

ARE WE EPISTLES?

The epistleship of Christians is not enough thought of. Paul calls the Corinthians—and, by implication, all true believers—epistles of Christ. Does it not mean that, as an ordinary letter is an index of its writer's character, a miniature of his mind, disclosing his sentiments and portraying his feelings, so we are to be copies of Christ, with His mind in us, manifesting itself to the world by us? It would seem so. But how far do we carry out this idea? How correct an image of Christ, or of Christ's conception as to what a man ought to be, do the people get who see us from day to day? He sends us out to represent Him, and to convey his message to men. Of what immense importance is it that we should not misrepresent, should not so blot, the message, as to disfigure it and make it undecipherable. While we cannot be exactly apostles of Christ, we certainly should be his epistles.

GOD'S LOVE.

Human love may change. The friendship of last year has grown cold. The gentleness of yesterday has turned to severity. But it is never thus with God's love. It is eternal. Our experience of it may be variable, but there is no variability in the love. Our lives may change; our consciousness of his love may fade out, but the love clings forever; the gentleness of God abides eternal. "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

There is never a moment, nor any experience, in the life of a true Christian, from the heart of which a message may not instantly be sent up to God and back to which help may not instantly come. God is not off in some remote heaven, merely. He is not away at the top of the long, steep life-ladder, looking down upon us from His serene calm and watching us as we struggle upward in pain and tears. He is with each one of us on every part of the way. His promise of presence is an eternal present tense: "I am with thee." So "Thou, God, seest me" becomes to the believer a most cheering and inspiring assurance. We are never out of God's sight for a moment. His eye watches each one of us continually, and His heart is in His eye. He comes instantly to our help and deliverance when we are in any danger.

God wants His children to find out that His hand is always within reach, no matter how dark it may look.

Let us take time to read our Bible. Its treasures will last when we shall have ceased to care for the war of political parties, the rise and fall of stocks, or the petty happenings of the day.

CURED BY KINDNESS.

He had lost all respectability, and was a common gutter drunkard. His family had disowned him, and would not recognize him when they met him. Occasionally he would get a job at the stables where Dr. Davis kept his horses. One morning the doctor laid his hand on his shoulder and said:

"Jim, I wish you would give up the drink."

There was something very like a quiver of the man's lips as he answered:

"If I thought you cared, I would, but there is a gulf between you and me."

"Have I made any gulf, Jim? Think a moment before you answer."

"No—you—haven't."

"If you had been a millionaire could I have treated you more like a gentleman?"

"No, you couldn't."

"I do care, Jim."

"Say it again, won't you?" There were tears in the man's eyes now.

"I do care, Jim," with a tender little emphasis on the Jim.

"Doctor Davis, I'll never touch another drop of liquor as long as I live. Here's my hand on it."

This was fifteen years ago, and "Jim" is to-day a respectable and respected man and an earnest Christian. Saved by a kind word!—*Sci.*

DENIED YET ANSWERED.

When Augustine, in his home at Carthage, resolved to visit Rome, his mother wished either to prevent him from going, or to go with him. He would listen to neither proposal, and resorted to a trick to carry out his plan. One evening he went to the sea-shore, and his mother followed.

There were two chapels, dedicated to the memory of the martyr Cyprian, and he pressed her to spend one evening in the church of the martyr, while he would accompany a friend on board a ship, there to say farewell. While she was there, in tears, praying and wrestling with God to prevent the voyage, Augustine sailed for Italy, and his deceived mother next morning found herself alone. In quiet resignation she returned to the city and continued to pray for the salvation of her son. Though meaning well, Monica had erred in her prayers, for the journey of Augustine was the means of his conversion. The Good Shepherd found the wanderer in Rome, and the Gospel became the power of God to his salvation. The denial of the prayer was, in fact, the answering of it. Instead of the husk, God granted rather the substance of her petition in the conversion of her son. "Therefore," said he, "O God, thou hast regard to the aim and essence of her desires, and didst not do what she then prayed for, that thou mightest do for me what she continually implored."—*Sci.*