

that there is "not a single village, great or small, without one or more cases of leprosy, generally more." He puts the number of lepers in lower Burnah, a small country, at 2,500, counting only the more advanced cases; for every device is resorted to to hide the fact of leprosy in its early stages. He visited asylums in India where 1,425 lepers were sheltered; yet not more than 5,000 of these poor sufferers are thus cared for, out of an estimated population of 500,000 lepers. He notices the great increase of cases of leprosy among Europeans in India; one was a man forty-six years of age who had been discovered to have leprosy, nineteen years before, going about on his crutches trying to help care for other lepers.

The caste or condition of the people does not exclude them from chances of becoming lepers. An instance is given of an educated man well versed in Hindu literature, of the writer caste, thus affected. Mohammedans, Hindus, Europeans, all alike are subjects of it. These all associate together in leper communities, though they would have shunned each other from social prejudice beforehand. Thus in this parable the Jew lepers were nine and the one was a Samaritan, all going out together, though in health the Jews would have despised associating with the Samaritan. There are leper asylums, but not enough for one in a hundred of known lepers. In some places the government furnishes the ground for a place where they build a hut or two to sleep in at night, all who have legs and feet to crawl, going out through the day to beg. The children of lepers almost certainly exhibit leprosy sooner or later, unless taken away from their parents very young. The advanced cases present most pitiable conditions. One case is mentioned of a poor old man, without hands, almost blind, whose little granddaughter nine years of age clung to him, cooked for him, and served him most devotedly. The same sad condition is found wherever leprosy is found.

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

Verses 5 and 6. A young man who had become a doubter went to hear Phillips Brooks preach, and he heard these words: "If you who are doubting and have but a grain of faith, hold to that, cherish it tenderly, live up to its teaching, and you shall find it increasing a hundredfold." This young man thought: "My grain of faith is that there is a God, a Supreme Being. I will live pure and good because he must desire it, even though I have no faith in prayer or in the life beyond." He cherished his grain of faith, and soon was led to believe in prayer to help him live pure and good. Thus the faith grew, and now he is a missionary in China leading men and women to Christ in that dark

land. Here was faith "as a grain of mustard seed" which accomplished great things.

Verses 7-10. It is the shirk and not the whole-souled worker who feels that he has earned heaven. It was the great naval commander, Nelson, who said when he gave his life for his country, "Thank God, I have done my duty!" Without doubt some common sailor on that ship, doing only what he must, felt that his country ought to give him her best. When some one spoke to Hannah More of her great work for God she said: "Talk not so vainly. I utterly cast it from me, and fall low at the foot of the cross."

Verses 11-18. As the Dead Sea drinks in the river Jordan and is never the sweeter; and the ocean all other rivers and is never the fresher: so we are apt to receive daily mercies from God and remain unthankful. We are like fishermen's weels, wide at that end which lets in the fish, but narrow at the other end, so that they cannot get out again; greedily to get mercy, tenacious to hold it. Our hearts, in this case, are like the windows of the temple,—"wide inside" to let in mercies, but "narrow outward" to let forth praises.—*Reynolds.*

There was a child in a family who seemed to be a favorite. Her father was always planning some pleasure for her. A friend said to him: "Is she your best beloved?" "No," he answered, "I do not love her more than the others, but it is a delight to give to her because she is so appreciative. I never did her the smallest service that she did not say, 'Thank you, papa.' So does our heavenly Father love to give to the grateful heart.

Verses 19. "Thy faith." It is not the quantity of thy faith that shall save thee. A drop of water is as true water as the whole ocean; so a little faith is as true faith as the greatest. A spark of fire is as true fire as a great flame. So it is not the measure of thy faith that saves thee. It is the thing that it grasps that saves thee. The weak hand of a child that leads the spoon to the mouth will feel as well as the strong arm of a man; for it is not the hand that feeds thee, but the meat. So if you grasp Christ ever so weakly, you are safe.—*Adams.*

Before the Class.

BY REV. E. M. FERGUSON.

Our object to-day is to teach the class that the unlimited power of a perfect faith in God comes as the result of a process of spiritual growth.

Did you ever watch an engineer starting a train? What a force he exerts! Could you pull that throttle? Would they let you? Why not? The company knows two things about that engineer: he understands his duty, and he can be trusted to obey orders. So it gives him that power—for himself?

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