

THE CHILDREN'S PORTION.

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS FOR THE CHILDREN.

BY ALPHEUS.

No. II.

Have any of my young readers ever watched carefully the doings of a colony of ants? The other day I was much interested in a number of them excavating a hole in a sand hill. It was wonderful what heavy burdens in the shape of grains of sand they would carry, and how nimbly they would work, and deposit their load on the outside of a rapidly growing ridge around their little cave. Their burden would usually roll away to the bottom of the mound by its own weight, showing method and calculation in their work. Once in a while, however, a lazy fellow would deposit his load on the inside of the ridge, and hurrying away would find that it had reached the bottom on the inside as quickly as himself. So it had to start and do its work over again, or, if it was left another must pick it up and leave it at a safe distance. "How like human nature!" thought I. "Men and women, boys and girls alike. One with painstaking care will do every duty faithfully; another will do it in a slipshod way, and the work must be gone over again and again, multiplying the labour by carelessness." I learned this lesson by considering the little ant:—Every duty should be performed faithfully. We only add to our labour by half doing a task. "Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well." Study Prov. vi., 6.

I remember once reading of one who was delighted with the production of an eminent artist. He studied the picture in all the peculiar lights calculated to produce an effect. Its various shades were admired and extolled. Out of one of the dark corners a portion of the picture was stealthily cut in order that the admirer might possess a portion of the master's handiwork. Now, what did he have? Only a dark, meaningless blotch when separated from the picture. When in its proper place it stood out as a necessary part of the whole, and then there was meaning in every shade, and in every touch, but separated it was a blank.

Take God's word as a whole. You cannot fathom the full meaning of the writer of a Book of the Bible without examining his whole argument; then let the light of one Book illumine the other, and by so doing you will reach nearer to "the light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world."

My dear young readers try to make each of these two lessons govern your every day life; the first will be of immense value to you in the battle of life: your success depends upon it. By practising the second, you will attain to the largest share of the best of all knowledge, that of God Himself. It will fit you to enjoy in the best way His teaching in this world, and prepare you for His company for ever.

Vol 1, no 1, 48
1888