

in the world! Thy strength was the omnipotence of Jesus, who overcame the world, conquered death and the grave, ascended up on high, and obtained all power in heaven and earth, for the weakest, youngest, and poorest of His people!

"Strong in Him!" I entered that home wearied in body and anxious in mind, but I gained strength and comfort from the lips of that weak and distressed child who was the stronger of the two. Often, I can say with truth, have his words come to me amidst the difficulties and struggles of life, and his quiet blue eyes have looked at me and cheered me, like the flowers seen by the fainting traveller in the desert, and the child has helped me to find peace where he found it, and to be "strong in Him."

Oh! could we but learn that lesson, we would be strong indeed!—fit for any duty, fit trial between us and glory. To be strong in Him has been the secret of all the strength, which has ever been enjoyed by God's people since the world began. They have all heard and known that "strength belongeth unto the Lord."

Moses was strong when he vanquished the Egyptians; but, said he, "*The Lord is my strength and my song.*" David was strong when he was "delivered out of the hands of all his enemies," but he confessed, "*God is my strength and power.*" The prophets were men of strength and power, and feared not the face of man. But what said Isaiah?—"The Lord Jehovah is my strength." What said Jeremiah?—"O Lord, my strength, my refuge, my fortress in the day of affliction!" What said Habakkuk?—"The Lord God is my strength!" The apostles were men of strength and power, what said they?

"I can do all things," says Paul—how? "*through Christ that strengtheneth me!*" Reader! seek to understand what it is to be strong in God. Never forget that with Him "is everlasting strength," that "strength belongeth unto God." Remember, too, that this strength is for all who will avail themselves of it. "The God of Israel is He that giveth strength and power." To each man He says, "Let him take hold of my strength," "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might," and promises that "they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," and "go on from strength to strength."

Do not complain of, but feel your weakness; "for when you are weak then are you strong. We become strong as giants when we trust God as little children, and we become weak as infants when we trust ourselves as if we were giants; for "God perfects His strength in our weakness." And when we fall, it may always be said of us "This is the man who made not the Lord his strength."

Little James died the night I saw him. "Strong in Him," he was conducted in perfect peace through the valley and shadow of death. "Strong in Him," he passed from the pained body, the poor home, the kind parents, to his Father's home, in heaven, where "there shall be no more pain." And there he is, and there he shall ever be, in joy and glory, because with the saints and angels he is "strong in Him forever."

Thanks for God's teaching from the meek and lowly ones! Verily "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength!"

the Elements of Family Happiness.

"BENIGN, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like

the precious ointment that ran down unto the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down unto the skirts of his garment." We have in these words high authority for the value of family happiness. May they not also imply something of its rarity?

That Christianity has greatly bettered our domestic condition, is too commonly admitted to require discussion. The individual Christianity of each member of a family must go farther still, to ensure the happiness of the whole; but that it does not always, nor perfectly ensure it, experience compels us to allow. It is a sad fact, but none the less a fact, that religious people do not always get on together very smoothly. The truth is, while there can be no solid happiness, no sincere confidence, without a firm basis of good principle and good intentions, it is very possible for people with the very best intentions to make each other very uncomfortable; and the well-being of our social existence depends less on the principles, than on the habits of our friends. We often offend others rather by our foibles than by our faults. This may apply also to affection. It is a common idea, that if we really love each other, all must go well. Now, we do not seek to draw affection from her corner seat by the hearth. Where love is not, happiness must be wanting. We may find there all the polished refinement of high breeding—all the courteous amenities of social intercourse; but no true happiness. Still, love is not enough. Many families, whose members love each other very tenderly, seldom get through the day without a quarrel. We must have yet other, if humbler ingredients in the cup of family happiness.

Good temper is one of the first. What endless troubles spring from temper. The jealous temper, the selfish temper, the unreasonable, peevish, sullen or self-sufficient temper: how many heads this hydra has—we had almost said, that a bad temper causes more unhappiness than a bad heart. And what a blessing even one good temper is in a house! One who is always ready to do what she is asked or bidden, at the time and in the way required; one whose dignity is not always prepared to resent neglect to claims of its own imagining; one whom you can tell of your pleasures without the fear of jealous detraction, or of your weaknesses, without the dread of being afterwards taunted with them; one who always leaves you hopeful and cheery. When we see how much sunshine is brought into a house by one such bright unselfish temper, we may form some idea of what happiness there would be in families if all took heed to their tempers.

As it is not so, we would recommend mutual forbearance. If there were less vapouring after sympathy for ourselves, and more endeavour to sympathize with others, we should be happier. If their habits and tastes are not to our liking, we may conclude that ours do not exactly suit their liking. Let us make the best of the matter as it stands. Above all, let us leave none of each other's opinions alone. We shall never make every one think in all things as we do: the fine edge of happiness, perhaps even of affection, may be destroyed in constant discussions which at least look like disputes.

We would say, in passing, that courtesy is too little regarded in the home circle. Loving a friend "better than any one in the world," is no good reason for speaking very impertinent truths to him, or taking very impertinent liberties with him.

Good sense, discretion, tact, is the best name for that of which we would speak next—that quality by which we know exactly what it is

best to say and do at the present moment, the genius of every day life. Not that we would exclude any form of talent. We are not of those who think clever people must be disagreeable, or who would confine happiness within the bounds of prosy mediocrity. Far from it: so that affection fills, good sense mixes, good temper sweetens, and religion blesses the cup, we rejoice to see it coloured by imagination, and sparkling with wit. The more intelligence, learning, and accomplishments, the better, if these contribute, in the first place, to the sum of family enjoyment.

We would mention one thing more: order. If a family would be happy, every member must have a distinct place, and must keep it. There must be no jostling aside, no disregard of due authority, and, above all, the egotistical vanity must be suppressed which is so subversive of all order and happiness by exaggerating the claims of self and overlooking those of others. Punctuality comes under this head. It sounds a trifle, but when one half of a family always make the other half wait for everything; when the younger members lounge down to breakfast after prayers, or drop in to dinner when the grace is said—even should this habit not be the source of perpetual remonstrance, on the one hand, and disobedience, not to say impertinence, on the other, it must greatly tend to destroy the spirit of order, which is one element of unity and happiness.

Let us not leave the subject with a sigh of despondency, with a secret feeling, that there is no family happiness. Thank God! it is not so. We have many bright glimpses of it here, though here we enjoy it not in perfection. And let us bear in mind, that our family relationships are only hallowed and happy in so far as they shadow forth, however faintly, the relationships and joys of a higher state; and that we shall then know what family happiness really is, when, crowned by the Spirit of love and peace, as co-heirs with our Elder Brother, we take our place in the glorified family of our Father in heaven. C. M.

CHURCH AT HOME.

Duty of British Christians.

SOME of the remarks recently made on the colonies and on missions by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, are well worthy of being perused. Although they are in part applicable only to the Church of England, there is much that is of interest to all who are pledged to promote the great cause of Christianity, and the success of Christian missions.

Speaking of the duty of the missionary society for which he is pleading, and of the duty of British Christians generally in reference to other countries, he says:—

"The resolution which has been placed in my hands says, that the 'growth and organisation of the colonial church, and the efforts which it is making for the support of its own ministers and institutions, are an encouragement to this society to persevere in its own special work of following the British emigrants and settlers with the ministrations and ordinances of religion. That is the special work of the society. Let us consider for a few minutes before I cease to trouble you further—Let us consider what that especial work means, and what claims it constitutes upon us as members of the British nation and of the British Church. Now, this great work of emigration, what is it? It is, at any rate, one of the most marked characteristics of the nineteenth century. It