

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

PRAY FOR ME.

BY ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

I beg of you—I beg of you, my brothers,
For my need is very sore;
Not for gold and not for silver do I ask you,
But for something even more,
From the depths of your hearts' pity let it be—
Pray for me.

I beg of you whose robes of radiant whiteness
Have been kept without a stain—
Of you, who, stung to death by serpent pleasure,
Found the healing angel, pain;
Whether holy or forgiven you may be—
Pray for me.

I beg of you, calm souls, whose wondering pity
Looks at paths you never trod,
I beg of you who suffer—for all sorrow
Must be very near to God;
And my need is even greater than you see—
Pray for me.

I beg of you, O children—for He loves you,
And he loves your prayers the best;
Fold your little hands together, and ask Jesus,
That the weary may have rest;
That a bird caught in a net may be set free—
Pray for me.

I beg of you—I beg of you, my brothers,
For an alms this very day;
I am standing on your door-step as a beggar
Who will not be turned away;
And the charity you give my soul shall be—
Pray for me.

THE GIRLS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

THE Anniversary Service of the Girls' Friendly Society was held on Thursday, 15th June, at 11.30 a. m., in St. Paul's Cathedral. When the *Te Deum* had been sung the Ante-communion Office, was read, followed by the hymn, 'The King of Love my Shepherd is,' after which the sermon was preached by the Bishop of Bedford, from 2 Cor. i. 6: 'Whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.'

The Bishop said; 'The wholesome lesson of affliction is a familiar thought to us all: "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." When suffering has come, when your lives have been darkened by sorrow, or when you have smarted under a bitter disappointment, you, dear sisters and associates, have said, as all who love God and follow Jesus Christ have said at such times, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." You have seen what God could do for yourselves, and that He of very faithfulness has caused you to be troubled. So, too, when He has poured on you His consolations, when the trials have been removed, or when He has said to you, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and strengthened you to bear them, you have felt that He was very gracious. You have thanked Him and taken courage. It is much to be able to see in all God's dealings with us the Father's hand of love and wisdom.'

'Have you ever thought of God's purpose, that His dealings should pass through you to others? They are meant to be not for you alone, but for the consolation and salvation of others too. First I know, for your own blessed consolation and salvation. You are not mere channels; the stream will first water your own garden, but it will flow on to water the gardens of others. Think for a moment of the Apostle's two examples of this. First, afflictions. Thou, my sister, hast suffered; for thy own soul's health it is well. It was said of the Captain of our Salvation that He was 'made perfect through suffering,' and shall the soldier seek a different way of perfection? But was the trial to be well for thyself alone? No! It was

God's gifts through thee to others. It did not belong only to thee, but partly to them. So it was with Jesus Christ. He was a man of sorrows that He might become the fountain of boundless sympathy with all the sufferings of man; that his whole human heart might beat in response to all human woe. What fruit, my sister, has thy sorrow borne? Thou art sent, according to thy place and power, among the sorrows and sufferings of others of those to whom thou dost minister; thou art sent with added power from thy own sufferings. Is it no gift of God to be able to say, "Ah! my sisters, I, too, have suffered?" It should make thee gentler, tenderer, more loving, more full of sympathy.

'Then about the consolation. Has balm been poured on thy own stricken heart? Has the veil been drawn over this world's brightness to open up a view of something better beyond? Why? for what purpose? For a purpose of tender love to thyself but also that the comfort may pass on in a bountiful fruitfulness to others, "that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." One who has passed through the storms and found peace, passed through the dark valley of desolation into the light, how potent she is among others! They turn to her in their troubles and find the help they need. Her comfort is theirs, her peace is theirs, her strength is theirs. She has taken her consolation as a trust for others. The more she sheds her light abroad the brighter and the fairer will it shine for herself.

'The principle I am advocating is a very wide one: "No man liveth to himself." It meets and refutes a common argument of unbelievers, who talk of the selfishness of Christianity, and say that Christians only want to save their own souls, while the aim of unbelievers is far nobler, to elevate humanity and promote the general welfare of the race. Why, that is the principle at the root of Christianity itself! It is startling to hear Christianity accused of selfishness. It is as large in the embrace of its divine charity as the world; it is the true heavenly communism, its model is the One Who gave His life for others, and its motto is "No man liveth to himself."

'All the events of our lives, all the phases of our souls' history, are meant to pass on in blessings to help other people. Even our sins can do so. How good God is to let our sins help others! This is the one thing in which our sympathy can be deeper and fuller than Christ's. We all have sins to look back upon, sins against the Father of infinite love. Well, our sin, our shame, our despicable weakness, these are matters between ourselves and God; but they can pass on for good to others too, by filling us with tender pity and love for sinners. As you go about, my sisters, in your loving, womanly ministrations, you will find many suffering from the memory of past sin, many bowed down by their impotence against some besetting sin now. You can feel for them, since you too, have sinned. But you and I have had advantages—careful training, social influences—which they have not had; in God's sight a girl in her first situation who is dishonest or bad-tempered may still be far, far above us; we cannot judge her: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." God only knows, according to the opportunities and the circumstances of each life, which soul has resisted the most temptations and made the best use of the grace given to it. Our sins should send us forth both gentle and humble.

'Then as to repentance. We have repented with a godly sorrow, and lost our sense of guilt under the blessed assurance of pardon through the Redeemer's blood. That, too, is meant by God to be for the good of others, not ourselves only. If we have sinned we can feel with sinners; if we have repented we can show the way of repentance and lead to the Cross of Christ.

'Lastly, our joys. How much home happiness we have! how many hours of innocent enjoyment! These, too, can be passed on. These joys should make us bright, hopeful, encouraging to others; the thankful heart must overflow in its thankfulness to those who need more gladness.

Our joy must become the joy of those with whom we come in contact; even as Christ prayed that His joy might remain in His disciples, and that their joy might be full. Dear sisters, will you pray God now, as you kneel to lay your hearts once more as an offering at His altar, for new strength for your work? And will you also pray that whatever His dealings are with you, you may pass them on in blessing to those for whom you labour, for Jesus Christ's sake?

After the sermon the anthem, "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently," was sung after which there was a special celebration of the Holy Communion.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF WEALTH.

No serious minded man can contemplate the deplorable waste of money, time, and energy that is bestowed upon exciting and exhausting amusements, without a feeling of distress. There are so many great works languishing for the want of men and money, while the life and wealth of thousands are thrown away in worse than idle amusements. It seems to be the curse of wealth that it paralyses noble ambitions, smother's sympathy, shuts out the great issues of life, and tempts men to self-seeking, and the gratification of low desires. Poverty may press down the soul, frustrate the best endeavors, and check the aspirations. But wealth is liable to pervert the best gifts of body and mind and degrade the noblest endowments to the basest ends.

This is not saying that all who are rich are given over to the lusts of the flesh and pride of life. The greater part of the world's beneficent works are carried on by the enterprise and sustained by the offerings of the rich. But how small is this "greater part" compared to what it might be, compared to what is needed! How few of the rich in this world, administer their stewardship with reference to the great needs of humanity; how many use it only for the gratification of their own vanity or lust.

It is this fact that saddens the hearts of pastors who are striving to imitate their Divine Master in bearing the burdens and alleviating the miseries of mankind. They see on every side the weak who need support, the ignorant who need instruction, the fallen who need reclaiming, the poor who need assistance; and at the same time they see, within easy reach, the means that would suffice for all this. But they cannot command these means. They cannot in very large measure influence them. It is only in exceptional cases that they can provide for exceptional and distressing needs. As a rule, the rich hold back their treasures. Some hoard them in order to increase power and to secure the distinction of great wealth. Some lay up in order that they may leave great legacies for others to squander it on themselves and families. From whatever motive, the larger portion of the wealth of the world is locked up and shut out from the Lord's work of saving the bodies and souls of men.

It is only as men learn to regard wealth as a stewardship, that it comes to be a blessing to themselves and to the world. While they regard it as a possession, a power of self-assertion or self-gratification, it must continue to be a snare and a reproach. The rich man who makes no use of his money, is a miser. He who uses it only for his enjoyment, is a brute. He who uses it only for the position and power it gives, is a vain and worthless man, not deserving of respect. Let no man be trusted. He allows the highest interest of humanity to suffer before his eyes, rather than part with his money, and he will see you distressed and ruined before he will lend you a helping hand. His heart is metallic, and he is dead to sympathy. But there are, thank God, some men of wealth who are unselfish, without personal ambition, humble, kind, and generous. To these how much does the world, and how much does the Church, owe! Their way of life is marked by monuments of beneficence, and their memory is blessed to children's children.—*Selected.*