

## GRUMBLING DISCIPLES.

I had no small difficulty in putting the above two words together. Somehow they did not seem to fit each other. For I found, in the best authorities, that the word disciple referred to those who were of a meek and quiet spirit,—lowly, contented, peaceful, &c. And the dictionary informed me, that to grumble was to "murmur with discontent; to utter a low voice, by way of complaint—to growl, to snarl." How in the creation can we put these two words together, thought I. Do they belong in each other's company? Are they on good terms with each other? Strange drops are these to attempt to mingle into one. Surely there is quite a gap between those who are meek and lowly and uncomplaining, and those who murmur and growl and snarl!

But I should never have thought of putting the words together, had it not been that I had seen the things together which they would represent. I should have been glad to have gone about Zion telling the towers thereof, and marking the bulwarks thereof, and considering her palaces, without being able to find a solitary grumbler there. But in my walk about Zion, I fell in with one here and another there; and kept on finding them scattered about, till I was almost afraid to count up the number I had seen.

I wondered that they had not done up their grumbling, and got through the whole of it before they came into Zion. They might as well left this outside the wall, as they did leave a good many other things, which they knew they could not bring in with them. And the more was the wonder, inasmuch as they could not but have seen stated conspicuously upon the walls, what qualities were essential to all who should enter Zion. One of the statements was in brilliant capitals,—“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, &c. A grumbler must be an eel really, to think of slipping through such a net. And if he did slip through this, the next would certainly catch him. “Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke.” And I think he must be good at escaping nets that could get through the following. “Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think of these things.”

But in spite of all, some of the above named disciples get into Zion. I found them there, as I went round to tell the towers thereof. It was very pitiful to see such rags as these hanging about those who are deemed to wear “linen clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints.” I wondered they could bear to see such unlike things together. It was as if snow-white robes had been spattered by the mire. I was so sad at the sight, that I took opportunity to chat a little with one of the grumblers in Zion, by way of inquiry about so remarkable a phenomenon. Each one had a plausible reason for wearing so vile a garment, with apparel otherwise so tidy.—One murmured because he had to keep up so constant a fight with poverty; another complained because of the suffering of sickness; another because of so sad a bereavement; another because neighbors were more prosperous and successful in business than himself—another because scandal had been using its serpent tongue, and so on. There was not one but could make some sort of a defence. And they could have made a pretty good business of it, had it not been that Zion's walls were hung on all sides with such pictures of what constituted the beauty and excellence of Christian character, as those above described; and had it not been that there were such painful misgivings in their own hearts respecting the soundness of their own reasoning.

One fact came out pretty plumply in my intercourse with these disciples, viz., that grumbling was not praying, nor anything like it. Indeed, it appeared on examination, that they were as antagonistic as fire and water. It has been settled, that when one of them gets possession of a disciple, the other is off directly.

I found out, too, which was very alarming, that grumbling was a very contagious quality. A grumbler will seldom be long alone. The distemper spreads. He will cause “a low voice by way of complaint,” as the dictionary definition has it, in lots of people about him. It would be a comfort therefore, for Zion, when any one gets this distemper, to isolate him as much as possible, as they used to lepers in Israel. Or if we could persuade a grumbler, when the mood was on him, to

turn aside to some retired place, and growl, and snarl, and murmur all alone; that would make the number of grumblers less, and, preventing contagion, diminish the amount of this doleful music.

I will only add that, pity as it certainly is, that disciples did not all do their grumbling before they came into Zion, certain it is, that they will have to do it all before they reach the higher Zion above. Word has reached us that, though the great King has mercifully borne with the offender here, he does positively and peremptorily declare that there shall be none of it there; no, not the shade or inkling of any such thing. There will be such love there, and such harmony of soul with God and all holy beings, such sweet and enrapturing music, such delightful employment, resulting from being presented faultless before the throne, that the hateful sound can never be heard there. We think grumbling disciples among us had better lay this fact to heart.—We respectfully suggest it to them, with the hint, that there is the exact counterpart of the world of light and love, where grumbling is done on a vast scale and without end, and that they will do well to see to it, that the great law that like and like go together, does not give them acquaintance with that world.—*N. Y. Observer.*

## Enemies.

Have you enemies? Go straight on, and mind them not. If they block up your path, walk around them, and do your duty regardless of their spite. A man who has no enemies is seldom good for anything—he is made of that kind of material which is so easily worked that every one has a hand in it. A sterling character, one who thinks for himself, and speaks what he thinks, is always sure to have enemies. They are as necessary to him as fresh air, they keep him alive and active. A celebrated character, who was surrounded by enemies, used to remark:—“They are sparks, which if you do not blow, will go out of themselves.” Let this be your feeling, while endeavoring to live down the scandal of those who are bitter against you. If you stop to dispute, you do but as they desire, and open the way for more abuse. Let the poor fellows talk—there will be but a reaction, if you perform but your duty, and hundreds, who were once alienated from you will flock to you and acknowledge their error.—*British Banner.*

## An Age of Revivals.

The churches have again gloried in the claim, that theirs has been an Age of Revivals in which the work of conversion has been rapid, and the Divine Word has had its free course over the community. Far as these scenes and seasons of religious profiting have been really and purely the work of God's Spirit, they should call forth our praises to the grace that gave them, and our prayers and our best efforts for their continuance and extension. But where man's work has undertaken to replace God's work, vigilance and fearless fidelity are needed on the part both of the ministry and the churches, lest God should be provoked to scorn the service and the worshippers, when censurers and altars have been blazing with strange fire. And when, as often it has been, God's Spirit has really wrought, Christians need to keep in view, for themselves, and for their new-found brethren, that godliness is a life and a growth. In its beginning, indeed, a change, or turning, or conversion, the importance of which cannot be exaggerated; that change is but initial to an overgrowing conformity; that turning, the entrance into a way to be patiently travelled; and that conversion, the passage from an earthly-mindedness, which went ever downward, into a heavenly-mindedness which necessarily mounts evermore upward. The Church must not allow herself to be satisfied with suspicious, or at best with superficial evidences of conversion; and to be contented by accounting an increase of members, however won, and however taught, necessarily an increase of her strength. The Church is to be, indeed, to those whom a true regeneration has made the babes of Christ's household, a nursery, full of provident tenderness, and patient forbearance; but it is to be also, for its members of varied advantages and longer date, something more than this;—a camp no less than a nursery. The trainers of God's sacramental host may not always be employed in feeding and swathing; and although the new born babe is to desire the sincere milk of the word, the more advanced disciples are rebuked by the apostle, if, after years, and opportuni-

ties, and experience, they need to be “taught again the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat—unskilful in the word of righteousness;” and not “going on unto perfection;” when “for the time” spent in Christian profession and under varied religious nurture, they “ought to be teachers;” nasterly instructors of others, rather than feeble meophytes in the faith.—*Dr. Williams.*

## Giving up the Farm.

A correspondent of the Congregational Journal, writing from New London, N. H., and describing the late Baptist anniversaries at that place, has the following allusion to an anecdote which was related in one of the sermons preached on that occasion:

Tuesday evening, Rev. Mr. Colver, of Boston, preached from Rom. xii. 1. Doctrine—Entire consecration to God. The sermon was evangelical, instructive, and searching.—Among his illustrations the speaker introduced the following anecdote: A man in a church of which Mr. R. was pastor, refused to pay his proportion for the support of preaching, and after considerable labor, was excluded. A few days after, he met the pastor, and accosted him—

“Good morning, brother R.”

“Don't call me brother,” said Mr. R., “I cannot acknowledge any one as a Christian brother who has not given up all he has to the Lord.”

At the next meeting of the church this man was present, and with tears rolling down his face addressed the meeting: “Brethren, I find I made a mistake. When I professed religion, I did not put my farm in. Now, brethren, I want you to let me put my farm in, and try me again.”

They did so. He put his property in, too, was restored, and became a useful member.

Have we not reason to feel, that many members of churches did not “put their farms in” when they professed to be for Christ, and have never yet consecrated their all to his service?

## The Waste of Property by War.

It is the chief impoverisher of the world.—By its uncertain and sudden changes, its general derangement and stagnation of business, its withdrawal of laborers from productive employments, and its formation of lazy and improvident habits, it cuts the very sinews of a nation's prosperity, and prevents, to an extent almost incredible, the accumulation of wealth among the mass of the people. When our population was only fifteen or sixteen millions our annual production was estimated at \$1,400,000,000; and, if we suppose war to diminish this amount barely one-fifth, the loss would be no less than \$280,000,000 a year.—At such a rate how incalculably vast would be the loss from this cause alone to the whole world, with its 1,000,000,000 of inhabitants!

But consider how much the war system costs even in peace. The amount of money wasted on fortifications and ships, on arms and ammunition, on monuments and other military demonstrations, it is quite impossible to calculate. France alone, with a territory not so large as some single states in our confederacy, has more than 120 fortified places, and a single one of her war monuments cost two million of dollars. Millions of dollars have we ourselves expended on a single fort, and a hundred millions more would hardly suffice to complete and arm the whole circle of our projected fortifications.

From 1816 to 1834, eighteen years of our peace, our national expenses amounted to \$464,000,000, of which nearly \$400,000,000, about sixth-sevenths of the whole, went for war purposes! Besides all this, Judge Jay reckons “the yearly aggregate expenses of our militia not much, if any, short of fifty millions.” The annual expenses of England for war-purposes, including interest on her war debt, average more than \$220,000,000; and Richard Cobden, after careful and extensive inquiries, came, in 1848, to the conclusion that the support of her war system is costing Europe, in time of peace, one thousand million dollars a year, besides the interest on her war debts, which amount to TEN THOUSAND MILLIONS!—*N. Y. Organ.*

## What if our Sunday-school Teachers had the Spirit of Martin Luther.

Think of two hundred thousand Martin Luthers putting their broad shoulders to the wheels of our heavy waggons, and helping on with all their zeal and power, the manifold enterprises of Christian benevolence, that are now impeded by sloth, covetousness, and

worldly-mindedness. Think of them distributing themselves among our Sunday-schools, spreading their holy ardor like a conflagration amid the assembled scholars. Or think of them entering our pulpits, proclaiming aloud the glad tidings of salvation; or becoming home missionaries; or undertaking to persuade the crowded population of the city, more reverently to observe the Sabbath day and keep it holy. What wonders might not be effected? But why do I go on thus ignorantly, prating about two hundred thousand Luthers. If God wanted them, he would have them; but it pleases him to show forth the greatness of his power, by using weaker instruments to bring about his designs. He who builds up mountains by the coral insect, can make you mighty in his service. Give him then your hands, your heads, and your hearts.—*E. Holding.*

## Individual Responsibility.

Dr. Wayland, speaking of the Christians who were dispersed by the first persecution of the Church at Jerusalem, says, “This little band accomplished more for the conversion of the world than all the Christians of the present day united have done;” does any one ask why? “Because,” says he, “every individual felt that the conversion of the world was the work to which he himself, and not an abstraction called the church, was responsible. Instead of relying on man for aid, every man looked directly up to God to forward the work. God was thus exalted, his power was confessed; and very soon, in a few years, the standard of the cross was carried to the remotest extreme of the then known world.”

## Man's Free Will Circumscribed by God's Providence.

For a man is circumscribed in all his ways by the Providence of God, just as he is in a ship; for although the man may walk freely upon the decks, or pass up and down in the little continent, yet he must be carried whither the ship bears him. A man hath nothing free but his will; and that, indeed, is guided by laws and reasons; but although by this he walks freely, yet the Divine Providence is the ship, and God is the pilot, and the contingencies of the world are sometimes like the fierce winds, which carry the whole event of things whither God pleases.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

## Judgment.

King Charles II., once said to John Milton, “Do you not think that your blindness is a judgment upon you for having written in defence of my father's murder?” “Sir,” answered the poet, “It is true I have lost my eyes; but if all calamitous providences are to be considered as judgments, your majesty must recollect that your royal father lost his head.”

## Temptation Resisted.

A poor chimney-sweeper's boy was employed at the house of a lady of rank, in England, to sweep the chimney of a room in which she usually dressed; when, finding himself on the hearth of a richly furnished dressing-room, and perceiving no one near, he waited a few moments to take a view of the beautiful things in the apartment. A gold watch, richly set with diamonds, particularly caught his attention, and he could not forbear taking it into his hand. Immediately the wish rose in his mind, “Ah! if I had such a one!” After a pause, he said to himself, “But if I take it I shall be a thief! and yet,” continued he, “nobody would know it, nobody sees me—Nobody! does not God see me, who is present everywhere?” Overcome by these thoughts, a cold shivering seized him. “No,” said he, laying down the watch, “I had much rather be poor, and keep my good conscience, than rich, and become a rascal!” At these words he hastened back into the chimney.—The lady, who was in the room adjoining, having overheard the conversation with himself, sent for him the next morning, and thus accosted him: “My little friend, why did you not take the watch yesterday?” The boy fell on his knees, speechless and astonished. “I heard every word you said,” continued her ladyship; “thank God for enabling you to resist this temptation, and be watchful over yourself for the future; and from this moment you shall be in my service: I will maintain and clothe you; nay, more, I will procure you good instruction, which will assist to guard you from the danger of similar temptations.” The boy burst into tears; he was anxious to express his gratitude, but could not.