

Burdens.

We all must bear them. Vain regret,
Love's longing for some dear, lost face,
Which even sleep cannot forget,
Nor yet the coming years replace;
The disappointment all must know,
When hope's mirage proves but a dream,
The finding Marah's waters flow
Where tempting wayside fountains gleam.

We all must bear them. Some may smile,
And hide their burden in a song;
And others may be silent while
They learn to suffer and grow strong;
We find no balm in Gilead's vale,
No recompense for pain or loss,
And oft our weary efforts fail
To lift the pressure of the cross.

We all must bear them. Why despair?
The wine-press is not trod alone;
The promise is that He will care
As doth a father for his own.
Our burdens may become our wings,
For underneath His arms will be;
And through our sighing sweetly rings,
"Sufficient is My grace for thee."

Some Aspects of Life Among Equals.

While the compassionate view of man, as compared with the ordinary view of him in his health and strength as a flourishing member of this world, is characterized by a beauty of its own, it has at the same time the defect of being a protected state of mind, a state in which the mind is for the moment relieved of all its tendencies to irritation and to asperity, and thrown into a perfect quiet by an external event which does everything for it without an effort of its own. The condescending life is sheltered from trials which very sharply beset the field of equals. The poor and dependent, the mourner, the despondent, the cast down—these exercise our active benevolence, but do not they unconsciously flatter us while they appeal to it? In the life of equals a man enters upon a vast field of relations in which his humility and his generosity pass through an ordeal of special and peculiar severity—severity far greater than that which attaches to any trial of them in the relationship to inferiors, for the simple reason that a man is in competition with his equals, and he is not in competition with his inferiors. To a superficial person it might appear that the great act of humility was condescension, and that therefore the condescending life was necessarily a more humble one than the life with equals. But this is not the true view of the case. The hardest trial of humility must be not towards a person to whom you are superior and who acknowledges that superiority, but towards a person with whom you are on equal footing of competition.

The Secret of Happiness.

One of my neighbours in town and church is an old lady whose dress is of no period of fashion. I wonder sometimes if for forty years the cost of it has exceeded as many dollars. Her step is as light as a girl's, her manner bright and cheery, and over her otherwise homely face spreads the glow of a heart at peace with God. Her youth was spent in a struggle for daily bread, and scarcely was this pressure removed before she was called upon to mourn the loss of first one and then another loved member of her family, until she had outlived every relative. Her home is plain, almost bare of the luxuries considered as indispensable to comfort, yet there is no one from whom I so much enjoy a visit as this solitary woman, ever so warm in greeting, so cheerfully companionable.

"There is so much heartsease about you," I once said to her, "that it refreshes me to meet you. Why, you are the youngest and happiest person I have seen to-day."

"Oh, yes," she said smilingly. "I have stopped growing old, for each day brings me nearer the possession of endless youth in my better home. And how can I be sad in this beautiful world, where my heavenly Father has placed me?"

"Still, you have had your full share of sorrows."

"Yes, I have surely passed through the valley of Baca, but, by the grace of God, I have been able to make it a well. But, my friend," she continued, "I have been happy only since I ceased to strain after what was beyond my reach, and resolved no longer to hug to my bosom my griefs and disappointments, but take them all to God, and leave them with Him, content to be what He wishes, and only that."

Influence More Effective than Effort.

Personal influence is, on the whole, more effective than personal effort. Influence is pervasive rather than assertive. It proceeds from one's character, instead of from one's deliberate endeavor; from what one is, instead of from what one strives to seem. Influence flows in upon others unconsciously, and does not excite opposition or provoke resistance like aggressive effort. Its potency is that of a strong gentleness, in the display of a wise goodness, more effective than loud speech or vehement action. It is like the quiet, calm flow of oil on the tempest-tossed sea, soothing into rest and peace what the winds and the waves have roused into lashing turbulence. Earnest endeavor in the right direction is the best that most well-meaning men can do for a good cause; but the steady influence of a fine character is yet better, when one is capable of it.

Summing Up.

We are called now to look back over the work of the year and to sum up its results. So far as this paper is concerned, the year has been a pleasant one. It has been a great joy to put into the hands of so many people the thoughts and suggestions which from week to week we have been able to fix in type. If our readers have enjoyed what we have given them as much as we have enjoyed its preparation, we are quite satisfied.

Still we ought to realize that it is not merely our enjoyments that we ought to be considering during these last days of the year. The questions we ought rather to ask are: What practical results have been won during the year? Have we taken the suggestions we have received and translated them into life? Are we any better and nobler to-day than we were when the year began? Have we made any real progress in higher things?

Such questions as these are probably not pleasant. But we should not fear to ask them honestly and earnestly. Life is passing. Another year has gone. Not to take account of stock as we pause a moment before entering a new year, is cowardly as well as foolish. Sum up your life for the year, young people. If the balance is on the right side, rejoice; if on the wrong side, get down on your knees and ask God's forgiveness and help.

The Possibilities of Heaven.

Activity, occupation, is the great secret of contented living. I cannot imagine who first conceived the idea of heaven as a place in which to stand still; some poor, timid soul, probably, to whom mere rest was the highest ideal of bliss. But the glowing descriptions of the Bible never convey any such idea; there every word seems to quiver with an intensity of life and glory. I never forget that Christ is the centre and source, the life and glory, of all; and that to be without one spot or stain of sin, to be pure as He is pure, holy as He is holy, is the crowning joy and glory of heaven. I long for intellectual expansion, but still more do I yearn for the spiritual unfolding into Christ's own image of infinite purity and love, which I hope for there.

Our spiritual nature is our highest, and its perfection far more to be coveted than that of the merely intellectual; but I believe it is the union and harmony of the two which constitutes the fullest perfection in even that higher life.

We are made both rational and spiritual beings, with capacities for indefinite expansion in both lives—in all lives. Whatever pursuit or taste is elevating and pure, a blessing to ourselves and others, we cannot doubt will be enlarged and perfected there. And O to what wonderful and glorious height a whole eternity will bring us! If

the attainments of some even here seem marvelous, what shall we behold there?

It is this wonderful capacity for development which makes a human soul worth so much. When a man with all these glorious possibilities before him persists in yielding to his lower propensities, and degrading himself by self-indulgence and sin, he ruins not only what he is, but what he might be in endless ages hence. His soul clogged, imbruted, narrowed down to low aims, cannot rise to a glorious immortality; he has kept himself away from it. If there were no revelation of future evil to such a soul, we should see how inevitable its ruin is.

Hints to Housekeepers.

HAM AND EGG SANDWICHES.—Chop one cupful of cold boiled ham very fine, put three fresh eggs into boiling water and let them simmer one-half hour, then place them in cold water to remove the shells easily; chop the eggs fine, add to the ham; season with a saltspoonful of dry mustard and one-half that quantity of cayenne pepper. Slice bread a day old very thin, cut in rounds with biscuit cutter, spread thinly with butter, then with the ham and egg mixture, cover with another buttered round. The crusts and pieces of bread should be dried in a slow oven and rolled to be used in croquettes, etc.

BIRTHDAY CAKE.—The following recipe will tell how to make a nice birthday cake for a child: Cream together one cup of butter and three cups of sugar; the yolks of four eggs beaten thoroughly with one cup of sweet milk; then add slowly four cups of finely sifted flour, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder, a little spice, a cupful of seeded raisins, and lastly, the well-beaten whites of four eggs. Put into a rather shallow cake tin and bake in not too hot an oven. Just before putting in the oven, drop in the ring, thimble, and the six-pence.

DUTCH PUDDING.—Boil a piece of the neck of the beef until perfectly tender, and the bones come out easily. Take it up on a tray, let it cool, then pick in pieces. Skim the grease off the liquor, and pour the latter into another vessel; after cleaning the kettle return the meat and liquor; when it boils thicken with sifted meal until it is like mush. Cook till well done, stirring constantly to prevent scorching. Season with salt, pepper and sage. Turn out in pans or crocks, and when cold slice and fry brown like sausage. This is fine and very convenient for breakfast.

COCOANUT PUDDING.—Cream one cupful of sugar with the yolks of six eggs, and stir in one-half pound of grated cocoanut (fresh grated is better than the desiccated), one pint of rich milk, and one-half cupful of stale sponge cake crumbs, two teaspoonfuls of vanilla, and the whites of three eggs well frothed. Put in the oven and bake for forty minutes. Add to the top of the pudding a meringue made of the whites of the other three eggs, beaten stiff, into which has been stirred one-half cupful of powdered sugar. Let this brown slightly then serve.

CAULIFLOWER, WITH DRESSING.—Boil one nice cauliflower for one hour in a graniteware or porcelain-lined kettle. Put on in cold salted water, with the stem up. When done drain and place on a hot platter. Pour over it the following dressing: Rub together a tablespoonful of butter and flour to a smooth paste, add gradually a cup and a half of cold water. Stir over the fire until quite smooth and thick, seasoning with pepper and salt, and just before serving add the well-beaten yolk of an egg mixed with a tablespoonful of water to prevent curdling. Serve hot.

It is sometimes useful to know that a teaspoonful of cornstarch is equal to one egg, and may be substituted in case of a scarcity of eggs for part of the eggs in custards or other dishes where milk and eggs are called for.

BAKED POTATOES CREAMED.—Bake eight good sized potatoes one-half hour in a hot oven; Scoop out the inside; beat at once, with one-half cup of hot milk, a tablespoonful of salt. Heap on a plate, touch lightly with yolk of an egg, brown in quick oven and serve.