

Family Reading.

IS GOD PARTICULAR.

"Then Elijah said, go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, empty vessels, not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and thy sons, and shall pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full," (2 Kings iv. 3-4)

Some one will say. "Why all this bother about shutting the door, and gathering vessels, and pouring out oil; could he not have helped the woman without all this detail." But so it was: and if she had failed in aught she would have lost the blessing. I remind you of Israel's first king. Saul was told to go and slay the Amalekites; and he returned saying he had fulfilled God's command. "What mean the bleating of those sheep and the lowing of those oxen in mine ears?" "Oh," said Saul, "I forgot for the moment; yes, to be sure, I did spare a few sheep and oxen, but it was for the purpose of sacrificing to the Lord." This was an obliviousness with a consequence; he lost the kingdom through it. Just so, my friend, when you begin to question what God commands,—“What is the use of this appointment?” “Where is the good of that injunction?” you are lost.—*Dr. Parker.*

HOW POSTAGE STAMPS ARE MADE.

In printing, steel plates are used, on which two hundred stamps are engraved. Two men are kept hard at work covering them with coloured inks and passing them to a man and a girl who are equally busy printing them with large rolling hand-presses. Three of these little squads are employed all the time. After the small sheets of paper upon which the two hundred stamps are engraved have dried enough, they are sent into another room and gummed. The gum used for this purpose is a peculiar composition, made of the powder of dried potatoes and other vegetables, mixed with water. After having been again dried, this time on the little racks which are fanned by steam power, for about an hour, they are put in between sheets of paste-board and pressed in hydraulic presses capable of applying a weight of two thousand tons. The next thing is to cut the sheet in half: each sheet, of course, when cut, contains a hundred stamps. This is done by a girl, with a large pair of shears, cutting by hand being preferred to that of machinery, which method would destroy too many stamps. They are then passed to two other squads, who perforate the paper between the stamps. Next, they are pressed once more, and then packed and labelled and stowed away for despatching to fulfill orders. If a single stamp is torn or in any way mutilated, the whole sheet of one hundred stamps is burned. Five hundred thousand are burned every week from this cause. For the past twenty years, not a single sheet has been lost, such care has been taken in counting them. During the process of manufacturing, the sheets are counted eleven times.

CHURCH LIFE.

Let no one imagine that he can do nothing to benefit his fellow-men, because his means are scanty, or the sphere of his influence limited. Responsibility ceases when means are exhausted, and duty never calls us beyond our appropriate spheres; but, up to the extent of our

means, responsibility rests solemnly upon us, and within our respective spheres duty is imperative and uncompromising in its claims. The servant to whom but one talent was given was summoned to activity and effort not less than he to whom ten were entrusted. It is not numbers, it is not wealth, it is not splendid and imposing rites as many are disposed to imagine, that clothe a people with their mightiest influence for good. A church and congregation may be small, and destitute alike of wealth and all the distinctions of worldly greatness; but if they are characterized by unbending adherence to the principles they avow—by consistency of life—and by earnestness in the employment of such means as they can command for the diffusion of the Gospel and the happiness of their fellow-men—they will shed around them an influence that will be irresistible, subduing prejudice and kindling admiration. There may be no voice heard in the streets, nothing to draw the wonderful observation of the multitude; but their very silence and unobtrusiveness will constitute a part of their power. It will surround them as an atmosphere, which their fellow-men will breathe; and, like the balmy influence of spring stealing gently over the face of creation and quickening death into life, it will transform and renew—like the perfume of ointment that is poured forth, it will diffuse itself around, gliding noiselessly over all barriers and drawing the gratified attention of all whom it reaches—or, like the light of the sun, it will stream forth in silent beauty, entering the cottage, and the mansion alike, commanding the admiration of beholders, and leading wanderers to God and to heaven.

THE CATHEDRAL SERVICE.

One of a party of six or seven who sat and knelt together in Chester Cathedral, the Sunday after reaching England, remarked, on coming out from evening service, that “This cathedral service would, of itself, amply repay one for the journey here and back,” and every one of the party said “Amen.” Of every real sanctuary consecrated by the prayers and communions of pious people, no matter how rude or humble it may be, the devout soul may say; “How lovely are thy dwellings, O Lord God of Hosts.” The plainest meeting-house shines in a light of transfiguration to the spiritual eye. But, “Oh, how lovely” these stately minsters, with their noble ritual and historic associations, and what treasures of memory the stranger stores up from hours spent in the worship at Westminster, Chester, Canterbury, Ely, York, Salisbury and Wells! Can he ever forget the genial, homely, heart-felt talk of Kingsley, or the radiance of that statuesque face of Stanley, or the manifold marvels of great organs reverberating in the high resonant spaces, of the noble qualities of various voices chiming together, and swelling out in angelic solos, or the holy words of Psalm and Creed, and Prayer and Litany, echoed to his heart from walls and monuments that for ages have been growing mellow with such music?—*Hart Courant.*

A RESTING-PLACE.

The harvest lesson which old age has to learn, is to be set aside as of no further use; and that not only by strangers but by those who once looked up to them for advice, and sought their companionship. Now, their taste is old, their opinions are with the past. The gravity which age and sorrow have produced is counted as gloom, and they are soon taught

that the more they keep to themselves the better, and this is perhaps well; in their loneliness they draw near to God; shut out from the society they loved, they seek converse with Jesus, and find sweeter enjoyment than the world could afford.

Life's closing hours should be distinguished by serenity and repose. Let not the aged harass and perplex themselves with occupations which were once proper and necessary. “Their strength is to sit still.” Old age is the resting place in the journey of life; and the feverish heat of noontide is exchanged for the refreshing coolness of twilight.

Prayer is the service to which the aged may be devoted; and there is no service which can be performed by mortals so effectual. It is not in vain for you to live, while you have access to a throne of grace.

“At evening time it shall be light.” Zech. 14: 7.

“Thy sun shall no more go down.” Isa. 60: 20.

HINTS TO HOUSEKEEPERS.

TO FRY FISH OR CUTLETS ECONOMICALLY.—Dry your fish thoroughly with a cloth, then roll it in flour; next make a batter of flour and water, dip your fish in on both sides, dredge over some fine raspings—which you can procure from your baker; fry quickly in boiling lard or oil.

STEAK-PIE OR PUDDING.—In making, sprinkle about half a teaspoonful of moist sugar over the steak along with the pepper and salt; it not only improves the flavor, but makes the meat very tender.

To make white of eggs beat quickly, put in a pinch of salt.

Fish may be scaled much easier by dipping into boiling water about a minute.

Fish may as well be scaled, if desired, before packing down in salt, though in that case do not scald them.

Salt fish are quickest and best freshened by soaking in sour milk.

Milk which is turned or changed may be sweetened and rendered fit for use by stirring in a little soda.

Salt will curdle new milk; hence in preparing milk porridge, gravies, etc., the salt should not be added until the dish is prepared.

Fresh meat, after beginning to sour, will sweeten if placed out of doors in the cool air over night.

Clear boiling water will remove tea stains and many fruit stains. Pour the water through the stain, and thus prevent the stain spreading over the fabric.

Ripe tomatoes will remove ink and other stains from white cloth and the hands.

A teaspoonful of turpentine boiled with your white clothes will aid the whitening process.

Boiled starch is much improved by the addition of a little sperm or a little salt, or both, or a little gum arabic dissolved.

Beeswax and salt will make your rusty flat-irons as clean and smooth as glass. Tie a lump of wax in a rag and keep it for that purpose. When the irons are hot, rub them first with a wax rag, then scour with a paper or cloth sprinkled with salt.