

packed meeting of Mr D. L. Moody's; and hundreds of angry faces were turned in the direction of the mother. But the evangelist, though compelled to stop, handled the incident with such good humor and kindness as to win the favor of a not altogether friendly community more than he could have done by any address, however eloquent. How much did Jesus gain by the way in which He dealt with this interruption! He captured the heart of childhood, which has ever since been devoted to Him; and He captured the heart of motherhood as well. In every century since, the proportion of children among His disciples has been a large one; and from among those who have loved Him in their childhood have come the majority of those who have confessed and served Him in manhood and womanhood. Well may children and women love Christ for this saying; because it has been fighting their battle in all the centuries and winning for them attention and veneration. Jesus took out of the hands of the apostles the weapon with which they had attacked the children and turned it against themselves, convicting them of being of a different spirit from himself. So far from His cause having nothing to do with the children, it belonged to them; and mature men and women were fit for it only in so far as they still remained children—for of such is the kingdom of heaven." This was an old lesson, which the disciples had been impressively taught before (18:3); but now it was repeated in circumstances not likely to allow it to be forgotten.

A Lesson of Contentment.—Perhaps there is no character in the Gospels about whom such divergence of opinion has taken place among expositors as the hero of the second incident. Some have condemned him with great severity as a bristling talker, with a very good opinion of himself but a very inadequate conception of the law of God. Jesus, it is thought by such, was not really answering his question when He told him to keep the commandments, or even when He ordered him to sell his possessions, but only seeking for a vulnerable place in his conscience; and they point to the sharp way in which He caught him up for addressing Him as "good," or asked about "the good," as the Revised Version makes him do in Matthew; as if he had said, "Why askest thou about the good?" or "Why callest thou me good? God is the only good; and, therefore, his laws are the way of life." On the other hand, some have looked on this youngman as the type of an anxious inquirer. His question, these say, was almost identical with the question, "What must I do to be saved?" and, although his sense of the law was imperfect, he was unsatisfied with his spiritual condition and asked, "What lack I yet?" They point with triumph to the fact that Jesus "loved" him; and some of them have gone so far as to express the hope that, after consideration, he may have returned to take up the responsibilities of discipleship. This, however, is going too far; for the very point of the lesson drawn by Jesus from the incident lies in the fact that one in so many respects eligible, should nevertheless have been kept back by his great possessions. When this reflection startled the disciples, he reiterated it in the strongest terms. By the alteration of a single letter in the Greek, "camel" would become "cable"; or, if camel be retained, the eye of a needle may mean the little side-gate in a town-wall, instead of the great gate through which the camels naturally go. But the proverb does not require such softening; and the more hyperbolic form is more in the manner of Jesus. Wonder has been expressed at the consternation with which the disciples, being poor men, received a saying which seemed to exclude the rich from the kingdom; but, though poor at the time, they were expecting soon to be rich.

Aberdeen, Scotland.

Matthew 19:1-2, 13-26.

Golden Text: Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven.

PRAYER.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that we do know that Thou art good, and plenteous in mercy, and ready to hear all that call upon Thee. Give ear unto our prayer, O Lord; grant that it may be such as Thou canst give ear to and answer. Breathe into our hearts desires after the highest good, and weaken in us all inclinations or longings for lesser and lower things. We bless Thee for fellowship with Thyself, and that we can draw near to Thee, not only to petition, but to behold and to receive. And we pray Thee to help us now, not only to bring to Thee our need, but that our minds and hearts may be filled and blessed by the thoughts which are only too unfamiliar to us of Thyself in all Thy gracious greatness, in all Thy strong sweetness and sufficiency. Amen.

MY FEEBLE LIFE.

I have no wit, no words, no tears;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numbed too much for hopes or fears;
Look right, look left, I dwell alone;
I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief
No everlasting hills I see;
My life is in the falling leaf:
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk;
Truly, my life is void and brief,
And tedious in the barren dusk;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud nor greenness can I see;
Yet rise it shall—the sap of spring;
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul,
Or cordial in the searching cold.
Cast in the fire the perished thing,
Melt and remold it, till it be
A royal cup for Him, my King;
O Jesus, drink of me.

—Christina G. Rossetti.

THE PEACE OF GOD.

As the apostle meant it, there is a gracious exuberance in his assurance to the Philippians that the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, should keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Phil. 4. 7). This peace is known truly as an experience. As a theory it does not satisfy the mind or the heart; but whoso hath felt it catches the spirit of the apostle's exhortation and rejoices in the conviction that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This love and this peace are inseparable: what God hath thus joined together cannot be put asunder in any soul.—O. P. Fitzgerald.

WHAT GRETA COULD DO.

Greta was only six years old and very small for her age. When she came into the Sunday school she wished very much to do something for Jesus. "Only I'm so little," she sighed, "and there isn't anything, not a single thing I can do." "Tut!" said grandfather, who had overheard. "Who opens my paper and finds my spectacles and brings my book from the library table?"

"And who puts the ribbon in my cap and gives puss her saucer of milk and teaches her to play so nicely with a string?" added grandmother.

"Who is the little girl that carries my slippers and rolls my chair up nearer the fire?" asked father, his eyes twinkling.

"I know somebody who can do errands as nicely as anyone," said mother. Then Sister Belle told what she knew, and Greta's eyes beamed with delight.

"Every little task that we do willingly makes the Lord Jesus glad in heaven," finished grandfather, patting Greta's brown curls.

CHRIST OUR FRIEND.*

By Robert E. Speer.

Friendship is the unselfish will to serve. A friend is one who has this will. No one ever was such a friend as Christ. Paul tells us in the first verses of the second chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians how far-reaching Christ's friendship was. There was no sacrifice too great for it. He laid aside His kingship. In some wonderful way He emptied himself of His rights in God, that He might come down to them and serve them. He was the greatest friend humanity ever had. He did not only feel for it; He worked and died for it.

Friendship stops at nothing but falsehood. A friend is one who will meet and bear anything for others. Christ was such a friend. He entered humanity. It must have been as a charnel-house to His pure soul. It was full of hate and lust and sin. All about him, as He went to and fro on earth, He saw what was repellant and shameful. Men showed Him their worst. What He saw was enough to have convinced any one else that humanity was not worth saving. But it did not convince Him. He was a friend, and therefore He loved the more He saw the need of love.

Friendship sees the good that does not exist, but that love can create. A friend is one who believes and whose belief makes the impossible possible. "This was Christ," Simon[†] He said, "Thou art. Thou shalt be." He saw in the fickle fisherman the possibility of the steadfast Apostle. Simon did not see it. I was not there. But Christ saw it, it came to produce it. Again and again His love detected non-existent beauties and created them. Love believeth all things. Christ's love believes in us when we are utterly unworthy and unreliable, and that is our first ray of hope. We believe that He can do anything, and He believes that He can do something with us. Such a friend is the maker of a new character in us.

Friendship never breaks or dies. "He was my friend once, but not now," we say of this or that one. So? Never in the world. If He ever was, He is.

The friendship of Christ was to the end and the uttermost. It is so still. We may have grieved Him much and often. We surely have. But that has not made Him less a friend. He is the still just where He was. His is the love that will not let us go. It is so because His love is not make-believe or imitation, but love. No love decays. All the waters cannot quench it. It is stronger than all deaths.

How do we treat such a friendship as this? As we ought, or as we treat no other friend?

"Lord, make me coy and tender to offend. In friendship first, I think, if that agree."

Which I intend,
Unto my friend's intent and end,
I would not use a friend as I use Thee.

"If any touch my friend or his good name, It is my honor and my love to free
His blasted fame

From the least spot or thought of blame,
I could not use a friend as I use Thee.

"When that my friend pretendeth to a place,
I quit my interest and leave it free;

But when thy grace
Sues for my heart I thee displace;
Nor would I use a friend as I use Thee."

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

M.—True friendship (Deut. 13:6; Prov. 17:17; 18:24).

T.—Two friends (1 Sam. 18:1-5; Prov. 27:9, 19).

W.—The sinner's Friend (Luke 7:31-43).

T.—A Friend in need (John 11:1-3, 36-44).

F.—A sympathetic Friend (Heb. 2:14-18; 4:14-16).

S.—A Friend at court (Zech. 3:1-7).

*Y. P. Topic Sunday, August 7, 1910.
Christ our Friend. John 15:9-16.
(Consecration Meeting.)