

acquaintance with the heart will only annoy, if not disgust, we shrink with horror from the unwelcome task of self-scrutiny. We must rid ourselves of this reluctance to look in, else we shall never know what there is in us that needs combating and subduing. There must be not only a willingness to look in, but a firm determination to know the worst of ourselves. We must look at our foes and know them, before we venture to assail them; and having measured their strength, we shall find that we must bring a resolute heart to the fight. The foe is stubborn and subtle, as well as strong, and in order to overcome we must have time, and courage, and a firm, unbending will, and above all, implicit confidence in Him who spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly.

(To be Continued.)

MARTHAS.

"I suppose that we 'Marthas' are rather a numerous body of women, scattered though we be throughout the length and breadth of the land. And I trust we all have sufficient humility to acknowledge the fitness of this name as applied to us. God grant that of each one of us it may be said, by our beloved Master, that we have also the distinguishing characteristics of Mary.

The leading traits which mark us as 'Marthas' are two—first, a sincere love to Jesus, with an earnest desire to do something actively for him—and, secondly, a care and trouble about 'many things.'

I must acknowledge that I have always felt a secret sympathy for Martha. I think how much more pleasant and easy it would have been for, too, to sit at her Saviour's feet and listen, having no care for household matters.

But, as He who can read all hearts and never errs, drew a comparison favourable to Mary, we must conclude that he saw more than the mere 'necessity' of labour and trouble in Martha's occupations.

However that may be, I think I know many 'Marthas' now, who would gladly leave all, and hasten to Mary's blessed seat.

This may not be.

And it just now occurs to me that the

reason for our Saviour's gentle reproof to Martha, may have been the same as that given in another place—"Me ye have not always," and may only have been applicable while he was personally on earth. I hope to be able to convince you that we, who have all these earthly cares imposed upon us, can be diligent in business, and, at the same time, be ever at the Master's feet, learning of him.

Turn we then to our Guide Book, and let us see what promises, encouragements, and directions we find there.

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."

"For he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

"I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

These precious promises were made by our beloved Saviour just before his death. How strong the language!—how full of meaning! They were intended to comfort his disciples then—they will do so now. Let us apply them.

We are wives, mothers, housekeepers. After a broken night's rest, we are awakened at dawn by a restless infant, whom we cannot coax into slumber again—and thus the day's work is commenced; and often and often the hours pass by, and we cannot find the moment for a literal retirement to a literal "closet."

Many a clergyman, with his uninterrupted hours in his quiet study—many another active Christian, whose busy hours are numerous, but to whom the leisure time comes at last—will doubt this. Few mothers will. A mother's work is never done.

How precious then to know that, if we cannot retire to a closet to meet our Saviour, he is willing to come to us in our nurseries, our kitchens, our parlours, and everywhere our occupations call us. He will "abide with" us, will "dwell in" us. Can we not, then, turn to Him every moment as fresh occasions occur, demanding grace and strength?

A child is exacting and petulant—another disobedient and perverse—another sick and weary—or, perhaps, all are quarrelsome; the very hour we had set apart to