me; she was firm, it is true, but she never was harsh." Her tongue spoke what her heart felt, and the law of kindness ruled it. Hers was no mere impulse of good nature. People have not to watch for the humor to ask for the coveted favor. She was not roughspoken and uncertain, but was always kindly at heart. The law of kindness was obeyed by her as much as the law of gravitation by the moon. Calm and quiet, gentle in manner and firm in duty, she rejoices in the hopes of the future. Hers is no sluggish and torpid life, buried in the cold narrow grave of the present. A light burns in her heart and kindles in her eye, which throws its radiance over all the future—the remainder of her life, the life of her children and her children's children; and away beyond these, that endless life, whose joy and rest she believes in, she can balance against the cares and sorrows of the world of duty.

The bearing of such a mistress, like her raiment, befits her station. Her character is daily growing stronger, and habits of goodness daily becoming fixed; her influence is daily extending, and it is all for good. Her voice follows her husband along his path, and her smile remembered, lights up his way. He is a stronger man for her—a "two-handed man," as the far away islanders call the missionary; and any one who has eyes may know, as he does his business on the exchange, in the bank, or in the market, that he is a well-to-do, comfortable, and prosperous man, who has a prudent help-meet at home, a strength and honor to her husband, a queen in her own domain, but to him at once a faithful counsellor and a true ally.

And when the bloom is gone from her cheek, and the silver threads are all through her hair, her children rising up and feeling the value of her love and care, miss her when they go away to their own battle of life, and will always bless her dear name. And her happy husband as he hears of their prosperity, will say, "They owe it all to their mother." She was not without beauty—her step had grace, her voice, as it is still, was soft and sweet; but not these now, but love, and gentleness, and meek wisdom, and self denying energy, have been her womanly attractions, and have laid the foundations of her credit. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain—how often has it fled before the smallpox.

Describe a tree, and you may begin at the thousand fibres which suck life from the soil, and send it creeping upwards through a thousand channels, till it oozes out in buds and leaves, blossoms and blushing fruit; or you may begin with the glossy leaves and radiant blossoms, and go downward through spreading branches and stately stem, until you come to the root again. The latter was the plan of Lemuel's mother, as he outlines this tree of righteousness. The fear of the Lord in the heart is the root, and all its energy and tenderness, and all this patient doing of duty, all this gentle and unselfish love, all this quiet and seemingly home labor, all this occupying of the proper station in life, are the true and suitable development, the expression and manifestation of a true life kindled in the heart.

"Who can find a virtuous woman?" asks a Solomon. Who searches for her? Beauty, accomplishments, wealth, and connexions, these are sought and found; but such quiet and unpretending goodness as this, makes no sensation, creates no stir, attracts no common admirers. To be somebody in the gay world or in the religious world; to dazzle or to charm the public eye; or to overwhelm with splendor and magnificence, these are the objects of an ambition common enough to one side, and of common enough attraction to the other. Not thus would Lemuel's mother have her son settled; and not thus will any wise woman, mother or daughter, think of determining the future. "If women would learn," says an old wise bishop, "what they will be praised for, and if they will learn what they ought to do, let them read the last chapter of Proverbs." And Matthew Kenney says: "Thus is shut up this looking-glass for ladies, which they are desired to open and dress themselves by; and they do so their adorning shall be joined to praise, and honor, and high respect from all mankind."

The history of the world teaches no lesson with more impressive solemnity than this; that the only safe guide of a great intellect is a pure heart; that evil no sooner takes possession of the heart than folly commences the conquest of the mind.

A ship on the broad, boisterous and open ocean needeth no pilot. But it dare not venture alone on the placid bosom of a little river, lest it be wrecked by some hidden rock. Thus it is with life. 'Tis not in our open, exposed deeds, that we need the still voice of the silent monitor, but in the small, secret, every-day acts of our life.

Protestantism in Italy.

Bishop Andrews writes of affairs in Italy, and in our mission in particular. We are hearing encouraging things of Protestant work in general, in that land, and hence are the more pleased to know of our own part in the same.

A singular sort of interest, almost a poetic interest, attaches to the Waldensian Church. "The Church of the Reformation," says Dr. Wylie in his recent history, "was in the loins of the Waldensian Church ages before the birth of Luther; her first cradle was placed amid those terrors and sublimities, those ice-clad peaks and great bulwarks of rocks." Its history is written in blood and tears," says another. It has now a fully equipped college at Florence for training ministers, and has forty congregations and sixteen charges and fifty places regularly visited by its evangelists. One of the very ablest men aiding Dr. Vernon as a preacher, is brother Gay, of Rome, of whom Bishop Andrews says: "He is a Waldensian by birth and training, of good scholarship and vivacious to a degree, a fluent and attractive preacher." Bishop Andrews also says: "The Waldensians in some cities have quite a large resident population by which their congregations are made larger than those of other churches."

The Wesleyans have a good work in some thirty stations, conducted by converted Italians, many of them ex-priests, and not a few of them were of mark and of former high position. In the Province of Padua the whole population has been influenced. They purchased property in Rome in 1872, two men subscribing \$1,000 each for the purpose. A few weeks since they dedicated their fine Gothic Church, opposite the palace of the Vicar of Rome, lately occupied by the Secretary of the Inquisition. In some stations, Mr. Pauson says, they have had old-fashioned Methodist revivals, in which men and women by the scores have realized the converting grace of God. In one place the government has been so pleased with the Wesleyan school, that they have knighted the missionary, making him a "cavaliere."

We have had a good work among the soldiers, but the diminished appropriations from the missionary board made it necessary to reduce expenses in some way. Dr. Vernon says: (1) "This military Church was one of the most expensive of all. (2) The elements comprising it are constantly changing, and away from Rome once, scarcely added more to our Church than they would if it were sustained by others. (3) With the means necessary for its support, two stations could be supported in interesting towns and cities elsewhere, as permanent and stable parts of our general cause." It illustrates Protestant unity in a Romanist country that Dr. Vernon should add as he does: "As the Wesleyans could provide rooms for Capellini, the preacher having that work, and for his services too, in their large palace, and so greatly lessen the cost of the work, they finally preferred and agreed to take all into their hands rather than to see it pass to others—an arrangement which pleased all parties." "This action was unanimously approved by the annual meeting, and met Bishop Andrews' approval also. (I count it myself a most fortunate turn of affairs. We will replace it in a few weeks by a station in an interesting town, by a man we have already employed in a limited way."

Brescello was also ceded to the Wesleyans, being not far from one of their stations. We shall thus be able to diminish expenses and yet institute very probably soon two stations in their stead."

Dr. Vernon also says: "You will see a new name in connection with Naples. Eduardo Stasio, a young Neapolitan lawyer, converted, well proved and admitted on trial into the Germany and Switzerland Conference, or rather recommended for admission." He adds: "The work in the other stations is substantially in the same condition as when I last wrote you.—*North-ern Christian Advocate.*

How the Oyster Builds his Shell.

The body of an oyster is a poor, weak thing, apparently incapable of doing anything at all; yet what a marvellous house an oyster builds around his delicate frame. When the oyster is first born, he is a very simple, delicate dot, as it were, and yet he is born with his two shells upon him. For some unknown reason, he always fixes himself on his round shell, never on his flat shell; and being once fixed he begins to grow, but he only grows in summer. Inspect an oyster-shell closely, and it will be seen that it is marked with distinct lines. As the rings we observe in the section of the trunk of a tree denote years of growth, so does the marking of an oyster tell us how many years he has passed in his "bed" at the bottom of the sea.

Suppose an oyster was born June 16, 1870; he would go on growing up to the first line we see well marked; he would then stop for the winter. In the summer of 1871 he would more than double his size. In 1872 he would add to this house. In 1873 and 1874 he would again go on building, till he was dredged up in the middle of his work in 1875, when he would be five-and-a-half years old. The way in which an oyster builds his shell is a pretty sight. I have watched it frequently. The hard or fringe of an oyster is not only his breathing organ—i. e., his lungs—but his feeding organ, by which he conveys the food to his complicated mouth with his four lips.

When the warm, calm days of June come the oyster opens his shell, and by means of this fringe begins building an additional story to his house. This he does by depositing very fine particles of carbonate of lime, till they at last form a substance as thin as silver paper and exceedingly fragile; then he adds more and more till at last the new shell is at least as hard as the old shell. When oysters are growing in their shells they must be handled very carefully, as the new growth of shell will cut like broken glass; and a wound on a finger from an oyster shell is often very troublesome.—*Frank Buckland.*

DEATH stung himself to death, when he stung Christ.—*Romans.*

Scientific and Useful.

STEWED BEEFSTEAK.

Slice and fry four onions in butter; put them in a stew-pan; cut the steak in good sized pieces and fry; pepper and salt it; put in the pan and cover it with water, letting it simmer slowly for two hours.

NEW ENGLAND SPONGE CAKE.

Eight eggs, their weight in sugar, half their weight in flour, a lemon, rind grated, and add juice; beat the whites separate, and add last; line the pan with buttered paper, and bake in a pretty quick oven three-quarters of an hour.

CLEANING HAIR BRUSHES.

To cleanse a hair brush, take a basin of cold suds, add a spoonful of spirits of ammonia, put in the brush, and draw a coarse comb through the bristles as many times as necessary. A cloth, too may be used to help the cleansing. Finally, rinse in clear water.

NITRIC ACID FOR HOARSENESS.

Dr. W. Handell Griffiths says that a few drops of nitric acid in a glass of sweetened water, a couple of times daily, will be found an excellent remedy for the hoarseness of singers. One of the largest fees ever received by him—so he says—was for this prescription.—*Southern Medical Record.*

FRENCH CONSOMME.

Put into a pot of cold water a good-sized shank of beef; let it simmer six hours; an hour before taking off the fire add a few onions, carrots, turnips, and a little celery, with salt and pepper; strain through a fine sieve, and you have a clear consommé. It is elegant to serve with a poached egg in each soup plate.

INDIAN MUFFINS.

One quart of Indian meal, soaked, one quart of wheat flour, stirred in the meal when cool, one dessert spoonful of salt, one tablespoonful of melted butter, four tablespoonfuls of condensed eggs, and one half cake of compressed yeast, or two cents' worth of bakers' yeast, and milk sufficient to form a stiff batter. If for breakfast, set over night; for lunch, early in the morning.

CHOCOLATE CUSTARD.

Grate fine one-quarter pound chocolate; pour over it one pint of boiling milk, stirring until it is a smooth paste; take six tablespoonfuls condensed eggs and add one pint of warm milk, three tablespoonfuls powdered sugar, one teaspoonful vanilla extract, and add the chocolate to it; bake about ten minutes in cups, or until they are cooked; pile on the top of each, sweetened whipped cream or white of fresh eggs.

SOAP WITH SALT.

If grease, fat or rosin, which are commonly employed to make soap, are heated with an excess of common salt, ammonia, and water, a soda soap separates, leaving chloride of ammonia in liquor, together with the excess of ammonia and salt. This reaction is the consequence of the great solubility of ammonia soap in ammoniacal water and the insolubility of soda soap in water containing more than 1 per cent of salt. The ammonia at first unites with fatty acids; then the sodium in the salt exchanges places with the ammonia in the soap, forming, as we said, a soda soap and chloride of ammonia. It is essential that there be an excess of ammonia and salt present in order that the reaction take place. One hundred parts of grease requires fifteen to twenty parts of ammonia, twenty to thirty parts of salt 200 to 300 of water.

FAT MEAT.

A celebrated French instructor in the art of cookery says that fat meat is the most profitable. He adds: Many buy inferior meat on account of the waste of the fat that is always found in good meat. When the fat is wasted it is the fault of the cook, who does not know how to use it. The fat skimmed off the broth of boiled meat, and that coming from the trimming of raw or cold beef, is much superior to lard to fry with. Lard flies all over; beef fat never does when properly melted. To melt beef fat or suet, cut it in small pieces, and set on rather a slow fire, in an iron pan. As soon as it begins to melt, skim the melted part off with a ladle, and turn it into a stone jar, which you cover when cold. Put it away in a cool, dry, and dark place. A careful cook never needs lard for frying purposes, but always has more fat than is necessary out of boiling or roasting pieces.

NERVOUSNESS.

Nervousness is one of the prices we have to pay for civilization; the nervous savage is a being unheard of. For this disorder, which is partly of mental and partly of bodily nature, relief is sought in various ways, and among those we may place the employment of narcotics. The temporary relief afforded by these drugs is very apt to lead those who suffer from nervous sensations to put too much trust in and resort too frequently to them. In the long run they prove most destructive to health. Their use of late has become so frequent as to threaten society with a serious evil. It has been boldly contended that chloral is to be found in the work-boxes and baskets of nearly every lady in the west end of the metropolis, "to calm her nerves." No doubt this is exaggeration, but it is a fact that in New York chloral punch had become an institution scarcely a year after the introduction of chloral into medical practice, and now it turns out that Germany—"sober, orderly, paternally-ruled Germany"—has such a thing as morphia disease among its population. The symptoms are not unlike those of opium eating. Experience suggests that persons suffering from this disease should at once be deprived of the drug. Their willfulness and liability to relapse, however, are so great, that it is said that only about twenty-five per cent, have been seen to recover in a large series of cases.—*Cassell's Magazine.*

SEEK not so much to know thy enemies and friends; for where one man has fallen by foes, a hundred have been ruined by acquaintances.

Those that have some acquaintance with Christ cannot but covet more. Even those that have received the Holy Ghost, must see their need of the ministry of the word.