

# The Glory of The Commonplace

PARABLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS  
FROM THE BOOKS OF

J. R. MILLER

*SELECTED AND ARRANGED BY*

JOHN T. FARIS

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## DR. J. R. MILLER'S BOOKS

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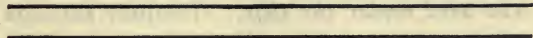
A HEART GARDEN	JOY OF SERVICE
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BEAUTY OF SELF-CONTROL	MAKING THE MOST OF
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BOOK OF COMFORT	MINISTRY OF COMFORT
BUILDING OF CHARACTER	MORNING THOUGHTS
COME YE APART	PERSONAL FRIENDSHIPS OF
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EVENING THOUGHTS	SILENT TIMES
EVERY DAY OF LIFE	STORY OF A BUSY LIFE
FINDING THE WAY	STRENGTH AND BEAUTY
FOR THE BEST THINGS	THINGS THAT ENDURE
GATE BEAUTIFUL	THINGS TO LIVE FOR
GLIMPSES THROUGH LIFE'S	UPPER CURRENTS
WINDOWS	WHEN THE SONG BEGINS
GLORY OF THE COMMON-	WIDER LIFE
PLACE	YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROB-
GOLDEN GATE OF PRAYER	LEMS
HIDDEN LIFE	

### BOOKLETS

BEAUTY OF KINDNESS	LEARNING TO LOVE
BLESSING OF CHEERFUL-	LOVING MY NEIGHBOR
NESS	MARRIAGE ALTAR
BY THE STILL WATERS	MARY OF BETHANY
CHRISTMAS MAKING	MASTER'S FRIENDSHIPS
CURE FOR CARE	SECRET OF GLADNESS
FACE OF THE MASTER	SECRET OF LOVE
GENTLE HEART	SECRETS OF HAPPY HOME
GIRLS: FAULTS AND IDEALS	LIFE
GLIMPSES OF THE HEAV-	SUMMER GATHERING
ENLY LIFE	TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW
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HOW? WHEN? WHERE?	UNTO THE HILLS
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JOY OF THE LORD	

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## FOREWORD

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**H**OW *was Dr. Miller able to write so as to reach the hearts of the hundreds of thousands who bought his books? The question has been asked many times by those who have noted the fact that the sales of these most helpful volumes have totaled more than two million copies. Perhaps one of the best answers was made by one who said, "He knew how to glorify the commonplace." He said ordinary things about ordinary people in most unusual ways. He illuminated every chapter by apt and striking illustrations from the everyday life of people around him. He had a wonderful faculty for taking familiar incidents and giving to them new applications. He used as illustrations things that no one else would have thought of, and the reader could only wonder why he had never seen the application himself.*

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## Foreword

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*In 1893 a volume of selected illustrations was used under the title, "Glimpses through Life's Windows." Since that time readers have urged the publication of a similar volume made up from later writings. With his usual modesty Dr. Miller was accustomed to reply that there would be no demand for such a book. However, he finally decided to give his readers what they sought. During the closing years of his life he thought of the book as one of the things he hoped to do, but he never found time to make the selections.*

*As his associate in editorial work I learned of his plans, and have attempted to carry them out.*

JOHN T. FARIS.

*Philadelphia, April, 1913.*

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I  
**Making Ready for Life**



## Making Ready for Life



### The Making of Manhood

IT used to be a custom for travelers in Switzerland to bring home clusters of the edelweiss. The flower is not sought because of its beauty or for its fragrance, but in recognition of its bravery and victoriousness in living and blooming under hard conditions. It grows on the Alps and Pyrenees, at lofty altitudes, where almost nothing else lives, and on crags difficult of access, and is among the hardest of all plants. Thus the edelweiss becomes the symbol of noble life that endures hardness, that is victorious amid antagonisms, that rises superior to obstacles.

The man who has never known hardship, who never has had to practice self-denial or make a personal sacrifice, may be the envy of other men whose lives have been one continued

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struggle. They may think that if they could have had his easy circumstances they could have made a great deal more of their life. But really their chance in life thus far has been far better than his. Manhood is made in the field of struggle and hardship, not in ways of ease and luxury. Hindrances are opportunities. Difficulty is a school for manhood.

Strength is the glory of manhood. Yet it is not easy to be strong—it is easier to be weak and to drift. It is easier for the boy in school not to work hard to get his lessons, but to let them go, and then at the last depend on some other boy to help him through. It is easier, when something happens to make you irritable, just to fly into a temper and to say bitter words, than it is to keep quiet and self-controlled. It is easier, when you are with other young people, and they are about to do something that you know to be unworthy, just to go with them, than it is to say, "I cannot do this wickedness against God." It is easier to be weak than to be

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strong. But we know where weakness leads us in the end.



### The Way to Blessing

A CHRISTIAN woman tells of her experience in making a fuller consecration to Christ. "Did you ever have a person in your home," she asks, "who acted as a perpetual rasp on the feelings of your household? I had. One day when I had nearly lost my faith and was sinking in the black waters of despair, I called on Christ to help me or I would perish. And what do you think He asked me to do? To love this woman. This was the only ladder He offered me out of the black depths. Then I grew uglier than ever, and almost hated my Saviour. The struggle continued until I could stand it no longer. In agony I rushed to my closet and besought Jesus to help me. It seemed then as though in a most tender, loving voice, He asked, 'Can't you love her for my sake?' I said, 'Yes, Lord, I will.' At once peace filled my heart. My feelings

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toward her changed entirely. I had yielded my will to Christ." She had heard the Master's voice, and was following Him. That to which He had called her was not easy,—it had on it the print of the nails,—but it was the way to blessing and joy.



### Preparing for Adversity

A TRAIN was sweeping along in the bright sunshine, when an attendant passed through the cars and lighted the lamps. The passengers wondered why this should be done at midday; but while they were talking about it, asking what it meant, the train plunged into a long, dark tunnel. Then all understood why the lamps had been lighted back there in the sunshine. This providing of light in advance prepared for the gloom in the tunnel's deep night. This illustrates what God's words stored in the heart do for us when our path suddenly bends into the darkness of sorrow. He who in the sunny days has not made the divine promises his own,

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when trouble comes has no comforts to sustain him. But he who has pondered the holy word, and laid up in memory its precious truths and assurances, when called to pass through affliction has light in his dwelling.



### The Habit of Right Living

A STAGE driver had held the lines for many years, and when he grew old, his hands were crooked into hooks, and his fingers were so stiffened that they could not be straightened out. There is a similar process which goes on in men's souls when they continue to do the same things over and over. One who is trained from childhood to be gentle, kindly, patient, to control the temper, to speak softly, to be loving and charitable, will grow into the radiant beauty of love. One who accustoms himself to think habitually and only of noble and worthy things, who sets his affections on things above, and strives to reach "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatso-

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ever things are lovely," will grow continually upward, toward spiritual beauty. But on the other hand, if one gives way from childhood to all ugly tempers, all resentful feelings, all bitterness and anger, his life will shape itself into the unbeauty of these dispositions. One whose mind turns to debasing things, unholy things, unclean, will find his whole soul growing toward the earth in permanent moral curvature.



### Integrity that Costs

MR. ROBERT C. OGDEN relates the following incident: "I will tell you what I consider an example of business honesty. A friend of mine, who died not long ago, held securities of a certain railroad property. Shortly before his death some one told him, on unimpeachable authority, that the railroad was about to go to pieces, and that he had better unload the securities. But he refused to do it, for some one else would have been the loser.

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And he was not a man of means. Sure enough, the railroad company went to pieces. It was put into the hands of a receiver, and my friend's securities were reduced to almost a nominal value."

"How can I learn the lesson?" some one asks. Christ will teach you. He says, "Come unto me, and learn of me." "The orange," says the Rev. W. L. Watkinson, "was originally a bitter berry, yet it has been transformed and transfigured into an apple of gold. And our poor, cold, selfish hearts are capable of being wonderfully ennobled and adorned by the riches of love, compassion, sympathy and bountifulness."



### The Preparation that Counts

SOME years since a party of Americans were about to leave Cairo for a journey across the desert. Before setting out, they bought vessels in which to carry water. Each one chose the kind of vessel that pleased him. One found

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jars of brass, whose fine designs attracted him. Another purchased porcelain vessels of rare beauty. A third, however, took some plain earthenware bottles. The way across the desert was long and wearisome. The heat was intense. Every drop of water was of value. The brass vessels heated; and the water was made impure, and unfit for use. The costly porcelain jugs cracked in the heat and the water was lost. But the plain earthenware bottles kept the water pure and sweet until the journey was ended.

We go out every morning to trudge over desert paths. We should be sure that on the Sabbath we make preparation that shall not fail us on the journey. Mere idle rest will not give it to us. We cannot get it from the Sunday newspaper, from the latest novel, from mere literary books, or from studying works of art. But if we turn our face to God's house on God's day, and commune with Him, filling our earthenware vessels of faith and love with the water of life, we shall not faint by the way.



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### The Sin at the Heart

NOR all the wrecks of life occur in the early days. A majestic tree fell at its prime—fell on a calm evening, when there was scarcely a breath of air stirring. It had withstood a century of storms, and now was broken off by a zephyr. The secret was disclosed in its falling. A boy's hatchet had been struck into it when it was a tender sapling. The wound had been grown over and hidden away under exuberant life, but it had never healed. There at the heart of the tree it stayed, a spot of decay, ever eating a little farther and deeper into the trunk, until at last the tree was rotted through, and fell of its own weight, when it seemed to be at its best. So, too, many lives fall when they seem to be at their strongest, because some sin or fault of youth has left its wounding and its consequent weakness at the heart. For many years it is hidden, and life goes on in strength. At last, however, its sad work is done, and at his prime the man falls.



## II

# Character Building



## Character Building



### The Cost of Character

MANY people have fine dreams of moral and spiritual beauty which never become anything more than dreams, because they will not work them out in pain, struggle, and self-restraint. Here is an incident from a private letter:

“One day, lately, one of my little music pupils, an old-fashioned, sweet little girl about nine years old, was playing scales and octaves, when she turned to me and said, ‘Oh, Miss Graham, my hands are so tired!’

“I said, ‘Never mind, Norma; just try to play them once or twice more. The longer you practice them, the stronger your hands will grow, so that after a while you will not feel it at all.’

“She turned the gentle little face weariedly to me and said: ‘Miss Graham, it seems as if everything that strengthens hurts!’

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“I gave her something else, but I thought: ‘Yes, my dear little girl, everything that strengthens hurts!’”

The child was right. It is true in music, it is true in all art, it is true in the making of character; everything that strengthens hurts, costs pain and self-denial. We must die to live. We must crucify the flesh in order that we may find spiritual gains.



### The Necessity of High Ideals

SOME one visiting the studio of an artist observed some highly colored stones lying on his table. When asked why he had these stones always before him, the artist said it was to keep his eye up to tone. For the same reason we need to keep before us always high ideals of life. Otherwise our minds are apt to drift away from the things that are best.

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### Shrinking from Temptation

WE put our hand into God's in the morning, and we ask Him to lead us through the day. We know not what experiences may come to us and we ask Him not to bring us into sore testings. The prayer is a request that in the doing of God's will for the day we may not be brought into places where it will be hard for us to be faithful.

Some tell us that it is cowardly to offer such a prayer. A soldier should not shrink from battle, for this is the very business of his life, that to which he is called, that for which he enlisted. Only in battle can he test the qualities of his heroism or train himself for the service to which he has devoted himself. A soldier who has never been in an engagement must be brave, but no one can be sure of it—he cannot yet be sure of himself; his courage has not been tested. An untempted virtue is only a possible virtue; it is not certain yet that it will stand the test. We must meet tempta-

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tion, and win the crowns which are only for the overcomers.

Is it not cowardly, then, to plead with God any morning not to be brought that day into places where we must fight? Are we to wish to be soldiers who shall miss conflict, danger, and hardship? Is that the kind of heroism Christ would teach His followers? He himself did not seek such a life. He shrank from no conflict and sought to be spared from no hard battle; and would He have us plead not to be brought into trial?

There is a sense in which this view is correct. If we are following Christ fully we will not hesitate to go with Him into any experience, however perilous it may be. "He that saveth his life shall lose it." Yet so much is involved in temptation, such possibilities of defeat and failure are dependent on the issue, that we dare not desire to enter into it. It is presumptuous to clamor to be led into the conflict. More than once Jesus warned His disciples to watch, that they might not enter into temptation. He knew how in-



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adequate their courage and their strength would prove in battle with the evil one, how their faith would fail in the moment of assault. We read of soldiers sick of camp, and chafing to be led against the enemy, but the Christian who is impatient to be tempted is very foolish. Temptation is too terrible an experience to be rushed into, unled by God.



### Undeveloped Capacities

SCIENTISTS tell us of certain birds which in their wild state do not sing, but which have in their throats fine muscles, showing that if they had had favorable environment, they might have been good singers. There is no one who has not more life muscles than he has learned to use. We have capacities for obedience, for service, for beautiful living, for usefulness, which lie undeveloped in us. Instead of letting ourselves slacken in the doing of our duty, we should set ourselves ever a higher work and every day add a line

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to the quality of our life and the worthiness of our character.



### The Secret of a Beautiful Life

AN inner life of love changes the aspect of all other lives it touches, casting the light of its own spirit upon them. There is a story of a young woman who was spending the day with a party of friends in the country, rambling through the woods and among the hills. Early in the morning she picked up a branch of sweetbrier and put it in her bosom. She soon forgot that it was there, but all day long, wherever she went, she smelled the spicy fragrance, wondering whence it came. On every woodland path she found the same odor, though no sweetbrier was growing there. On bare fields and rocky knolls and in deep gorges, as the party strolled about, the air seemed laden with the sweet smell. The other members of the party had their handfuls of all sorts of wild flowers, but the one fragrance that filled the air for

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## Character Building

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her was sweetbrier. As the party went home on the boat, she thought, "Some one must have a bouquet of sweetbrier," not dreaming that it was she who had it.

Late at night, when she went to her room, there was the handful of sweetbrier tucked away in her dress, where she had put it in the morning and where unconsciously she had carried it all day. "How good it would be," she said to herself, as she closed her eyes, "if I could carry such a sweet spirit in my breast that every one I meet should seem lovely!"

The incident suggests the secret of a beautiful Christlike life. We cannot find sweetness on every path our feet must press, in every place we are required to go. Sometimes we must be among uncongenial people, people whose lives are not gentle, who are unloving in disposition, with whom it is not easy to live cordially in close relations. Sometimes we must come into circumstances which do not minister to our comfort, in which we do not find joy, gladness, encouragement.

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The only way to be sure of making all our course in life a path of sweetness is to carry the sweetness in our own life. Then, on the bleakest roads, where not a flower blooms, we shall still walk in perfumed air, the perfume carried in our own heart.

It is thus that Christ would have us live. He does not promise to lead us always through scenes of beauty, along paths of joy; what He promises is to put the beauty and the joy into our own lives, so that we shall have cheer and blessing wherever we go. St. Paul said that he had learned in whatsoever state he was therein to be content. That is, he had in himself, in his own heart, through the grace of God and the love of Christ given to him, the resources for contentment, and was not dependent upon his condition or his circumstances. Some people seem so happily constituted by nature, having such sunny spirits and such cheerful dispositions, that they cannot help being loving and sweet. How others who are not so gifted by nature, or who are in poor health, or have much to try

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them, can keep always sweet, unaffected by their condition, is the problem. But they can. The secret is to have the love of Christ hidden in their hearts. That will make any life sweet.



### Unsuspected Talents

OLE BULL and John Ericsson, the inventor, were old friends, but the musician could not get the inventor to listen to his violin. All he thought about was machines. He had no time for music. He did not know there was any music in his soul. Ole Bull then prepared a little ruse, and one day took his violin to Ericsson, asking him to mend it—something had gone wrong with it, he said. Then, to test it, after the mending, Ole Bull drew the bow lightly over the strings, and soon the most marvelous notes filled the office. Ericsson sat amazed, entranced, and begged the musician to play on. "I never knew before that I cared for music," he said. It was the discovery of a power and faculty in his soul which, until now, had been sleeping.

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We do not dream what capacities of ours are lying undeveloped, useless, unawakened, like music in a sleeping harp.



### Conquerors through Christ

It is well that we learn the need of divine help in the temptations of our lives. It is not enough to have the forms of religion—in the great crises of our experience only Christ himself will suffice. It is said that Gainsborough, the artist, longed also to be a musician. He bought musical instruments of many kinds and tried to play them. He once heard a great violinist bringing ravishing music from his instrument. Gainsborough was charmed and thrown into transports of admiration. He bought the violin on which the master had played so marvelously. He thought that if he only had the wonderful instrument he could play, too. But he soon learned that the music was not in the violin, but was in the master who played it.

We sometimes read how certain persons

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have learned to overcome in temptation and we try to get their method, thinking we can overcome, too, if we use the same formula that they use. We read the biographies of eminent saints to find out how they prayed, how they read the Bible, thinking that we can get the secret of their victoriousness simply by adopting their order of spiritual life. But as the music was not in the violin, but in the player, so the secret of victory in temptation is not in any method, not even in the Bible, nor in any liturgy of prayer, but only in Christ. The power that makes us strong is not in any religious schedule, it is not in any one's methods—we must have Christ with us, Christ in us.

There is a beautiful legend of Columba, the apostle of Christianity in North Britain. The saint wished to make a copy of the Psalms for his own use, but the one book was kept out of his reach, hidden in the church. Columba made his way secretly into the church, at night, and found the place where the volume was kept. But there was no light

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in the building and he could not see to write. Yet when he opened the book and took his pen to write, light streamed out from his hand and flooded the page with radiance. With that shining hand he made a copy of the Psalter. It is only a legend, but it teaches that those who live always in communion with Christ have Christ in themselves and need falter at nothing. When we are serving Him, He helps us. The light of His life in us will make our lives shine so that where we go the darkness will be changed to day. Then we will always be conquerors in Him.



### The Blessing of Meekness

LONG ago, there lived a saint so good that the angels came down to see how a mortal could be so godly. He went about his daily work, diffusing virtue as a star diffuses light, as a flower emits perfume, without being aware of it. Two words told the story of his days—he gave; he forgave. Yet these words



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never fell from his lips; they were only expressed by his smile, in his forbearance and charity.

The angels asked God that the gift of miracles might be given to this good man. The answer was, "Yes; ask him what he wishes." So the angels spoke to him about it. Would he choose that the touch of his hand should heal the sick? He said, "No." He would rather God should do that. Would he have power to convert souls? He answered, "No;" that was the Holy Spirit's work. What then did he desire? He said, "That God may give me His grace." When pressed still further to choose the particular power he would have, he replied, "That I may do a great deal of good without ever knowing it." Then it was decided that every time the saint's shadow should fall behind or on either side, so that he could not see it, it should have the power to cure disease, soothe pain and comfort sorrow. So it came to pass that, falling thus out of his sight, his shadow made withered plants grow again, and fading flowers sweet,

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gave health to pale children and joy to unhappy mothers. But the saint was never aware of the blessings that flowed from him. And the people, respecting his humility, even forgot his name and spoke of him as The Holy Shadow.



### Failure as a Builder of Character

SAID the president of one of our great universities, in addressing his students, "Show me the young man who has had failure and has now won his way to success, and I will back him." A man who has never had any failure, whose course has been one of unbroken prosperity, has not the resources of strength and endurance stored away in his life that he has who has suffered defeats and then has risen again and pressed forward to victory. The latter has been growing manhood while he was suffering earthly defeat. A true man never can be really defeated. He may fail in business, but not in character.

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## Character Building

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### Eyes and No Eyes

THERE is a little book called "Eyes and No Eyes," which tells of two boys who one day went out for a walk together. When they came back, a friend asked one of them what he had seen. He said he had seen nothing. He had been traveling through dust and along rough paths, but he had not seen anything beautiful or interesting in all the two hours' walk. When the other boy was asked the same question, he replied with much enthusiasm, telling of a hundred beautiful things he had seen in his walk—in the fields and in the woods—flowers and plants and bits of landscape, birds and squirrels and rippling streams. The two boys had walked together over the same path, and while one had seen nothing to give him pleasure, the other came back with his mind full of lovely images and bright recollections. Both had looked on the same objects, from the same points of view, but they had looked through different lenses.

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### Reserve for Emergencies

WE must build our lives for emergencies, if we would make them secure. It is not enough for a soldier to be trained merely for dress parade. It requires no courage to appear well on the drill-ground; it is the battle that tests the soldier's bravery and discipline. A writer tells of watching a ship captain during a voyage across the Atlantic. The first days were balmy, without more than a pleasant breeze. The passengers thought the captain had an easy time, and some of them felt that it required little skill to take a great vessel over the sea. But the fourth day out a terrific storm arose, and the ship shivered and shuddered under the buffeting of the waves. The storm continued, and in the morning the captain was seen standing by the mainmast, where he had been all night, with his arms twisted in the ropes, watching the ship in the storm and directing it, so as to meet the awful strain in the safest way. The reserve was coming out in the dauntless seaman.

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## Character Building

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### Help in Temptation

AN English naval officer told a grateful story of the way he was helped and saved from dishonor in his first experience in battle. He was a midshipman, fourteen years old. The volleys of the enemy's musketry so terrified him that he almost fainted. The officer over him saw his state and came close beside him, keeping his own face toward the enemy, and held the midshipman's hand, saying, in a calm, quiet, affectionate way, "Courage, my boy! You will recover in a minute or two. I was just so when I went into my first battle." The young man said afterwards that it was as if an angel had come to him, and put new strength into him. The whole burden of his agony of fear was gone, and from that moment he was as brave as the oldest of the men. If the officer had dealt sternly with the midshipman, he might have driven him to cowardly failure. His kindly sympathy with him dispelled all fear, put courage into his heart and made him brave for battle.

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It is thus that Christ is touched with a feeling of our infirmity when, assailed by sudden temptation, we quail and are afraid. He comes up close beside us and says, "I understand. I met a temptation just like yours, that tried me very sorely. I felt the same dread you feel. I suffered bitterly that day. I remember it. Be brave and strong and your fear will vanish and you will be victorious." Then He takes our hand and the thrill of His sympathy and of His strength comes into our heart, dispelling all fear.



### Plodding to Victory

MANY young men are impatient of slow success. In their enthusiasm, they expect to advance rapidly and without hindrance in their chosen career. The young physician is eager to find at once a large and remunerative practice. The young aspirant for literary honors is disappointed if immediately his work is not accepted and his name written high in the list of popular writers. The young business man

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expects to have success from the day he begins. The artist thinks that the excellence of his work should win fame for him the day his pictures are shown to the public. The same is true in all professions and callings.

The fact is, however, that with very few exceptions, beginners in every occupation must be satisfied for a time with but meager recognition and slow results. Many young men who know that this is true in general have the feeling that their own case will be an exception. We like to think ourselves a little different from other people. We may as well make up our minds, however, to the fact that there are few exceptions to this rule. The only genius that counts is the capacity for hard work. The men who have achieved the greatest success in the various callings have had to struggle for it most intensely.

Robert Louis Stevenson, for example, is thought of as a genius. We would probably think, from reading his masterpieces, that

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literary work was always easy for him. But he has told us what it cost him to attain success as an author. He says: "I imagine nobody ever had such pains to learn a trade as I had; but I slogged at it day in and day out, and I frankly believe (thanks to my dire industry) I have done more with smaller gifts than almost any man of letters in the world." He writes further: "All through my boyhood and youth, I was known and pointed out for the pattern of an idler; and yet I was always busy on my own private end, which was to learn to write. I always kept two books in my pocket—one to read, one to write in. As I walked, my mind was busy fitting what I saw with appropriate words; when I sat by the roadside, I would either read, or a pencil and a penny version book would be in my hand, to note down the features of the scene or commemorate some halting stanzas. Thus I lived with words. What I thus wrote was of no ulterior use; it was written consciously for practice. It was not so much that I wished to be an author (though I wished



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that, too) as that I had vowed that I would learn to write.”

There are reasons why it is better that young men should not get on too rapidly or too easily at the beginning. No matter how gifted they may be or how well prepared, they are not ready at once for full responsibility. At the best, their preparation is theoretical, not practical. They need to learn by experience, and it is better that they should do so leisurely, without too much pressure. A young physician who should have the responsibilities of a large practice thrust upon him at once could only fail. A young business man, who, immediately after leaving college, should take sole charge of a large establishment, would find himself unable for its management. It is better that every young man should begin in a quiet way and grow up with his growing practice or business.

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### The Spot on the Glass

A MAN was washing a large plate glass in a show window. There was one soiled spot on the glass which defied all his efforts to cleanse it. After long and hard rubbing at it, with soap and water, the spot still remained, and then the man discovered that the spot was on the inside of the glass. There are many people who are trying to cleanse their lives from stains by washing the outside. They cut off evil habits and cultivate the moralities, so that their conduct and character shall appear white. Still they find spots and flaws which they cannot remove. The trouble is within. Their hearts are not clean, and God desires truth in the inward parts.



### Conquering the Love of Money

THERE is a story of a merchant who was devoted to high purposes in life, who was determined to be a man free from bondage to the lower things. One day a ship of his that

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was coming homeward was delayed. He became anxious, and the next day was yet more troubled, and the third day still more. Then he came to himself, awaking to his true condition of bondage to earthly things, and said, "Is it possible that I have come to love money for itself, and not for its nobler uses?" Taking the value of the ship and its cargo, he gave it to charities, not because he wished to be rid of the money, but because only thus could he get the conquest over himself, holding his love of money under his feet.



### Leaving What is Behind

MANY people are lost by clinging to their past. They have allowed it to be unworthy. When Cardinal Mazarin was near to death, it is said a courtier in his palace saw him walking about the great halls of his palace, gazing at the magnificent pictures, the statuary, and works of art. "Must I leave it all? Must I leave it all?" he was heard to murmur despairingly. These were his treasures, the

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accumulation of a long life of wealth and power. These were the things he had lived for, and they were things he could not take with him. He must leave them to the moth and rust. We must beware of our earthly entanglements. We should forget the things of the past by having our hearts filled with the glory of things to come.



### “Don’t Write There!”

A MOMENT after we have done a wrong thing we may bitterly repent it. We may be willing to give all we have in the world to undo it, to make it as though it never had been. But in vain. A deed done takes its place in the universe as a fact, and never can be recalled. “Don’t write there, sir!” said a boy to a young man in the waiting-room of a railway station, as he saw him take off his ring and begin with a diamond to scratch some words on the mirror. “Don’t write there, sir!” “Why not?” asked the young man. “Because you can’t rub it out.” We should

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be sure before we speak a word or do an act, that we shall be willing to have it stand forever.



### Religion without Life

THERE is a story of a sculptor who had chiseled in marble a statue of St. George and set it before a church in Florence. Michael Angelo was asked to see it. He stood before the marble and was amazed at the success of the young artist. Every feature was perfect. The brow was massive. Intelligence beamed from the eyes. One foot was in the act of moving as if to step forward. Gazing at the splendid marble figure, Angelo said, "Now, march!" No higher compliment could the great artist have paid to St. George in marble. Yet there was no response. The statue was perfect in all the form of life, but there was no life in it. It could not march. It is possible for us to have all the semblance of life in our religious profession, in our orthodoxy of belief, in our morality, in our Chris-

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tian achievements, in our conduct, in our devotion to the principles of right and truth, and yet not have life in us. Life is the great final blessing we should seek.



### The Real Victors

SOME boys had played a game. One little fellow came home gloomy and cast down. His side had lost. But that was not the cause of his dejection.

“Mother,” he said, “God was on the side of the bad boys to-day, and they won. You see, we fellows thought we would try awfully hard and not get mad or cheat or say bad words, and not one fellow did. But the other side did. They swore and got cross and cheated, and they won. God was on their side, and it wasn’t fair.”

The mother could not comfort her boy. The father came in presently, and the mother drew him aside and quietly told him of the state of things. Presently the father said:

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“Well, my boy, I hear you won out today.”

“Well,” in a very solemn voice, “you heard wrong, because we were beaten.”

“But I heard there were two games. I heard that you lost the match, but won the big, important thing—you conquered yourselves. You didn’t beat the other fellows, but you conquered your tempers and bad language. Congratulations, my boy; I am proud of you.”

The boy’s face began to change. “Why, that is so, father,” he said happily. “I didn’t think of it in that way. God was on our side, after all, wasn’t He?”



### Keeping Up the Standard

SOME one says that the sentence, “That will do,” has done more harm than any other sentence in the English language. It indicates the acceptance of a standard below the highest. A person has done something which is not his best. He recognizes the fact; but he

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is too indolent to do it over again, or he is impatient to get the matter off his hands, and decides to let it go as it is. "That will do," is a confession of unworthiness in what is done, and of indolence in the person who does it. He knows he could do better, but decides to let it pass.

Many catastrophes come in later years from doing imperfect or careless work in youth. When digging for the foundation of a great building, the workmen came upon a piece of old wall. "That will do," they said; and they left it in the new wall, building around it. The great structure went up, and was filled with business. One day there was a crash. The fragment of old wall had given way, and the whole building fell in ruin.

Continually young people are leaving in the foundation walls of their character a fault, a wrong habit, a weakness, a flaw. It would be hard to dig it out. It is easier just to build over it and around it, and so they let it stay. "That will do," they say apologetically. Then afterwards, in



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some great stress or strain, the character fails and falls into ruins; it is seen then that that careless piece of foundation-building was the cause of it all.



### **"If Thy Foot Offend Thee"**

A RABBIT was caught by its foot in a hunter's steel trap. The little creature was wise enough to know that unless it escaped from the snare it would soon lose its life. So it gnawed off its leg with its own teeth, and, leaving its foot in the trap, fled away, maimed, to liberty. It saved its life at the cost of its ensnared member. He who has become entangled in some evil association, hearing the call of Christ, should arise and follow Him straightway, though he must leave behind a right hand or a right foot.



### **Patience under Unmerited Criticism**

AN interesting story of Michael Angelo is related, which illustrates the wise way of

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treating even ignorant, officious, and impertinent criticism. When the artist's great statue of David was placed for the first time in the Plaza in Florence, all the people were hushed in wonder before its noble majesty—all except Soderinni. This man looked at the statue from different points of view with a wise, critical air, and then suggested that the nose was a little too long. The great sculptor listened quietly to the suggestion, and taking his chisel and mallet, he set a ladder against the statue, in order to reach the face, and climbed up, carrying a little marble dust in his hand. Then he seemed to be working carefully upon the objectionable feature, as if changing it to suit his critic's taste, letting the marble dust fall as he wrought. When he came down again Soderinni again looked at the figure, now from this point of view and then from that, at last expressing entire approval. His suggestion had been accepted, as he supposed, and he was satisfied.

The story furnishes a good illustration of

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a great deal of fault-finding to which we must listen. It is unintelligent and valueless. But it cannot be restrained. There is no subject under Heaven on which these wise people do not claim to have a right to express an opinion, and there is no work so perfect that they cannot point out where it is faulty and might be improved. They are awed by no greatness. Such criticisms are worthy only of contempt, and such critics do not deserve courteous attention. But it is better that we treat them with patience. It helps at least in our own self-discipline, and it is the nobler way.



### Courage to Live Nobly

SOME of us are dimly aware of the great possibilities in us, yet lack the energy and the earnestness necessary to release our imprisoned faculties and give them wing. One of the most wonderful stories of the conquest of difficulty is that of Helen Keller. She was blind, she was deaf, she could not speak. Her

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soul was hidden away in an impenetrable darkness. Yet she has overcome all these seemingly invincible obstacles and barriers and now stands in the ranks of intelligence and scholarship. We have a glimpse of what goes on in her brave soul in such words as these: "Sometimes, it is true, a sense of isolation enfolds me like a cold mist as I sit alone at life's shut gate. Beyond, there is life and music and sweet companionship; but I may not enter. Fate, silent, pitiless, bars the way. Fain would I question His imperious decree; for my heart is still undisciplined and passionate; but my tongue will not utter the bitter, futile words that rise to my lips, and they fall back into my heart like unshed tears. Silence sits immense on my soul. Then comes hope with a smile and whispers, 'There is joy in self-forgetfulness.' So I try to make the light in others' eyes my sun, the music in others' ears my symphony, the smile on others' lips my happiness."

Helen Keller, in one little sentence that she has written, discloses the secret of all that she

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has achieved and attained. This resolve, she herself says, has been the keynote of her life. "I resolved to regard as mere impertinences of fate the handicaps which were placed about my life almost at the beginning. I resolved that they should not dwarf my soul, but, rather, should be made to blossom, like Aaron's rod that budded." Some of us, with no such hindrances, with no such walls and barriers imprisoning our being, with almost nothing in the way of the full development of our powers, with everything favorable thereto, have scarcely found our souls. We have eyes, but we see not the glory of God about us and above us. We have ears, but we hear not the music of divine love which sings all round us. It may not always be easy for us to learn to know the blessed things of God which fill all the world. But if we had half the eagerness that Helen Keller has shown in overcoming hindrance, half the energy, think how far we would be advanced to-day! We would then regard as mere impertinences of fate the handicaps

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which are about us, making it hard for us to reach out to find the best things of life. We would not allow our souls to be dwarfed by any hindrances; but would struggle on until we are free from all shackles and restraints and until we have grown into the full beauty of Christ.



### Beyond the Reach of Insult

ONCE in Wellesley College a student was complaining bitterly to the president of a certain rudeness that had been shown to her. The president said, "Why not be superior to these things, and let them go unregarded?" "Miss Freeman," retorted the student, "I wonder how you would like to be insulted." Miss Freeman drew herself up with fine dignity and said, "Miss S., there is no one living who could insult me."



### Undiscouraged

SOMETIMES men fail in their business ventures or in their professions. They give their best

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strength and their most strenuous efforts to some work, and it does not succeed. The work fails, but the men need not fail. It is a great thing to meet misfortune victoriously, coming out of it with life unhurt, with new strength and courage for another effort. A distinguished jurist lost an important case in the courts. He showed no feeling of discouragement, however, and a friend asked him how he could take his disappointment so calmly. "When it is over," said the great lawyer, "I have no more to do with it. If I kept thinking of my defeats, I feel that I should go mad. But I will not brood over them. When one case is done, I drop it, whatever the result may be, and go on to the next."

It is a fine thing to see a boy, when his competitor has won the game, reach out his hand to him in manly congratulation. He has lost the game, but he has won in nobility. The only real defeat is when a man shows an unmanly spirit and yields to depression after losing in business, or pouts and sulks and acts

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like a baby when he has failed to get the prize he wanted.



### Looking into the Mirror

A YOUNG woman writes that on three successive Sundays she heard three different preachers, and that each one of them spoke very earnestly on the importance of self-control. This persistent recurrence of the same lesson had set her to thinking of the subject, and she wrote with some alarm regarding her own lack of self-mastery. She saw that she had been allowing herself to fall into certain habits which are very unseemly, which are marring the sweetness of her disposition and making her disagreeable. She has been living in a boarding-house, and she began to see that she had been behaving herself in a very selfish way toward her hostess. She had permitted herself to become exacting and critical, finding fault with everything. She had been acting like a peevish, fretful child, losing her



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temper and giving way to her feelings in a most unseemly fashion.

It does not take long for one to get a reputation as a discontented person, as unreasonable, as hard to get along with, as disagreeable, or as a gossip, or a meddler in other people's matters. We need to keep it in our prayers continually that we may have the gift to see ourselves as others see us. It would be a good thing if we all were to read the thirteenth of First Corinthians at least once a week all through our life. It would be like looking into a mirror which would expose the unseemly things in our behavior, that we might cure them.



### III

## Growing like Christ



## Growing like Christ



### Growing like Christ

ONE of Hawthorne's short stories tells of the Great Stone Face. The rocks on a mountain were so grouped that, looked at from a certain point, there was the appearance of a human face. There was a tradition among the people that some day there would come to the valley a man with the same gracious features which this stone face bore, a man who would have the noble character and personality represented by these features.

A boy, Ernest, listened one evening to this tradition from his mother's lips, and the tradition sank into the boy's heart and stayed there. He would look up at the noble stone face and wonder when the man would come who should fulfill the old prophecy. Three times a man came who the people thought might be the man of the stone face, but each

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time they were disappointed. Through days and years, while the boy grew to manhood and the man into old age, he continued to look at the stone face, pondering its noble beauty and unconsciously growing himself all the while into the beauty which his soul had idealized in that image on the mountain. He grew into wisdom and strength, and became a friend of the people and their teacher. By and by a poet, listening one day to Ernest's words as he spoke to his neighbors, discovered the resemblance and exclaimed, "Why, Ernest himself is like the great stone face!" Looking at that benign face all the years, pondering its features, he had been transformed into its image.

So those who look intently at the face of Christ, entering into the spirit of His life, walking in daily fellowship with Him, bearing His cross, loving Him and doing His will, take His image upon their own lives, grow like Him, until neighbors and friends begin to see the resemblance and say, "Why, they are like the blessed face of Jesus Christ!"

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### Learning God's Lessons

ONE tells of entering a great, crowded church one Sunday morning, while the congregation was singing. A thousand voices joined in the psalm, but it seemed as if no two of the men were in accord. But as the visitor listened, he heard one voice which was singing quietly, clearly, distinctly, and sweetly, amid all the confused discords. Soon he noticed that the other voices, one by one, were coming into unison with this one. Before the last verse was reached the whole congregation was singing in perfect harmony. The mass of discordant voices had been dominated by the one true voice and all had been lifted up by it into its own sweet, clear tone.

In some such way does the will of God begin its work in a human heart. Its voice is clear and true and unflinching. It sings alone, however, in a chorus of harsh, discordant voices. Its work is to bring all these dissonances into harmony, to train all these voices of willfulness and waywardness, all these

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unmusical feelings and impulses and desires, into quiet unison with itself. When we say that certain persons are growing in grace we mean that the will of God is slowly and gradually bringing their undisciplined powers and tendencies into harmony. The music is growing sweeter. The lessons of patience, meekness, joy, peace, gentleness, thoughtfulness, kindness, charity, are being a little better learned each day.



### When Christ Sweetens the Life

A PLAIN-SPOKEN woman said to her daughter, who had been rude to a servant, "My dear, if you haven't enough kindness in you to go round, you must save it up for those you consider beneath you. Your superiors can do very well without it, but I insist that you shall be kind to those who need it most."

The first thing the love of Christ does is to sweeten all the life, the disposition, the spirit, the temper, the manners. One writes



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of a sweetbrier life. A little group of girls were together one rainy afternoon. One of them opened the door for a moment, and a wave of wet, green, growing things poured into the room. The girl at the door turned and said to the others, "Do you smell the sweetbrier down by the gate? It is always fragrant, but never so fragrant as in the rain." One of the girls said impulsively that this reminded her of her aunt. When asked to explain, she said, "Why, you see, there are ever so many roses that are fragrant—the roses themselves, I mean—but the sweetbrier is the only one whose leaves also are fragrant. That is why it makes me think of my aunt, because everything about her, everything she does, not the large things only, but all the common, every-day things—the leaves as well as the blossoms—have something beautiful in them. There is something in her spirit, a gentleness, a thoughtfulness, a kindness, a graciousness, that goes out in everything she does, in every word she speaks, in every influence that breathes from her life."

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### One Test of Christlikeness

A PASTOR was commending religion to a boy, expressing the hope that he would give his heart to God in his youth. "Religion is a continual joy," he said. "Look at your sister, Sarah. How much that dear girl enjoys her religion!" "Yes," drawled the boy, with frank candor, "Sadie may enjoy her religion, but nobody else in the house enjoys it." The boy's judgment may have been harsh and unjust, but there are professing Christians of whom it is true that their families do not enjoy their religion. It is not sweet. It is not a comfort to people. It is critical, rasping, censorious, exacting. It was a serious condemnation of this girl's religion that her family did not enjoy it.

A close observer has said, "Many a sister spoils her testimony in the church by her tongue in the kitchen." Another has said, "There are people who lead us Heavenward, but stick pins in us all the way." In a conversation overheard on a railway train,

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one reports catching this fragment of talk: "Yes, I suppose she's good—I know she is. But she isn't pleasant to live with." A goodness that isn't pleasant to live with is not the kind that is most needed in this world. We may do all our duties faithfully, conscientiously, bearing our share of the burdens and cares, and yet, if we are not pleasant to live with, we fail in the most essential quality of love. An unlovely spirit, frowns and chilling looks, sharp, impatient words, overbalance the eager, painstaking service that does so much to help in practical ways. What the person is mars the value of what he does.



### A Step at a Time

THE law of divine guidance is, step by step. One who carries a lantern on a country road at night sees only one step before him. If he takes that step, however, he carries his lantern forward and this makes another step plain. At length he reaches his destination

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without once stepping into the darkness. The whole way has been made light for him, though only a step at a time. This is the usual method of God's guidance. The Bible is represented as a lamp unto the feet. It is a lamp, or lantern—not a blazing sun, not even a lighthouse, but a plain, common lantern, which one can carry about in his hand. It is a lamp unto the feet, not throwing its beams afar, not illumining a whole hemisphere, but shining only on the bit of road on which the pilgrim's feet are walking.



### The Indispensable Christ

AN old writer tells of dreaming that a strange thing happened to his Bible. Every word in it that referred to Christ had faded from the pages. He turned to the New Testament to find the Gospels, and found only blank paper. He looked for the prophecies about the Messiah, which he used to read, and they had all been blotted out. He recalled sweet promises which he used to lean on with de-

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light, but not one of them could be found. The name of Christ had faded from every place where once it had been. What would it mean to us to find ourselves some day without Christ, to find that we had lost Him, to look for Him in some great need and find that we do not have Him any more?

There is a striking little story by Henry van Dyke, called "The Lost Word." It is a story of one of the early centuries. Hermas had become a Christian. He belonged to a wealthy and distinguished pagan family. His father disinherited him and drove him from his home when he accepted the new faith. From being one of the richest young men in Antioch he was now one of the poorest. In the Grove of Daphne one day he was sitting in sadness by a gushing spring, when there came to him a priest of Apollo, a pagan philosopher, who, seeing his unhappy mood, began to talk with him. In the end the old man had made this compact with Hermas. He assured him of wealth, of favor, of success, and Hermas was to give him only one word

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—he was to part forever with the name of Him he had learned to worship. “Let me take that word and all that belongs to it entirely out of your life, so that you shall never need to hear it or speak it again. I promise you everything,” said the old man, “and this is all I ask in return. Do you consent?” “Yes, I consent,” said Hermas. So he lost the word, the Blessed Name.

He had sold it. It was not his any more. He went back to Antioch, to his old home. There he found his father dying. For hours he had been calling for his son. The old man received him eagerly, said he had forgiven him, and asked his son for his forgiveness. He then asked Hermas to tell him the secret of the Christian faith which he had chosen. “You found something that made you willing to give up life for it. What was it you found?” The father was dying and his pagan belief gave him no comfort. He wanted now to know the Christian’s secret. Hermas began to tell his father the secret of his faith. “Father,” he said, “you must believe with all

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your heart and soul and strength in"—where was the word? What was the name? What had become of it? He groped in darkness but he could not find it. There was a lonely soul, crying out for the Name, but Hermas could not tell even his own dying father what it was. The word was lost.

Love came into his life and happiness was heaped on happiness. A child was born to him. But in all the wondrous joy something was wanting. Both he and his wife confessed it. They sought a dismantled shrine in the garden and Hermas sought to pour out his heart. "For all good gifts," he said, "for love, for life, we praise, we bless, we thank—" But he could not find the word. The Name was beyond his reach. There was no one to thank. He had lost God.

The boy grew into wondrous beauty. One day Hermas was victorious in the chariot races. Then he took his boy in the chariot and drove again around the ring to show him to the people. The tumult frightened the horses and they ran away. The child was

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tossed off, and when his father turned to look for him, he was lying like a broken flower in the sand. His distress was great. Days passed. "Is there nothing that we can do?" said the mother. "Is there no one to pity us? Let us pray for his life." Hermas sank on his knees beside his wife. "Out of the depths," he began—"Out of the depths we call for pity. The light of our eyes is fading. Spare the child's life, thou merciful—" But there was only a deathly blank. He could not find the Name. The word he wanted was lost.

This story has become true in actual life thousands of times. People have given up the name of Christ, sold it for money, or pleasure, or power, or sin. Then when times of need came, and they turned to find help, there was only blankness. In a home there is some great distress. One is nigh unto death, and friends want to pray for him. But they cannot pray. In childhood they were taught the words, "Our Father," but long since they have lost the holy Name, and now,



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when they would give worlds to go to God they cannot find the way.

In all the world there is no sadness so deep as the sadness of one who has lost Christ and then in some great need is trying to find Him. There is no ear to hear. It is a fearful thing to give up Christ, to lose Him. "Without Me ye can do nothing."



### Christ Liberty in Me

IN the later days of Grecian art, a prize was offered for the best statue of one of the goddesses. A youth in the country who loved this goddess set to work to compete for the prize. But he lacked the artist's gift and experience, and his statue was crude and clumsy, far from beautiful. It seemed to have no chance at all for winning the prize. But the goddess, so the heathen legend runs, knowing of the sincere devotion of this youth to her and his love for her, when the time came for the display of the statues in the competition, entered herself into the crude

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stone, and at once it glowed with divine beauty, by far the most beautiful of all the statues, winning the prize.

We are called to show the world the beauty of Christ, to reproduce the glory of His life, not in cold marble, but in Christian character, in Christian spirit, in Christian service. In our weakness and faultiness it may seem to us that we cannot do anything, that our life and work are unworthy of the holy name we bear. Our best seems most unlovely, crude, faulty, imperfect; but if we truly love Christ, if we truly believe on Him, and if at His command we strive to do that which seems impossible, Christ himself, knowing our love, and seeing our striving, will enter into our life and fill it with Himself. Then our poor efforts will become radiant and divine in their beauty.



### Tennyson and the Rosebush

A FRIEND once said to Lord Tennyson, "Tell me what Jesus Christ is to you, personally."

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They were walking in the garden, and close by was a rosebush full of wonderful roses. Pointing to this miracle of nature, Tennyson answered, "What the sun is to this rosebush, Jesus Christ is to me." The sun had wooed out from the bare, briery bush of the spring days all that marvelous beauty of roses. And whatever was lovely, winsome, and divine in the life of the great poet, he meant to say, had been wooed out of his natural self by the warmth of Christ's love.



### In Order to See Christ

WHEN Leonardo da Vinci's great picture, the "Last Supper," was finished, it is said there was much discussion among the monks as to which detail was the best. One suggested this and another that. At length they all agreed that the best feature was the painting of the table-cloth with its fine drawing and rich coloring. The artist was grieved when he heard what they said. It had been his wish

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to make the face of the Master so far the most winsome feature that it would instantly and overpoweringly attract every one's eye to itself. But now his friends praised the tablecloth and said nothing of the Master's face. Taking his brush, he blotted from the canvas every thread of the cloth, that the blessed face alone might win the adoration of all beholders. Let it be so with us. Whatever draws any eye or heart away from Christ, let us blot out. "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus."



### No Worldly Wisdom

MR. MORLEY, in his *Life of Gladstone*, referring to certain qualities in Gladstone's character and conduct which were inspired by his beliefs and convictions as a Christian, says, in effect: "There was no worldly wisdom in these lines of action," and adds: "But, then, what are people Christians for?" They belong to Christ. They wear Christ's name.

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They live in a code of heavenly laws. If they are not different from other people they are falling below the glory of their calling. People think meekness and patience in enduring wrong marks of weakness. No; they are marks of strength. That is what Christians are for.



### Christ in His Friends

THERE are some Christians who, by reason of their beautiful life, sweet spirit, and noble faithfulness, make us instinctively think of Christ. One said of another: "You have only to shake hands with that man to feel that he is a follower of Christ." A little child, when asked if he knew about Jesus, said: "Yes, He lives in our street." There was some one the child knew who was so beautiful in spirit, so gentle, so kind, that he visioned for the child's thought of Christ. You know such a person, in whose presence you could not do anything false or mean or wrong.

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### Rules for Christian Living

WE are at much pains to please the honored and beloved friend who stays with us a day or a week. We give him the best room. We shape all our household life, our engagements, our occupations, our hours, our meals, our pleasures, our conversation, to make him happy. We try to be at our best in our behavior. We seek to make the home atmosphere congenial to him. What kind of home should we make ours when Christ, the Son of God, is our guest? Love should abound. Jesus was glad to be guest in the home of Martha and Mary. If there be any nagging, wrangling, contention, strife, unrest in that home, would He have continued to come and to stay there? The Christian's home should be happier, brighter, heavenlier, than the one next door where Christ is not a guest.

The same test should be applied to business life. Is the Christian's store a different kind of store from that of his neighbor, who is not a Christian? Is the business done in a

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different way, a way that distinctly characterizes it as ruled by a heavenly spirit? Are different methods employed? Are people who buy goods any surer of being honestly dealt with in Christian-man's store, than they are in the store of Mr. Worldly-man, on the other side of the street? Do they receive more courteous treatment? Is there a higher standard of business honesty in it?

Is the Christian carpenter a better carpenter, and does he do more skillful and more conscientious work than the carpenter over the way who does not follow Christ? Is the Christian builder a better builder than the one who is not a Christian? Does he put more honest work into his houses, better materials, better masonry, better carpentering, better plumbing, better roofing, than the other man does? "What do ye Christians more than others?"

A successful business man was asked for the primary rule of Christian business life. He answered, "To think of the other man." He said, in explanation: "I can afford to lose

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in a transaction, but I cannot afford to have my customer lose. I may be the victim of misrepresentation, but I must never allow him to suffer from false statements or from any concealed defects in the goods I sell him. He must learn to trust me implicitly and to know that I would a hundred times rather suffer myself than to cause or allow him to suffer.”

This is the only wise business policy, as well as the only right thing to do. A business man cannot afford to take advantage of his customer. It is suicidal for him to do so. He may pocket a little more money once or twice, but he has lost his reputation, which is his best asset. While this is good business, it is also good religion. We must think of the other man's interest as well as our own, before our own. How is it in fact among Christian people? What do Christian business men do more than those who are not Christians? Does the world see any difference?

The same rule should apply in our personal relations with others. Is there anything in



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our life and character and conduct that distinguishes us from those with whom we associate who are not Christians? Are we better than they are? Are we more patient? Are we more thoughtful and unselfish? Are we kinder and more helpful as neighbors? A Christian woman said: "The rule of conduct that has done most for me in my life I found the other day in a newspaper. It is this: 'Make yourself good, and make other people happy.'"



### Transfigured Lives

SOON after Judson reached Burma, he met one day a native woman. He could not speak a word of the language, but touching the woman's hand he looked up and pointed upward. She went home and told her friends that she had met an angel. His very face seemed transfigured. Now and then a saintly face is seen that seems to have almost a supernatural glow in it, as if a holy fire burned back of it. Every soul writes its

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story more or less distinctly on the face, which is the index of the inner life. Discontent soon shows its fevered spirit in fretted features. Anger soon reveals its unlovableness in the sinister lines it stamps on the brow. Unholy passion in time blots the delicate marks of purity and innocence from the countenance and leaves instead the tarnished marrings wrought by its own vileness. There is no cherished sin which does not work up out of the heart, however deeply it is hidden there, and reveal itself in some way in the face. Men think their unhallowed secret sin is not known, but ofttimes they are mistaken; the thing they suppose hidden from all eyes but their own, all eyes see in telltale signs which no art can obscure.

In like manner, good in the heart works its way up into the face, and prints its own beauty there. Love in the life softens the features and gives them a warmth like the gentle beauty of spring flowers. Peace in the heart soon gives a quiet calm to the countenance. Many a perturbed, restless face

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grows placid and reposeful under the influence of peace. Purity in the soul shows itself in the upward look and the thoughtful reverence which tells of communion with God. Benevolence writes its autograph on brow and cheek. Thus in a sense even the physical features share in the transfiguration of the life of faith and holiness.



### Why Her Life was Beautiful

PROFESSOR DRUMMOND tells of a young girl who became wondrously beautiful in her life, growing into a rare Christlikeness. Her friends wondered what the secret could be. She wore upon her breast a little locket which she always kept closed, refusing to allow any one to see within it. Once, however, when she was very ill, a friend was permitted to open it, and found there only a little piece of paper, bearing the words, "Whom not having seen I love." This told the whole story. Her love for the unseen Christ was the secret

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of that beautiful life which had so impressed itself upon her friends.



### Never off Duty

A LITTLE girl, applying for membership in a church, when asked by the pastor what she thought it would be for her to be a Christian, replied: "I suppose it will be to do what Jesus would do, and to behave as Jesus would behave, if he were a little girl and lived at our house." There could be no better definition of a consecrated life. We are always to ask, "What would Jesus do?" and then try to do the same. A Christian is always a Christian, wherever he may go. He is never off duty. He always represents Christ. He must always strive to be what Jesus would be and do what Jesus would do in his place.



### The Things that Scar the Heart

THE things that hurt and scar our lives are resentment, unforgiveness, bitter feeling, de-

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sire for revenge. Men may beat us until our bones are broken, but if love fails not in our hearts meanwhile, we have come through the experience unharmed, with no marks of injury upon us. One writing of a friend who was dreadfully hurt in a runaway accident says that the woman will be probably scarred for life, and then goes on to speak of the wondrous patience in her sufferings and of the peace of God that failed not in her heart for a moment. The world may hurt our bodies, but if we suffer as Christ suffered there will be no trace of scarring or wounding in our inner life.

We may learn from our Master how to endure wrong so as not to be hurt by it. "When He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." He did not take the righting of His wrongs into His own hands. He had power and could have summoned legions of angels to fight for Him, but He did not lift a finger in His own defence. When Pilate spoke to Jesus of his power to crucify or release Him, Jesus

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said, "Thou wouldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above." God could build a wall of granite about us, if He would, so that no enemy can touch us. He could shield us so that no power on earth can do us any hurt. He could deliver us from every enemy. We should remember when we are suffering injury or injustice at the hands of others, that God could have prevented it. He could have held back the hand that it should not touch us. He could have ordered that no harm should be done to us, that we should suffer no injury.

This wrong that you are suffering, whatever it is, is therefore from God, something He permits to come to you. It is not an accident, a lawless occurrence, something that has broken away from the divine control, something that God could not prevent breaking into your life. In nature not a drop of water in the wildest waves of the sea ever gets away from the leash of the law. Law reigns everywhere, in things small and great.

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### The Face of the Christian

A MISSIONARY in Tokyo tells of a Japanese woman who came to speak about having her daughter received into the school for girls which the teacher was conducting. She asked if only beautiful girls were admitted. "No," was the reply; "we take any girl who desires to come." "But," continued the woman, "all your girls that I have seen are very beautiful." The teacher replied, "We tell them of Christ, and seek to have them take Him into their hearts, and this makes their faces lovely." The woman answered, "Well, I do not want my daughter to become a Christian, but I am going to send her to your school to get that look in her face."

Christ is the sweetener and beautifier of the lives and the very face of those who become his friends. He gives them peace, and peace brightens and transforms their features. He teaches them love, and love makes them beautiful.

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### Not Embittered

WE may be treated unjustly by one to whom we have been a faithful friend for years. Will that absolve us from being kind any longer to the ungrateful person? No; Christian love is not to be affected by any treatment it may receive from others. The true patriot is to be loyal to his country even though the country has been ungrateful to him. The Christian in his private relations is never to let his heart become embittered by any injustice done to him.

Sometimes beside the brackish sea you will find a spring of water gushing up, as sweet as any that bursts from the hillside. When the tide is low you dip up its clear water and drink it and it refreshes you. A few moments later you come again and find the tide covering the place, its bitter waters rolling over the spring; but in a little while you pass again, and now the tide has rolled out to sea. You find the spring again and its clear streams are pouring up as sweet as before,



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without a trace of the brackishness of the sea in which the spring has been folded so long. So should it be with the love of the Christian heart. No wrong, no ingratitude, no cruelty, should ever embitter it. We should never cease to pray for others because they have been unkind to us.



### Beautiful Within

THE ideal life is one that is beautiful within and without. In the description of the King's daughter, the common version of our Bible says she is "all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold." The splendor of her spirit within is matched by her outer raiment.

One day a thoughtful girl was reading in an old book. It was time-worn, but on its pages were golden words which enshrined the wisdom of an ancient age. As the girl read, her eyes lingered on one rare sentence, which seemed to have a special message for her that day. As she pondered it, it took fast hold

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of her thought until she began to breathe it as her own. It was a prayer—"God make me beautiful within."

It was the beginning of a new life for the earnest-spirited girl. God had found her and touched her heart. She was hearing a voice which called her to an experience that she had not known before.



### Learning to be Gentle

THERE is a beautiful legend of the sweet-toned bell of the angels in heaven which softly rings at twilight. Its notes make a music supremely entrancing. But none can hear it save those only whose hearts are free from passion and clear of unlovingness and all sin. This is only a legend. No one on earth can hear the ringing of the bells of heaven. But there is a sweeter music which the lowliest may hear. Those who live the gentle life of patient, thoughtful, selfless love make a music whose strains are enrapturing.

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“The heart that feels the approval  
That comes from a kindly deed  
Knows well there’s no sweeter music  
On which the spirit can feed.

“In sweet’ning the life of another,  
In relieving a brother’s distress,  
The soul finds its highest advancement,  
And the noblest blessedness.

“That life is alone worth the living  
That lives for another’s gain;  
The life that comes after such living  
Is the rainbow after the rain.

“This spirit of human kindness  
Is the angel the soul most needs;  
It sings its most beautiful pæan,  
While the heart does its noblest deeds.”



### The Beauty of the Imperfect

A MOTHER found her boy trying to draw.  
Very rude were the attempts, but to her quick  
eye and eager heart the figures were beau-  
tiful. They had in them the prophecies of the

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child's future and the mother stooped and kissed him in her gladness, praising his work. Compared with the artist's masterpiece when the boy had reached his prime, these rough sketches had no loveliness whatever. But they were beautiful in their time as the boy's first efforts.

The same is true of all faithful efforts to learn how to live. We may follow Christ very imperfectly, stumbling at every step, realizing but in the smallest measure the qualities of ideal discipleship; yet if we are doing our best, and are continually striving toward whatsoever things are lovely, our efforts and attainments are beautiful in the eye of the Master and pleasing to Him.



### Forgiving like Christ

A CHRISTIAN man was called upon by another who had wronged him in ways most malign and offensive, asking now, however, in a great and pressing need, for help. Other persons

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had been appealed to by him, but had refused to do anything. Even his own brothers and sisters had turned away, saying they would do nothing for him. All the world had grown tired helping him; no one was left. When the appeal came to this man to relieve the distress, though there was no confession made of the grievous wrong done in the past, no apology offered, he quietly and without a word, at sore cost to himself, cheerfully gave the help that was needed. See the print of the nails!



IV

**Ministering by the Way**





## Ministering by the Way



### In the Common Ways

THE way to find Christ is to look for Him in the common ways. This is the way to find our duty, too. Many people are always thinking of their mission in the world as something unusual. They do not suppose that anything so common as life's ordinary tasks could be the thing God wants them to do, the thing they were sent into the world to do. When they think of being of use in the world, they expect to have the opportunity of doing some fine thing, something out of the ordinary routine. But, as a rule, we find our best work, the things we are meant to do, our chances for being useful to others, in the line of our common duty. Here is a scrap from a recent story :

“If I could only be of some use in the

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world,' cried Frances, impatiently, 'or could fill some place in it, I would not complain.'

"'Well,' suggested Cousin Patty, 'making beds is very useful work. Your mother seems to need some one now to fill the place of mender-in-ordinary in the family. Why not begin where you are to be useful? I never saw anybody willing to be of use who couldn't be used right where he stood. As for filling places—did you ever think that you are put into your own place so as to fill that? Wanting to climb out of your own place before you have filled it, to go hunting for an empty one somewhere else, never seemed to me a sensible thing to do.'"

This fragment of conversation suggests a very common mistake, and the way to prevent making it. Do the duty that comes next to your hand, and you will find yourself near to heaven. Do not wander everywhere, looking for Christ. He is not far off. You do not need to climb mountains or cross seas to see Him. Look for Him in the midst of the tasks of the common days. He was made known at

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Emmaus, not in some splendid transfiguration, but in the breaking of bread at the common meal. Do your duty in the lowly ways and you will see the blessed Face beaming its love upon you.



### The Song that Frees Us

SOME of us feel that we are not yet free. We cannot live the true, sweet life we want to live. But Christ is able to set us free. He overcame the world, all the power of evil, and in His name we can be more than conquerors. This is the good news which the gospel brings. From old crusading times comes a story. A certain king, on his way back from the Holy Land, was captured and cast into prison—where, none of his friends knew. The king had a favorite minstrel, who determined to find his master. He went throughout the country, pausing before the door of every prison, singing the songs he had been wont to sing before his king. He hoped thus to find the captive monarch. Long he journeyed

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in vain, but at last, as he stood before a prison window and sang, he heard a voice within—the voice of him he sought. The old songs, sung at the prison window, were heard by the captive, who was soon released. So the messengers of Christ go through this world singing the song of Christ's love before every prison door. And whosoever hears the song is made free.



### Her Place of Witness

A SETTLEMENT worker found a young Christian girl in a very unhappy state of mind because she had to work in a mill when she wanted to study and "get up a little." She was a worthy girl, capable of making a good deal of her life. But at present her home needed her help, and it was impossible, therefore, for her to give up her uncongenial work.

The friend gave the girl a book which she thought might help her, and left her to work out the problem for herself. The book suggested certain things the girl might do, even

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in the mill, to make her life splendidly worth while.

“You know,” she said one day, “there is only one of the twelve girls in my room who is a Christian.” “Well,” suggested her friend, “there is your opportunity.” Since then the girl has not only been happy and at peace herself, but she has brought several of the girls to Christ and spoken to others who are interested. She accepted her assignment, became Christ’s witness, and the noisy, uncongenial mill has become a place of glad service.



### The Man with a Genius for Helping

“THERE is a man,” said his neighbor, speaking of the village carpenter, “who has done more good, I really believe, in this community than any other person who ever lived in it. He cannot talk very well in a prayer meeting, and he doesn’t often try. He isn’t worth two thousand dollars, and its very little he can put down on subscription-papers for any object. But a new family never moves into

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the village that he does not find them out, to give them a neighborly welcome, and to offer any little service he can render. He is always on the lookout to give strangers a seat in his pew at church. He is always ready to watch with a sick neighbor, and look after his affairs for him. I have sometimes thought that he and his wife kept house-plants in winter just to be able to send flowers to invalids. He finds time for a pleasant word for every child he meets; and you'll see the children climbing into his one-horse wagon when he has no other load. He really seems to have a genius for helping folks in all sorts of common ways, and it does me good every day just to meet him on the street."



### The Ministries that Count Most

A LEGEND says that when the monk Theodosius rose one morning, there were three imperative things in his plan for the day; three things which he determined to do before the setting of the sun. But early in the morn-

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ing there came from a neighboring convent a novice, asking Theodosius to give him instruction in the painter's art. The monk set to work patiently to tutor the novice, leaving his own task yet undone. At length the novice departed; but scarcely had Theodosius resumed his work when a mother came, eagerly seeking his aid for her sick child. Long was he detained, attending his patient, until the boy was relieved and restored. It was then time for vespers; and then a brother monk in sore distress lingered, poured out his story on Theodosius' breast, and was comforted. Thus all the day was gone, and the monk had scarcely touched the things he had planned to do. He then

“turned wearily to bed,  
Praying, ‘O God! to glorify thy name  
Three things I purposed; now, with heart-  
felt shame  
I see the day is ended, and not one  
Of all those things my feeble skill hath done.  
Yet, since my life is thine, be thine to say  
Where shall be done the duties of the day;

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And in thy work, my work perfected be,  
Or given o'er in sacrifice to thee.'

"Then suddenly upon his inward ear,  
There fell the answer, gentle, calm, and  
clear:

'Thrice hath my name to-day been glorified  
In loving service,—teacher, friend, and guide.  
Such with God for man, if gladly done,  
Is heaven's ministry on earth begun.  
To work the works I purpose is to be  
At one with saints, with angels, and with me.'"

The divinest ministries of each day are the things of love which God sends across our way. The half-hour the busy man takes from his business to comfort a sorrow, to help a discouraged brother to start again, to lift up one who has fainted by the way, to visit a sick neighbor and minister consolation, or to give a young person needed counsel, is the half-hour of the day that will shine the most brightly when the records of life are unrolled before God.



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### Showing Our Colors

SOME of us would like to choose for ourselves our place of witnessing. It is easy to rise among Christian people on a quiet Sunday and say, "I am a Christian, too." But it may be harder to stand up to-morrow among those who do not love Christ and say the same words. A young man finds himself the only Christian in the office where he works. He shrinks from showing his colors there. But he is the only one Christ has in that office. If he should fail to witness for his Master in the presence of the men who are there they will fail to hear about Christ, perhaps will be lost for want of a word, and the blame will be his. Christ knows where He needs us and our service, and we should never fail Him wherever we are.



### Witnesses for Christ

BEFORE Jesus went away from earth He told His disciples that they should be His witnesses,

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This referred not only to the words they should speak concerning Him, but to every influence of their lives. Sometimes in a court trial a great deal depends upon what one particular witness may say. Men are brought long distances to testify in certain cases because of the importance of what they know. A witness journeyed all the way from South America to the United States to occupy the witness stand but for five minutes, to answer only two or three questions. Recently several distinguished men traveled a thousand miles to say a few words in court regarding the personal character of an accused man and his standing and reputation for integrity in his former home. None of us know how much we owe to the testimony of our neighbors concerning us, the good words they speak for us, the kindly mention they make of the things we do. If false or calumnious things are said of us by an enemy, the testimony of those who know us in our every-day life is our sole refuge. Our reputation is the composite of all the things that people who see much of

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us and know our daily lives witness concerning us.



### Responding to the Vision

ONE bitter winter night one of the boys Dr. Barnardo had been teaching asked leave to remain all night in the stable where the little school was held. "Oh, no! run away home," said the doctor. "Got no home," said the boy. "Be off," said the teacher sharply; "go to your mother." The boy said he had no mother, had no father, didn't live anywhere, had no friends. Dr. Barnardo talked with him further, and learned that he was only one of many waifs who literally had no home, no father, no mother, no friends, lived nowhere. The boy led him out—it was midnight—and showed him where a number of these boys stayed. Peeping into barrels, boxes, and holes, and striking matches, he found at last a woe-begone group of eleven poor boys, from nine to eighteen years old, sleeping in all postures, clad in their rags, with nothing to cover

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them, exposed to the bitter wind—a spectacle to angels and men, sorrowful enough to break any heart of love.

“Shall I wake ’em up?” asked Jim Jarvis, the boy-guide who had brought Dr. Barnardo to this scene of want. “Shall I show you another lay, sir? There’s lots more.” But the young student had seen enough. Sick at heart, he went home, saddened, amazed, bewildered, but the vision of misery and wretchedness he had seen led to his devoting his life to the saving of waifs and strays. During the forty years that he lived, giving himself wholly to this one work, he rescued more than fifty thousand children from the gutter, fed them, trained them, and set most of them, at least, in honest ways of life. He organized a great rescue work which is going on, now that he is gone. All this because he was not disobedient to the vision which broke upon his eyes that cold midnight.

Wherever a vision of suffering, of need, of degradation, of want, or of sin is shown to us, it should be regarded as a call to us

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to do something to give relief, to rescue, or to save.



### The Secret of Helpfulness

THE secret of abundant helpfulness is found in the desire to be a help, a blessing, to all we meet. One wrote to a bereft mother of her little one who had gone to heaven: "Gratia was in our home only once when but five years of age, and yet the influence of her brief stay has been filling every day since in all these three years, especially in the memory of one little sentence which was continually on the child's lips wherever she went, 'Can I help thee?'" We begin to be like Christ only when we begin to wish to be helpful. Where this desire is ever dominant, the life is an unceasing benediction. Rivers of water are pouring out from it continually to bless the world.

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### A Coveted Honor

WE can readily call to mind friends and acquaintances with whom life has passed roughly during the year. Let us write to them. Write to the friend far away, who is fighting a hard battle, and tell him that you think of him constantly. Write to the sick friend who fancies herself of no use in the world and tell her that her life matters much to you. Hugh Price Hughes, Dr. Robertson Nicholl says, kept very few letters, but in searching through his desk one day his wife came upon one from a special friend which Mr. Hughes had not destroyed. He had been passing through a serious trial, and this friend had written him a letter of encouragement and strong affection. Then Dr. Nicholl says, "If I were to covet any honor of friendship, it would be this—that some letters of mine might be found in the desks of my friends, when their life struggle is ended."

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### Where Heaven Is

WE must not make the mistake of thinking that Christian work consists merely in devotions and acts of worship. A minister preached one day about heaven, and his sermon was greatly enjoyed by his people. Next morning a wealthy member of the church met the pastor and spoke warmly of the discourse. "That was a good sermon about heaven," he said. "But you didn't tell us where heaven is."

"Oh," said the minister, "I can tell you now. Do you see yonder hill-top? In a cottage there, is a member of our church. She is sick in one bed, and her two children are sick in another bed. I have just come from her house. There is not a lump of coal, nor a stick of wood, nor a loaf of bread, nor any flour in that house. If you will go down town and buy some provisions and some coal, and send them to that home, and then go yourself to the house and read the Twenty-third Psalm beside the woman's sick-bed, and kneel

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and pray with her, you will know where heaven is."

Next morning the man met his pastor again, and said, "You were right—I found heaven." In the place of worship we learn of heaven's joy and happiness; out in the fields of need we find heaven in service of love.



### Planting Beauty Everywhere

A WRITER tells of an English nobleman, who, when he went over his estate, always carried acorns in his pocket; and when he found a bare spot, he would plant one of them. By and by there would be a tree growing on the place, adorning it. So we may plant on every empty space of time a seed of something beautiful, which will not only be an adornment, but will prove a blessing to others. It is one of the finest secrets of life to know how to redeem the minutes from waste, and to make them bearers of blessing, of cheer, of encouragement, of good, to others.



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### The Only One

IF you are the only Christian in the shop, the store, or the office where you work, a peculiar responsibility rests upon you, a responsibility which no other one shares with you. You are Christ's only witness in your place. If you do not testify there for Him, there is no other one who will do it. Miss Havergal tells of her experience in the girls' school at Düsseldorf. She went there soon after she had become a Christian and had confessed Christ. Her heart was very warm with love for her Saviour and she was eager to speak for Him. To her amazement, however, she soon learned that among the hundred girls in the school, she was the only Christian. Her first thought was one of dismay—she could not confess Christ in that great company of worldly, un-Christian companions. Her gentle, sensitive heart shrank from a duty so hard. Her second thought, however, was that she could not refrain from confessing Christ. She was the only one Christ had there and she must

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be faithful. "This was very bracing," she writes. "I felt I must try to walk worthy of my calling for Christ's sake. It brought a new and strong desire to bear witness for my Master. It made me more watchful and earnest than ever before, for I knew that any slip in word or deed would bring discredit on my Master." She realized that she had a mission in that school, that she was Christ's witness there, His only witness, and that she dare not fail.



### How a Kindness Multiplies

A SAILOR boy brought home a fuchsia to his mother from some foreign cruise. She put it in a window-box and it grew, and by its beauty drew attention to itself. Soon there were fuchsias in other neighboring windows and in countless gardens. Thus the one little plant which the boy brought over seas multiplied itself and spread everywhere. If on the judgment day the Master shows this boy fuchsias growing in gardens, in window-

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boxes, in conservatories in many lands, and says, "You planted all these; all this beauty is from your hand," the boy will be overwhelmed with surprise. He never saw these thousands of blooming plants. "Lord, when did I plant all these?" But we understand it. His hand brought one little plant, in love, from a foreign land, and the one has multiplied into all this vast harvest of loveliness.



### How the Master Reveals Himself

H. ISABEL GRAHAM has written a beautiful story in the form of a legend of a monk who knelt continually in his cell and prayed to be fashioned into the likeness of the cross. He had made a vow that none should see his face until he had looked upon the face of Christ. So his devotions were unbroken. The birds sang by his cell window and the children played without, but the monk heeded not either the children or the birds. In the absorption of his soul in its passion for the

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Christ, he was oblivious to all earthly things. One morning he seemed to hear a spirit-voice saying that his prayer to see the Blessed One should be answered that day. He was very glad and made special preparation for the coming of the vision. There was a gentle knocking at his door by and by, and the voice of a child was heard pleading to be fed and taken in. Her feet were cold, her clothing was thin. But the monk was so intent on the coming of the vision that he could not pause to minister to any human needs. Evening drew on, the place became dreary, the tapers burned low. Why was the vision so long in appearing? Then, with bitter grief, the monk heard the answer that the vision had already come, had lingered at his door, and then, unwelcomed, had sobbed and turned away. Jesus had come in a little child, cold and hungry, had knocked, and called, and waited, and, grieved, had gone. The monk had been expecting some shining splendor, like the burning bush, or the transfiguration. The vision had come as a little

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## Ministering by the Way

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child in need, seeking help, and he had not recognized it, and had refused to receive it.

We have a desire to see Christ. We long for visions of His beauty and glory. We wait in our place of prayer, hoping that He will reveal Himself in some theophany. We sit at the Holy Supper and plead with Him to show Himself to us in some celestial brightness. We go apart into some sacred retreat, and pray and meditate, thinking He will come to meet us there. But we are much more likely to have Him come to us in some human need to which we may minister, in some sorrow which we may comfort, or in some want which we can supply. "I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; . . . I was sick, and ye visited me. . . . Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."



THE HISTORY OF THE  
LORDS OF THE  
MOUNTAINS OF SWITZERLAND

V

**Serbing the Lord**

The first part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland. The second part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland. The third part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland. The fourth part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland. The fifth part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland. The sixth part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland. The seventh part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland. The eighth part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland. The ninth part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland. The tenth part of the history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland is a history of the lords of the mountains of Switzerland.





## Serving the Lord



### Harnessed for Christ

A MAN found a wild torrent in the mountain. It could work only waste and ruin as it rushed, uncontrollable, down the gorge. He built a flume for it, and carried its wild flood in quiet streams down into the valley, where they watered the fields and gardens, gave drink to the thirsty, and turned many a wheel of industry. That was far better than if he had dried up the torrent. It was far better, too, than if he had left it to flow on forever with destructive force. Now it was flumed and made to do good, and make the world richer and more beautiful. That is what God wants to do with the cravings, the desires, the passions, the longings, and all the mighty energies of our nature. They are not to be destroyed. Yet they are not to be allowed

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## The Glory of the Commonplace

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to work waste and ruin in efforts to find gratification in merely earthly channels, in unbridled license.

That is sin's way. Rather, these great forces in our nature are to come under the yoke of Christ, and are to be led by him into all holy service for God and man.



### Probing Our Religion

It is related of a great artist that he was once wandering in the mountains of Switzerland, when some officials met him and demanded his passport. "I do not have it with me," he replied, "but my name is Doré." "Prove it, if you are," replied the officers, knowing who Doré was, but not believing that this was he. Taking a piece of paper the artist hastily sketched a group of peasants who were standing near, and did it with such grace and skill that the officials exclaimed, "Enough, you are Doré."

The world cares little for a mere pro-

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## Serving the Lord

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fession. We say we are Christians, and the challenge is, "Prove it." If we are of Christ we must be able to do the works of Christ, to live the life of Christ, to show the spirit of Christ. The artist's skillful drawing proved his identity. We must prove that we are the followers of our Master by the love, the grace, the beauty, the holiness of our life.

Religion is not merely a matter of creed and profession, or of church-going and public worship; it is far more a matter of daily life. It is not how we behave on Sundays, nor the kind of creed we hold, nor the devoutness of our worship; it is the way we act at home, in school, in business, in society, in our associations with men. It is vitally important that all who are Christ's in name shall manifest Christ's beauty in life and character. It is not enough to witness for Christ in our words; we are to be witnesses to Christ and for Him in ourself. It is not enough to preach the gospel in sermon or exhortation; the gospel that honors Christ truly is the gospel men read in our daily life.

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## The Glory of the Commonplace

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### Loyalty to Christ

DR. G. CAMPBELL MORGAN tells of a friend of his who had a little daughter that he dearly loved. They were great friends, the father and daughter, and were always together. But there seemed to come an estrangement on the child's part. The father could not get her company as formerly. She seemed to shun him. If he wanted her to walk with him, she had something else to do. The father was grieved and could not understand what the trouble was. His birthday came and in the morning his daughter came to his room, her face radiant with love, and handed him a present. Opening the parcel, he found a pair of exquisitely worked slippers.

The father said, "My child, it was very good of you to buy me such lovely slippers." "O father," she said, "I did not buy them—I made them for you." Looking at her he said, "I think I understand now what long has been a mystery to me. Is this what you have been doing the last three months?"

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## Serving the Lord

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“Yes,” she said, “but how did you know how long I have been at work on them?” He said, “Because for three months I have missed your company and your love. I have wanted you with me, but you have been too busy. These are beautiful slippers, but next time buy your present and let me have you all the days. I would rather have my child herself than anything she could make for me.”

We are in danger of being so busy in the Lord’s work that we cannot be enough with the Lord in love’s fellowship. He may say to us, “I like your works, your toils, your service, but I miss the love you gave me at first.” There is real danger that we get so busy in striving to be active Christians, so absorbed in our tasks and duties, our efforts to bring others into the church, that Christ himself shall be less loved and shall miss our communing with him. Loyalty means first of all devotion. Has Christ really the highest place in your heart? It is not your work that he wants most—it is you. It is beautiful to do things for him—it is still more beautiful to

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make a home for him in your heart. A young man, at great cost, has brought from many countries the most beautiful materials he could find and has built as a memorial to his dead wife an exquisite little chapel. Only a few men could do anything so rare, so lovely. But the poorest of us can enthrone our loved ones in our hearts, and the poorest of us can please Christ even more by making a little sanctuary in our hearts for him.



### Fleeing from Duty

THERE is a story of a woman who had had many sorrows. Parents, husband, children, wealth, all were gone. In her great grief she prayed for death, but death came not. She would not take up any of her wonted work for Christ. One night she had a dream. She thought she had gone to heaven. She saw her husband and ran to him with eager joy, expecting a glad welcome. But, strange to say, no answering joy shone on his face—only surprise and displeasure. “How did you

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## Serving the Lord

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come here?" he asked. "They did not say you were to be sent for to-day. I did not expect you for a long time yet."

With a bitter cry she turned from him to seek her parents. But instead of the tender love for which her heart was longing, she met from them only the same amazement and the same surprised questions.

"I'll go to my Saviour," she cried. "He will welcome me if no one else does." When she saw Christ there was infinite love in his look, but his words throbbed with sorrow as he said: "Child, child, who is doing your work down there?" At last she understood. She had no right yet to be in heaven. Her work was not finished. She had fled away from her duty.

This is one of the dangers of sorrow, that in our grief for those who are gone we lose our interest in those who are living and slacken our zeal in the work which is allotted to us. When one asked to be allowed to bury his father before beginning to follow Christ, the answer was "Leave the dead to bury their

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## The Glory of the Commonplace

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own dead but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God." However great our bereavement, we may not drop our tasks until the Master calls us away.



### Sharing Our Blessings

DR. WATSON (Ian Maclaren) tells of once hearing a plain sermon in a little country church. It was a layman, a farmer, who preached, but Dr. Watson says he never heard so impressive an ending to any sermon as he heard that day. After a fervent presentation of the gospel, the preacher said with great earnestness: "My friends, why is it that I go on, preaching to you, week by week? It is just this—because I can't eat my bread alone." That is the Master's own burden—his heart is breaking to have men share with him the blessings of life. He cannot bear to be alone in his joy. There is no surer test of love for Christ than the longing to have others love him.



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## Serving the Lord

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### The Most Precious Thing

THE first step in returning to God is always to make confession. Until we have done this we cannot be forgiven, and until we are forgiven there can be no restoration to the divine favor. In an Oriental story, nothing would open the gate of heaven for the exiled spirit until she found a man weeping bitterly over his sins. Catching a tear as it fell from his eye, she brought that to the angel-warder and was admitted. A class of pupils in an institution for the deaf were asked by a visitor, "What is the most precious thing in the world?" Many different answers were given. One wrote, "Going home;" another, "A mother's love;" another, "To have a friend." When the last and youngest came to the board she wrote, with trembling fingers and bowed head, "The tear of penitence." And she was right. If we have sinned, there is no gift we can bring to the Lord that is half so precious in his sight as a penitential tear. It will open heaven's gates to us when all the

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good works of a hundred lifetimes would not cause it to move on its hinges.



### Working for God

THE truest life is that which is lived most fully and unbrokenly unto God. In one of his books Dr. W. L. Watkinson relates that Jenny Lind said to John Addington Symonds, in accounting for the motive and spirit of her wonderful singing, "I sing to God." She meant that she looked into God's face, as it were, and consciously sang to him. She did not sing to the vast audience that hung on her words and was held spellbound by them. She was scarcely conscious of any face before her but God's. She thought of no listening ear but God's. We may not all be able to enter into such perfect relation with God as did this marvelous singer, but this is the only true ideal of all Christian life. We should do each piece of work for God. The business man should do all his business for God. The artist should paint his picture

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for God. The writer should write his book for God. The farmer should till his ground for God. This means that we are always engaged in the Father's business and must do it all in a way that he will approve. Jesus was a carpenter, for many years working at the carpenter's bench. We are sure that he did each piece of work for his Father's eye. He did it skillfully, conscientiously, beautifully. He did not skimp it nor hurry through it so as to get away from the shop earlier.



### Flaws that Mar

It is not enough to make our lives true only so far as men can see them. We have but scorn for men who profess truth, and then in their secret life reveal falsehood, deception, insincerity. There must be truth through and through in the really noble and worthy building. A little flaw, made by a bubble of air in the casting, has been the cause of the breaking of the great beam

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years afterward, and the falling of the immense bridge whose weight rested upon it. Truth must be in the character—absolute truth. The least falsehood mars the beauty of the life.



### For God's Eye

WHEN a heathen artist was asked why he took so much pains with the back of the figures he was chiselling, since they would be against the walls and no one would ever see them, his noble answer was, "The gods will see them." Always we are working for God's eye, and should ever do our best.

Not only are we working for God's eye, but it is God's own work that we are doing. Whether a man is a carpenter, a painter, a stone-cutter, a farmer, a teacher or a minister, it is God's work he has in hand; and he must do his best. Old Stradivarius, the violin-maker, was right when he said that if his hand slacked he would rob God. We rob God whenever we do anything carelessly, or

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## Serving the Lord

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do less than our best. A writer says, "The universe is not quite complete without my work well done." We misrepresent God and disappoint him when we do in a slovenly way anything, however small, that he gives us to do.



### How Careful Work Told

MEN said the old smith was foolishly careful as he wrought on the chain he was making in his dingy shop in the heart of the great city. But he heeded not their words, and only wrought with greater painstaking. Link after link he fashioned, and at last the chain was finished and carried away. In time it lay coiled on the deck of a great ship which sped back and forth on the ocean. There seemed no use for it, for the great anchor never was needed, and the chain lay there uncoiled. So years passed. But one night there was a fearful storm, and the ship was in sore peril of being hurled upon the rocks. Anchor after anchor was dropped, but none

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of them availed; the chains were broken like threads. At last the great sheet anchor was cast into the sea, and the old chain was quickly uncoiled and run out until it grew taut. All watched to see if it would bear the awful strain. It sang in the wild storm as the vessel's weight surged upon it. It was a moment of intense anxiety; the ship with its cargo of a thousand lives depended upon this one chain. What now if the old smith had wrought carelessly even on one link of his chain? But he had put honesty, truth, and invincible strength into every part of it, and it stood the test, holding the ship in safety until the storm was over and the morning came.



### The Nobility of Service

THOSE highest in rank in this world are they that serve the most cheerfully, the most self-forgetfully. "Ich Dien" is the motto under the triple plume of the Prince of Wales. The origin of the motto dates back more than five

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## Serving the Lord

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hundred and fifty years. It was originally the motto of John of Luxemburg, King of Bohemia, who was killed in the battle of Crecy in 1346. Edward found the King dead on the field, with the royal flag on his breast, and under the crest of three ostrich feathers the words, "Ich Dien"—"I serve." Edward gave it to his son, and now for more than five hundred and fifty years it has been an adopted sign, a heritage of voluntary service. There could be no more royal motto for one to wear who is preparing to rule. A true king is the nation's first servant. The noblest and most manly man in any community is he who most devotedly, most unselfishly, with sincerest love and interest, serves his fellow-men.



### When Sacrifice Sanctifies Love

ONE was speaking of a friend who for years had professed faithful friendship, but who the moment that friendship demanded an act of self-denial failed and fell back. Nothing

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ever really begins to count as worthy living until love passes out of the commonplace expression into the splendor of sacrifice. There is no true glory in life—there may be beauty, there may be winsomeness, but there is no glory in any service for Christ if it stops short of sacrifice. It is said that when Dr. Temple was Bishop of London he sent a young man to a position involving much hardship. The young man's friends tried to dissuade him from accepting it, and he went to the bishop and told him that he believed he would not live two years if he accepted the appointment. Dr. Temple listened and replied somewhat in this way: "But you and I do not mind a little thing like that—do we?"



### A Loser Who Won

A LITTLE poem tells of a race. A number of runners were on the course. There was one who at first seemed destined to outstrip all the others. The way was long, and the goal was



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## Serbing the Lord

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far away. Still the favorite kept in the lead. But those who were watching the race saw this man stop by and by and lift up a little child that had fallen in the way and take it out of danger. A little later, a comrade fainted and he turned aside to help him. A woman appeared, frail and inexperienced, and he lingered to help her find the way. The watchers saw the favorite again and again leave his race to comfort, cheer, or help those who were in distress or peril. Meanwhile he lost his lead, and others passed him; and when the winners reached the goal he was far behind. He did not receive the prize for the race, but the real honor was his. Love had ruled his course, and the blessing of many helped by him was his. The only true monument any one can have is built of love.



### As One Who Serbed

WHEN Dr. Temple, afterward Archbishop Temple, was head master of Rugby School, he visited the boys one day when they had

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been sent to clean out the pigsties. One of the boys went to him and said: "Am I forced to do this dirty task?" "I suppose not," he replied; "you are not exactly forced." "May I go, then, sir?" asked the student. "Yes," answered Dr. Temple slowly. "Give me the rake." The student was about handing him the rake when he saw the head master taking off his coat. He was going to do the dirty work himself. The student said: "I don't want you to do it, sir." "Somebody must do it," was the reply. The young man took the rake and did the work, and never grumbled any more. Thus it was that Christ took his place in life, not as a mere master, but as one who served. He took the lowest place. When none of his disciples would do the servant's part, when they shrank from it and asked, "Must we do it?" He answered: "No; you are not forced to do it. Give me the basin and the towel." And before they knew what He was doing, He was on His knees, washing their feet. How the Master's lowly service shamed the proud disciples that night! How

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it ought to shame us to-day, when we are still too proud to take the servant's place and do the hard and lowly things!



### The Sorrow of Doing Nothing

IT will be pathetic for any redeemed one to come home with no fruit of service. A guest at the Hospice of St. Bernard in the Alps tells this incident of one of the noble St. Bernard dogs that have saved so many men. This dog came struggling home one morning through the snow, exhausted and faint, till he reached the kennel. There he was wildly welcomed by the other dogs. But sad and crestfallen, he held his head and tail to the floor, and crept away and lay down in a dark corner of the kennel. The monks explained that he was grieved and ashamed because he had found no one to rescue that morning from the storm-drifts. How shall we feel, we whom Christ has redeemed, if we come home at last, ourselves, without having brought any one with us?

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### Cure for Discouragement

THERE was a woman who had become embittered by a long experience of sickness and of injustice and wrong, until she was shut up in a prison of hopelessness. Then, by reason of the death of a relative, a little motherless child was brought to her door. The door was opened most reluctantly, at first; the child was not warmly welcomed. Yet when she was received, Christ entered with her, and at once the dreary home began to grow brighter. The narrowness began to be enlarged. Other human needs came and were not turned away. In blessing others, the woman was blessed herself. To-day there is no happier home than hers. Try it if you are discouraged. Begin to serve those who need your love and ministry. Encourage some other disheartened one, and your own discouragement will pass away. Brighten another's lonely lot, and your own will be brightened.

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## Serving the Lord

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### "He Did It Unto Me"

THERE is a pleasant legend of St. Martin. He was a soldier. One bitter night a beggar, scantily clad, asked alms of the soldier. All he had was his soldier's cloak. Drawing his sword he cut the cloak in half, gave one part of it to the poor man and was content with the other part. That night he had a wondrous vision. He beheld Christ on his throne. Looking closely, he saw that the King in his glory was wearing half of the cloak which he had given to the beggar that night. Amazed, he heard the King say, "This hath Martin given to me."



### Doing Our Best

RECENTLY a Swiss vase, about sixteen inches in height, was put up at auction. It was dated 1763, A. D. No history of it was given. But the vase was so exquisite in its beauty and so surely genuine, that it brought more

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than twenty thousand dollars. Yet this rare thing was once a mere lump of common clay with a few moist colors on it. The value was in the toil and skill of the artist who shaped and colored it with such delicate patience. He did his best, and the vase witnessed to-day to his devotion and faithfulness.

The frieze on the Parthenon at Athens was chiefly the work of Phidias. The figures were life size and stood fifty feet above the floor of the temple. For nearly two thousand years the work remained undisturbed. Near the close of the seventeenth century the frieze was shattered and its fragments fell upon the pavement. Then it was seen that the smallest detail of the work was perfect. Phidias had wrought for the eyes of the gods, for no human eyes could see his work. We should do perfect work, even when we work obscurely, for nothing less is worthy the glory of our own life. We should set higher ideals for ourselves. We are not worms of the dust—we are immortal spirits, and this dignifies the lowest thing we do. Sweeping a room for

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Christ is glorious work. Cobbling shoes may be made as radiant service in heaven's sight as angel ministry before God's throne. The glory is in ourselves, and we must express it in all that we do.



### From Prayer to Service

THE truest religious life is one whose devotion gives food and strength for service. The way to spiritual health lies in the paths of consecrated activity. It is related in monastic legends of St. Francesca, that although she was unwearied in her devotions, yet if during her prayers she was summoned away by any domestic duty, she would close her book cheerfully, saying that a wife and a mother, when called upon, must quit her God at the altar to find him in her domestic affairs. Yet the other side is just as true. Before there can be a strong, vigorous, healthy tree, able to bear much fruit, to stand the storm, to endure the heat and cold, there must be a well-planted and well-nour-

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ished root; and before there can be a prosperous, noble, enduring Christian life in the presence of the world, safe in temptation, unshaken in trials, full of good fruits, perennial and unfading in its leaf, there must be a close walk with God in secret.



VI

**Ourselfes and Others**



## Ourselves and Others



### Poisonous Lives

THE upas tree which grows in Java has an acrid, milky juice which contains a virulent poison. According to the story told by a Dutch surgeon about a hundred years ago, the exhalations of this tree are fatal to both animal and vegetable life. Birds flying over the tree fall dead. No flower or plant will live near the tree. The story is probably untrue, but it illustrates human lives in this world whose influence always leaves a blight on others. They may be winning and attractive. They may come in the guise of friendship and wear the garb of innocence, but they have absorbed the poison of evil until their very breath is deadly. One cannot be with them, accepting their friendship, or coming under their influence, without being hurt by them. The sweet flowers of purity wither

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in their presence. There are men and women whose merest touch is defiling, who carry moral blight for others wherever they go.

An ancient legend tells of a maiden that was sent to Alexander from some conquered province. She was very beautiful, but the most remarkable thing about her was her breath, which was like the perfume of richest flowers. It was soon discovered, however, that she had lived all her life amid poison, breathing it, and that her body was full of poison. Flowers given to her withered on her breast. Insects on which she breathed perished. A beautiful bird was brought into her room and fell dead. Fanciful as this story is, there are lives which in a moral sense are just like this maiden. They have become so corrupt that everything they touch receives harming. Nothing beautiful can live in their presence. On the other hand, the Christian life is one whose warm atmosphere is a perpetual benediction. It is like the shadow of Peter, having healing power, so that all on whom it falls are enriched and blessed by it.

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## Ourselves and Others

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### Influence

A POOR boy was drawing home one day a little wagon filled with pieces of broken boards which he had gathered about some building operation. He was tired, his feet were bare, his clothing was ragged, his face was pinched and pale, telling of poverty and hunger. The boy had stopped to rest and had gone asleep. His cap had fallen from his head and his face was exposed to the sun. Then an old man, carrying a wood saw, passing along, saw the boy, and a look of pity came into his face. Taking from his pail his own scanty dinner, he laid it down beside the lad and hurried away. Others saw the act. A man walked down from his house near by and laid a silver half dollar beside the workman's dinner. A woman, living across the street, brought a good cap. A child came running with a pair of shoes and another with a coat. Other persons stopped, whispered, dropped silver. So, from the old wood sawyer's one kindly act, there had gone out this

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wave of influence, leading a score or more of people to do likewise.



### Gentle Faultfinding

It is sometimes necessary to tell our friends of their faults, but we should go about it in love, with prayer, and with wise and gentle tact. A gentle, loving way is better than blurting out the criticism, as some brusque people do, abruptly, calling it frankness, saying that they always honestly say what they believe. It may be honest and frank enough, but it is not the Christlike way. "What did you preach about yesterday?" asked an old clergyman of a young minister, one Monday. "On the judgment," replied the young man. "Did you do it tenderly?" asked the old pastor. We should never speak to others of their sins and faults unless we can do it tenderly.

We need patience, too, and sometimes we must wait a long time for the opportunity to do our duty in this regard, to speak the right word. But the right occasion will come, if

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## Ourselfes and Others

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we wait for it. Harm is done oftentimes by speaking too soon.



### Our Duty to the Weak

A LITTLE child is said once to have closed her prayer on a winter evening in this way: "I saw a little girl on the street this afternoon; and she was cold and barefooted; but it isn't any of our business; is it, God?" She was only more honest in her prayer than some older persons; for many people certainly act as if they regarded it as none of their business, when they see their fellow-men suffering and in need. But the teaching of Christ shows that it is our business, that we are under obligation to love and serve all men. We are debtor to every man; we may not owe him money, but we owe him love, and love means whatsoever help he needs,—bread for his hunger, or sympathy and cheer in his trial and struggle.

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### Seeing the Best in Others

A LADY once said to Hogarth that she wished to learn to draw caricature.

“Alas; it is not a faculty to be envied,” replied the great master of the art.

“Take my advice, and never draw caricature. By the long practice of it I have lost the enjoyment of beauty. I never see a face but distorted, and never have the satisfaction to behold the human face divine.”

A similar word of caution is needed by all of us, lest our daily occupation and habit influence us in our way of looking at the lives about us. The way to escape the danger is to be full of unjudging love.



### Dealing with Those Who Fail Us

DR. J. H. Jowett says it is a common custom in Syria to cut a reed and use it for a staff to lean on when walking. As one climbs a hill, however, and bears more of his weight



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## Ourselfes and Others

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on his staff, it sometimes gives way and the reed becomes cracked and bruised. All a man can do then with his shattered staff is to break it altogether off and throw it away as a worthless thing. These poor reeds are symbols, Dr. Jowett suggests, of people on whom we have leaned and who have failed us. We trusted them and helped them in some time of need in their lives, and they did not prove loyal and true. We showed them kindness when they were in trouble and turned to us for help, and they forgot the kindness. They broke their word to us. The staff became a bruised reed. Now what should we do? Should we deal harshly with them? Should we cherish vindictiveness toward them? Shall we cast them off and say we will have nothing more to do with them? What would Jesus do? "A bruised reed will He not break." We need the gentleness of Christ in dealing with those who have failed us or proved ungrateful to our kindness.

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## The Glory of the Commonplace

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### The Power of Friendship

A REQUEST came from a hospital for the sending of a birthday letter to a nurse. Other friends were also in the secret. The nurse was far from home and was dreadfully homesick. Next day she wrote to a friend in glowing words of what her birthday had been to her in happiness and what it had done for her in the way of love's revealing. She said she could not express her gladness. She had never known before what love meant.

The world is full of people who are just as hungry-hearted, who know just as little of the sweet and beautiful things of love, and to whom a gracious, cheerful kindness will be a revealing of Christ, which will make all things new for them. Those of us who have been most highly favored, who have known much of love and love's sweet revealings, who have had many friends to brighten our lives in all circumstances, cannot understand the emptiness of many lives which do not know anything whatever of the meaning of sweet

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human affection, who really never have had a friend. There are many who have scarcely ever received a real kindness in their whole life. To such it is a holy hour when one says to them, "I am going to be your friend." A teacher said this to a boy who had never heard such a word before. His lot was most dreary. He had been badly treated, receiving only hard knocks, hearing only sharp and bitter words, no one ever having said to him anything gentle. When his teacher, his heart touched by the boy's forlorn loneliness, laid his hand on his shoulder and looking into his sad face, said, "Cheer up, my boy, I am going to be your friend," it was as if Christ himself had spoken. A new light flashed into the boy's face as he looked eagerly a little later and said, "Did you mean what you said to me a moment ago—that you would be my friend? If you are going to be my friend, I can be a man."

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### Misunderstood

A YOUNG man was severely criticised by his companions for his closeness and meanness. He received a good salary, but lived in a pinched way, without even the plain comforts that his friends thought he could easily have afforded, and without any of that generous expenditure in social ways in which other young men of his class indulged. Many strictures were made on his meanness—as it seemed to his companions. That was one side of his life; but there was another. That young man had an only sister—they were orphans—who was a great sufferer, shut in her room, kept on her bed continually. This only brother provided for her. That was the reason he lived so closely, saving every cent he could save, and doing without many things which other young men thought indispensable, that she in her loneliness and pain might be cared for and might have comforts. That was the other side of the character, the one side of which had appeared

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so unattractive to his friends. We see how unjust was their judgment, based on knowledge of only the one phase of his conduct. Seen in connection with its motive, the quality so severely censured became a mark of noble, manly beauty. To judge from a fragment only is to judge ignorantly and unjustly.

A tender story is told of Professor Blackie, of Edinburgh, which illustrates the same lesson. He was lecturing to a new class, and a student rose to read a paragraph, holding the book in his left hand. "Sir," thundered the professor, "hold your book in your right hand." The student attempted to speak. "No words, sir! your right hand, I say!" The lad held up his right arm, ending piteously at the wrist: "Sir, I hae nae right hand," he said.

Before the professor could open his lips there arose such a storm of hisses as one perhaps must go to Edinburgh to hear, and by it his voice was overborne. Then he left his place, and going down to the student he

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had unwittingly hurt, he put his arm around the lad's shoulders and drew him close to his breast. "My boy," said Blackie,—he now spoke very softly, yet not so softly but that every word was audible in the hush that had fallen on the classroom,—“You'll forgive me that I was overrough? I did not know—I did not know.”



### Unwise Amiability

AN English writer has some good words about flattery. They are suggested by a character in a recent story. It is that of an old woman who was clever but very disagreeable. One of her friends said to her that she ought to be more gracious and to give amiability a trial in her life. She was conscience stricken and confused as she thought of herself. "I'm a beast of an old woman," she said. "I can be agreeable if I choose; nobody more so." "Then why not choose to be so!" it was suggested. So she tried the experiment and was

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greatly encouraged. Her amiability gave pleasure to her friends and she kept it up.

But she was not always wise in her new rôle of amiability. For instance, she fell into the habit of flattery, thinking that in this way she could please people. On every occasion she practiced this new art with assiduity. The result was not always felicitous, however. Too often she would so overdo her praise of people that its insincerity became apparent. Even the vainest persons were made aware, by the extravagance of her words, that she was only playing with them, and the effect was not to please but to offend. She would break out in enthusiasm over a friend's bonnet or dress. She would go into paroxysms of mirth over the retelling by another friend of some old story or of some threadbare bit of humor. She would tell some old, withered woman how fresh and young she looked—like a young girl in her teens. So the good woman's excessive efforts at amiability had the effect of sarcasm upon those she supposed she was pleasing.

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### Mistaken Coddling

A DISTINGUISHED botanist, exiled from his native country, found a position as under-gardener on a nobleman's estate. While he was there, his master received a rare plant with which no one in the estate was familiar. The head gardener, supposing it to be a tropical plant, put it in the hothouse to protect it from the winter's cold. He thought the plant needed warmth. It did not thrive, however—indeed, it began to droop. The new under-gardener, knowing the plant, its native place and its nature, said: "This is an arctic plant. You are killing it by the tropical atmosphere into which you have introduced it." He took the plant out into the frost, and to the amazement of the gardener piled ice about it. Soon it began to recover its freshness and vigor, and its drooping life became vigorous and strong. It was being killed by summer heat when what it needed was the cold of winter.

Friendship makes the same mistakes with



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many lives. It coddles them, indulges them, treats them softly, with overkindness. It tries to make all things easy for them, instead of making strong, brave men of them. This is a mistake that is made by many parents in dealing with their children. They try to save them from all hardness, from self-denial, from work and struggle. They bring them up in hothouses, not knowing that they are arctic plants, and need the snow and ice about them instead of the warm air of the conservatory.



### The True Benefactors

A THOUGHTFUL man was asked to contribute to the erection of a monument to a discourager, and replied, "Not a dollar. I am ready to contribute toward building monuments to those who make us hope, but I will not give a dollar to help perpetuate the memory and influence of those who live to make us despair." He was right. Men who make life harder for us cannot be called benefactors.

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The true benefactors are those who show us light in our darkness, comfort in our sorrow, hope in our despair.



### An Effective Rebuke

THE principal of a girls' school once administered an effective rebuke to a pupil who was always complaining of her ailments. This student came to school one morning whining about a "dreadful cold." The teacher said cheerfully, "Oh, I'm so glad you have one!" Naturally the girl was astonished; but the wise woman continued, "Why shouldn't I be glad? You are always doing something to make yourself ill; so of course you must enjoy it, and I am happy to have you pleased."

This stinging sarcasm opened the girl's eyes to the knowledge that she herself was responsible, to a large extent, for her own bodily conditions, and that it was a reflection upon her intelligence, as well as her conscience, thus to ignore the laws of her physical being.

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### A Bridge for Others

A BEAUTIFUL story is told about the Agassiz brothers. Their home was in Switzerland, on the shore of a lake. One winter day the father was on the other side of the lake from the home, and the boys wanted to join him. The lake was covered with thick ice. The mother watched the boys from her window as they set out. They got on well until they came to a wide crack in the ice. Then they stopped, and the mother became very anxious, fearing they might be drowned. The older boy got over easily, but the little fellow was afraid to jump. Then, as the mother looked, she saw Louis, the older brother, get down on his face, his body stretched over the crack, making a bridge of himself and then she saw his little brother creep over on him.

This story is a beautiful parable of love. We should be willing to make bridges of ourselves on which others may pass over the chasms and the streams that hinder them in their way. We have many opportunities of

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doing this in helping our brothers over hard places, out of temptation, through sickness, to positions, or into some better way of living. It is not pleasant to lie down on the ice or in the wet and let another use us as a bridge. But Christ did it. His cross was just the laying of his own blessed Life over the awful chasm of death and despair that we might pass over on him into joy and hope and heaven. He endured the cross, despising shame, that he might save us. We cannot call ourselves Christians if we balk or falter or hesitate in responding to calls to endure suffering, loss, or shame in order to help others. "He that saveth his life shall lose it."



### "She Doesn't Say—She Does"

"SHE may not be brilliant in the common acceptance of the term," said a young woman of her friend, "and she is poor and unknown, yet, more than any one else, she has started me on the path of loving my neighbor as myself."

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“How did she do it?” asked her listener.

“She doesn’t say—she does,” was the reply.

“She loves her neighbor and it shows in her whole being. She never says sharp or bitter things about people, because such things never come into her mind. I once asked my friend,” she continued, “how she could act her natural, sweet self toward those who were hateful to her. She replied that she knew if people understood their relations to the universe and to each other, they would choose the better part; and that she could not and would not obscure their vision by standing in the way of any light that might come to them. In other words, she simply doesn’t recognize the hateful spirit at all. She puts it all out of mind, recognizing the mutual dependence of all upon each other, and their consequent duties toward each and all.”



### Building for Others

WHEN a great building is to be erected, deep excavations are made, and piles of stones are

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laid down in the darkness, only to be covered up and hidden out of sight by the imposing superstructure which rises high in the air. This foundation work receives no praise. It is not ever seen by any human eye. It appears in a sense to be wasted work; yet we know that without it there would be no massive buildings towering in majestic proportions in the air. So, many men's lives seem to be failures, while in reality they have been built into the foundations of great temples. Their work is covered up and hidden out of sight, and makes no show before the world; but without it those who come after them could not have achieved the success which makes their names bright.

For a whole generation men are experimenting in some way; for example, in electricity. Some of them almost succeed. They seem to be on the very edge of achievement; but success persistently and narrowly eludes them, and they die at last, broken-hearted over their failure. Then a new man arises, and takes the results of their experiments as

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a starting-point. He is successful, and all the world rings with his praises; yet he never could have brought the invention to this triumphant issue but for the long, patient experimenting of those who went before him, toiling, sacrificing—failing. Nearly every great discovery or invention that has proven a boon to the world, had a long history of such effort and failure behind its final success. Who will say that the men who wrought thus so unselfishly in obscurity, and without result or reward, really failed? They did their part in preparing the way. Their work was essential in its place. Should they not share the songs of victory which the world sings for the man who at last brings the invention to triumphant completion?

Once, a man, prospecting in the mining regions of Arizona, found a remarkable natural bridge. It spans a deep cañon, forty-five feet in width. The bridge is made by a great agatized tree that lies across the gorge. Scientific men say that many ages since this tree was prostrated by some terrible storm,

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and fell across the cañon. By the effects of the water and of time, it has passed through many stages of mineralization, and is now a wonderful tree of solid agate. And there it lies, making an agate bridge over which men may pass from side to side. This tree seemed to be a failure when, that day in its prime, it was broken off by the storm and hurled to the ground. But, instead of being a failure, to what nobler use could it have been put than thus to become a bridge of agate, to stand for ages, and on which countless human feet may walk across the chasm?

This fallen tree is an illustration of countless human lives which have fallen and seemed to fail but which in time have proved to be bridges over which others can walk to honor, success and triumph. We are all daily passing over bridges built of the toils, sacrifices, and failures of those who have gone before us. The luxury, ease, and comfort we now enjoy cost other men tears, pain, and loss. We cross continually to our blessings and privileges, our promised lands, our joys, on



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the bridges built for us by those who have failed.



### Helping to Develop Others

A CHILD had been playing in the garden, one day, and when she came in her mother said, "What have you been doing, my dear?" "Helping God, mother," said the little one. "How have you been helping God?" asked the mother. "I saw a flower going to blossom, and I blossomed it," answered the child. There are some people who think they are helping God when doing just what this child did. God does not want help in opening his buds and blossoming his roses. The buds must be opened and the roses blossomed in nature's gentle way, in God's way. To blossom them before their time would be to ruin them. We need to be most careful in our culture of spiritual life in others, especially in children. Violence and forcing may do incalculable harm. Many a child's life fails of its rarest beauty because its development

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is hastened. Rosebuds want only air, sunshine, and rain to bring out their beauty. The best thing we can do to develop spiritual life is to give an atmosphere of love and purity to those we seek to bless.



### Her Secret

No crowns in heaven will be brighter than those shall wear who have lived out love's lesson in their own homes. Nearly every one has known some home, nearly all of whose light has come from one member of the household. Frederick W. Robertson, referring to such a life, asks, "What was the secret of her power? What had she done? Absolutely nothing; but radiant smiles, beaming good humor, the tact of divining what every one wanted, told that she had got out of self and had learned to think of others; so that at one time it showed itself in deprecating the quarrel, which lowering brows and raised tones already showed to be impending, by sweet words; at another by smoothing an in-

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valid's pillow; at another by soothing a sobbing child; at another by humoring and softening a father who had returned weary and ill-tempered from the irritating cares of business. None but her saw those things."



### "As We Forgive"

A WRITER says of another, "His heart was as great as the world, but there was no room in it to hold the memory of a wrong." This is the true ideal for every Christian heart. We have it in the prayer which we are taught to offer for forgiveness. While we ask God to forgive us, we declare to him that we have forgiven those who are indebted to us, those who have trespassed against us. We say to God that there is no bitterness, no spirit of unforgiveness, in our heart.



### In the Wrong Hands

It is said that one day, many years ago, there was an auction in London which was

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attended by distinguished people. Among other things offered for sale was a Cremona violin, more than a hundred years old. It was reputed to be a Stradivarius. The auctioneer raised the violin and held it gently, almost reverently, as he told its story and spoke of its wonderful qualities. Then he gave it to a musician who was present, asking him to play upon it. The man played as well as he could, but the violin in his hands failed to win enthusiasm from the audience.

The auctioneer began to call for bids. But the responses came slowly. Then there came into the room a stranger, an Italian. He pressed his way to the side of the auctioneer to see the violin. He took it into his own hands, examined it carefully, held it to his ear as if it had some secret to whisper to him, and then laid it gently on his breast and began to play upon it, and marvelous music at once filled the room. The people were strangely affected. Some smiled, some wept; every heart was stirred. It was Paganini, the great master, whose fingers were on the

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strings. When he laid the instrument down, the bidding began again, and there was no trouble now in selling it. In the hands of the first player, the qualities of the violin were not brought out, and men did not know a treasure was being offered to them. But in the hands of the great master its marvellous powers were discovered and brought out.

Our lives are like violins. In the right hands they will give forth wonderful music. But in unskillful hands their powers are not discovered. It is strange with what want of thought and care many people entrust their lives into the hands of those who cannot bring out the best that is in them! Ofttimes of those who only do them harm. This is seen in the recklessness which many young people show in choosing their friends. Indeed, they do not choose their friends at all, but let themselves drift into association and intimacy with any who come their way.

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### Love Better than Alms

TURGENIEFF in one of his little parables tells of meeting on the way a beggar, who held out his greasy hand for alms. Turgenieff searched all his pockets, but had no money, no food, nothing whatever, to give the man. He said to him, "I am sorry, brother, that I have nothing for thee." The beggar's face brightened, and he said, "That is enough. Thank you." To be called "brother" was better than any alms would have been. We may not give money to the mendicant on the street, but we may show him kindness, the spirit of brotherhood, and that will be worth more to him than the largest alms. It will gladden and cheer his heart, and bring to him a little of the warmth of the love of Christ.

## VII

### Helping by Unselfishness





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### The Folded Hands

LONG ago, in quaint old Nuremberg, lived two boys, Albrecht Dürer and Franz Knigstein. Both boys wished to be artists, and both studied and wrought with great earnestness. Albrecht had genius; but Franz had only love for art, without the power to put on canvas the beautiful visions that haunted him. Years passed, and they planned to make each an etching of the Lord's Passion. When they compared their work, that of Franz was cold and lifeless, while Albrecht's was instinct with beauty and pathos. Then Franz saw it all, and knew that he could never be an artist. His heart was almost broken; but he said in a voice almost choked with tears, yet full of manly courage, "Franz, the good Lord gave me no such gift as yours; but something, some homely duty, he has

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waiting somewhere for me to do. Yet now—be you artist of Nuremberg, and I——”

“Stay, Franz, be still one moment,” cried Albrecht, seizing his pencil. Franz supposed Albrecht was adding some finishing touches to his exquisite drawing, and waited patiently in his attitude of surrender, his hands folded together. With his swift pencil Albrecht drew a few lines and showed the sketch to his friend.

“Why, those are only my hands,” said Franz. “Why did you take them?” “I took them,” said Albrecht, “as you stood there making the sad surrender of your life so very bravely. I said to myself, ‘Those hands that may never paint a picture can now most certainly make one.’ I have faith in those folded hands, my brother-friend. They will go to men’s hearts in the days to come.”

Albrecht’s words were true prophecy. Into the world of love and duty has gone the story so touching and helpful in its beautiful simplicity; and into the world of art has gone the picture—for Albrecht Dürer’s famous

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“Folded Hands” is but a picture of the hands of Franz Knigstein as they were folded that day in sweet, brave resignation, when he gave up his heart’s dearest wish, and yet believed that the Lord had some homely duty still worth his doing.

This charming story tells us that if we cannot do the beautiful things we see others doing for Christ and which we long to do, we can at least do some lowly work for him. It teaches us, too, that self-surrender to God, though our heart’s fondest hope is laid down, is, in God’s sight, really the most beautiful thing we can do with our life. It teaches us also, that the hands which can do no brilliant thing for God, may yet become hands of benediction in the world. If we are truly fellow-workers with God, he can use whatever we have that we really surrender to him. And oftentimes he can do more with our failures than with our successes.

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### Giving Himself to His Friend

ONE of the magazines told the story of the way a young man gave himself. He was poor, and had a great desire to get an education and become a lawyer. He saved enough money by hard work to carry him through college in a self-denying way. In his first year he made a friend, a young man, brilliant, and noble as well, who also had all the money he needed. The two were room-mates and became close personal friends, in spite of their difference in position. During the first summer vacation, the father of the well-to-do boy died, leaving his son no money, however, to continue his course. The young man wrote to his friend and told him he could not return to college, and that he must abandon his dream of obtaining an education and go to work. The friend wrote to him about in this way: "You have fine capacity and will make a useful man if you have education. I have found out that I would make only a fourth-rate lawyer at best. It would be far

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better for you to be educated than for me. I have money enough saved to carry you through college. You must take my money and complete your course. I enclose a draft for the amount. I will drop out of sight altogether and lose myself. Do not try to find me—it will be of no use. Do not refuse the money—you can never return it to me.” That was self-denial of the noblest kind.



### How General Howard Forgot Self

DURING General Sherman's last campaign in the South, in the American Civil War, certain changes in commanders were made. General Howard was placed at the head of a special division. Soon after this the war closed and there was to be a grand review of the army at Washington. The night before the review, Sherman sent for Howard and said: "The political friends of the officer you succeeded are determined that he shall

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ride at the head of the corps, and I want you to help me out."

"It is my command," said Howard, "and I am entitled to ride at its head."

"Of course you are," replied Sherman. "You led the men through Georgia and the Carolinas; but, Howard, you are a Christian, and can stand the disappointment."

"If you put it on that ground," said Howard, "there is but one answer. Let him ride at the head of the corps."

"Yes, let him have the honor," said Sherman, "but you will report to me at nine o'clock, and will ride by my side at the head of the army."

Howard protested, but his commander's orders were positive. So, that day, in the grand review, the man who had yielded his rights had a place of higher honor at the head of the whole army. It is ever thus—the meek inherit the earth; those who forget themselves and serve without striving for place, in the end receive the truest honor before both God and man.

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### Be an Encourager

THEY tell us in mountain regions that avalanches are oftentimes hanging poised so delicately on the crags that even the reverberation of a whisper on the air may cause them to fall with ruinous effect upon the homes and villages in the valleys. The guides caution tourists at certain points not to speak or sing, lest they cause disaster. There are human lives bearing such burdens of sorrow and trouble that one disheartening word may bring them despair. We should learn never to give discouragement. It is a crime against humanity. Beware that you never speak dishearteningly to any one. Only love can save the world. No matter how the person may have sinned, only gentleness can save him.

A newspaper writer makes the suggestion that for men like himself some kind of league should be formed by which those who join should bind themselves to say some kind word or do some kind act daily. The editor suggests, however, that only one kindness daily

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is too formal, and altogether too meager. There is need for kindness not once a day to one person, but a thousand times a day, to a thousand persons. There is need for cheer continually. If you can truly say, "I believe God," you cannot but be an encourager. God himself is a God of cheer. Religion is simply love and kindness. Washington Gladden says that "religion is friendship—friendship first with the great Companion, on the Godward side. Then on the manward side the same is true." To be friends with everybody; to fill every human relation with the spirit of friendship; is there anything more than this that the wisest and best of men can hope to do?



### The Weak Brother

IN almost every community there is one who is intellectually weak, a foolish boy or man, or a girl or woman who lacks ability to take her place among her sisters. Sometimes such a person is made the sport of neighbors, of



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those who are bright and talented, laughed at, even treated rudely, cruelly. It is a pitiful sight to see one who is feeble-minded, who has not wit enough to take his place among others. It is pathetic to see one buffeted and abused by those to whom God has given good mental abilities. It is beautiful to see a bright, manly boy become the champion and friend of another boy who is almost imbecile, protecting him from the sport of others. It is told of Edward Eggleston that in his boyhood he and his companions were forming a literary society. The membership they determined should include only the best boys and young men in the place. None who were undesirable should be admitted. There was one boy in the neighborhood who was mentally deficient, who greatly desired to join the society, that he might learn to "speak pieces," he said. Most of the boys laughed at the suggestion that he should be admitted. But young Eggleston, with a manly earnestness, favored receiving him. "We have no right," he said, "to keep all our good things

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to ourselves. This poor boy will do us no harm, and it will please him and it may do him good. He pleaded for the boy so earnestly that he was admitted. It made him very happy, and he became fairly bright.

This was a Christly thing to do. Jesus would have treated the boy just as Edward Eggleston did. He never broke even a bruised reed, so loving was he toward the weak. We should seek to get the lesson into all our conduct. If there is a bashful girl in the neighborhood, or a shy, retiring boy, these are the ones to whom Jesus would have the young people show the greatest attention in their social life. Those for whom most persons do not care are the ones for whom Jesus would care most tenderly if he were here. Those who need the most help are the ones Jesus himself helps the most.

“All honor to him who wins the prize!”

The world has cried for a hundred years;  
But to him who tries and fails and dies,  
I give great glory and honor and tears.”

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### The Duty of Pleasing Others

THE Duchess of Kent was a richly endowed woman and was universally beloved. Once the Princess Alice, herself simple, sweet and unspoiled, asked her: "What makes every one love to be with you? I am always so sorry to have to leave you, and so are all the others who come here. What is the secret, grandmamma?"

It was not easy for the noble woman to answer such a personal question. But it was important that it should be answered for the sake of her who had asked and who was indeed hungry to know the secret. So the noble lady gave this memorable answer:

"I was early instructed that the way to make people happy was to appear interested in the things that interested them, namely, their own affairs; and that this could be accomplished only by burying one's own grief, annoyance, satisfaction, or joy completely out of sight. Forgetfulness of one's own concerns, my dear, a smiling face, a word

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of sympathy or unselfish help, where it is possible to give it, will always make others happy, and the giver equally so.”



### The Love that Forgets Self

A CHILD had a beautiful canary bird. From morning till night it sang, and its song filled all the house. But the child's mother was ill—so ill that even the singing of the bird, which to the boy was such delicious music, disturbed and distressed her. He put it into a part of the house as far away as possible from the sick-room, thinking that the sound could not reach the mother's ears. But the shrill singing still came into the room, and pained the weak invalid.

One morning, as the child stood holding his mother's hand, the bird began to sing, and the notes came into the chamber very faintly; and yet as he watched the sufferer's face, he saw an expression of pain sweep over it. She said nothing, but the boy needed no words to tell him that the bird's singing was

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distressing her. "It is no music to me," he said, "if it pains my mother." So he took the cage, and, carrying it away, gave the bird to a friend. "But you loved the bird," his mother said, when she learned what he had done. "Yes," he replied; "but I love you more."

We should repress in ourselves the tastes which are not agreeable to our friends. We should cut off the habits which hurt the sensitive hearts whose happiness is dear to us. We should put away the things in us, whatever the cost may be, which give pain to our loved ones.



### How to Prevent Strife

THERE is a story of two monks who had never quarreled. They began to think their life monotonous, and one of them suggested that they quarrel. "Well, what shall we quarrel about?" "About this stone," was the answer. "You say it is yours and I'll say it is mine." "This stone belongs to me," said

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the first. "Very well—you may have it," was the reply.

Christians should always be ready to yield their own preferences to prevent strife. "Blessed are the peacemakers."



### Helping Others Out of Sin

DURING a great flood in the Mississippi, which threatened the destruction of the city of New Orleans, two men stood on the levee, watching the rising waters. One asked the other, "If you had the strength and the money to use at will, what would you do for your city?" Not having thought of the matter in this definite way, the gentleman referred the question back to his friend, "What would you do?" "I would build these dykes so wide and so high," he answered, "that no flood could ever endanger the city again. That would be the finest thing any man could do for New Orleans." The other thought a moment and then said, "I would not do that. If I were able I would get my arm beneath

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the city, and lift it so high that no flood could ever endanger it again.”

Christ was sent not to build sheltering walls round men, to shut off danger from them—for then they never could grow strong—but to put into their hearts new life, new courage, new hope, new strength, so as to lift them beyond the reach of the world’s evil. That is the best, too, that we can do for others. We cannot destroy sin nor shut it away by dykes so that it will no more assail, but we can help to make men whom sin cannot reach.



### Making Rough Paths Smooth

THERE is a beautiful legend which tells how, long centuries ago, in a somber forest, some moss began to grow. The sunshine warmed it, and it spread it until it formed a soft, rich carpet of bright hue. One day, Jesus, coming out of the wilderness, passed through this old forest, with feet torn and bleeding from the rough way by which he had come. His

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path led over this carpet of moss; and as his bruised and weary feet walked on it they were soothed, refreshed, and rested by the gentle softness. Grateful for the comfort which he had received, Jesus, from his loving heart, uttered words which made the moss holy for all time: "Thou shalt be blessed forever, o'er every plant that grows." Then forth from the green bosom of the moss there sprang a perfect rose.

This is only a legend; but in its perfect beauty we can get a sweet lesson—that the Christ honors always and everywhere the gentle thoughtfulness which makes the way easier for any tired one. We are in this world to bless others. If we can spread a carpet of moss for any bruised or weary feet, we are sure of the benediction of the Christ. Such sweet ministry we can render every day. Evermore Jesus is passing in the persons of his little ones. The paths are rough, and feet bleed as they walk over them. He who lives to give cheer and hope and strength will receive the Master's blessing.



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## Helping by Unselfishness

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### A Wounded Soldier's Unselfishness

JUST after the death of Queen Victoria this beautiful story was told: She was visiting the wounded soldiers who had been brought back from South Africa. She was specially distressed by the suffering of one man who had been terribly hurt.

"Is there nothing that I can do for you?" asked the Queen.

The soldier replied, "Nothing, your Majesty, unless you would thank my nurse for her kindness to me."

The Queen turned to the nurse, and said, with tears in her eyes, "I do thank you with all my heart for your kindness to this poor wounded son of mine."

There was something exquisitely beautiful in the soldier's unselfish thought of the nurse who had been such a comfort to him in his sufferings. His gratitude was so great that he sought even the Queen's honoring rather for her than for himself.



Spoken Lessons

VIII

Home Lessons



## Home Lessons



### Helping the Discouraged

ONE summer afternoon, during the Civil War in America, some Southern generals were sitting under a tree, when suddenly a shell from a Northern battery crashed over their heads. The officers hastened to seek a safer place. But one of the party lingered; and the others, glancing around, saw him stooping to the ground, as if he had found something of great value. The crashing of the shell through the branches had torn a bird's nest from its place, and hurled it to the ground. And the general of armies was gathering up this nest, with its sacred burden of young bird-life, to replace it among the branches.

It is the business of the friends of Jesus to put fresh hope into the discouraged hearts of husbands and wives, brothers and sisters,

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and thus be the hand to help restore the home to its true place, amid the branches of the tree of love.



### Fighting for Our Own

EVERY man worthy the name will fight to the death for his home. And this motive is always present when we are defending the right. We must seek the purity and the safety of the town in which we live, because our family is in it, and peril to the population is peril to them. We must seek a wholesome water supply, good drainage, and clean streets, because our children and friends live in the city. So in all movements for education, reform, and religion, there is the same motive. A distinguished man was speaking at the opening of a reformatory institution for boys, and remarked that if only one boy was saved by it, it would repay all the cost. After the exercises a friend asked the speaker if he had not put it a little too strongly when he said that the cost of founding the institu-

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tion would be repaid if only one boy were saved. "Not if he were my boy," was the answer.



### One Cure for Temper

HASTY temper is so common that people do not think much of it. We talk about it as a kind of harmless weakness, so common as to be almost permissible. Men apologize for their friends who are bad-tempered, as if it made little difference. But really it is a serious blemish on one's character. Think of the hurt an ungoverned temper produces in homes where angry words fly like arrows, wounding gentle hearts. Think how an ill-tempered father or mother hurts the lives of children. The time to get a sweet temper is in youth. We have no right to say a harsh word anywhere, especially in our own home. It was the custom of the Cary sisters that when one of them felt out of sorts, moody, or ill-tempered, she would go away by herself until the ugly mood had passed off. This would

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be a good rule to adopt in every house. In place of sulking or showing sullenness, when we feel this miserable demon getting possession of us, we had better go away and fight the battle out alone where our harsh speech will hurt no other one.



### Love's Best at Home

THE story of friendship anywhere is a story of cost and suffering, but it is in the home that it must suffer the most, make the greatest sacrifices. When husband and wife clasp hands at the marriage altar, they can fulfill their covenant of love only by mutual loving unto death. It may cost either of them a great deal to love as they have promised to do, until death separates them. Here is a man who loves his wife with a devoted affection. For ten years she has been a helpless invalid, and he has carried her from the bed to the chair, and up and down stairs, and has ministered to her in a most beautiful way,



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failing in nothing that she needed or craved, pouring out his life's best treasures to give her comfort or pleasure. This is ideal. So it should be in all the home relations. Love that stops at no cost, at no sacrifice, should be the law of the home life.

It should be the same with all the qualities of love. We are to exercise patience with every person we may meet, in all the relations of life, but we should show the sweetest and most Christlike patience in our own homes. Kindness is the great law of Christian life. It should be the universal law. We should be kind to every one, not only to those who treat us with love, but also to those who are ungentle to us, returning to them love for hate. But in our own home and toward our own, our kindness should not only be unvarying, but be always exceptionally tender.

A writer suggests that members of a family, when they separate for the night or even for the briefest stay, should never part in any but an affectionate way, lest they shall never meet again. Two incidents illustrate

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the importance of this rule. A distinguished man, when much past middle life, related an experience which occurred in his own home in his young manhood. At the breakfast table one morning he and a younger brother had a sharp quarrel about some unimportant matter. He confessed that he was most unbrotherly in his words, speaking with bitterness. The brother rose and left the table and went to his business, very angry. Before noon the younger man died suddenly in his office. When, twenty years afterward, the older brother spoke of the occurrence, he said that it had cast a shadow over all his life. He could never forgive himself for his part in the bitter quarrel. He had never ceased to regret with sore pain that no opportunity had come to him to confess his fault and seek forgiveness and reconciliation.

The other incident was of the parting of a workingman and his wife. He was going forth to his day's duties and there was a peculiar tenderness in his mood and in their good-by that morning. He and his wife had

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their prayer together after breakfast. Then he kissed the babies, sleeping in their cribs, and returned a second time to look into their sweet faces. The parting at the door never had been so tender as it was that morning. Before half the day was gone the men brought him home dead. The wife got great comfort in her sorrow from the memory of the morning's parting. If their last words together had been marked by unkindness, by wrangling, or even by indifference, or lack of tenderness, her grief would have been harder to bear. But the lovingness of the last parting took away much of the bitterness of the sorrow.

If we keep ourselves ever mindful of the criticalness of life, that any day may be the last in our home fellowships, it will do much to make us gentle and kind to each other. We will not act selfishly any hour, for it may be our last hour together. We will not let strife mar the good cheer of our home life any day, for we may not have another day.

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### Home Courtesies

A YOUNG girl boarded with an elderly woman, who took a maternal interest in her. One evening the young girl had been out rather late and a fine young man brought her home. The boarding-house woman asked the girl who the young man was. "He is my brother," replied the young woman. "Your brother!" exclaimed the somewhat cynical old lady, in a rather doubting tone. "Why, I saw him raise his hat to you as he went away." The courtesy seemed to be to the older woman impossible in a girl's own brother. Is it so? Do brothers not usually practice good manners toward their sisters? Every young man with even the smallest pretensions to gentlemanliness will take off his hat to any other young man's sister. Does he not also to his own?

A young man entered a reception-room with his wife. He carelessly stepped on her gown and stumbled. "Mary," he said impatiently, "I wish you would either hold your dresses up, or have them made short." The

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wife said nothing for a moment, and then she asked very pleasantly, "Charles, if it had been some other woman whose dress you had stepped on, what would you have said?" The young man was honest with himself. He bowed and said frankly, "I should have apologized for my awkwardness, and I do now most humbly apologize to you, my dear. I am truly ashamed of myself."



### **Pleasing God in the Common Things**

WHEN we seek to do the things that are above, where Christ is, most of us find the bulk of our occupation in common tasks and duties. To-morrow we shall have to rise early and go to our business, and there will be no dishonor, no irreverence in our most diligent devotion to these common tasks and occupations. We may please our Master just as well in these things that are given to us to do, as we please him on Sunday in specific acts of worship.

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A mother among the very poor died and left a little daughter with a heritage of love and sacrifice. She bade her to be kind to her father, who was a drunkard. She would often be abused by him, when he came home at night, but she was always to be patient and gentle with him. "Remember it's all the drink." The younger children were also confided to her keeping and she was to do all she could for their comfort. She was wondrously loving and kind, living the lesson of love so beautifully that heaven must have looked down with approval upon her sweet life. But she never could go to church or to Sunday school. There were some godly people who tried to get her to the mission, and they told her that Christ would not be pleased with her unless she would attend the services. Mary was frightened and feared that she should not be saved, for the care of the children and her drunken father gave her no time for anything else.

When the heated season came Mary took the fever. Her body had been weakened by

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the care and toil, and she was unable to endure. She grew worse and worse, and the doctor said she could not live. One day Mary sent for the playmate who lived across the street and said, "The charity doctor has been here, Katie. He says I'll never be any better. If it wasn't for one thing I'm sure I'd just be glad. You know how it's been here, Katie—I've had so much to do I couldn't mind the children and go to the preaching, too. And I've been so tired at night I couldn't think to pray. And now, when I see the dear Lord Jesus, what can I say?" Then Katie, the little comforter, her help to the problem brought; into the heart made wise by love, the Spirit sent this thought: "I wouldn't say a word, dear, for well he understands. I would never say a word at all. But, Mary, just show him your hands." That was enough. The hands that had wrought so faithfully would tell the whole story.

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### His Father's Memory

WE do not realize what the daily life of the home means in the future of the children. Example is most important. One said to a minister: "The memory of my father is a sacred influence to me; yet I can remember the day when I was hungry because of my father's conduct. I can remember my mother crying as she cut the last loaf, keeping none for herself, and gave us what there was."

The father had been turned away from his business for refusing to do a mean and shabby thing. They gave him three days to think it over, and then he came home with no prospects and no money. The mother said to her children, "It breaks my heart to see you hungry, but I will tell you what kind of man your father is," and she told them.

The son, far on in his years, testified: "Many a time have I been tempted to do wrong, and then there arose before me the figure of the man who dared even to see his children suffer before he would sully his own



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conscience and sin against God." And this recollection restrained him and kept him true. It is a great thing for a boy to have such memories of his father as that.



### His Mother's Prayers

A GOOD man tells of what happened in his own childhood home over and over again. As he lay quietly at night in his little room, before sleep came on there would be a gentle footstep on the stairs, the door would open noiselessly, and in a moment the well-known form, softly gliding through the darkness, would appear at his bedside. First, there would be a few gentle inquiries of affection, gradually deepening into words of counsel. Then kneeling, her head touching his, the mother would begin in gentle words to pray for her boy, pouring forth her whole soul in desires and supplications. Mothers know how her pleadings would run, and how the tears would mingle with the words. "I seem to feel them yet,"

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he writes in advanced years, "where sometimes they fell on my face. Rising, then, with a good-night kiss, she was gone. The prayers often passed out of thought in slumber, and came not to mind again for years, but they were not lost. They were safely kept in some most sacred place of memory, for they reappear now with a beauty brighter than ever. I willingly believe that they were an invisible bond with heaven, that secretly preserved me while I moved carelessly amid numberless temptations and walked the brink of crime."



### Memories of Home

DANIEL WEBSTER, referring to the early home of his parents in a log cabin, built amid the snowdrifts of New Hampshire, "at a period so early that, when the smoke rose first from its rude chimney and curled itself over the frozen hills, there was no similar evidence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada," uttered

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these noble words concerning this rude cabin :  
“Its remains still exist. I make it an annual visit. I carry my children to it, to teach them the hardships endured by the generations which have gone before them. I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents which mingle with all that I know of the primitive family abode. I weep to think that none of those who inhabited it are now among the living; and if ever I am ashamed of it, or if ever I fail in affectionate veneration for him who reared it, and defended it against savage violence and destruction, cherished all the domestic virtues beneath its roof, and, through the fire and blood of a seven years' Revolutionary War, shrank from no danger, no toil, no sacrifice, to save his country, and to raise his children to a condition better than his own, may my name, and the names of my posterity, be blotted forever from the memory of mankind.”

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### Prayer in the Home

ARCHDEACON FARRAR says of his mother: "My mother's habit was, every day, immediately after breakfast, to withdraw for an hour to her own room, and to spend that hour in reading the Bible, in meditation and in prayer. From that hour, as from a pure fountain, she drew the strength and the sweetness which enabled her to fulfill all her duties, and to remain unruffled by all the worries and pettinesses which are so often the intolerable trial of narrow neighborhoods. As I think of her life, and of all it had to bear, I see the absolute triumph of Christian grace in the lovely ideal of a Christian lady. I never saw her temper disturbed; I never heard her speak one word of anger, or of calumny, or of idle gossip. I never observed in her any sign of a single sentiment unbecoming to a soul which had drank of the river of the water of life, and which had fed upon manna in the barren wilderness. The world is better for the passage of such souls across its surface. They

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may seem to be as much forgotten as the drops of rain which fall into the barren sea, but each raindrop adds to the volume of refreshing and purifying waters. 'The healing of the world is in its nameless saints. A single star seems nothing, but a thousand scattered stars break up the night and make it beautiful.' "



### The Blessing of Family Prayer

A GOOD man said that the evening family worship had saved his home and its love. The days were full of little frictions and irritations. He was a man of quick temper and hasty speech, and often was the home music jangled. The close of the day was unhappy. But the evening prayer set all things right again. The father and mother knelt, side by side, with their little children, and as they prayed, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," they were drawn close together again in love. The little strifes were healed, and their wedded joy saved. The sun was

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not allowed to go down upon their differences. This is one of the blessings of family prayer. Christ comes and appears to us alive beside the sacred home altar and shows us his hands and speaks his word of peace.



### Room for the Heavenly Guest

A LITTLE Welsh girl went into a worldly home as a servant. All her life she had been used, in her own home, to godly ways—family prayers, grace at meals, reverence for God, love, kindness. In this home where she was employed, all this was wanting. There was no prayer, no reverence, no love—instead there was profanity, bitterness, strife, heaven-daring sin. After one night, the little maid told her mistress that she could not stay—she was afraid to stay where God was not a guest. If we would keep the heavenly Guest in our heart, we must make a home of love there for him, with an atmosphere kindly and congenial. In a prayerless, loveless heart the heavenly Guest will not stay.

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### The Only Bond

SEVERAL years since, in one of the magazines, was this suggestive story :

Once there was a woman who loved a man. He died, and she sought some way to reach him where he was, and could not. Then a heavenly messenger came to her and said: "I have been sent to help thee, for thy crying has been heard. What is thy need?"

The woman answered: "That I may find the soul of my husband, who is dead."

The Shining One said to her: "That may be done only if there is a bond between you that death could not break."

She said: "Surely there is a bond. I have lain in his bosom. I have borne the sacred name of wife."

But the angel shook his head and said: "That is no bond."

Then she raised her head proudly and said: "Surely there is a bond. I have held his children in my arms; with their innocence have they bound us together. By the sorrow

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in which I bore them there is an enduring bond." But the angel said, very sadly: "Even this will not suffice."

Then the woman paled, but she said: "My spirit and that of my husband were one. In naught were we separate. Each answered each without speech. We were one. Does not that bond hold?"

But the angel answered very low: "It does not hold. In the domain of death all these bonds of which thou speakest crumble to nothing. The very shape of them has departed, so that they are as if they never were. Think yet once more, I pray thee, before I leave thee, if there is one thread to bind thee to him whom thou lovest; for if not, he has passed from thee forever."

The woman was silent, but she cried to herself desperately: "He shall not go from me!" The angel withdrew a little way, and the woman thought and thought, with deep inward communing. Finally, she raised her face and said: "Once—but it was long ago—he and I thought of God together."



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The angel gave a loud cry, and his shining wings smote the earth, and he said: "Thou hast found the bond. Thou hast found the bond."

The woman looked, and lo! there lay in her hand a tiny thread, faintly golden, as if woven from the strands of the sunlight, and it led into the darkness.

Only those who think of God together have between them a bond of union which death cannot sever. The only tie which never shall be broken is love for Christ. Those whom this sacred bond unites never shall be separated. If this love is not in us, there is nothing in our lives which will endure; all else will perish.



### The Holy of Holies in the Home

A CHRISTIAN who had long been engaged in useful service tells of a visit to his old childhood home. He was put to sleep in the spare room. He opened a closet door, and a scene was before him which brought a rush of tears

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to his eyes. An old chair stood there, and before it lay a cushion in which were knee-prints.. Evidently this was some one's closet of prayer. Instantly the truth flashed upon him. He was looking into the secret sanctuary of his beloved mother, where she had prayed all her children into the kingdom of Christ. I saw now the place where the grace was invoked by intercession which had brought the power of Christ into his own heart. What a holy place it was!

What would be the result if every Christian home in the world had such a holy of holies, its old chair daily wet with tears of love, and its cushion deeply indented by suppliant knees?

IX

**Life among the Lowly**



## Life among the Lowly



### In the Humble Place

It is easier to work amidst cheers and huzzas than in obscurity, where one never heard a commendation. A writer says, "One test of the religious life is in its willingness to occupy a subordinate place and to work faithfully in it." The story is told of a young man who was president of a young people's organization, and who greatly liked prominence. He had a genius for keeping always in the limelight. As long as he could lead and be prominent he was happy, cheerful, enthusiastic and interested. But when he was not in some conspicuous position he was not a comfortable man to get along with. One of his friends described and characterized him thus: "He has plenty of religion to lead, but not enough to follow." There are always

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good people of this type. They work splendidly when they are in a conspicuous place, with others under them, but when they are second or down somewhere in the common ranks, they are of little use. It takes more grace to shine in the lowly places than in places of prominence.



### The Cheering Flame of Love

A TENDER and beautiful story of lowly faithfulness is told. It was on one of the Orkney Islands where a great rock—Lonely Rock—dangerous to vessels, juts out into the sea. In a fisherman's hut on this island coast, one night long ago, sat a young girl, busy at her spinning wheel, looking out upon the dark and driving clouds. All night she toiled and watched, and when morning came, one fishing-boat, her father's, was missing. Half a mile from the cottage her father's body was found, washed upon the shore. His boat had been wrecked on Lonely Rock.

The girl watched her father's body after

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the manner of her people, till it was laid in the grave. Then when night came she arose and set the candle in her casement, that the fishermen out on the waves might see. All night long she sat in the little room spinning, trimming the candle when its light grew dim. After that, in the wild storms of winter, in the quiet calm of summer, through driving mists, illusive moonlight, and solemn darkness, that coast was never one night without the light of that one little candle. As many hanks of yarn as she had spun before for her daily bread she spun still, and one more, to pay for her nightly candle. The men on the sea, however far out they had gone, were always sure of seeing that quiet light shining to give them safe guidance. Who can tell how many hearts were cheered and lives saved from peril and death by that tiny flame which love and devotion and self-sacrifice kept there through the long years?

This is but a leaf out of the story of millions of faithful lives that yet go unpraised among men. The things they do are not the

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same in all, but the spirit is the same. These humble ones keep the light of love burning where it guides and cheers and blesses others. By the simple beauty of their own lives, by their quiet deeds of self-sacrifice, by the songs of their cheerful faith, and by the ministries of their hopeful hands, they make one little spot of this sad earth brighter and happier.



### The Glory of the Common Life

To many people life is all a dreary commonplace. Some see nothing beautiful in nature. They will walk through the loveliest gardens and see nothing to admire. They will move among people and never observe in them any glimpses of immortality, any revealings of the divine nature. They will go through all the years and never see God in anything. It would give us a radiant world in nature if our eyes were opened to see the splendor that is in every tree, plant, and flower.

An artist was painting a picture which he



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hoped might be honored in the Academy. It was of a woman, struggling up a street, on a wild, stormy night, carrying her baby in her arms. Doors were shut in her face. Nowhere was there warmth, sympathy, or love for her. The artist called the picture "Homeless." As he was painting it, imagination filled his soul with divine pity. "Why do I not go to lost people themselves, to try to save them, instead of merely painting pictures of them?" he began to ask. The common bush burned with fire. Under the impulse of the new feeling he gave himself to Christ and to the Christian ministry. He went to Africa as a missionary, devoting his life to the saving of the lowest lost. If we had eyes touched by divine anointing, we should see in every outcast, in every most depraved life, the gleaming of every possible glory.

Many of the best people in the world are lowly and obscure. They have no shining qualities, no brilliant gifts. Yet if we could see them as they really are, we would find the

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thorn bush burning with fire. They are full of God. Christ lives in them. There is a story of a Christian Italian who works with pick and shovel, walking two miles every morning to his task. He lives on the plainest food. Yet he is the happiest man in all the neighborhood. He has a secret which keeps him happy in all his toil and pinching. Away in Italy he has a wife and two children, and he is working and saving to bring them to America, where he is building a home for them. His lowly thorn bush of hardness and poverty is aflame with the fire of love.



### Bringing Heaven Down

THE test of life to which most of us are called during the week will not be in conspicuous things which people will talk about, but in the little common things of the common days. Charles Wagner tells us, that, instead of living among the stars, we would better learn to love the flowers that grow at our feet. A

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heavenly vision which we cannot bring down into our common every-day life means very little to us. In one of Murillo's pictures we see the interior of a convent kitchen. Instead, however, of mortals in working dress, we see angels in white garments at the lowly work. One is putting the kettle on the fire, another is lifting a pail of water, another is at the dresser, reaching up for the dishes. Then there is a little cherub wanting to help, but continually getting in the way of the others and hindering them. The artist means that we may bring heaven down into all the lowly ways of earth, and that even kitchen service may be made as heavenly as work of angels in heaven.



### The Service of the Lowly

THERE is a beautiful legend of Fra Bernardo. The monastery had vowed to set a carved altar to the Christ at Christmas-tide. Every monk was to do his own part. All the other monks had finished their work. On Christmas

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eve Fra Bernardo knelt and told his Lord of his failure. He had tried with his poor skill to carve something for the altar, for Christ's dear sake, but somehow he could not make anything worthy. So he prayed that his fingers might have skill, and that he might be able that very night to carve the dream of beauty that was in his heart. In the morning the monks sought Bernardo's cell and found him there—

“Dead, smiling still, and prostrate as in prayer;  
While at his side a wondrous carving lay—  
A face of Christ sublimely tender, sweet,—  
The work of Fra Bernardo was complete.”

So it will be with those who seem to fail but who continue striving faithfully, doing their lowly work as well as they can. When the end comes it will be seen that what to them seemed failure was beautiful with the beauty of Christ. God finishes the work that his lowly ones try to do for them.

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## Life among the Lowly

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### Ministry in Obscurity

NOT long since in a great city an aged Christian woman closed her earthly life. She had lived always in very plain circumstances. She had enjoyed only the most ordinary privileges of education. She had no peculiar gift for any distinct form of Christian activity. She had never taught a Sunday-school class, nor led a woman's prayer meeting, nor taken part in a missionary society, nor been connected with a temperance union or any sort of organized association. She had never been recognized by her friends as an active worker in any capacity. But for sixty of her eighty years she had been a true, earnest and sincere Christian. She had been a faithful wife, and a loving, self-denying mother. She had brought up her family in the fear of the Lord. She had lived a quiet, patient, gentle life.

About her coffin there sat a large circle of her descendants—her own children and grandchildren. Her life-story was a record,

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not of any great deeds, nor of any fine things done, but of eighty years of plain, simple, lowly, Christlike goodness. Yet it never can be known until the Judgment Day, when the books shall be opened, what blessings that humble life left at its close in the world. Its silent, unconscious influence poured out through all the long years into other lives, making them better, happier, holier, sweeter.

Such a ministry of goodness is within the reach of every Christian. It requires no brilliant gifts, no great wealth. It is a ministry which the plainest and the lowliest may fulfill. Then its influence is incalculable.



### Unconscious Helpfulness

A YOUNG woman who had passed through deep sorrows said to a friend one day, in speaking of the comfort certain persons had given her unconsciously, "I wish some people knew just how much their faces can comfort one! I often ride down in the same street-car with your father, and it has been such a

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help to me to sit next to him. There is something so good and kind and strong about him, it has been a comfort just to feel he was beside me. Sometimes, when I have been utterly depressed and discouraged, he has seemed somehow to know just the right word to say to me; but if he didn't talk, why, I just looked at his face, and that helped me. He probably has not the least idea of it, either, for I know him so slightly, and I don't suppose people half realize, anyway, how much they are helping or hindering others!"

There is a great deal of this unconscious kindness in the world. Moses wist not that his face shone. The best people are not aware of their goodness. According to the legend, it was only when it fell behind him, where he could not see it, that the saintly man's shadow healed the sick. This is a parable. Goodness that is aware of itself has lost much of its charm. Kindnesses that are done unconsciously mean the most.

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### Transfigured by Sorrow

It is one of the blessings of pain or suffering that it softens hearts, and woos out gentleness and kindness. A very common experience is given in the story of a worker in one of the slums, which tells of a whole family completely changed through the influence of a deformed child who became the angel of the home. The father was a navy, the lads were coarse and uncouth, and the mother, overworked and far from strong, had fallen into untidy habits. But there was born into that home a crippled child, and it was the means of drawing out the sympathy, love, and tenderness of the whole family. The man nursed and petted his child evenings; the boys made playthings for her, and showed their affection in all sorts of pleasant ways; the mother kept the window clean, that her child, pillowed on the table, might look out on the court. Thus a large and blessed ministry of kindness was inspired by what seemed a misfortune. The suffering of a child transformed



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## Life among the Lowly

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all the household life, making each heart gentler, more thoughtful, more unselfish. It is often so. Many a sweet home owes most of its sweetness to a quiet, patient sufferer, whose pain has been the messenger of God to soften hearts and enrich common lives with heavenly tenderness.



X

**Transfiguration**



## Transfiguration



### The Fragrance of Lowly Lives

ONCE in crossing a meadow I came to a spot that was filled with fragrance. Yet I could see no flowers and I wondered whence the fragrance came. At last I found, low down, close to the ground, hidden by the tall grass, innumerable little flowers growing. It was from these the fragrance came. You enter some homes. There is a rich perfume of love that pervades all the place. It may be a home of wealth and luxury, or it may be plain and bare. No matter; it is not the house, nor the furniture, nor the adornment that makes the air of sweetness. You look closely. It is a gentle woman, mother or daughter, quiet, lowly, hiding herself away, from whose life the fragrance flows. She may not be beautiful, may not be specially well educated, may

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not be musical, nor an artist, nor "clever" in any way; but wherever she moves she leaves a benediction. Her sweet patience is never disturbed by the sharp words that fall about her. The children love her because she never tires of them. She helps them with their lessons, listens to their frets and worries, mends their broken toys, makes dolls' dresses for them, straightens out their tangles, settles their little quarrels, and finds time to play with them. When there is sickness in the home she is the angel of comfort. Her face is always bright with the outshining of love. Her voice has music in it as it falls in cheerful tenderness on the sufferer's ear. Her hands are wondrously gentle as their soothing touch rests on the aching head, or as they minister in countless ways about the bed of pain.



### A New Heart

THERE is a story in one of the sacred books of the Hindus of a devotee who had served a

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certain goddess with such faithfulness that she offered to give him whatever he might ask. She offered him lands and wealth beyond price, but the man said, "Alas! I have no need for such things. I already have great estates, abundance of silver and gold, and all the good things of this life. But I am a miser. I cannot enjoy the things I possess. I die of famine, with plenty all around me, and I know nothing of the pleasures that are common to generous minds. Give me, then, a new heart." The goddess looked at him in amazement, and said, "Thou hast asked a thing too difficult," and she vanished.

But this is the very thing God does for those who ask it. He is able to change the miser's heart, so that he may find pleasure in blessing others with his gifts. He does this by putting his words into the heart. Then the heart is changed, and the life that was all wrong is made all right.

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### Set Free

THE way to become free from all other masters is to become Christ's servant. St. Paul delighted to call himself a slave of Christ. He who knows no master but Christ is free indeed. We are never free until we accept Christ's yoke. When we do this Christ breaks every other chain and sets us free. There is a story of a stranger who entered an Oriental city, and as he walked through the market-place he saw many birds in cages. He asked the price of one bird and cage, and, paying for it, opened the door. The bird flew out, and rising a little way in the air, caught a glimpse of its native mountains far away, and then flew swiftly toward them, dropping sweet songs as it hastened toward home. The traveler then bought the other cages, one by one, and set the birds free, until all had been liberated. That is what Jesus would do for us in our captivity. He would set us all free, breaking our chains, opening our prison doors, that we may fly away toward our home.



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### Hindrances as God's Gifts

A CHRISTIAN physician, whose career has been full of faith and noble ministry, gives this experience. He was a poor boy, and a cripple. One day he was watching some boys on the ball-field. They were active, strong and wealthy. As he looked on, his heart grew bitter with envy. A young man who stood beside him noted the discontent on his face, and said to him, "You wish you were in those boys' place, don't you?" "Yes, I do," was the answer. "I reckon God gave them money, education and health," continued the young man, "to help them to be of some account in the world. Did it ever strike you," he continued, after a moment's pause, "that he gave you your lame leg for the same reason—to make a man of you?"

The boy gave no answer, and turned away. He was angry, but he did not forget the words. His crippled leg God's gift! To teach him patience, courage, perseverance! To make a man of him! He thought of the

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words till he saw their meaning. They kindled hope and cheer, and he determined to conquer his hindrance. He grew heroic. He soon learned that what was true of his lame leg, was true also of all the difficulties, hindrances, and hard conditions of his life—they were all God's gifts to him to help him to be of some account in the world—to make a man of him.



### Death's Emancipation

THE truth of immortality gives a wonderful motive to those who are doing spiritual work. Some of the people whom we seek to help are broken in their earthly lives. There are those, for example, whose bodies are dwarfed and misshapen. What does the truth of the immortal life tell us about these crippled and deformed ones? Only for a little while shall they be kept in these broken bodies. What an emancipation death will be to them!

One tells of a little wrinkled old woman who sells newspapers at a certain corner in

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a great city, day after day, in sun and rain, in winter and summer. Here is the story of this poor creature's life. She was bereft of her husband, and then an orphaned grandchild was put into her arms by her dying daughter, and she promised to provide for the little one. This is the secret that sends her to her hard task day after day. But that is not all the story. Some old friends offered the woman a home with them in return for trifling services, but she would have had to be faithless to her trust. This she could not be. Her dead daughter's child was sacred to her. So she stands there on the street corner in all weathers, selling newspapers to provide for the little one. Ah, it is a noble soul that is in that old bent, wrinkled body! No angel in heaven is dearer to God than that poor creature, serving so faithfully at her post. Think what immortality means to her!

A little child was left in the arms of a young father by a dying mother. He was thankful. "Her beautiful mother will live again in her, and I shall be comforted," he

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said. He lavished his love upon her. But the child developed spinal disease and grew to be sadly misshapen. The father's disappointment was pitiful. He drew himself away from the ill-favored child, neglecting her. At length the child died and as the father sat in his room in the evening, thinking of her sad, short life, he fell asleep and a radiant vision appeared before him. It was his daughter, straight and beautiful, more beautiful than her lovely mother ever had been. He held out his arms yearningly, and she drew near to him, and knelt, and laid her head against his breast. They talked long of things in their inmost souls, and he understood that this was his daughter in reality. This was the child as she was in her inner life, the spirit-child, what she was as God and angels saw her. He never had been able to see her in this radiant loveliness, however, because of the physical deformity which disease had wrought, thus hiding from his blinded eyes the real splendor of her sweet, lovely girlhood. With great tenderness he

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laid his hand on her head, saying, "My daughter!" Then the vision vanished—it was only a dream. But in the dream there was a revealing of the truth about her. This was indeed the child over whose disfigurement he was so bitterly disappointed. This was the thing that had dwelt in that crooked body. This was what she was now in her immortal body.



### Calling Out the Music

ONE of Frances Ridley Havergal's poems tells us of an Æolian harp which a friend sent with a letter describing the wonderful sweetness of its tones. Miss Havergal took the harp and thrummed its seven strings, but there were no thrilling strains, only common music. She read the letter again and found instructions which she had overlooked at first. Then she raised the window and put the harp under the sash. Now the wind swept over the strings and the room was filled with melodious strains which no fingers of man

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could have produced. Only when the breath of heaven blew upon the harp could its marvelous music be brought out.

The human soul is such a harp. Human fingers call out much that is lovely and sweet, but it is only when its chords are swept by the breath of heaven, by the Holy Spirit, that its noblest music is called out.



### How Christ Transfigures the Life

A FRIEND gave a college student a pure, inspiring and elevating picture, and asked him to hang it up in his room and keep it there for one year. The young man promised to do so. But he cared more for worldly things, for a good time, than for his studies. Then he was not as careful as he should have been about his pleasures. The friend was in the student's room one day and saw the picture on the wall, in a place of honor, but clustered about it were many common sporting prints, some of them of a questionable character.

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The beautiful picture in the center seemed strangely out of place in such unhallowed company. Yet the young man appeared entirely unaware of anything unfit in the setting, as he spoke very gratefully of his friend's beautiful gift.

Six months later, however, the friend was again in the student's room. There was the picture still in its honored place on the wall, but all the questionable prints were gone, and in place of them hung other pictures, pure, refining and beautiful, all of them in harmony with the picture in the center. The friend manifested much pleasure as he looked about the room and saw the transformation. The young man said in explanation, "You see, I couldn't have those foolish things there beside that"—pointing to the other's gift. "The contrast was too dreadful. At first I didn't see it, but looking at your lovely picture opened my eyes to the unfitness of the others, and I took them all down and burned them. Then I bought other pictures to hang up in their place, but they all had to be pure and

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good, and in harmony with the one in the center.”

It is always thus when Christ is taken into the chief place in the life. Everything that is not in harmony with his peerless beauty must go out, and only the things that are in keeping with the mind and spirit of Christ can have a place in the life.



### Transfigured by Unselfishness

IN one of his books Dr. Miller quoted this story from a volume in his library:

“In a pottery factory there is a workman who had one small invalid child at home. He wrought at his trade with exemplary fidelity, being always in the shop at the opening of the day. He managed, however, to bear each evening to the bedside of his ‘wee lad,’ as he called him, a flower, a bit of ribbon, or a fragment of crimson glass—indeed anything that would lie out on the white counterpane and give color to the room. He was a quiet, un-sentimental man, but never went home at



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night without something that would make the wan face light up with joy at his return. He never said to a living soul that he loved that boy so much, still he went on patiently loving him, and by and by he moved that whole shop into positively real but unconscious fellowship with him. The workmen made curious little jars and cups upon their wheels, and painted diminutive pictures down their sides before they stuck them in the corners of the kiln at burning time. One brought some fruit in the bulge of his apron, and another engravings in a rude scrap-book. Not one of them whispered a word, for this solemn thing was not to be talked about. They put them in the old man's hat, where he found them; he understood all about it, and, believe it or not, cynics, as you will, but it is a fact that the entire pottery, full of men of rather coarse fiber by nature, grew quiet as the months drifted, becoming gentle and kind, and some dropped swearing as the weary look on the patient fellow-worker's face told them beyond mistake that the in-

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evitable shadow was drawing nearer. Every day some one did a piece of work for him and put it on the sanded plank to dry, so that he could come later and go earlier. So, when the bell tolled and the little coffin came out of the lonely door, right around the corner, out of sight, there stood a hundred stalwart workmen from the pottery with their clean clothes on, most of whom gave a half day's time for the privilege of taking part in the simple procession and following to the grave that small burden of a child which probably not one had ever seen.



### The Love that Transforms

"DEAR MOSS," said the thatch on an old ruin, "I am so worn, so patched, so ragged, really I am quite unsightly. I wish you would come and cheer me up a little. You will hide all my infirmities and defects; and, through your loving sympathy, no finger of contempt or dislike will be pointed at me."

"I come," said the moss; and it crept up

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and around, and in and out, till every flaw was hidden, and all was smooth and fair. Presently the sun shone out, and the old thatch looked bright and fair, a picture of rare beauty, in the golden rays.

“How beautiful the thatch looks!” cried one who saw it. “How beautiful the thatch looks!” said another. “Ah!” said the old thatch, “rather let them say, ‘How beautiful is the loving moss!’ For it spends itself in covering up all my faults, keeping the knowledge of them all to herself, and, by her own grace, making my age and poverty wear the garb of youth and luxuriance.”

So it is that love covers the plainness and the ruggedness of the lowliest home. It hides its dreariness and its faults. It softens its ruggedness. It changes its pain into profit, and its loss into gain.



### Made Handsome by Love

THE story is told of a distinguished woman, that when she was a girl she was so homely

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that even her mother said to her one day: "My poor child, you are so ugly that no one will ever love you." The cruel words fell into the child's heart, but instead of making her bitter they had just the opposite effect. She determined that if her face was homely she would make her life so beautiful that people would love her. She began to be kind to everybody, to be loving, thoughtful, gentle, helpful. She never became handsome in features, but she did become the good angel of the community in which she lived. It was love in her heart that transformed her life and saved her from utter disheartenment.

There are those whose lives have been hurt in some way, and who seem doomed to carry their marring or wounding through all their days, but whom the love of Christ can yet restore to beauty and strength. There is no ruin which He cannot build up again into fair loveliness. There is no defect which He cannot turn into victory. To know that He is touched, the Christ on His throne of glory, with the feeling of our infirmities puts into

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the heart a new secret of joy which will transform the dreariest life into heavenly gladness.



### What God's Love Does for Us

A WRITER tells the story of a boy who at the age of eight was regarded as being of feeble mind, hopelessly imbecile, the result of some illness in infancy. The boy's father was widely known as an educator. Inspired by his deep love for the child, he took personal charge of his training, devoting himself to it most assiduously. If the boy had been sent to ordinary schools, he would probably never have been anything but an imbecile. As it was, however, he became bright and talented, passed with honor through one of the great universities, and became a man of ability and influence. The father's gentleness made him great. His genius as a teacher, inspired by his strong love for his child, took the poor, stunted life, and by patience developed its latent possibilities into beauty and noble strength.

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That is what God's wonderful love does with us. What would we have been but for the divine care of us? As the warm sunshine falling upon the bare, dried, briery bush, unsightly and apparently useless, woos out leaves and buds and marvelous roses, so the warm love of God, falling upon our poor, sin-hurt lives, with only death before them, awakens in them heavenly yearnings and longings and aspirations, and leads them out and glorifies them.

There is a wonderful inspiration in the knowledge and consciousness that God loves us. A newsboy was in the habit of running after a gentleman on the ferry-boat and brushing his coat with affectionate fondness. One day the gentleman asked him, "Why are you so careful with me every morning?" The boy answered, "Because once, when you bought a paper, you said, 'My child!' No one ever called me his child before. That's the reason. I love you for saying that to me." It was the first love the boy had found in this world, and it was like heaven to him.

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It is a blessed moment to us when we first realize that God is our Father, and calls us his own children. It fills us with unspeakable joy. It brings the love of God about us in floods. It lifts us up into heaven in our experience.

If we keep ourselves in the love of God, the love of God will enter into us and fill us. We seem to have now but a small measure of this divine love in us. We are unloving in our own lives. We chafe easily when others irritate us. We are readily vexed and offended and hold grudges and resentments. If God were like us, what would become of us? If he were so unforbearing, unforgiving, and uncharitable as we are, if he had no more mercy on us than we have on those who unintentionally hurt us, what would become of us? But if we keep ourselves in the love of God, all this is changed. The love in us transforms us into its own spirit. If a bar of iron lies in the fire for a time, it becomes red-hot—the fire enters into the iron and transfigures it. A lump of clay lying on a

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rose becomes fragrant—the rose's sweetness enters into it. A grain of musk in a bureau drawer fills all the garments in the drawer with its perfume. If we keep ourselves in the love of God, in the atmosphere of that love, our whole being becomes saturated with it until we live as God lives. It was written of one Christian man,

“His life grew fragrant with the inner soul,  
And weary folk who passed him on the street  
Saw Christ's love beam from out the wistful  
eyes,  
And had new confidence in God and men.”

So it will be with all who truly keep themselves in the love of God. Their lives will be transformed into the grace and beauty of Christ, and the weary ones who see them and know them will have new faith in God and new love for men.



### Learning the Lesson of Devotion

THERE are transforming motives if only we can get them into our hearts. Love has



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power to transfigure the dreary tasks into delights. You have seen a young girl, light-hearted, care-free, with scarcely ever a serious thought in her mind. She seemed to think only of herself. She was self-indulgent, never denying herself anything she wanted. She never sacrificed her own comfort for another. By and by you saw her a mother, with a baby in her arms. Now her life was altogether changed. Love had blossomed out and possessed her. She cared now for her child with intense and self-forgetful devotion. She thought no longer of her own ease and comfort. There was no more in her any spirit of self-indulgence. Then she did everything, the dreariest task, gladly, joyously. There was no complaint, no fretting. Love had taught her the lesson of self-devotion, and her heart sang as she wrought.



### Singing for Others

A SINGER told the story of how she sang only for ambition, because she hoped to gather

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fame and wealth. But one Sunday she went to sing in a prison, after the minister had preached. Among the convicts was one with strangely sad and hungry eyes. "I sang to that one man," the singer said, "and as I sang, a power that was never mine before was given me. The tears rained down the man's cheeks as he listened. Faces all about him began to soften." It was a holy moment for the singer. She had risen out of mere professionalism, and her soul had been touched and thrilled by the love of Christ. From that day all was new for her.

XI

**Learning by Suffering**



## Learning by Suffering



### Out of Tribulation

DR. W. L. WATKINSON tells of a flower-show in London, where all the flowers exhibited had been grown in the city. He says, "It is not much to grow flowers in privileged places—in places where there is pure air, sweet light, silver dew; but think of growing palms and myrtles, roses and orchids, in dingy courts, in murky cellars, in mean back yards, on narrow window-sills, on the tiles, among chimney-pots—think of growing prize blossoms in yellow fogs, stifling air, and amid the breath of the million. No wonder the Queen went to see this exhibition; it was one of the most pathetic of shows, a splendid triumph over dark and hard conditions." So in St. John's vision the noble saints, shining in white garments and bearing the symbols of battle and

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victory, had come, not out of ease and kindly circumstances, not out of experiences of luxury, from cosy homes, from favored spots and genial conditions; rather they had won their nobleness in hard lots, in fierce struggle, in sharp temptation, in bitter sorrow, in keen suffering.

Some of us grow impatient of our difficulties and hardships. We brood over them and come to think that we have not been fairly dealt with. Some of us resent our trials and think that God has not been kind, has not even been just with us. "I submit to you," wrote a young man the other day, "whether I have had a fair chance in life, whether God's dealing with me has been quite right and just." Then he told of certain trials and losses, certain bereavements and sorrows, certain disappointments and struggles which he had met, and then of certain wrongs and injustices he had suffered from those who ought to have been his friends. The story was one that drew out sympathy. But in the light of this heavenly vision all that had

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seemed so hard meant an opportunity for this young man to grow into manly strength and heroic character. Those who have the battles and the trials, and overcome in them, shall wear white robes and carry palm branches. They shall be among the victors at the last. Nothing noble is attained easily. The crowns of life can be won only on the fields of struggle.



### In Green Pastures

A young Christian who had been for many weeks in a hospital, undergoing a painful operation and then slowly recovering, wrote me in the days of her convalescence, "I have found my little white bed here in the hospital a bit of God's green pasture." Not only had it proved a place of rest and peace to her, but also a place of spiritual refreshment.

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### The Use of Adversity

RENAN, in one of his books, recalls an old French legend of a buried city on the coast of Brittany. With its homes, public buildings, churches, and thronged streets, it sank instantly into the sea. The legend says that the city's life goes on as before down beneath the waves. The fishermen, when in calm weather they row over the place, sometimes think they can see the gleaming tips of the church spires deep in the water, and fancy they can hear the chiming of bells in the old belfries, and even the murmur of the city's noises. There are men who, in their later years, seem to have an experience like this. The life of youthful hopes, dreams, successes, and joys had been sunk out of sight, submerged in misfortunes and adversities, vanished altogether. All that remains is a memory. In their discouragement they seem to hear the echoes of the old songs of hope and gladness, and to catch visions of the old beauty and splendor, but that is all. They



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have nothing real left. They have grown hopeless and bitter.

But this is not worthy living for one who is immortal, who has been born to be a child of God. The hard things are not meant to mar out life—they are meant to make it all the braver, the worthier, the nobler. Adversities and misfortunes are meant to sweeten our spirits, not to make them sour and bitter.

“Confide ye aye in Providence,

For Providence is kind,

And bear ye a’ life’s changes

Wi’ a calm and tranquil mind.

Tho’ pressed and hemmed on every side,

Hae faith and ye’ll win through,

For ilka blade o’ grass keps

Its ain drap o’ dew.”

We need to think of these things. There should be a constant gaining, never a losing in our spiritual life. Every year should find us living on a higher plane than the year before. Old age should always be the best of life, not marked by emptiness and decay, but by higher fruitfulness and more gracious

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beauty. St. Paul was growing old, when he spoke of forgetting things behind and reaching forth to things before. His best was yet to be attained. So it should always be with Christian old age. We must ever be turning northward, toward fuller life and holier beauty. This can be the story of our experience only if our life is hid with Christ in God. Torn away from Christ, no life can keep its zest or its radiance.



### The Beauty of the Veteran

A MOTHER and her child sat side by side in the same company. Both love Christ and are following him. The girl is sweet, beautiful, a picture of grace. She never has known a struggle, has scarcely ever been called to make a sacrifice, has never found it hard to do right. Her face is fair, without a line. The mother has had cares, struggles, and fights with evil, has endured wrongs, has carried burdens, has suffered, has had bitter sorrows, has been misunderstood, has poured out her

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life in love's sacrifices. One would say that the child is the more beautiful, the fairer and lovelier in her life. But as the two appear in the eyes of Christ, while both are beautiful, the mother wears the holier loveliness. She has learned in suffering. She has grown stronger through her enduring of struggle. The lines of her face, which seem blemishes on her fair beauty, are the marks of Jesus Christ. The recruit who entered the ranks only yesterday, and who never has seen a battle, seems by far the handsomest soldier in the regiment, with his gay dress, clean armor, and unscarred face. But the old soldier who is the veteran of a score of battles, though his uniform is soiled and torn, his gun blackened with powder, his face marked with wounds and scars—is not he the more perfect soldier?



### Christ's Comfort in Sickness

WHEN Christ comes into our lives all things are made new. One who had been a Christian

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many years told of serious illness in her home—a beloved daughter was lying in fever. In this experience the mother learned as never before how real is the love of Christ in the lives of his friends. She said: “No story could be told which could be more wonderful than the story of the goodness shown to me these months, nothing more nearly reaching the miraculous than the way Christ has sent comfort and blessing to me and to my sick child.” Then she went over the story, and it is wonderful indeed. At the moment of need, the right comfort always came. A nurse was necessary, but could not be afforded. Then a message came from an old friend, not seen for years, and the nurse was provided. Letters came every day with their sympathy and cheer, just when the mother’s burden seemed too heavy for her to bear. Every moment of the suffering of these months is made bright with the thought of Christ’s love which came at the right moment. Everything has been transfigured for this mother. She found the fire burning on the beach, with fish there-

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on as well as bread, and the Master standing by.



### The Service of Inactivity

A PASTOR who had wrought long and had hardly ever been absent from his church was broken down and for months could not come to his accustomed place. During his long absence he wrote to his people words like these: "I understand that when I am physically unable to do the work I would be doing gladly if I could, it is not my work at all. It would have been mine if I were well, but now my only duty is to be quiet and still. Duty is not all activity; sometimes it is to wait and sing. Nothing is going wrong in my life because I am not in what would be my place if I were well. My ministry is not broken or even interrupted by this experience. My work for my Master has not been stopped,—its form only has been changed." No doubt this pastor was doing as much for his people those quiet

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days away from them as he had ever done in his active days in their midst.

We dare not take comfort from this teaching if we are not called from our duty in some providential way. Some of us are too easily taken from our work. Small excuses are allowed to draw us away. Obstacles are not always meant to interrupt our efforts,—oft-times they are meant to be overcome, making us more earnest and persistent. There is altogether too much resignation in some Christians. Their resignation may be indolence. We must be sure the Good Shepherd calls us to “lie down in green pastures” before we stop in our service. But if lying down is our duty, then we must do it as joyfully as ever we listened to a call to move strenuously forward.



### Softening the Face

IN Barrie's “Margaret Ogilvy,” is a chapter with the suggestive title, “How my mother got

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her soft face." She got it through suffering. Her boy was hurt. News had come that he was near death, far away from home, and the mother set out to go to him, hoping to reach him in time to minister to him and comfort him. Her ticket was bought, she had bidden the other children good-bye at the station. Then the father came out of the little telegraph office and said huskily, "He's gone!" and they all went home again up the little brae. The mother never recovered from the shock. She was another woman ever after, however, a better woman, gentler. Barrie says, "That is how my mother got her soft face and her pathetic ways and her large charity, and why other mothers run to her when they have lost a child." There are many other mothers who have got soft faces in the same way. They have had troubles very hard to bear, but their lives have been made more beautiful by the hardness. That is part of what Christ is to us—he leads us through pain and loss, but our faces grow softer.

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### The School of Suffering

ONE writes of a poet whose pen was facile, who wrote many brilliant lines. The world listened and was charmed but not helped, not inspired to better things. The poet's child died, and then he dipped his pen in his heart's blood and wrote, and the world paused and listened and was blessed and quickened to more beautiful life. Before we can do anything that is really worth while in helping our fellow-men, we must pass through a training of suffering, in which alone we can learn the lessons that will fit us for this holier service.



### Learning in the Darkness

IN the advertising circular that came with a new canary bird there was a description of the way the birds are educated. They are raised in the peasant districts of Germany. When they are to be trained, each bird is put in a little box cage, with only a small hole to give



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him just light enough to see to eat and drink. These cages are then put in a room from which all light is excluded, and their teacher gives the birds a lesson every two hours. First they get a lesson on the flute, then on the violin, then on bells, and last of all a nightingale is brought in to sing its wonderful notes and then to teach the birds to sing at night.

The point to be noted is that the birds must be taught their lessons in the darkness. They would not learn them in the light. It is with many people also as with the birds. There are certain songs we cannot learn to sing in the sunshine. So the great Teacher calls us apart and shuts the doors, to keep out the light and exclude the world's noises, and then teaches us the songs of peace, of joy, of trust, of love. Thus painful things of life have their place in the divine training of our lives.



### Growth through Sorrow

MANY of the things our Master calls us to do or to endure, do not seem to our eyes at the

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time the best things. Much of our life is disappointment. Sorrow comes oftentimes with its hot tears, its emptyings of the heart, its pain and bitterness. We do not know when we set out on any bright, sunny path, into what experiences we shall be led. A noble young man married a sweet, beautiful girl. They were very happy. Life began for them in a garden of roses. Only three bright years had passed, however, when the young wife broke down in health. Then she became an invalid, much of the time unable to leave her room. The burden has been a very heavy one for the husband, requiring continual self-denial and sacrifice, besides the grief and anxiety it has brought.

That was not the life these two dreamed of on their wedding morn. They thought only of gladness and prosperity. It never occurred to them that sickness or any trouble could break into their paradise. But the Master has made no mistake. Even already, to those who have watched their lives and noted the fruit of the suffering in them, it is becoming

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## Learning by Suffering

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apparent that love and goodness are written in all the painful lines of the long story. The young man has been growing all the years in strength, in gentleness, in purity of spirit, in self-control, in the peace of God, and in all manly qualities. It seemed a strange place to bid him cast his nets—into the deep waters of disappointment—but he is now drawing them full of rich blessing and good.



### Revealed by Adversity

ONE writes of watching an old tree in the autumn, as the leaves were touched by the frost and fell off when the rough wind blew. As the tree at last became bare he saw a bird's nest on one of the branches. Through the summer days the nest had been hidden beneath the thick foliage, but the blasts of winter which swept away the leaves uncovered this home and shelter of the birds. So, oftentimes, it is in the history of God's children. In their prosperity we do not see their refuge, which is

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hidden and secret—hidden beneath the leaves of worldly prosperity. But when adversity comes, taking away earthly beauty, stripping off the bright foliage, their true and eternal refuge in God is disclosed. The storms of earth only drive them back into God's bosom.



### God the Healer

THERE is a story of an Indian child who one day brought in from the field a hurt bird. The old chief asked the child where she had found the bird. "Among the wheat," was the answer. "Take it back," he said, "and lay it down just where you found it. If you keep it, it will die, but if you give it back to God, he can make it well again." It is with hurt hearts as it is with hurt birds. They belong to God, and only he can heal them. Human hands are clumsy and unskillful in comforting. If you have sorrow, let God be your heart's healer. No human hands can help, save those

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that God has trained into something of his own gentleness. When God comforts, there are no hurts remaining in the life, he is so gentle, so skillful.



### An Anchor Heavenward

WHEN they began to build a great wire suspension bridge over a wide river, a kite was sent across with the first fine wire. This was fastened, and then on it other wires were drawn across, until the great bridge hung in the air, and thousands were passing over it. From many a home a loved one, borne to heaven, carries the first heavenward thought of a worldly household. But from that moment and on that slender thread, their thoughts, affections, and longings go continually heavenward, until there is a broad golden bridge hung between their home and God's house, and prayer and love are constantly passing over.

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### The Blessing of Death

A BOY whose young sister was dying had heard that if he could secure but a single leaf from the tree of life that grew in the garden of God, the illness could be healed. He set out to find the garden, and implored the angel sentinel to let him have one leaf. The angel asked the boy if he could promise that his sister never should be sick any more if his request were granted, and that she should never be unhappy, nor do wrong, nor be cold or hungry, nor be treated harshly. The boy said he could not promise. Then the angel opened the gate a little way, bidding the child to look into the garden for a moment, to have one glimpse of its beauty.

“Then, if you still wish it,” said the angel, “I will myself ask the King for a leaf from the tree of life to heal your sister.”

The child looked in, and after seeing all the wondrous beauty and blessedness with-

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in the gates, he said softly to the angel, "I will not ask for the leaf now. There is no place in all this world so beautiful as that. There is no friend so kind as the Angel of Death. I wish he would take me, too."



### "I Want My Heavenly Father"

A BEAUTIFUL story is told of Rudyard Kipling during a serious illness a few years since. The trained nurse was sitting at his bedside on one of the anxious nights when the sick man's condition was most critical. She was watching him intently and noticed that his lips began to move. She bent over him, thinking he wished to say something to her. She heard him whisper very softly the words of the old familiar prayer of childhood, "Now I lay me down to sleep." The nurse, realizing that her patient did not require her services, and that he was praying, said in apology for having intruded upon him,

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“I beg your pardon, Mr. Kipling; I thought you wanted something.” “I do,” faintly replied the sick man; “I want my heavenly Father. He only can care for me now.” In his great weakness there was nothing that human help could do, and he turned to God and crept into his bosom, seeking the blessing and the care which none but God can give. That is what we need to do in every time of danger, of trial, of sorrow—when the gentlest human love can do nothing—creep into our heavenly Father’s bosom, saying, “Now I lay me down to sleep.” That is the way to peace. Earth has no shelter in which it can be found, but in God the feeblest may find it.



XII

**Looking on the Bright Side**

THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
BY  
NATHAN OSGOOD  
VOL. I.

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1846.

## Looking on the Bright Side



### Getting above the Fog

THE Sabbath should be a day for the uplifting of the whole life. A tourist among the Alps tells of climbing one of the mountains in a dense and dripping mist, until at length he passed through the clouds, and stood on a lofty peak in the clear sunlight. Beneath him lay the fog, like a waveless sea of white vapor; and, as he listened, he could hear the sounds of labor, the lowing of the cattle, and the peals of the village bells, coming up from the vales below. As he stood there he saw a bird fly out of the mists, soar about for a little while, and then dart down again and disappear. What those moments of sunshine were to the bird, coming up out of the cloud, the Sabbath should be to us. During week-days we live down in the low vales of life,

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amid the mists. Life is not easy for us; it is full of struggle and burden-bearing. The Sabbath comes; and we fly up out of the low climes of care, toil, and tears, and spend one day in the pure, sweet air of God's love and peace. There we have new visions of beauty. We get near to the heart of Christ, into the warmth of his love. We come into the goodly fellowship of Christian people, and get fresh inspiration from the contact.



### Seeing the Sunny Side

THE question was asked of two church officers, "How are matters in your church this year?" The first spoke discouragingly. The church to which he belonged seemed dead, he said. The attendance was not large. The Sunday school had fallen off. The prayer meetings were only a handful. The men in the membership appeared indifferent. Even the pastor did not seem as enthusiastic as he used to be. The whole tone of the good man's

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talk was lugubrious. There was not a glad, cheerful, praising word in all he said.

The other man, to the same question, answered with enthusiasm. The meetings were full. The pastor was working with earnestness and hope. Everybody was eager to work. A Thanksgiving tone ran through all his words. A church with such sunshiny men for its officers will have twice the success and blessing that a church can have whose officers are gloomy, disheartened, and hopeless.

But it is not in religious life and work only that there is so much lack of cheer and hope. In all lines of life one finds the same spirit. In many homes there is almost an entire absence of the thanksgiving spirit. A shadow rests on all the life. There is an immense amount of whining heard. Nothing is quite satisfactory. There is little singing. The quest seems to be for spots and mistakes, something to blame and condemn. How much better it would be, how much more of heaven we would get into our homes if we would train ourselves to find the beauti-

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ful things and good things in each other and in all our experiences and circumstances! Anybody can find fault—it takes no genius to do this. Genius is far better shown in finding something to praise and commend in imperfect people, in hard conditions.



### When the World Goes Out

A PRIZE was offered for the best definition of a friend. Many persons competed, but the definition which was adjudged the best and to which the prize was awarded was, "A friend—the first person who comes in when the whole world has gone out." Some of us know the truth of this definition by experience. There was a time when we needed a friend and one by one our acquaintances and those who called us friend, passed by and passed on and away—cold, unsympathetic, unheeding, leaving us to struggle along with our burden, our need, or our responsibility. Then when all had gone out there came one, cheerful, brave, strong, unself-

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ish, speaking the word or doing the deed which brought us relief, so that we could go on our way without failing.

It is such a friend that Christ is to us—when all the world has gone out and no one is ready to help, He comes in; when all human friends have failed us, He stands beside us, strong and faithful. Human love may be true, but at best its power is limited. It can go only one short mile with us, and then must fall out, fall behind, leaving us to go on alone. It has no wisdom to help beyond the merest borders of experience. We are powerless in the presence of any great human need. True friendship can do much. One wrote to a friend that he had never crossed the friend's threshold with a grief but that he went away without it; had never come hungry-hearted without being fed and having his sorrow comforted. Never had the friend's door been closed to him for even one little day. Yet there came a day when even that door was closed, when that friendship gave

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no help, no response, no consolation, no comfort. Human friendship is wondrously sweet, yet there come experiences when the truest, strongest human friend can do nothing. But when all the world has gone out, Christ will come in. He is an unfailing, an eternal Friend.



### Utilizing Our Handicap

A CONNOISSEUR in gems brought a large, beautiful onyx to an artist, and said: "See how clear, pure, and transparent this stone is. What a fine one for your skill, were it not for this one fatal blemish!" Then he showed the lapidary at one point an underlying tinge of iron-rust, which, he said, made the stone almost worthless.

But the artist took it, and with matchless skill and delicacy wrought upon the stone, carving on it the graceful figure of a lovely goddess. By most ingenious and patient use of his engraving tool, he fashioned it so that what had seemed an ir-



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reparable blemish was made into a leopard-skin, on which rested the feet of the goddess—the contrasting colors enhancing the beauty of the cameo.

This illustrates what we may do with the hard things in our condition, what God would have us do with them. We think we can never make anything good and worthy of our life, with the many discouraging things, the obstinate hindrances there are in our lot. Really, however, we can make our life all the nobler, richer, greater, stronger, worthier, by means of the very things which, we think, ruin our chances.



### In the Making

IN one of George Macdonald's books occurs this fragment of conversation. "I wonder why God made me," said Mrs. Faber, bitterly. "I'm sure I don't know where was the use of making me."

"Perhaps not much yet," replied Dor-

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othy; "but then he hasn't done with you yet. He is making you now, and you don't like it."

It would give us more patience with ourselves if we always remembered this. We would not get so discouraged with our infirmities, imperfections, and failures if we always kept in mind the fact that we are not yet made, that we are only in process of being made, that God is not yet through making us. It would often help us to understand better the reasons for the hard or painful experiences that come to us. God is at work on us, making us. If we yield ourselves to his hand, in quietness and confidence, letting him do what he will with us, all will be well.



### Singing Away the Pain

A PARTY of tourists were driving one day along the road to Killarney. As they approached a cottage near the drive, they

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heard singing. The voice that sang was sweet and rich, and of wondrous power. The members of the party were entranced. They stopped to listen as the notes of the song rose higher and clearer. Presently a young girl came out of the cottage with a basket on her arm.

“Please tell us who is singing so sweetly in your cottage,” one of the party asked her.

“It is only my Uncle Tim, sir,” answered the girl. “He has just had a bad turn with his leg, and he is singing away the pain.”

“Is he young? Can he ever get over the trouble?” asked the young man.

“Oh, he is getting a bit old, now, sir,” replied the girl. “The doctors say he’ll never be any better in this world—but he’s so good it would make you cry to see him suffering his terrible pain, and then hear him singing the more sweetly the more he is suffering.”

That is what the peace of God will help us to do. It gives us songs in the night.

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It puts joy into our hearts when we are in the midst of sorest trouble. It turns our thorns into roses.



### Blessing out of Pain

AN old legend relates that long ago some monks had found the crown of thorns which the Saviour wore on the day he was crucified. During Passion Week it was laid on the altar in the chapel, and the people looked upon the sacred crown with great reverence, awed as they saw the cruel thorns bearing still their stains of blood. Very early on Easter morning one of the monks entered the chapel to remove the dreadful relic which would be so out of harmony with the glad thoughts of the day. When he had opened the door he found the whole place filled with wondrous perfume. He could not understand it. As he went up to the altar, the early sunlight, coming in through the eastern window, showed him the crown still resting there, but it had become

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a crown of roses, every rose pouring out its marvelous fragrance.

The beautiful legend is a parable of what Christ does with earth's sorrows for all who love and trust him. The life of Christian faith is not freed from pain, but out of the pain comes rich blessing. The crown of thorns must be worn by the Master's friends who follow him faithfully, but the thorns burst into sweet flowers as the light of heaven's morning touches them.



### Try Singing

A WRITER tells of a boy who was sunny and brave. He met the ills of life, which too many people regard as almost tragedies, with courage. Nothing ever daunted him. Where most boys are afraid or break into tears, he was undismayed and untroubled. But one day something serious happened. He and a playmate climbed a tree. Just when our little philosopher had reached the

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top, his foot slipped and he fell to the ground. He lay there, evidently hurt, but uttered no cry. It was the playmate that screamed. The doctor found the leg badly broken. The boy bore the setting patiently without a whimper. The mother slipped out of the room to hide her own tears—she couldn't stand it as well as her boy did. Outside the door she heard a faint sound and hurried back, almost hoping to find him crying.

“My boy!” she said, “do you want something? I thought I heard you call.”

“Oh, no, mother,” he said, “I didn't call. I just thought I'd try singing a bit.” And he went on with the song.

When you have pain, or struggle, or a heavy load, or a great anguish, don't complain, don't cry out, don't sink down in despair, don't be afraid—try singing a bit. Trust God and praise.

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### The Remembers

MR. CHARLES G. TRUMBULL tells a beautiful little story. It is an incident of an Austrian watering-place:

“‘Ah! but I have the remembers,’ said the young Austrian doctor, with a happy smile. The day was gloomy and dismal, for it was raining hard. The great Kaiserbad, with its white steps and handsome architecture, that shone so gleamingly beautiful under a noonday sun, now looked a dirty yellow as the rain beat upon its sides, and trickled down the ins and outs of its masonry. Few people were to be seen on the streets or in the music-gardens and open-air cafes of the usually lively little Bohemian resort. Even the peaks of the surrounding Austrian Alps could be seen but dimly through the cloud and fog. If one was ever to be depressed by the weather, it seemed as though the time had come.

“So thought an American visitor, who, on ascending the steps of the Kaiserbad

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for his customary Swedish gymnastics and bath, had met one of the little physicians in attendance. But only yesterday the Prince of Bulgaria had completed his stay in the village. He had conferred an honorable order upon the chief physician at the Kaiserbad, and had given each of the lesser lights a princely fee as a parting token. No wonder that the spirits of the young doctor were not to be dampened by a mere rainy day. So, in response to the American's 'Good-morning; what disagreeable weather!' came quickly in broken English, 'Ah! but I have the remembers.' The words and the lesson stayed with those to whom they were afterward repeated, and the thought of the gloom-banishing power of the little doctor's 'remembers' had been more effective and far-reaching than perhaps he or the Prince of Bulgaria ever dreamed of."

If we all would keep in our hearts the "remembers," the memory of the beautiful things, the cheering things, the happy



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things that come to us in our bright, pleasant days, we should never have a day of unrelieved gloom.



### The True Enlarging of Life

ACQUISITION is not gain, possessing is not inheriting. The way the meek man inherits the earth is by getting the beautiful things of the world into his life, not merely by having them added to his estate. It is not by owning mountains, but by having the mountains in his heart that a man is really enriched. Dr. Robertson Nicoll, in speaking of owning and possessing, says: "I occasionally go out on a Saturday afternoon along a Surrey lane. Who owns that lane? I do not know. But I possess it. It belongs to me, for I can appreciate its beauty of color and contour; I go through it with a rejoicing heart, and I care not who holds the title-deeds."

A man who is seeking to enlarge his life

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may continue poor all his years in an earthly sense, but he receives into his life qualities of character which make him a better and greater and richer man.



### "God's Sky is over Us Yet"

A MOTHER, after a sore bereavement which changed all her life, was grieving at having to leave the old home where everything had grown sacred. Tears filled her eyes as she took the last look at the familiar scene—house, grounds, trees, and hills. Her little boy tried to comfort her, and as he looked out of the window of the car, he said: "Why, mother, God's sky is over us yet! It's going right along with us." We never can get beyond the blue of the heavens; we never can get out from under the shadow of the Almighty. Wherever we may have to go we shall always have the love of God over us.

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### Singing in the Midst of Suffering

THERE is a story of song birds being brought over the sea. There were thirty-six thousand of them, mostly canaries. At first, after the ship sailed, the sea was calm and the birds were silent. They kept their little heads under their wings and not a note was heard. But the third day out the ship struck a furious gale. The emigrants were terrified, the children wailed. Then this strange thing happened. As the tempest reached its height, the birds all began to sing, first one, then another, till the whole thirty-six thousand were singing as if their little throats would burst. Is that the way we Christians do? When the trouble begins, when the clouds of sorrow gather and break, when the storm rises in its fury—do we then begin to sing? If we fully understand the covenant of our God and believed his promises, should not our song break forth in tenfold joy when the tempest begins? But instead, we get frightened at the smallest

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troubles, we fret and grow discontented when any hope fails. We chafe at little sufferings, we complain and repine, and the sunshine dies out of our face and the gladness out of our voice.



### More Mercy than Misery

A LITTLE story-poem tells of a shepherd boy leading his sheep through a valley when a stranger, meeting him, and looking closely at his flock, said, "I see you have more white sheep than black." "Yes," answered the boy; "it is always so."

It is always so with sheep; there are more white ones than black in every flock. But we may take a wider view, and we shall find that everywhere in life there is more white than black. It is so in nature. There are some desert spots on the earth; but these are few, and their extent is small in comparison with the broad, fertile fields which spread everywhere. There are some sad people in every community; but the

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number is far exceeded by those who are happy. There always are sick and crippled and blind and suffering ones; but they make only a small proportion of the whole population of any place, the great majority being well, active, and strong. There are cloudy days in every year; but there are more days of sunshine and blue skies.

In any life, too, there is more white than black. Some people are not willing to confess that this is true. They imagine that the evil days are more in number than the good, that there is more cloud than blue sky in their life, that they have more sorrow than joy. But this is never true. There may be days when the darkness swallows up the light, but at evening time it shall be light. Really the list of mercies in any life, if added up through the years, would make a measureless record, while the sad and painful things, if footed up, would show an almost inappreciable list. The trouble with too many good people is that one little spot of darkness bulks so in their

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vision that it hides a whole heaven full of stars. One sorrow blots out the memory of a thousand joys. One disappointment makes them forget years of fulfilled hopes. Many people have a strangely perverted faculty of exaggerating their molehills of trouble into mountains, and looking at their blessings through diminishing lenses.

It would minister greatly to our gladness if we had a firm faith in the goodness of the providence that rules in all the affairs of our life. There is infinitely more mercy than misery in the world, more pleasure than pain, more white than black. Then, even the things that seem adverse have hidden in them a secret of blessing. "All things work together for good to them that love God." In every tear a rainbow sleeps.



### Out of Adversity

It is said that one of the great diamond fields in South Africa was discovered in this interesting way: One day a traveler entered

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the valley, and paused before a settler's door where a boy was amusing himself by throwing stones. One of the stones fell at the feet of the visitor; and he picked it up, and was about to return it to the boy when he saw a flash of light from it which arrested his attention, and made his heart beat with eager surprise. The stone was a diamond. The boy had no thought of its value; to him it was only a plaything. To the passer-by it was only a pebble which he spurned with his feet. But to the eye of the man of science, a gem of surprising value was unfolded in the rough covering.

So it is that many of the events of Providence appear to ordinary eyes as uninteresting, without meaning, oftentimes as even unkindly, adverse. Yet in each event there is wrapped up a divine treasure of good and blessing for the child of God. We need only eyes of Christian faith to find in every painful experience a helper of our gladness. Precious gems of rarest blessing are inclosed in the rough crusts of hardship, care,

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loss, and trial, which we are constantly coming upon in our life's way. We shall find when we get home that many of the things from which we have shrunk as evils have been the bearers to us of our richest treasures of good.



### The Glasses You Wear

A LADY took her visitor to a window to show her a view which to her was most inspiring. The guest manifested almost disgust as she exclaimed that all she saw was an unusually fine lot of black chimneys and smoky back-buildings. The genial hostess said, cheerfully, "Why I never saw the chimneys and back-buildings before. I saw only the hills yonder and that fringe of noble trees on the horizon!" This woman got far more out of life than her friend did, for she had eyes for the beauty and grandeur of the world about her, while the other saw only the things that were homely and without beauty.



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The same is true of the men and women about us, as well as of the scenes and conditions. It would add immeasurably to our pleasure in life if we would train ourselves to look for whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, in the people about us, instead of for the blemishes and faults. If we wore the glasses of love and charity, it would be in this way that we should see every one and every one's work. What a change it would make for us in the world of people if we should some day put on these new glasses and look at others through them!



### The Blessing of Hardness

It is related of a New England farmer that he put all his combativeness into a rough farm in Massachusetts and made it one of the best. Once a friend said to him, "I should think that with your love of farming you would like to have a more pro-

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ductive soil to deal with—in some Western State, for instance.”

“I should hate farming in the West,” he said vigorously. “I should hate to put my spade into the ground where it did not hit against a rock.”

There are many men who would find no pleasure if it were only and always easy. Their chief delight is in meeting obstacles and overcoming them. A hindrance in their path arouses the best that is in them in the effort to master it.

It is true in a measure of all good life that it needs antagonism or struggle to develop it.

XIII

“Thy Will Be Done”



## “Thy Will Be Done”



### When God Chooses

A MINISTER sat with a father and mother by the bed of a child, who was hovering between life and death. He was about to pray for the little sufferer, and turning to the parents he asked, “What shall we ask God to do?” After some moments the father answered, with deep emotion: “I would not dare to choose. Leave it to Him.”

Would it not be better always in things of earthly interest to leave to God the decision, letting Him choose what it is best for him to do for us or to give to us? We are not in the world to have ease and pleasure, to succeed in business, to do certain things—we are here to grow into strength and beauty of life and character, to accomplish the will of God and to have that will wrought out in our own life. Ofttimes

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the present must be sacrificed for the future, the earthly given up to gain the heavenly, pain endured for the sake of spiritual refining and enriching. If we are willing to let God choose for us and accept what He gives, we shall never fail to receive the best—perhaps not what earth would call the best, but always God's best. We know not what to pray for as we ought, and we would better leave it to God.

The truest prayer is oftentimes that in which we creep into the bosom of God and rest there in silence. We do not know what to ask, and we dare not say even a word, lest it might be the wrong word, hence we simply wait before God in quietness and confidence. We know that what is best our Father will do, and we trust Him to do what He will.



### Learning Submission

CHRIST does not seek to take away the burden—rather, he would make us strong and

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## “Thy Will Be Done”

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brave to bear it. One writes of an invalid lady who had a little locket in which were five dates written in red ink. “Those are the black-letter, not the red-letter, days of my life,” she said to her friend. “The first is the date of mother’s death, and O, how I rebelled, though I was only a girl in my teens. The second, three years later, is the date of my father’s leaving us, and again I rebelled. The third marks the time of my husband’s going, and still I murmured and struggled. The fourth is the date of the taking of my only darling, a sweet little fellow of five, and this time I almost cursed my heavenly Father, for now all my loved ones were gone and I was left alone. All the while I was not a Christian—indeed, I had grown bitter and hard. I thought God was punishing me. Now I see that he was not punishing, but educating me by a strange discipline. But I want you to look at the last date,” the woman continued. It read March 3, 1898. She said, “That was the day I gave my heart to the Saviour.

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You notice there were twenty-six years between the first date and the last—twenty-six years of fruitless rebellion. It took me twenty-six years to learn to say, ‘Thy will be done.’”



### Letting Christ Guide

THE evangelist, Mr. Charles M. Alexander, relates a story he heard a woman tell in a Friends’ meeting. She quoted the words in the prophet’s description of the Messiah, “The government shall be upon His shoulder.” Then she gave two illustrations. She told first of a good woman with a large family and many household cares, who became very ill. She was in great distress, not knowing how she could be spared from her tasks, how the affairs of her home could be carried on without her. Then an old and trusted servant came into her room and volunteered to take charge of everything. “Give yourself no anxiety,” she said. “Everything will go on beautifully.”



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## “Thy Will Be Done”

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So the good woman turned over everything to the faithful servant—her pocketbook, her keys, all the care and all the planning. So we may trust Christ with all our affairs and let Him do all for us. “The government shall be upon His shoulder.”

A boy was out driving with his father. The father said: “You may choose to-day where we shall go, on what roads and to what places.” The boy replied: “No, father, I do not want to choose the way. You always choose the loveliest roads and find the way to the most beautiful spots. I know I could not make the drive half so pleasant as you will.” Then the father said: “Would you not like to drive, then?” But again the boy declined. “I don’t want to drive, father. You drive so carefully. You always find the smoothest roads. You never take the wrong way. You never run against stones. If I drove I know I should run against stones. If I drove I know I should run over rough places, and we would be jolted. I would rather have you drive.”

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The boy had learned that his father could find better ways and would drive more safely than he could, and so he preferred just to sit in the carriage and let his father choose the way.

When we read of Christ that the government is upon His shoulder, why should we not rejoice to leave in His hands the guidance and the protection of our lives? Think how wise He is—knowing all things, knowing how to choose the best for us. Who does not know that this is better, safer, wiser than if we were to choose the way for ourselves?



### Comfort in God's Will

A BEAUTIFUL story is told of a devout Jewish home in which were twin boys who were greatly beloved. In the absence of the father, both boys suddenly died. When the father returned, not knowing of the sorrow in his home, the mother met him at the door and said, "I have had a strange visitor since you went away."

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## “Thy Will Be Done”

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“Who was it?” asked the father, not suspecting her meaning.

“Five years ago,” his wife answered, “a friend lent me two precious jewels. Yesterday he came and asked me to return them to him. What shall I do?”

“Are they his?” asked the father, not dreaming of her meaning.

“Yes, they belong to him and were only lent to me.”

“If they are his, he must have them again, if he desires.”

Leading her husband to the boys’ room, the wife drew down the sheet, uncovering the lovely forms, white as marble. “These are my jewels,” said the mother. “Five years ago God lent them to me and yesterday He came and asked them again. What shall we do?”



### The Secret of Peace

A POOR woman in the hospital was told by the matron that she could not recover, that

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## The Glory of the Commonplace

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her complaint was incurable. It is very hard to be told this—that one never can hope to be better, that one's life work is done. However, this poor sufferer was not overcome by what the kindly matron told her. She did not shrink from pain and death. But there was still one point at which she could not yield to God's way. With tears she said that she gladly and patiently accepted God's will so far as her own pain and death were concerned, but she could not bear the thought of leaving her children alone. She declared that no one could induce her to feel resigned on this matter.

The visitor to whom she said this had no words with which to chide her. She could only say to the poor woman, "Yours is untold sorrow, far beyond my understanding, but God knows all about it; God understands. Will you not tell him just how you feel? Tell him what you have told me, all your pain, your anxiety about your little children, your sore dread at thought of leaving

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## “Thy Will Be Done”

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them alone in this world.” Then the visitor went away, promising to pray for the poor woman, in her sore struggle. In a day or two she came again, and found the sufferer calm and patient. She had told God—had poured out her whole heart in unrestrained prayer, and she said to her friend, “I am just leaving everything with God; not only whether I shall live or die, but each one of my little children, if I am to be taken from them. Everything is safe with him. I feel it now. I know it.”

She had acknowledged God in this hard way, as in all other and easier ways. She had acknowledged him, too, by telling him all about her trouble, by going over her anxieties with him, and now there is no trouble, no anxiety, any longer. There are now no “anything but this” in her submission. To the Master’s words: “In all thy ways,” she could now respond, “Yes, Lord, in all my ways.”

This is the secret of peace—this losing of our will in Christ’s.

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### The Secret of Not Getting

THERE was a trifling accident to a railway train one day, which caused an hour's delay. One lady on the train was greatly excited. The detention would cause her to miss the steamer, and her friends would be disappointed in the morning when she should fail to arrive. That night the steamer on which she so eagerly wished to embark was burned to the water's edge, and nearly all on board perished. Her feeling of grieved disappointment was changed to one of grateful praise for the strange deliverance wrought. A carriage drove rapidly to a station one afternoon, just as the train rolled away; it contained a gentleman and his family. They manifested much annoyance and impatience at the failure to be in time. Important engagements for to-morrow could not be met. Sharp words were spoken to the coachman; for the fault was his, as he had been ten minutes late in appearing. An angry scowl was on the gentle-

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## “Thy Will Be Done”

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man's face, as he drove homeward again. All the evening he was sullen and unhappy. In the next morning's paper he read an account of a terrible bridge accident on the railway. The train he had been so anxious to take, and so annoyed at missing, had carried many of its sleeping passengers to a horrible death. The feeling of bitter vexation and sullen anger was instantly changed to one of thanksgiving. In both these cases the goodness of God was shown in not suffering his children to do what they considered essential to their happiness or success.



### Patience

THERE is a story of a rabbi who met a child carrying a basket closely covered. “Tell me, little maid,” said the rabbi, “what you have in that basket.” The child answered, “If my mother had wished that any one should know what is in this basket, she would not have covered it up.” If God had

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meant us to know all his plans of love for us, he would not have kept them covered up under experiences of pain and suffering. We may be sure, however, that for all our times of chastening and trial there is an afterward, full of glorious good, waiting for us.



XIV

The Love of God



## The Love of God



### The Persistence of Life

THE superintendent of a hospital in Mexico, a hospital chiefly for workers on a new railroad, writes of her amazement over the way some persons are brought in hurt from accidents, with scarcely a trace of life remaining, and yet how life persists in them. She tells of one man with both arms torn away at the shoulders, both limbs broken in two or three places, head cut and torn, body bruised, yet living and recovering. How frail we are, and yet what persistent life we have! God loves us and will shelter us from harm and will keep us from being destroyed, if only we will let our lives lie in his hand, trusting and obeying him. "We prevail by yielding, we succumb to conquer, like those sea flowers which continue to

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bloom amid the surf, where the rocks crumble." We have seen flowers growing sweet and fresh in the early spring days under the great snowdrifts. So God hides and protects the gentle lives of those who trust in Him, and in the very snow banks of trouble and trial which surround them. The least and feeblest of us can keep ourselves unspotted in the sorest perils, if we hide away under the shelter of the divine love.



### The Shepherd is Near

SOMETIMES God's sheep, in their experience in this world, must pass through deep, dark valleys; and yet they need not be afraid, the Shepherd is with them. Not only is He with them, but is able and willing to defend them against all enemies, as well as to guide and help them through.

Life is full of illustrations. A child cries out in the night in terror. It is afraid in the darkness. The mother speaks, thus re-

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vealing her presence; and the child is comforted, and in a moment sleeps in peace. A timid one is afraid to go through some gloomy way. One brave and strong and unafraid, says, "I will go with you"; and all fear vanishes, and the timid heart becomes bold. A poor woman in a London hospital was told that she must undergo a painful operation. She was asked if she was willing to submit to it. After a moment's hesitation she said, "Yes, I can endure it if Lady Augusta Stanley will sit by me and hold my hand." "I will fear no evil; for thou art with me."

We know how the presence of a strong, tried, trusted friend comforts us in any place of loneliness or danger. Were you ever in a strange city, where, amid all the throngs on the streets you saw no face you had ever seen before, none in which you perceived any token of recognition? You were opposed by a dreadful sense of loneliness. Then suddenly you met a friend, one you had known long, and in whom you had

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confidence. What a sense of comfort this friend's presence gave you! Instantly your feeling of loneliness vanished. You were no longer afraid. This is the comfort which is described in the wonderful words of this psalm: "I will fear no evil: for thou art with me."



### Is God Always Kind?

THE crippled girl in Ralph Connor's story could not understand how God could be good and let her suffer so. Her friend asked her about the plaster jacket the doctors had put on her.

"Did it hurt you when they put it on?"

"It was awful," she replied, shuddering as she thought of it.

"What a pity your father wasn't there!" said her friend.

"Why, he was there."

"Your father there, and did not stop the doctors hurting you so cruelly?"

"Why, he let them hurt me. It's going

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to help me, perhaps make me able to walk about some day.”

“Oh, then they did not hurt you in cruelty, just because they wanted to? I mean that your father loves you, though he let you be hurt; or, rather, he let the doctors hurt you just because he loves you, and wants to make you well.”

The girl became very thoughtful. Presently the light began to shine in her face. Then she asked, as the mystery of it all began to become clear to her, “Do you mean that though God let me fall and suffer so, he loves me?”

Her friend nodded. Presently she said, as if to herself, “I wonder if that can be true.”

We are sure also that God could relieve us of the things that are so hard for us to bear—could, if he would. There is nothing that God could not do. Pilate boasted to Jesus that he had power to crucify him, or to release him, as he chose. “No,” said Jesus; “thou canst have power over me

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only as it is given thee from above." This is God's world, and nothing can get out of God's hands. "My lovingkindness shall not depart from thee."



### Blunders Dear to God

NOT perfect, but blameless. Some one has said that no doubt many of the most beautiful things in heaven are the outcome of earth's blunders—things which God's children, with loving hearts, tried to do to please God. The blunders tell of love, and are dear to God. There is a rich home which I visit in which the most sacred and precious household treasure is a piece of puckered sewing. A little child one day picked up the mother's sewing—some simple thing she had been working on—and after half an hour's quiet, brought it to her and gave it to her, saying, "Mother, I's been helping you, 'cause I love you so." The stitches were long and the sewing was puckered, but the mother saw only beauty



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in it all, for it told of her child's love and eagerness to please her. That night the little one sickened, and in a few hours was dead. No wonder the mother keeps that piece of drawn and puckered sewing among her rarest treasures. Nothing that the most skillful hands have wrought, among all her household possessions, means to her half so much as that handkerchief with the child's unskilled work on it.



### Christ's Welcome for the Sinner

THE people thought Jesus would not want to be troubled with a beggar. But how mistaken they were! There is a story of President Lincoln, that one day he was ill, and refused audience to all who called—senators, diplomats, chief justices—the greatest and most distinguished in the land. Then a poor woman came, begging to see the President. Her dress was plain and worn, her face was thin and sorrowful, and

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in her arms she carried a baby. When she was told that the President was ill and could not see her, she begged so earnestly to be allowed to speak to him for a moment that the attendant went to the President and told him of her. "Show her in," was the prompt reply. Though he would not see the great and noble who came to honor him, he could not refuse to see this poor woman who came in her distress to beg for her soldier-husband's life.

Is it not thus with Christ? Even if there should be a day when angels and saints would be kept away, he would still welcome the penitent or the poor sufferer who comes with his bitter needs.



### Out of the Fragments

A DISTINGUISHED musician ordered a violin from a maker of violins—the best he could make. At length he came for his instrument. He began to draw the bow across

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the strings, and his face clouded. He was disappointed. He broke the violin to pieces on the table, paid the price, and went away angry. The maker gathered up the fragments of the shattered instrument and carefully put them together. Again the musician came, and taking his bow, drew it over the strings, and now the tone was perfect. He was pleased. "What is the price?" he asked. "Nothing," the maker replied. "This is the violin you broke to pieces on my table. I put the fragments together and this is the instrument on which you now make such noble music."

God can take the broken fragments of a life, shattered by sorrow or by sin, and out of them make a new life whose music shall thrill many hearts. If one is discouraged, if the life seems to be hopelessly broken, the gospel of divine love brings encouragement. There are no ruins of life out of which God cannot build beauty and blessing.

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### Without Care

MARTIN LUTHER, referring to care for to-morrow, says: "I have one preacher that I love better than any other on earth; it is my little tame robin, who preaches to me daily. I put his crumbs upon my window sill, especially at night. He hops onto the window sill when he wants his supply, and takes as much as he desires to satisfy his need. From thence he always hops to a little tree close by, lifts up his voice to God and sings his carol of praise and gratitude, then tucks his little head under his wing, goes fast to sleep, and leaves to-morrow to look after itself. He is the best preacher that I have on earth."



### Struggling for God's Gifts

It is refreshing to find Caleb so heroic at eighty-five. Most old people ask for easy places, but Caleb had a young man's heart. He did not seek easy things. He asked for

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a mountain which giants still held, saying that he would drive them out. It develops our own powers and graces to have to fight to get possession of our inheritance. God puts the gold deep down among the rocks, that we must dig and search for it if we would get it. He gives a man a farm, but the farm has to be cleared and cultivated before it is ready to yield its harvest. He gives a young man a fine education, but the young man must study hard to get it. He gives a young girl splendid musical talent, and to get it developed into its possibilities she has to spend months and years in weary practice. God gives us great grace, holiness, likeness to Christ, power in Christian work, meekness, patience; but we must struggle long with our old nature to obtain these gifts.



### Yet God is Near

IN the hardest experiences of life we are sure always of God's love. An Arctic ex-

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plorer was asked whether during the long months of slow starvation which he and his companions had endured, they suffered greatly from the pangs of hunger. He replied that these pangs were forgotten in the feeling that their friends at home had forgotten them and were not coming to rescue them. There is no suffering so bitter as the sense of abandonment, the thought that nobody cares. But however painful and hard our condition may be, however men may wrong us and injure us, Christian faith assures us that God loves us, that he has not forgotten us, that he cares.



### The Message of Love

AFTER the terrible earthquake and fire at San Francisco, some children far out in the country were gathering up pieces of charred paper which had been carried by the currents of air. Among these fragments they found a partly burned leaf of the Bible. A boy

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found it and took it home to his father who smoothed it out and read for the first time the immortal words, "Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three, and the greatest of these is love." It was a strange message to come out of the great conflagration—strange, but wonderfully fitting. Everything else of beauty and power had gone down in dust and ashes, but love remained—that was imperishable, and faith and hope remained. Nothing is worth living for but love—God's love and the love that it inspires.



### The Soul's Possibilities

It is said that one day Carlyle suddenly stopped at a street crossing, and, stooping down, picked up something out of the mud, even at the risk of being knocked down and run over by passing vehicles. With his bare hands he gently rubbed the mud off this thing which he had picked up, holding it as carefully and touching it as gently

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as if it had been something of great value. He took it to the pavement and laid it down on a clean spot on the curb-stone. "That," said the old man, in a tone of sweetness he rarely used, "is only a crust of bread. Yet I was taught by my mother never to waste anything, and, above all, bread, more precious than gold. I am sure that the little sparrows, or a hungry dog, will get nourishment from this bit of bread."

This is a suggestion of the way God looks upon a human life which bears his image. The merest fragment of life he regards as sacred. So long as there is the least trace of divine possibility in a human soul, he is ready to make something out of it, to take it out of the mire and give it another chance. If, therefore, one has lost the opportunity to realize God's first thought for his life, there still remains another chance. "The vessel that he made was marred in the hands of the potter; so he made it again—another vessel."

In Florence, one of the treasures of art



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admired by thousands of visitors is Michael Angelo's representation in marble of the young David. The shepherd boy stands with firm foothold, the stone grasped tightly in his right hand, ready to be sped on its holy errand. When the statue was unveiled, three hundred and fifty years ago, it caused an unparalleled sensation among all lovers of art. It is, indeed, a marvelous piece of sculpture.

But the strangely winning thing in the story of that statue is that it was the stone's second chance. A sculptor began work on a noble piece of marble, but, lacking skill, he only hacked and marred the block. It was then abandoned as spoiled and worthless, and cast aside. For years it lay in a back yard, soiled and blackened, half hidden among the rubbish. At last Angelo saw it, and at once perceived its possibilities. Under his skillful hand the stone was cut into the fair and marvelous beauty which appears in the statue of David.

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### What He Could

IN a railroad accident a young fireman stood manfully at his post and was fatally hurt. Everything was done for him that kindness could do. A minister spoke to him of the love of Christ.

“Yes,” he gasped, “I do believe in Christ. But God knows I’ve had to work so hard, such long hours, and have been so tired at night that I have had no chance to pray much or to go to church.”

His brother stood by and broke in, “But he’s been a good boy. He worked night and day to support our crippled mother—and me, when I was laid up for a year.”

“Yes, sir, and he took care of me,” said a big baggageman, “when I had smallpox and nobody would come near me.”

“And more than once,” added another young man, “he’s taken my run, after coming in from his own, when I was too sick to go out.”

The poor fireman smiled on his friends—

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a smile of gratitude. He had never heard such praise.

“God will not keep him out of heaven—will He?” said his brother, tenderly.

The minister bent over the dying boy and said, reverently and with deep feeling: “The peace of God, the peace of Christ, be upon you. You have done what you could.”

Can we doubt the gentleness of Christ in such a case? He is infinitely patient with all whose lot is hard. He never exacts more of us than we can do. He is never unreasonable. He knows when the burdens are too heavy for us. Once He, “being wearied with his journey, sat down by the well” in his exhaustion. He sympathizes with those who are weary and helps them.



### How God's Word Plows

A BIBLE found its way into a home where a Bible had never been before. The man of the house began to read it aloud to his wife in the evenings, and the words entered their

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hearts. One night, after reading aloud portions of the book, the man said, "Wife, if this book is true, we are wrong." The book condemned them. They became troubled. The Word was plowing its way into their hearts. Next evening, as they read again, the sense of sin in them became still deeper, and the man said, "Wife, if this book is true, we are lost!" They became very greatly distressed. The words they had read had shown them that they were sinners, guilty, lost. Next night they read again, and found something of hope—they had read of divine love and mercy, and the man said, "Wife, if this book is true, we can be saved." The Word of God does mighty plow-work in men's hearts before they can be made fruitful.

**Prayer Lessons**



## Prayer Lessons



### "Here Am I"

AN Eastern story tells of one who was discouraged because his prayers seemed not to be answered. An enemy taunted him, bidding him call louder, but a heavenly message brought him comfort, assuring him that his prayer to God really had the answer in itself.

"'Allah, Allah!' cried the sick man, racked with pain the long night through:

Till with prayer his heart was tender, till his lips like honey grew.

But at morning came the Tempter; said, 'Call louder, child of pain!

See if Allah ever hear, or answer, "Here am I" again.'

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“Like a stab, the cruel cavil through his brain  
and pulses went;

To his heart an icy coldness, to his brain a  
darkness sent.

Then before him stands Elias; says, ‘My  
child! why thus dismayed?’

Dost repent thy former fervor? Is thy soul  
of prayer afraid?’

“‘Ah!’ he cried, ‘I’ve called so often; never  
heard the “Here am I”;

And I thought, God will not pity, will not  
turn on me his eye.’

Then the grave Elias answered, ‘God said,  
“Rise, Elias, go,—

Speak to him, the sorely tempted; lift him  
from his gulf of woe.

“ “Tell him that his very longing is itself an  
answering cry;

That his answer, ‘Come, gracious Allah,’ is  
my answer, ‘Here am I.’ ”

Every inmost inspiration is God’s angel un-  
defiled;

And in every ‘O my Father!’ slumbers deep  
a ‘Here, my child!’ ”



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## Prayer Lessons

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### Our Unanswered Prayers

A CHILD may indolently shrink from the study, the regular hours, the routine, the drudgery, and the discipline of the school, begging the parents to let him stay at home from school and have an easy time; but what would you think of the father who would weakly and softly grant the child's request, releasing him from the tasks which are so irksome? Nothing more unkind could be done. The result would be the dwarfing of the child's life for all the future. Is God less wisely kind than our human fathers? He will not answer prayers which ask that we may be freed from duty or from work, since it is by these very things we grow. The only true answer in such prayers is the non-granting of what we ask.



### When Prayer is a Mockery

THERE is an ailment called sleeping sickness, which appears to be quite serious in

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some parts of the world, always terminating fatally. . There would seem to be a moral trouble of the same kind. At least, there are people who are disposed to sleepiness and need to be waked up. The Psalmist felt that he needed to be waked up. He wanted to sing praises, but his harp hung silent on the wall and he calls, "Awake, psaltery and harp." There is a good deal of spiritual lethargy in many of us. We are sluggish and need to be roused up. The psalmist said he would awake right early. It is said that Dr. Adam Clark was in the habit of rising early. A young minister was lamenting that he could not wake early, and asked the doctor how he had learned to do it. "I suppose you prayed a great deal about it?" "No," said the good man, "I got up." Instead of praying to get spiritually awake, we should simply get up. Prayer is a mockery unless we rise and begin at once to do God's will.

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## Prayer Lessons

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### Prayer and No Prayer

It is told of a good man that in a great bereavement he was strangely, supernaturally calm and peaceful. It was discovered that some friends had agreed together to pray for him, that his faith might not fail. That was the secret of his wonderful ability to be victorious in sorrow. Thousands are strengthened for their struggles, and carried in safety through untold perils, because loved ones are praying for them. Verily, "more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." None of us know what we owe to the intercessions of those who love and pray for us.

But there is another side. How many go down in their struggles, are defeated in their battles, are wrecked in life's storms, because no one is praying! A missionary came back from a preaching tour, and reported that there had been almost no blessing in his work. A good woman said, "Alas! I am to blame. I did not pray this time

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for you as I have always done before when you were out." A mother, seeing her son led away as a prisoner, arrested for crime, cried bitterly, "It is my fault; I did not pray enough for him!"



### Living Up to Our Prayers

THERE is an interesting story of a boy whose prayer was brought to a sudden pause by his conscience impelling him to run away and undo a bit of childish mischief before he could go on. The story runs thus:

"'If I should die 'fore I wake,'" said Donny, kneeling at grandmother's knee; "if I should die 'fore I wake—'"

"'I pray,'" prompted the gentle voice. "Go on, Donny."

"Wait a minute," interposed the small boy, scrambling to his feet and hurrying away downstairs. In a brief space he was back again, and, dropping down in his place, took up his petition where he had left

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it. But when the little white-gowned figure was safely tucked in bed the grandmother questioned, with loving rebuke, concerning the interruption in the prayer. "You didn't think what you were saying," she said apologetically.

"But I did think what I was sayin', grandmother; that's why I had to stop. You see, I'd upset Ted's menagerie, and stood all his wooden soldiers on their heads, just to see how he'd tear 'round in the mornin'. But if I should die 'fore I wake, why I didn't want him to find 'em that way, so I had to go down and fix 'em right 'fore I could go on. There's lots of things that seem funny if you're goin' to keep on livin', but you don't want 'em if you should die 'fore you wake."

"That was right, dear; it was right," commended the voice, with its tender quaver. "A good many of our prayers wouldn't be hurt by stopping in the middle of them to undo a wrong."

It would be well if all of us had a little

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more of Donny's realism in our praying. It might stop the flow of our words sometimes, while we go out and set something right in the realm of action which in the divine presence we see to be wrong. But it would save us from some of the mockeries and insincerities of prayer which now so much mar our worship.



### Was the Prayer Answered?

IN a beautiful home a little child lay very sick. The young parents had once been active Christians, but in their first wedded happiness they had given up Christ, and had now no place in their home for God. Their happiness seemed complete when the baby came. Radiant were the days that followed. Their joy knew no bounds. Then the baby fell very sick. In their alarm the parents sought the offices of religion and earnest and continued prayers were offered by the little one's bedside. Great physicians consulted together and all that

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science could do was done. But the baby died. "God did not answer our prayers," the parents said, and they complained bitterly.

Years afterward the father wrote these words to a friend: "I believe now that if God had granted my ardent prayers for the life of my beautiful first-born son when he was taken sick at nine months old, I never would have been the man I am now; I would have remained the godless man I had then become. But when I stood with my despairing wife beside our dead baby, even feeling bitter toward God because he had not heard our cries, I remembered how I had departed from God, and returned to him with penitence and confession. The death of my boy brought me back to Christ." The prayers seemed unanswered. At least the answer came not as the father wished, but God's way was better. The boy's life was not spared, but the father was saved.

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### Pray One for Another

SOME good people never go outside the circle of self in their prayers. Yet the last place in the world where we should be selfish is when we are on our knees. A minister made a strange request of a parishioner—that for a month he should not offer a single word of prayer for himself, or for any of his family, nor bring any of his own affairs to God. “What then shall I pray for?” asked the friend. “Anything that is in your heart, only not once for yourself.” When the good man came to his first season of prayer it seemed that he could find nothing to pray for. He would begin a familiar petition, but had to drop it, for it was something for himself. It was a serious month for him, but he learned his lesson. He found that he had been praying only for himself, and his own household, and had not been taking the interests of any others to God. The Lord’s Prayer teaches us to pray for others with our-



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selves. It is not, "Give me this day my daily bread," but, "Give us our bread to-day," leaving out no other hungry one.



### Bearing the Cross

It is told of President Lincoln that in one of the dark days of the American Civil War a poor woman came to plead that her husband or one of her five sons in the army might be released to care for the little farm and to be a comfort to her. Mr. Lincoln spoke to her with deep emotion of the great crisis through which the country was passing, telling her that not one soldier could be spared. Then he spoke of the noble part she was doing in sparing her husband and all her sons to the country. He told her he thought that in the great need she would not want to take back even one of them. As she listened, her patriotism rose, and she withdrew her request, and went back home to share loyally and gladly in the saving of the country. So it is that God ap-

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peals to us when we seek relief from crosses or sorrows, until we are ready for his sake to go on in our life of greatest self-denial and sacrifice. Our unanswered prayers seem better than if they were answered.



### True Prayer

SOME friends wanted to know how the holy Bengel prayed, and watched him at his devotions one night. He opened his New Testament and read slowly and silently, often pausing in meditation, or as if listening to the voice of gentle stillness. There was a glow in his features, and frequently he would look up as if he saw a face his watchers could not see. Thus an hour passed. He had not once been on his knees, nor had he been heard to utter a word. Then as the clock struck the hour for his retiring he closed the book, saying only, "Dear Lord Jesus, we are on the same old terms," and went to his bed. That was truest prayer. That is what it is to pray

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## Prayer Lessons

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without ceasing—to be always near enough to God to talk with him, always to be drinking in his love even in our busiest hours.



### At Prayer

WHEN General Gordon was with his army in Khartoum it is said that there was an hour every day when a white handkerchief lay over his tent door. While that signal was there no one, however high his rank, ever approached the tent. The most urgent business waited outside. Every one knew that Gordon was at prayer that hour within the tent, and not a man nor an officer came near until the handkerchief was lifted away.

There is always a sacredness about prayer. We instantly withdraw if unawares we suddenly come upon one engaged in prayer. We are awed into reverence when we see any one, however humble, bowing in prayer. But the sight of Christ at prayer touches us with still deeper awe. We un-

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cover our heads, and take off our shoes, and stand afar off in reverent hush while he bows before his Father and communes with him. Yet no figure is more familiar in the Gospels than the Master at prayer.



### A Prayer and its Effect

ONE night many years ago two young men were put into the same room in an English country inn. One of them was a heedless, thoughtless youth. The other, when the time for retiring came, quietly knelt down beside the bed and prayed in silence. His companion was strangely impressed. Fifty years afterward he wrote, "That scene, so unostentatious and so unconcealed, aroused my slumbering conscience, and sent an arrow into my heart." The result was the young man's conversion to God, followed by long years of service as a Christian minister and as a writer of books which have greatly blessed the world. "Nearly half a century has rolled away," he wrote again,

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“with its multitudinous events, but that old chamber, that humble couch, that silently praying youth, are still present in my imagination and will never be forgotten, even amid the splendors of heaven and through the ages of eternity.”



### An Answered Prayer

A LAWYER came to his client and said he could not prosecute a certain claim. The client wanted to know the reason. The lawyer told him of a visit he had made.

“I found the house and knocked, but nobody heard me. So I stepped into the little hall, and through a crack in the door I saw a cozy sitting-room, and on the bed, her head high on the pillows, an old woman. I was about to knock again, when the woman said: ‘Come, father, now begin. I am all ready.’ Down on his knees by her side went the old, white-haired man, and I could not have knocked then for the life of me.

“Well, he began. First he reminded God

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that they were still his submissive children, and that whatever he saw fit to bring upon them, they would accept. It would be hard for them to be homeless in their old age. How different it would have been if at least one of the boys had been spared!

“The old man’s voice broke then, and a thin white hand stole from under the coverlet and moved softly through his snowy hair. He went on presently, saying that nothing ever could be so hard again as the parting with the three boys had been—unless mother and he should be separated. Then he quoted several promises assuring the safety of those who put their trust in God. Last of all he prayed for God’s blessing on those who were demanding justice.”

The lawyer then said to his client, “I would rather go to the poorhouse to-night myself than to stain my hands and heart with such persecution as that.”

“Afraid to defeat the old man’s prayer?” asked the client, with hard tone.

“Bless your soul, man,” said the lawyer,

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“you couldn’t defeat that prayer. Of all the pleading I ever heard that moved me most. Why I was sent to hear that prayer I am sure I do not know. But I hand the case over.”

“I wish,” said the client uneasily, “that you hadn’t told me about the old man’s prayer.”

“Why so?”

“Well, because I want the money that the house would bring. I was taught the Bible myself when I was a boy, and I hate to run against it. I wish you hadn’t heard a word the old man said. Another time I would not listen to petitions not intended for my ears.”

The lawyer smiled. “My dear fellow,” he said, “you are wrong again. That prayer was intended for my ears, and yours, too. God Almighty meant it so. My mother used to sing, ‘God moves in a mysterious way.’”

“Well, my mother used to sing that, too,” said the client, and he twisted the claim papers in his fingers. “You can call in the

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morning, and tell mother and him that the claim has been met.”

God will always find some way to answer His children's prayers. We need not trouble ourselves as to how he can do this—that is not our matter. All we have to do is to lay our need before the throne of mercy, and to let God answer us as He will.



### Silent Times

IN Wellesley College a special feature of the daily life of the household is the morning and evening “silent time.” Both at the opening and closing of the day, there is a brief period, marked by the strokes of a bell, in which all the house is quiet. Every pupil is in her room. There is no conversation. No step is heard in the corridors. The whole great house with its thronging life is as quiet as if all its hundreds of inmates were sleeping. There is no positively prescribed way of spending these silent min-



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utes in the rooms, but it is understood that all whose hearts so incline them shall devote the time to devotional reading, meditation, and prayer. At least, the design of establishing this period of quiet as part of the daily life of the school, is to give opportunity for such devotional exercises, and by its solemn hush to suggest to all the fitness, the helpfulness, and the need of such periods of communion with God. The bell that calls for silence, also calls to thought and prayer; and even the most indifferent must be affected by its continual recurrence.



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### Intentions not Enough

STANDING before a masterpiece of art in one of the Old World's galleries, a young artist said to Ruskin: "Ah! if I could put such a dream on canvas!" "Dream on canvas!" growled the critic; "it will take ten thousand touches of the brush on the canvas to make your dream." Looking at the divine ideal of an unanxious life, as we see it, first in the words and then in the character of Jesus, we are all ready to wish we might realize it. But wishing alone will never lift us up to this holy beauty. We must toil to reach it. It will take ten thousand touches of the brush to put the dream on canvas. Mere dreaming does little. Chiseled on the tomb of a disap-

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pointed, heart-broken king, Joseph II of Austria, in the royal cemetery at Vienna, is this pitiable epitaph: "Here lies a monarch who, with the best intentions, never carried out a single plan." Not thus can we learn our lesson. Good intentions will do nothing unless they are wrought into deeds and into character. Better far was the spirit of Joan of Arc, who, when asked the secret of the victoriousness of her famous white standard, replied: "I said to it, 'Go boldly among the English,' and then I followed it myself." Thus only can we win the splendor of a life without worry. We must have our good intentions, and send them forward like white banners, but we must follow them ourselves. We must put our dreams into beautiful life.

Thus day by day, "no day without a line," we may get the lesson learned. Christ will help us if we try in his name. As we go forward, he will make the struggle easier for us. He will make the dreams come true as we strive to make them real.

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### Seeking the Things Above

THERE is a story of a man who in youth once found a gold coin on the street. Ever after, as he walked, he kept his eyes on the ground, looking for coins. He found one now and then, but he never saw the trees, the hills, the glorious landscapes, or the blue sky. The tendency of our absorbed business life, with its weary grind and struggle, is to hold our eyes ever on the dusty earth, causing us to miss the sight of the things that are above. St. Paul's counsel is that since we are raised together with Christ, we should seek the things that are above, where Christ is. A life which runs only along on the ground, with no elevation in it, no thought of heaven or of God, no vision of Christ, is unworthy of a child of God. We should get time every day, for a little while, at least, to think of God, to look into the face of Christ, and to gaze upon the heavenly hills.

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### Seeing the Beauties of Heaven

THERE was a godly man who built himself a house. It was a pleasant home, with many comforts. There was joy in it. But he said that the best thing about his home was that, sitting at his own fireside, he could see his father's house away on a distant hill-top. "No matter the weather," said he, "whether winter or summer, spring or autumn; no matter the sky, whether cloudless or stormy,—when I sit by my east window, my father's roof and chimney tops, and the door into my father's house, are always visible to my sight. Then, when night comes, no matter the darkness, for far away over the fields and valleys gleams the light in my father's windows." Happy is he who builds his earthly dwelling where from its doors he can ever see afar off his heavenly Father's house with its many mansions; and where, even in the darkest nights, its lights shine down upon him with their kindly cheer. He will then never be lonely



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nor afraid. He will never lose hope. He will breathe heaven's sweetness, and catch the accents of heaven's songs, and his eye will be charmed with glimpses of heaven's beauties.



### The Call to the Larger Life

A TRAVELER tells of holding in his hand the egg of a rare East India bird which was so near the hatching that the bird inside was pecking away at the shell. He could hear it struggling to get out. It was shut away in the darkness, cramped, confined, but it was not content to stay there. It seemed to know that there was a larger life for it outside, that on wings it might soar away to greet the morning light, that it might see splendors of beauty, that it might look on mountains, valleys, and rivers, and bathe in the pure air of sunny skies. This bird in the shell is a picture of the higher nature which is within every human life. It is not satisfied. It is a prisoner

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longing to be liberated. It is conscious of a wider freedom, a larger liberty, that is possible to it. We are made for communion with God. The mission of Christ to us is to bring us out into this larger, fuller life. Instead of vainly trying to satisfy our spiritual needs and cravings at earth's fountains, he leads us to heaven's fountains. He reveals to us the love of God. He tells us that we are God's children, and brings us into intimate relations with our Father in heaven. He gives us intimations of a future for ourselves that is full of blessedness and glory. He calls us to this larger life.



### God Was There

SOME time since two men met on a vessel crossing the Atlantic. They soon discovered that they had both been in the American Civil War, one fighting with the North, the other with the South. They discovered, too, that they had taken part, on one occa-

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sion, in the same battle. Then this incident came out as they talked together reminiscently. One night the Northern soldier was on sentry duty on one side of a little river, and the Southern soldier was a sharpshooter just across the river, picking off soldiers on the other side at every opportunity. The sentry was singing softly, "Jesus, Lover of my Soul," as he kept his watch, and the words of the old hymn were heard in the still night over the stream. The sharpshooter was taking aim and was about to fire on the sentry. Just then he heard the words, "Cover my defenceless head with the shadow of thy wing." His rifle dropped—he dare not shoot a man praying that prayer. "I could as soon have shot my own mother," he said. Was not God in this whole incident? Was he not a reality that night? We need not ask why no one has ever seen God. Lift up your eyes unto the mountains in every time of need, and God will always help.

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### Hiding in Safety

A TOURIST tells of coming upon a village which nestled on the bosom of a great mountain. He asked the villagers if they had many storms. "Yes," they replied, "if there is a storm anywhere in the neighborhood it seems to find us out." "How do you account for this?" asked the visitor. They answered, "Those who seem to know say it is because of the mountain which towers above our village. If he sees a cloud anywhere in the horizon he beckons to it until it settles on his brow." The visitor inquired further if they had many accidents from lightning. "Not one," they replied. "We have seen the lightning strike the mountain countless times,—and a grand sight it is,—but no one in the village is ever touched. We have the thunder which shakes our houses, and then we have the rain which fills our gardens with beauty that every one so much admires."

This is a parable of what Jesus Christ

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is to us and to all who believe in him. He is the mountain on which the storms break. On Calvary the tempests of ages burst about his head. But all who nestle in his love are sheltered in him. "In me ye shall have peace," he said. He is our eternal Keeper because he took the storms on his own breast that we might hide in safety under the shadow of His love.



## The Path in the Sky

SEAMEN grow anxious when for many hours they cannot get a sight of the heavenly bodies to take observations. No one is safe in this trackless world who does not keep his eye upon the heavenly hills. No direction of life is safe but that which looks to God for its guidance. A story is told of a lady traveling through a dense forest in the South. She was overtaken by night and lost her way. The driver dismounted and began to walk about among the trees, try-

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ing to find the road. The lady noticed in the dim light of the stars that his face was turned toward the sky. She asked him why he was looking upward, when what he wanted to find was in the road in the woods. The man answered, "If I can find the path in the sky I can find the road on the ground." He knew that the only place in the thick forest where the sky could be seen through the dense branches was where the trees had been cut away in making the road. To find the opening overhead was to find the way on the ground. Ever it is true that earth's right paths are marked out for us in the sky. We must look to the hills in our perplexity for guidance.



### Out of the Fog

WE all have our special days, when we go up to the hilltop, out of our low valleys, and get a wider vision. It is well to have such a day even occasionally, but it would

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be better if we should live on the hills all the while. Some people stay always down amid the mists and never get to see a mountain-top. They never behold the sun. They never breathe the atmosphere of heaven. A little dog, one chill autumn day, was seen to get up from where he was lying in a dark corner of a room, and go and lie down in a patch of sunshine which he saw on the floor. The dog teaches us a good lesson. There are always bright spots in even the darkest experience, and we should find them and live much in them.



### Looking Unto the Hills

IN portions of the great West of the United States there are vast tracts of land which not so many years ago were only deserts. The soil was wondrously fertile, but there was no water. Little rain fell, and scarcely anything would grow. Yet yonder all the while were the mountains with their melting snows and their flowing streams. All that

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was needed to transform these desert valleys into gardens was to bring the blessing of the mountains to them. Men lifted up their eyes to the hills for help, and the result is seen to-day in the great orange-groves and all the unparalleled luxuriance of Southern California, and in the garden beauty and fertility of other portions of the country.

This is a parable. All over the world there are men and women with possibilities of rich spiritual life. They might become great blessings in the world. They might be like trees bearing much fruit for the glory of God and to feed the world's hungry. But with all their natural gifts their lives are like deserts. They live only for themselves. They do not know the secrets of service. They are weak in the presence of the world's evil, and fall before its temptations. They have no power to help others in their deep needs.

Yet all the while, yonder rise the hills of God above their heads, with their treasures of



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life and power, available to faith and prayer. If only they would lift up their eyes to the mountains they would find what they need to change the desert of their lives into gardens. If through the channels of faith and love they would bring the grace of heaven down into their barrenness and emptiness they would henceforth be like fields which the Lord hath blessed.



### The Inner Life

It will help us to endure physical suffering quietly and uncomplainingly, if we will remember that it is only the outward man that can be touched and affected by these experiences, and that the inward man may not only be kept unharmed but may be growing all the while in beauty and strength.

A poor shoemaker, in his dreary little shop in a great city, one day found by accident that there was one little place in his dark room from which he could get a

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view, through a window, of green fields, blue skies and far-away hills. He wisely set his bench at that point, so that at any moment he could lift his eyes from his dull work and have a glimpse of the great, beautiful world outside. From the darkest sick-room and from the midst of the keenest sufferings there is always a point from which we can see the face of Christ and have a glimpse of the glory of heaven. If only we will find this place and get this vision, it will make it easy to endure even the greatest suffering.



### The Nearness of Christ

WE think of Christ as in heaven and so He is; but He is just as really on the earth as in heaven. A recent writer happily illustrates this by the sky. We look up at the sky and it seems far away, like a great blue arch or canopy, high above us. But where does the sky really begin? Not up in the air, above the hills and the mountains. It

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begins right beside us. Indeed, the sky is all about us. We walk in it. We sit down in it. We sleep in it. It is all about our house at night. We breathe the sky and draw nourishment for our life out of it. The rain comes out of the sky to refresh the earth and make it beautiful. This illustrates the nearness to us of the living Christ. We walk in Him. In Him we live and move and have our being. He is never so far off as even to be near—He is more than near. He wraps round about us continually with His blessed life. We breathe Christ if we are His friends.

Could there be a truer representation of the living Christ than this? There is no part of the whole life of any of us, whether good or bad, whether it be a holy scene of kindness, of helpfulness, of devotion, or a scene of frivolity or sin in which we would be ashamed to have ourselves caught and photographed—there is nothing in the life of any of our days or nights in which Christ is not.

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### Inspiration from Heaven

It is said that at a certain moment of the night a man in the Lick Observatory, California, lying upon his back, looks out through the great telescope and waits for a certain star to cross a fine line made by the tiny thread of a spider's web drawn across the telescope. This indicates the time, and from this indication the great clock is set. Thus a star from heaven directs the movements of all the railway trains, all shops and factories, all business of every kind in all the vast region. So we are to get light from heaven for all our life on earth, not only for our worship, our religious activities, our Christian service, but for our business affairs, our amusements, all our tasks and duties, our home matters, our plans and pleasures. The light of the skies regulates everything. The smallest things in our lives should get their inspiration from heaven. All life should follow the Star.