

# Things that Endure

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"SILENT TIMES," "FOR THE BEST THINGS," "THE BOOK  
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No 1

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

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A HEART GARDEN	JOY OF SERVICE
BEAUTY OF EVERY DAY	LESSON OF LOVE
BEAUTY OF SELF-CONTROL	MAKING THE MOST OF
BETHLEHEM TO OLIVET	LIFE
BOOK OF COMFORT	MINISTRY OF COMFORT
BUILDING OF CHARACTER	MORNING THOUGHTS
COME YE APART	PERSONAL FRIENDSHIPS OF
DR. MILLER'S YEAR BOOK	JESUS
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
GO FORWARD	TURNING NORTHWARD
HOW? WHEN? WHERE?	UNTO THE HILLS
IN PERFECT PEACE	YOUNG MEN: FAULTS AND
INNER LIFE	IDEALS
JOY OF THE LORD	

**Things that Endure**

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## FOREWORD

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WHEN *the death of J. R. Miller was announced, many of the tens of thousands who every year looked forward to the appearance of new volumes from his pen feared that there would be no more of his helpful books.*

*But a pleasant surprise awaits his world-wide audience. While fulfilling a promise to him to complete for publication two volumes on which he was at work until the pen dropped from his weakening hand, I discovered among his manuscripts rich material which has never been published in book form. So it is possible this year to offer another volume in the series of books of which already more than two million copies have been sold. The chapters of "Things That En-*

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## Foreword

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*ture” are here presented just as they came from the heart and brain of him who found his greatest joy in helping others.*

JOHN T. FARIS.

*Philadelphia, U.S.A.*

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**Things that Endure**

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## CHAPTER I

### Things that Endure

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T was one of the conceits of ancient poetry that the oarsman, Charon, was permitted on one occasion to visit this earth. From a lofty mountain top, he looked down upon the cities, palaces, and works of men. As he went away, he said, "All these people are spending their time in building just birds' nests. No wonder they fail and are ashamed." Building birds' nests to be swept away in the floods, when they might be erecting palaces of immortal beauty, to dwell in forever—thus, indeed, must much of our life and work appear to the angels who look down upon us from heaven and see things as they are. Many things that men do leave no permanent results, nothing to show a little while afterward that they have been wrought.

No doubt, there are things evanescent in themselves, which yet leave an enduring im-

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pression. A rose has but a brief existence, and yet it may leave a touch of beauty on the hearts of those who behold it. Charles Kingsley advises, "Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful. Welcome beauty in every fair face, every fair sky, every fair flower, and thank Him for it who is the fountain of all loveliness, and drink it in simply and earnestly with all your eyes; it is a charming draught, a cup of blessing."

There may be good, therefore, in even the most transient things we do. They may leave touches of beauty on the lives of others, or may put inspiration toward sweeter and better living into other hearts. But there is a large class of things that people do which neither do good to others nor store away any treasure for those who do them. It is possible to live, however, so that everything we do shall last. In all our busy life, we may be laying gold, silver, precious stones, on the walls of life's temple, materials which will not be consumed nor tarnished in the fire that shall try men's work. In the sphere of unseen things, results

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## Things that Endure

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are rated, not by dollars, but by moral values. Here a cup of cold water given to a thirsty one in the name of Christ will count for more than the piling up of a fortune for one's self.

In this sphere, also, the man whose hands appear empty at the end of his life may be rich, leaving to the world an enduring inheritance of good. Writes Kingsley again:

There is no failure for the good and wise.  
What though thy seed should fall by the wayside  
And the birds snatch it, yet the birds are fed;  
Or they may bear it far across the tide  
To give rich harvests after thou art dead.

Our work will last only when it is inspired by love and is wrought in the name of Christ. Nothing that we do for ourselves will endure. There is no immortality for vanity and self-seeking. The glory of self-conceit is only a bubble that bursts and leaves but a wrack of froth behind. But what we do in love for Christ and our fellow-men will live. One made a costly piece of embroidery, weaving into it many silver and gold threads. The work was then laid away for a time, and when it was

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## Things that Endure

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looked at again the whole delicate and beautiful fabric had decayed—nothing was left save the gold and silver threads. These were bright as ever in imperishable beauty. The only threads in the web of a life which will endure are the gold and silver threads which love for Christ and love for men put in.

We do not begin to realize what power even the smallest things, if love be in them, have to put brightness and a blessing into dreary or empty lives. The memory of a kindly word stays oftentimes for years in a heart to which it brought cheer and uplifting. A flower sent to a darkened room in some time of sickness or sorrow leaves fragrance which abides ever afterward. A note of sympathy, with its word of cheer and love, is cherished as dearer than gold or gems, and its message is never forgotten. The greatest deeds without love make no enduring record, but when love inspires them the smallest ministries of kindness leave imperishable memories in the lives which they help and bless.

It ought to be one of the deepest longings

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## Things that Endure

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of every true heart to leave in this world something which will last, which will live in blessing and good.

“Is the world better or worse where I tread?  
What have I done in the years that are dead?  
What have I left in the way as I passed—  
Foibles to perish, or blessings to last?”

It is pitiful to spend one's years in doing things that are not worth while, things that will perish and leave no record of good in any life. We should not be content to let a single day pass in which we do not speak some gracious word or do a kindness that will add to the happiness, the hope, or the courage and strength, of another life. We should seek ever by ministries of love to redeem our days of toil from dreariness, emptiness, and earthliness, and make them radiant in God's eye and in the story they write for eternity.

“For me—to have made one soul  
The better for my birth;  
To have added but one flower  
To the garden of the earth;

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## Things that Endure

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“To have struck one blow for truth  
In the daily fight with lies;  
To have done one deed of right  
In the face of calumnies;

“To have sown in the souls of men  
One thought that will not die—  
To have been a link in the chain of life,  
Shall be immortality.”

# The Cost of Reaching the Best



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## CHAPTER II

### The Cost of Reaching the Best

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OME one has been making a little calculation which is interesting. A bar of iron of a certain size, in its rough state, is worth five dollars. If it be made into horseshoes, it is worth twelve dollars. When it has been put through certain processes and then made into needles, instead of horseshoes, its value is increased to three hundred and fifty dollars. The same piece of iron, however, made into knife blades, becomes worth three thousand dollars, and made into balance springs for watches, is increased in value to the enormous sum of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. These figures are not vouched for, but it is no doubt true that a bar of iron is capable of becoming worth a great deal more than in its rough state it would bring in the market.

The iron reaches its higher values through certain processes. It has to be put into the

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## Things that Endure

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fire, and has to be hammered, rolled, pressed, cut, and polished. The more it is worth in the end, the longer and severer processes must it pass through in preparation. It requires more heating and pounding to make it into watch-springs than into horseshoes or knife blades.

There is an illustration here of the way in which the best that is in human lives can be brought out. It can be done only by the processes of education and self-discipline, and these processes are not easy. The boy who would live up to the best that is in him cannot spend the greater part of his time on the playground, nor can he slip along through school and college with keys and translations. He must dig out his lesson with sweat and toil. The girl who would live up to the best that is in her must deny herself many tempting and attractive diversions and good times, and must devote herself sedulously to study, reading, work. We are disposed to sympathize with and pity young people who are called to endure hardship, self-denial, pinching econ-

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## The Cost of Reaching the Best

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omy, disappointment, defeat, and trial. But we should rather commiserate those who have no hardness, no self-denial, no necessity for economy, no struggles. These are apt to remain all their lives only like the bar of common iron, while those who must endure the severe discipline are the only ones whose lives grow into nobleness strength, usefulness, and Christlikeness.

Even of Jesus it is said that he "was made perfect through suffering." We can save our life only by losing it. We can bring out the better nature only by the crucifying of the worst. We can develop our character, our true life, only by the denying of ourselves in those things that belong to the lower phases of life. We must keep our body under, if we would attain the best possibilities of our higher nature. Many people dread the hindrances and obstacles which lie in their way, but, rightly seen, these are opportunities for making something of our life.

The law of sacrifice lies at the heart of all beautiful living. Everywhere we find illus-

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## Things that Endure

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trations of this. A great oak stands in the forest. It is beautiful in its majesty. It is ornamental. It casts a pleasant shade. Beneath its branches the children play. Among its boughs the squirrels frolic and the birds sing. The woodsman comes one day with his axe, and the tree quivers in all its branches under his sturdy blows. "I am being destroyed!" cries the oak. So it seems, as the great tree crashes down to the ground. The children are sad because they can play no more under the broad branches. The birds grieve because they can no more nest amid the summer foliage. But let us follow the tree's history. It is cut into boards and beams, and built into a beautiful cottage, and now human hearts have their home and nest there. Or it is used in some sacred temple where God is worshipped. Or it goes into the sides of a great ship which speeds over the seas. The losing of its life was the saving of it. It died that it might become deeply and truly useful.

The plates, cups, and vases we use in our

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## The Cost of Reaching the Best

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homes lay once as clay in the earth, quiet and restful. Then came men with picks, and the clay was rudely torn out and thrown into a mortar and beaten and ground in the mill, and pressed under weights, then shaped by the potter's hand, then put into the furnace and burned, at last coming forth in beauty to begin a history of usefulness. If the clay could speak, it might cry out, but the end proves that what seemed destruction was its making into beauty and value.

These are simple illustrations of the law which applies also in human life. We must die to be a blessing. People said Harriet Newell's life was wasted when she gave it to missions and then died and was buried with her babe, far from home and friends,—bride, missionary, mother, martyr, and saint, all in one short year,—without having told one heathen of the Saviour. But was that beautiful, gentle life really wasted? No; for a hundred years her name has been a mighty inspiration to missionary work, and her influence has brooded everywhere, touching thousands of

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## Things that Endure

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hearts of gentle women and strong men, as her story has been told. Had Harriet Newell lived a thousand years of quiet, sweet life in her own home, she could not have done the work that she did by giving her young life in what seemed unavailing sacrifice. She lost her life that she might save it. She died that she might live. She offered herself a sacrifice that she might become useful. We can reach our best only through pain and cost.

**When kindness is Unkind**

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### CHAPTER III

## When Kindness is Unkind

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THE demand to-day is that all things shall be made easy. It is so in homes. Nothing must be hard for children. They must be tenderly nurtured. Their burdens must not be made too heavy. Their tasks must not be made too exacting. Their wishes must never be refused. Even their whims must be gratified. A writer gives an example of the way this method of training is carried out. "O George," spoke a young mother in a tone of rebuke to her husband, who had been reproving the little daughter of the household, "you said, 'Don't,' just now to Dorothy. How could you? Just think what you have done! You have interfered with her individuality."

It may not always be with the same deliberate thought that mothers never deny a child anything. Not always is the motive to preserve the child's individuality from repression.



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## Things that Endure

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Still there is in homes a great deal of this spirit of indulgence which moves along the line of least resistance in home government.

The same is true also in many schools. Everything must be made pleasant. The teacher must always make the lessons so interesting that it will not tax the pupils to listen to them and so simple that it will not require any effort to understand them. It is thought to be unreasonable to expect pupils to do any hard thinking for themselves. A distinguished teacher says that pupils of this dainty kind would like to lie in bed and have their studies sent up to them.

It may seem very pleasant for young people to have their work made so easy. But that is not the way for them to make the most of their lives. To evade effort is to fail of achievement. For the student to have the hard work done for him is to rob him of the results of faithful study. There are some things we can get done for us, but nobody can achieve our education for us. If we insist on never doing the things that are unpleasant we can-

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## When Kindness is Unkind

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not expect to receive the benefits and the rewards.

This does not mean that the hard work of the student is not pleasant—it may be pleasant, yet not easy. The harder he works, the more pleasure does he find in his studies. The student who is diligent grows enthusiastic. He “burns the midnight oil” in pursuit of knowledge. He becomes eager in his research. He finds joy in his work. On the other hand, when the pupil has no interest in his studies he makes no progress in them, gets nothing from them. He probably blames it on the teacher, saying that he does not make the lessons interesting. He does not make things so simple, so easy, that no thinking is necessary, no knitting of brows, no hard study. He is quite ready to teach, but the best teacher is not the one who leaves nothing for his pupil to do. Good teaching tells the least it can—it makes the pupil do the work.

The demand of many pupils is that the teacher shall always be interesting. He shall tell everything about the lesson in such a

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## Things that Endure

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bright, charming way that the pupils shall be made happy. There is the same demand in other lines where one man is set to guide others. The people in the pews demand that the preacher shall interest them. They do not want hard thinking—they go to church to be entertained and if they are not entertained the fault is with the sermon. If they grow sleepy they say the preacher is heavy and does not know how to make his sermons impressive. Books must be made interesting or people will not read them. They pronounce them dull if they do not sparkle in every sentence.

This demand to be entertained is of the spirit of indolence. Every one who insists that he must not be required to work hard in his search for knowledge will miss the attainments which will be won only through patient toil. Parents want to be kind to their children and sometimes they overdo their kindness by indulging their dislike of hard duty, their distaste for self-denials. “To spare our children,” says one, “only to make it more certain that we shall have failed to harden them for

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## When Kindness is Unkind

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the battles of life; to make it more probable that they will go down in the struggle; to send them out only to suffer and bend and break under the ruthless pressure of the modern world—that is perhaps the worst crime that can be committed against the future of the race and the happiness of humanity.” Life is full of tragedies coming from such kindness.

The loving-kindness of God is the most perfect illustration of love. God is never unkind—he cannot be unkind. Yet he never indulges his children, giving them their own way when their own way is not good. He does not answer their cries to be freed from pain when pain is the best thing for them. He insists on obedience, however hard it may be, because no other way can bring blessing and good. God’s severity with his children is the greatest kindness. This ought to be the model for parents in dealing with their children. Anything else leads to the spoiling of life, the marring of character. Perhaps no other failure in parental training in these days is so great or so ruinous as that which is produced

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## Things that Endure

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by overkindness, or what is thought to be kindness. All who are teachers of the young are in danger of erring in the same way. The popular sentiment to-day is that we should never cause any one pain. But it is not thus that the divine teaching runs. "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." Pain is the way to the highest, truest life. God gives joy, the most perfect joy, but we reach it through suffering. We must love our children so well that we can let them meet and endure pain in order that the beauty of soul in them shall be perfected.

Then for ourselves, if we would reach the highest, we must be willing to suffer, to pay any price of self-denial or restraint that the image of Christ in us be not marred. We praise peace, but peace if anything less than the holiest and highest is not the peace we want to rest in. A prayer by F. W. H. Meyer runs, "From the torpor of a foul tranquillity may our souls be delivered into war." There is a story of a sculptor who worked for years in poverty and obscurity to reach his

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## When Kindness is Unkind

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ideal. At last the work was finished in clay. But sudden cold came upon the city that night and the old man knew that his model would freeze and be destroyed. He had no fire in his poor attic, which served both as studio and sleeping-room. In the morning they found the statue wrapped with the clothes from his bed, warm and unharmed. But the sculptor they found dead. He had given his life to save his masterpiece. We should be ready to suffer even unto death that our ideal may be kept unmarred. Nothing of cost or sacrifice should be spared that our lives may reach the best.

**The Interweaving of the Days**

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## CHAPTER IV

### The Interweaving of the Days

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IT is a good thing to learn to live by the day. We should devote all our strength to the doing well of each day's tasks, and then should disengage ourselves altogether from its entanglements. Emerson puts it well: "Finish every day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. To-morrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely; and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense. This day is all that is good and fair. It is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the yesterdays."

Yet important as is the duty of fencing off the days and keeping them separate, there is a sense in which no day stands alone. The days are links in an endless chain. Each day receives an inheritance from yesterday, and at



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its close passes it down to the day which comes after. We start every new day with the memories of all our days trailing after us. We have all the knowledge gathered during the years that are gone. We have also the experience of the past by which our lives have been enriched, or possibly hurt. We are bound up, too, in the associations and friendships which have been formed. In countless ways, yesterday's life and to-day's are intertangled. Each day is but a little section of a great web, containing one figure of the pattern, the warp running through all the days and years. A life is a serial story, opening with infancy, closing with death, and each day is one little chapter in the story.

We best prepare for to-morrow when we make to-day beautiful with truth and faithfulness. To-day is the blossom, to-morrow is the fruit. To-day is the sowing, to-morrow is the harvest. Far more than we realize does to-morrow depend upon to-day. The Bible has its promises of divine care and provision; yet all such promises imply our faithfulness in

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## The Interweaving of the Days

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duty as the condition of their fulfilment. A link dropped in the chain of obedience and fidelity will mean a break in the continuity of the blessing. Every minute is a key which, when touched, strikes a note somewhere in the future. If the touch be a true one, it will help to make music of love and joy. If it be a wrong touch, it will make a discord in the melody of life.

“Every moment of each hour  
Has its power to raise and lift,  
Or its little hindering power.  
Nothing idly passes by;  
Naught too small to give its gift:  
Bind their wings, then, as they fly—  
Till they bless you, hold them tight.”

If those who are preparing for their life-work had any true conception of the relation of early studies and discipline to future power and success, they would think no work too hard, no study too exhausting, in order to make ready for their chosen calling. It is said that one of Turner's great sea-pictures has been sold recently for nearly twenty thou-

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## Things that Endure

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sand pounds. It is well known that Turner gave the closest attention to details. It is said, for instance, that he once spent a whole day on the shore of a quiet lake, tossing pebbles into the water, to study the effect of the sunlight on the ripples as they were started by the stone and spread over the lake's surface. His companions twitted him on having wasted his day, as he had nothing to carry back to show for his visit to the lake. "But I have learned how the ripples look," he replied. "I think I shall be able to get something out of the day after all."

Turner's day was not wasted. It is to such patient attention to minute details in preparation that his great pictures owe their wonderful perfection and beauty. Behind all worthy success lies ever a preparation almost infinitely painstaking. Those who despise routine, technique, drill, discipline, in the days of training, never can win honors for fine attainment and achievement in after years. Self-indulgence to-day means mediocrity—or less—to-morrow.

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## The Interweaving of the Days

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One tells of seeing a builder idly picking up a piece of wood as he stood talking to a friend. He turned it over in his hands and said: "See what a beautiful piece of oak this is. Notice the fineness of its grain. This wood will take a higher polish than a piece of ordinary oak. Can you guess why this is?" he asked. His companion could not answer. "Well, it is because the tree from which it came had to endure a great deal of buffeting. It did not grow in a forest, sheltered by other trees. It stood apart in some field alone, and this wood gets its delicate grain from the battle with the elements which it had to wage through all its history as a tree. It was beaten on every side, and it was this experience of hardness which has given to this piece of wood such an exquisite quality of fibre."

What is true of trees is true also of men—they grow best, into the finest character, into manliest strength, the noblest influence, in a life of struggle, toil, self-denial. The easy life may seem more pleasant to-day, but it

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## Things that Endure

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does not fit us for masterful and victorious life to-morrow.

The same law applies in spiritual life. Our to-morrow depends upon our to-day. It is possible in a Christian home to put into the hearts and minds of children such qualities and principles that they shall be able to master the world's evil when they go out to face it. When men build a great ship to go out upon the sea they store away in its keel enormous reserves of strength—stanch ribs of iron, immense beams and stays, massive plates of steel. If the vessel were being built to sail only on some peaceful river or even to go upon the ocean in quiet days, it would be a wasteful expenditure at such large cost to put such enormous strength in her frame. But the builders are wisely equipping the ship for the most terrific storms she may ever have to encounter.

“Common chances common men can bear,  
And when the sea is calm, all boats alike  
Show mastership in floating;  
But in the gale of life,

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## The Interweaving of the Days

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And when the adverse winds  
Are wildly raging,  
Then the stanch ship only  
Answers nobly to her helm, and can  
Defy the fury of the tempest's wrath."

If we live well the days of youth and opportunity we shall not fail in the days of stress and need. God is in all our life, and if we are only faithful each day as it comes, nothing but good shall fall to our lot. Very beautifully is the truth set forth in these lines:

"He holds the key of all unknown,  
And I am glad;  
If other hands should hold the key,  
Or, if he trusted it to me,  
I might be sad.

"What if to-morrow's cares were here  
Without its rest?  
I'd rather he unlocked the day,  
And as its hours swung open say,  
'My will is best.'

"I cannot read his future plans,  
But this I know:  
I have the smiling of his face  
And all the refuge of his grace  
While here below.

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## Things that Endure

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“Enough, this covers all my needs,  
And so I rest.  
For what I cannot, he can see,  
And in his love I still shall be  
Forever blest.”

## Doing and Not Doubting



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## CHAPTER V

### Doing and Not Doubting

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OME good people talk altogether too much in a doleful strain. Indeed any doleful talk in a Christian is too much. We have no right to go about airing our fears and doubts. In the first place, we need not have fears and doubts, if we have truly committed our life to Christ. Surely we are safe in his hands. But if, in spite of our secure trust and our divine keeping, we still have gloomy feelings on certain days, we ought not to speak them out to others. It is not good witnessing to our Master, for one thing. Besides, it makes life harder for others. We have no right ever to be a discourager. Usually it is not possible for us to lift away people's burdens. Indeed it would not be well that we should do this if we could. These burdens are God's gifts to his children; it is his will that they should carry them for a time, and if we lifted them

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## Things that Endure

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off we might be interfering with the discipline of divine love and doing harm, not good. But we surely sin against our brother when by giving him our own doubts and fears we make him less brave and strong for his hard duty or his sore struggle. Rather, it is the duty of love always to try to make him stronger by words of cheer and hope.

There is still another reason why we should not let our doubts and fears have wing. While we keep them in our own breast, unexpressed, we can the more easily get the mastery over them. Talking gloomily makes our own heart less brave. When we have said a discouraged word we have given way in some measure to the disheartenment which is trying to get possession of us. And every time we yield to this temptation, we are allowing the enemy to add another strand to the cable which, by and by, will bind us in the habit of life that will make us slaves of depression.

When Dr. Charles S. Robinson was pastor of a church in New York, he repeated in the course of a sermon this stanza:

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## Doing and Not Doubting

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“Oh, how many a glorious record  
Had the angels of me kept,  
Had I done instead of doubted,  
Had I warred instead of wept.”

He asked the congregation to repeat it after him, and then added, “You may forget the sermon, but do not forget the verse.”

Years after this a prominent lawyer, in a private letter, recalled the incident, and spoke of the help which he and others had received. Dr. Robinson replied: “I remember the sermon and my little verse. It gives me more joy than I can describe to know that I help anybody. Sometimes I think the highest reward I shall ever get in heaven will be the words, not exactly, ‘Well done,’ but ‘Well tried.’ Now and then, however, some thoughtful, generous person like you comes along and says, ‘Well, when you tried that time you did.’ So I try again.”

The lesson of this stanza is one we all may profitably let into our life—not to doubt, but to do; not to weep, but to war. Doubt paralyzes energy; doing brings the strength of

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## Things that Endure

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God into hand and heart. The moment we begin to try to obey, God begins to impart grace to help us to obey. Brave struggle leads to victory; weeping causes weakness which ends in pitiable defeat.

Dr. Robinson's thought of a reward for trying well is good. God will not forget our efforts, even if we fail of the result we hoped from them. It was said to David, "Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart." We shall have reward, at last, for the good things we sincerely try to do. This should encourage us when we have wrought faithfully, but do not see fruit from our labor.

**No True Work Is Vain**

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## CHAPTER VI

### No True Work Is Vain

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NO true work for God ever fails. Was there ever in this world such other apparent failure as there was in the life of Jesus at the close of the day he died? Nothing seemed to be left. The Cross had buried in black floods of shame all that was beautiful and worth while in that blessed life. Even the little handful of followers he had gathered about him during his troubled years had lost all confidence in him as the Messiah. Yet we know that what seemed failure was most glorious success. The history of Christianity these nineteen centuries is the story of the influence of Jesus.

When you have done your duty any day, when you have been true to God in your work, in your witnessing, it is impossible that you have failed. Sometime—it may be years hence—but sometime the good will be appar-

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## Things that Endure

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ent and the blessing from your faithfulness will be wrought out before the eyes of the world. It is not the noise we make that produces impressions. Nor are the visible results the truest and deepest. Teachers sometimes feel that their work with their pupils has failed because they do not see the tearful eye after the tender lesson and the instant change in the life after the earnest appeal. The preacher thinks his work has failed because his sermons do not draw crowds and do not leave startling results. The best work is wrought in the silence. Said Frederick W. Robertson: "For teachers—What is success? Not in the flushing of a pupil's cheek or the glistening of an attentive eye; not in the shining results of an examination, does your real success lie. It lies in that invisible influence on character which He alone can read who counted the seven thousand nameless ones in Israel. For ministers—what is ministerial success? Crowded churches, full aisles, attentive congregations, the approval of the world, much impression produced? Elijah

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## No True Work Is Vain

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thought so, and when he discovered his mistake and found out that the Carmel applause subsided into hideous silence, his heart well nigh broke with disappointment. Ministerial success lies in altered lives and obedient, humble hearts.”

We should set it down as a principle, that only as God works in us will our work have power, and that ordinarily God works silently. Elijah waited, and a terrible storm swept among the mountain crags; but the Lord was not in the storm. Next there was an earthquake and the mountain was shaken to its base; but the Lord was not in the earthquake. Then came fire—the lightning leaped from cliff to cliff and the deep gorges blazed; but the Lord was not in the fire. When these startling manifestations of energy were gone by, then God came. There was “a still small voice”—“a sound of gentle stillness”—and that was God.

How silently the sunbeams pour down all day long! No one hears their falling. Yet what mighty energy there is in them! What



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wonderful results they produce! How silently the dew comes down in the darkness; yet in the summer morning all the leaves and flowers and grasses are gemmed as with diamonds, and there is new life everywhere in field and garden and forest. So it is in all life. It is not noise nor sensation that produces true spiritual results; it is God in us, the Spirit working through us, the love of God breathing in our words, in our acts, in our life. We know how silently Christ wrought. His voice was not heard in the streets. The Spirit of God moves upon men's hearts and changes them, but no one hears the Spirit's movements.

But if we work thus, hiding ourselves away and letting God use us, and if we are true and faithful to our duty, our work shall never fail. Sometime, somewhere, there will be blessing from it. We may not see results at once. Our pupils may go away from our most earnest teaching apparently unimpressed. Sorrowing ones may appear to receive no comfort from our sympathy or from the divine

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## No True Work Is Vain

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words of consolation we speak to them. Congregations may scatter away after the preacher's most solemn appeals, appearing to carry with them no deep and lasting influence from his words. But if God is truly in our work, blessing and good will sometime surely follow. Years hence, it may be, the strong man will bend over the humble teacher's grave and drop a tear as he says, "It was her sweet patience, her loving, beautiful life, her earnest words, her faithful holding up of Christ before my eyes, that led me to my Saviour."

The dewdrop sinks away into the heart of the rose and is lost, forgotten. But all day in the hot sunshine the rose is more lovely and pours out a sweeter fragrance. Your words of comfort spoken to a sad one sank down like the dew into the depths of the sorrowing heart and seemed to be altogether lost. But the life grew stronger as the blessed sympathy of your spirit touched it and as the truth you spoke entered into it, and soon was restored to peace and joy.

The preacher goes home discouraged and

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## Things that Endure

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hides himself away from sight, feeling that no good has been done by his sermon, because no one spoke of any help or benefit received from it. But in one life and another and another, among those who heard him, there is new hope, new courage, new resolve, new inspiration. One goes home and seeks his neglected altar and prays, the first time in months. One is encouraged to try again to overcome his besetting sin. One goes out to find some needy one to whom he can minister in Christ's name. One is stronger all the week amid the toils and tasks of a busy life and lives more sweetly, more earnestly, more lovingly.

Thus the sermon that in secret the minister wept over, after preaching it, thinking it had done no good, really blessed many lives, inspiring, quickening, cheering, arousing, rebuking sin, comforting sorrow, kindling hope. If only God be in us in our work, we need not be anxious about results. Our noise may make no impression, but God's silence works omnipotently.

**“Be Thou a Blessing”**

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## CHAPTER VII

### “Be Thou a Blessing”

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OD gives us nothing to keep altogether as our very own. What he gives us is still his, and we have only the use of it. It is lent to us. This means that it is to be returned again to God when we have ended our use of it. It is not to be returned, however, just as it came to us, the bare gift and nothing more; it is to be multiplied with use and then returned with proper accruements.

There is another phase of this use of God's gifts which we should not overlook. While they are in our hands they are to be employed not for ourselves alone, or at all, primarily, but to give help, comfort, joy, light, and cheer, to others. When the Lord called Abraham to leave his country, his home, his friends, and go out as a homeless stranger, whithersoever he might be led, he gave Abraham a promise of great blessing. Then came

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## Things that Endure

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the command, "and be thou a blessing." He was to receive from God, and he must also give.

This is the law of the heavenly kingdom. Nothing whatever is given to us to be kept for ourselves alone. Everything that is ours is ours to use and then pass to others. God gives us his love, the most wonderful gift that even he has to bestow, but we are not to keep it. We are to love others as he loves us. If we do not love others, that is proof that we have not really taken the gift of God's love into our own heart. God gives us his mercy—he forgives us. We are to pass his forgiveness to others. The only real indubitable proof that we have received the divine forgiveness is that we are extending it to those who have wronged or injured us. "Forgive us as we forgive," we are to pray.

So it is of everything we get from God, the largest and the smallest blessings,—we are to pass them on. Blessed of God in such a wonderful way, "be thou a blessing." If we but carried out his teaching and fulfilled this law

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## “Be Thou a Blessing”

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of Christ's kingdom in every particular, it would make this earth a heaven. Yet that is just what we should aim to do.

“Be thou a blessing.” Make it personal. Look back and think of the persons with whom you have come into contact to-day—to how many of these have you been a blessing? There are few of these who did not need something you could have given. Everybody is carrying a burden. Many have sorrows of which the world knows nothing, for not all the world's grief hangs crape on the door-knob.

What are you really doing for people? What are you giving to them? There are some persons who make the load of others heavier instead of lighter. They are discouragers rather than encouragers. One of the ways of being a blessing is never to make life harder for another, never to be a hindrance, never to go to others with doubts and fears. This alone is a good thing—never be a discourager.

But that is only a negative way of being

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## Things that Endure

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a blessing—blessing others by not harming or injuring them. It is better than being a plague to others, doing them injury. But it is not the kind of help God wants us to give. The divine command is, “Be thou a blessing.” This calls for an active helping. Blessing is a noble word. It is a great thing to be a blessing to any one. It is to bring him something from God, to do him good in some way that will make him better, stronger, and happier. We have had our cup filled with the love of God; now we are to share our blessing with others.

“If thou art blest,  
Then let the sunshine of thy gladness rest  
On the dark edges of each cloud that lies  
Black in thy brother’s skies.  
If thou art sad,  
Still be thou in thy brother’s gladness glad.”

It is not easy to live a life of perpetual blessing to people. Jesus did it, but it was very expensive living for him.

“Virtue went out of him,” to heal and help. He gave out something of himself to every one he touched. We cannot do people much



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## “Be Thou a Blessing”

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good, we cannot help them in deep and true ways, without cost to ourselves. What costs us nothing is not worth giving. An old proverb says, “One cannot have omelet without breaking eggs.” We cannot do anything worth while for others without cost. If you begin to love another, you do not know what your loving will demand of you before you have finished its task. Love gives and serves and sacrifices unto the uttermost.

We need never fear the cost, however, when there comes to us an opportunity of being a blessing to another. Blessing for ourselves depends upon our being faithful to every duty of love, regardless of the cost. If we shrink from the service because it is too much for us to do, we miss the gift of God for ourselves, which is offered to us in the opportunity. The true and the beautiful life is the one that seeks to be a blessing to every other life it touches.

“Do any hearts beat faster,  
Do any faces brighten  
To hear your footsteps on the stair,  
To meet you, greet you, anywhere?”

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## Things that Endure

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Are you so like your Master  
Dark shadows to enlighten?  
Are any happier to-day  
Through words that they have heard you say?  
Life were not worth the living  
If no one were the better  
For having met you on the way,  
And know the sunshine of your stay."

**Making a Living and Making  
a Life**

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## CHAPTER VIII

# Making a Living and Making a Life

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GOVERNOR RUSSELL, of Massachusetts, in addressing a graduating class, said, "There is one thing in this world better than making a living, and that is making a life." The words are worthy of most careful pondering. It is the duty of every one to make a living. "Six days shalt thou labor," runs the old commandment. "If any will not work, neither let him eat," was Paul's frank counsel regarding idlers. We are taught in the Lord's Prayer to look to God for what we need for the sustenance of our bodies, but it is "our daily bread" that we are authorized to ask for, and it is not ours until we have earned it. Excepting those who are too young, those who by the infirmities of age are incapacitated for labor, and the sick, the obligation to make a living rests upon all.

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## Things that Endure

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Yet making a living is not the first thing in life. The first thing is to make a life, to build a character, to grow into a worthy manhood. Our Lord showed us the true relations of a living and a life when he said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." The "all these things" to which he referred are things we need for our bodies—what we shall eat, what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed. Jesus does not say these things are unimportant—it is necessary that we have daily bread as long as we stay on the earth. But his teaching is that we are not to put first in our thought, our desire, our request, the supply of our physical wants. Indeed this is not to be the real aim of our living at all. We are to make central in all our life the righteousness and the kingdom of God. That is, we are to live to do God's will, to be what he made us to be, to do what he wants us to do, to attain the divine beauty. The supplying of the needs of our body is really not our matter at all, but God's. If

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## A Living and a Life

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we live truly, he will look after our living. "These things shall be added."

It is the duty, therefore, of each one, to make a life. That is what we are here for. This means that we shall develop to the fullest possibilities the capacities which have been intrusted to us, making the very most of our life. It means that we shall seek in all our experiences to grow toward perfection. We are always at school. Our great Teacher is ever setting new lessons for us. In all our common and uncommon duties and experiences there is something back of the mere act required. To do the simplest task negligently, slurring or skimping our work, hurts our life and character. While we are serving men, we are also and primarily serving Christ. Our work may not be congenial, and in our distaste for it we may do it negligently, but if we do we shall fail to please Christ and to seek him aright. We may be under a master who is unworthy, who treats us unjustly, and we may be tempted to think that we are not required to do our best for him. But there is

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## Things that Endure

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Another who is our real Master, and it is for him that we must work.

In all our efforts to make a living, whatever the pressure of need may be, we should never cease to seek God's righteousness. That is, we should never, in order to get our daily bread, do anything that is not right. Sometimes people say as an excuse for doing something dishonest or dishonorable, "I must live." That is not true. The essential thing is not that we shall live, but that we shall do the will of God. We would better die of hunger than do wrong to get bread. It is said that God feeds the sparrows, and yet these birds, we are told, are most careful in gathering food from the ground to keep their wings clean and unsoiled.

"I watched the sparrows flitting here and there,  
In quest of food about the miry street;  
Such nameless fare as seems to sparrows sweet  
They sought with greedy clamor everywhere.

"Yet 'mid their strife I noted with what care  
They held upraised their fluttering pinions fleet.  
They trod the mire with soiled and grimy feet,  
But kept their wings unsullied in the air.

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## A Living and a Life

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“I, too, like thee, O sparrow, toil to gain  
My scanty portion from life’s sordid ways.  
Like thee, too, often hungry, I am fain  
To strive with greed and envy all my days.  
Would that I, too, might learn the grace  
To keep my soul’s uplifted wings from stain!”

It is not enough to get on in life—we must get on in a way that will please God, in a righteous way. When we see a man rising to prominence, growing rich, achieving power and fame, before we can commend him as worthily successful we must know by what steps he has climbed to his high eminence. Where are those who in making a living, or in winning worldly success, wreck and lose their life?

Our first aim should ever be to build a life that will appear spotless and beautiful before God. No other success is worth achieving. A man may make a splendid living, robing himself in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day, but if meanwhile he is not making within himself a noble and Christlike manhood, he is losing all that is worth while.



**Our Lives Words of God**

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## CHAPTER IX

### Our Lives Words of God

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ORIENTALS say that each man and woman has a message, and that only those who utter their message are true men or women.

It is interesting to think of ourselves in this way, as sent into the world with something to give out or manifest. Lowell tells us that

Life is a sheet of paper white  
Whereon each one of us may write  
His word or two,—and then comes night.

Every life is meant to be a word of God. Christ was the Word. He came to manifest in his incarnation the whole of God's being. Men looked into his face, and saw the effulgence of the Father's glory and the very image of his substance. He was in the fullest sense the Word. But every human life, even the least, if it fulfils the divine thought for it, is also a word of God, revealing something of God.

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## Things that Endure

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It is easy to believe this of a few men, like Moses, David, Isaiah, John and Paul, through whom definite and distinct revelations have been given to the world. But there is no one to whom God does not give something to tell to men. It is not the same message for all, or for any two. To one it is a revealing of science; to another, a poet's vision; to another, fresh light from holy Scripture; to another, a new thought of duty; to another, a special ministry of love.

Whatever our message may be, we dare not withhold it. Suppose that the beloved disciple, having leaned upon the breast of Jesus and learned the secret of his love, had gone back to his fishing after the ascension, failing to tell men what had been spoken to him, how he would have wronged the world! Any life that fails to hear its message and deliver it, wrongs those to whom it was commissioned to carry blessing. But every life, even the lowliest, which fulfils the divine thought for it, adds its little measure to the joy and treasure of other lives.

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## Our Lives Words of God

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“There’s never a rose in all the world  
But makes some green spray sweeter;  
There’s never a wind in all the sky  
But makes some bird wing fleeter;  
There’s never a star but brings to heaven  
Some silver radiance tender,  
And never a rosy cloud but helps  
To crown the sunset splendor;  
No robin but may thrill some heart,  
His dawn-light gladness voicing.  
God gives us all some small, sweet way  
To set the world rejoicing.”

The follower of Christ has a very definite message to deliver. St. Paul tells us that he is to manifest the life of Jesus in his mortal flesh. Many lives of Christ have been written, but in every Christian life there should be a new one published; and it is these lives, written not in handsomely bound volumes, with fine paper and gilt edges, and with attractive illustrations, but in men’s daily lives, that are needed to save the world. Says Whittier:

The dear Lord’s best interpreters  
Are humble human souls;  
The gospel of a life  
Is more than books or scrolls.

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## Things that Endure

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It is important that we should understand how we are to manifest the life of Jesus in our own life. It is not enough to talk about him. There are those who with silver tongue can speak of Jesus eloquently and winsomely, of whom it cannot be said, even in widest charity, that his life is reincarnated in them. When the apostles were sent out, they were not to witness for Jesus in words, but were to be witnesses unto Jesus in character, in disposition, in service. It is not more preaching that is needed to advance the kingdom of God among men; it is more gospels in the lives of Christians. It is not what we tell people about Christ that makes his name glorious in their eyes, that makes them want to know him, that draws them to him with their sins, their needs, their sorrows, their failures: it is what they see of Christ in our own life.

What was this life of Jesus that is to be repeated in every Christian life? Its great central figure was love—not what passes for love among men, but love full of compassion, love serving even to the lowliest degree and

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## Our Lives Words of God

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at greatest cost, love that was patient, forgiving, thoughtful, gentle, love unto the uttermost, which went to a cross to save the world. It was indeed a wonderful life. The half of its blessed meaning has not yet been discovered, even after nineteen centuries of scholarly study and research and of precious Christian experience. Every day reveals some new beauty in the character of Jesus and uncovers new depths in his love.

When we think of being like Christ, we are apt to gather out a few gentle qualities and let these make up our conception of Christlikeness. True, he was a kindly man, a patient, quiet man; he was thoughtful, compassionate, unselfish, loving. But we must not forget that the cross is the truest symbol of the life of Jesus. An artist was trying to improve on a dead mother's portrait. He wanted to take out the lines. But the woman's son said it would not be a true portrait of his mother if the lines were effaced. They told the story of love, serving, and sacrifice which made her what she was. The lines

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## Things that Endure

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were themselves the truest features in the whole portrait.

No picture of Jesus is true which leaves out the marks of love's cost, the print of the nails, the memorials of his suffering. No manifesting of Jesus is true which does not reproduce in spirit and act his devotion to the will of the Father and his love of men unto the uttermost. It is not enough that we point others to an historic cross standing on Calvary, far back in the centuries; they must see the cross in our own life. When we speak to our neighbors of the pity of Jesus, his eager desire to save the lost, his giving of his life a ransom, they must see all this in us. This is the manifesting of Jesus for which we are sent into the world.

Only when we do surrender our lives to Christ that he enters into us can we thus repeat his life. There is a legend of the later days of Greece, which illustrates this. A prize was offered for the best statue of one of the deities. A country lad, who believed in this particular god with all his heart, had a pas-

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## Our Lives Words of God

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sionate desire to make the statue. He wrought manfully, but, lacking the artist's skill and experience, the figure he produced was wanting in grace and beauty. Then the legend relates that this god, seeing the lad's loving endeavor worthily to manifest his character before the eyes of men, helped him. While the other competitors were laughing at the boy's crude work, the god himself entered into that pathetic marble failure, glorifying it with his own radiant beauty.

This is only a heathen legend, but it illustrates what Christ does for all who truly live for him, and with loyal heart and diligent hand seek indeed to show to the world his beauty. He enters their hearts, and lives out his own blessed life in them. Poor indeed may be our best striving, but Christ in us will glorify it.



## Two Days

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## CHAPTER X

### Two Ways

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WE ought not to live in the past. We ought to forget the things that are behind and reach forward to the things that are before. "Forward and not back," is the motto of Christian hope. The best days are not any days we have lived already, but days that are yet to come.

Yet some people live altogether in their past. They love to recite the deeds they have done in former years. They believe in their old ways and talk deprecatingly of the new ways, the innovations, the changes, of modern days. The past holds all their life's hopes and treasures. They sit uncomforted by their graves. They mourn over its vanished pleasures as if never more would a rose bloom or a violet pour its perfume on the air. They live as if the future had nothing for them—no joys, no hopes, nothing to be achieved, no

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## Things that Endure

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love, no beauty. They seem like men who have been caught in a great sea of ice and frozen fast in it, so that they cannot extricate themselves from its grip. The past holds them in a captivity from whose meshes they cannot escape.

This is not a good use of the past. However happy we may have been in the days that are gone, that happiness will not satisfy our hearts in their present cravings. We cannot live to-day on yesterday's bread. Last winter's fires will not warm our house next winter. Last summer's sunshine will not woo out the foliage nor paint the flowers of this summer. The past, however rich it may have been in its blessings, cannot be a storehouse from which we can draw supplies for the needs of the passing days. We cannot live on memories.

Yet there is a right use of the past. There are ways in which it may be made to yield blessing, help, and good, for us in the life of to-day. It should be to us a seed plot, in which grow beautiful things planted there in the life

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## Two Ways

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of bygone days. Our to-day is always the harvest of all our yesterdays. The deeds we have done and the words we have spoken are not dropped, left behind, as things with which we shall never have anything more to do. They are part of ourselves, and we never can shake them off.

We should carry forward the lessons and the gains of the past. We do not live well if we fail to learn many things as we pass through our years. We leave childhood behind us when we go forward to manhood, but all that is lovely and good in childhood, all its impressions and visions, we should keep in our mature years. Not to do so is to lose much that is richest and best in living. It is always sad if we fail to assimilate the results of the experiences of the various stages of life through which we move. There is a true forgetting of things gone, which is not mere oblivion, but it is the incorporating of whatever is permanent in them with the new phases of life into which they lead. We put away childish things when we become men

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## Things that Endure

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because we require them no longer. Starlight fades when morning comes, because in the new glory it is not needed. We leave school days behind when duty calls us afield, but we carry from our school days lessons by which to live more wisely in the midst of toil and struggle. All through our years we should reap the harvests of which we sowed the seeds in days that are behind.

We never can get away from our past. We carry it all with us. We carry its memories. The children used to be told that the strange music they heard when they held a marine shell to their ears was the memory of the sea's moanings and surgings, treasured away in the recesses of the shell while it lay on the shore. It is only a fancy, but the fancy illustrates the way in which memory treasures up the records of the past to become the soul's music along the years.

We talk much of living by the day. We say we should fence off the days, so that neither yesterday's shadows nor to-morrow's care may come into to-day's life. But there

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## Two Ways

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is a sense in which we cannot sever any day from time past or time to come. The days are all woven together as parts of one web, and we cannot tear them apart. The threads of yesterday run through to-day and then extend into to-morrow. One day's life alone, if that were all, would have no meaning for us; it would have neither memory nor hope in it. There could be no friendship, for friendship draws much of its sweetness out of the past, from memories of faithfulness, constancy, strength, and helpfulness, which give assurance of unflinchingness in the stress of to-day. We need our past, for it is there the roots of our lives grow; we need the future, for we live for its hopes. In our darkest days we are comforted by the remembrance of the stars that shone down upon us out of the bright skies of the past, and by the hope that the stars will again come out, that there are better days waiting for us on before.

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## Things that Endure

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“Were this our only day,  
Did not our yesterdays and to-morrows give  
To hope and memory their interplay,  
How should we bear to live?

. . . . .

“But each day is a link  
Of days that pass and never pass away;  
For memory and hope—to live, to think—  
Each is our only day.”

The Duty of Being Always  
Strong



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## CHAPTER XI

# The Duty of Being Always Strong

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IT is always a duty to be strong. Weakness is never set down as a virtue. There is abundant proof of divine sympathy with weakness. God is the friend of the weak. Weakness draws his help in an especial degree. It is so in the realm of human affection. A child that is hurt or sick or blind is watched over far more carefully than the one that is strong and well, and draws to itself a larger measure of sympathy and help. The whole household contributes of its strength to make up for the weakness of the invalid. This is an illustration of the way the love of God discriminates, giving help, not according to men's strength but according to their weakness.

We may be sure, therefore, if we are weak, that we can get all the more of God's strength because of our lack of strength of our own.

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## Things that Endure

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This is what St. Paul meant when he said, "When I am weak, then am I strong." Indeed, the consciousness of weakness is the secret of strength, for it opens the way for God to help. However a man may have failed in his efforts, when at last he learns his own hopelessness of the struggle in his own strength, he is ready for victory if only he turns to God. Self-confidence is weakness, because it asks no help from God. Self-distrust is strength when it casts itself upon the divine power.

Thus weakness is redeemed from the despair into which it would sink if it had no resources beyond itself. It could then only be trampled down and crushed into the dust. It is one of the glories of the divine love that it reaches after human hopelessness, that it seeks to save the lost, that it brings its help to the broken and defeated rather than to the whole and the unconquered.

This is a secret which all who are in the grip of temptation should hasten to learn. Mr. Drummond on one occasion was asked

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## Being Always Strong

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to use his influence with a man who had become addicted to the use of strong drink. Mr. Drummond was riding with the man and asked him, "Suppose your horses ran away and you lost control of them and they turned a steep hill, what would you do?" The man replied that he could do nothing. "But suppose," added Mr. Drummond, "that some one sat by your side who was stronger than you?" The man said promptly, "I would give him the reins."

Mr. Drummond pointed out to his friend the peril in which his life stood because appetite had gained the mastery. Then, reminding him of the nearness and helpfulness of Christ, he urged him to put the reins into his hands. Always the divine strength is ready to take hold of human weakness and change it into power.

While this is the law of divine grace, it still remains true that it is our duty to seek always to be strong. Weakness is never to be desired or sought after as something beautiful, as a quality in a noble character. We need

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## Things that Endure

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strength in order to make anything of our life. Nothing worthy is ever attained or achieved by a driveler. Thousands of men with fine possibilities never come to anything because of their lack of energy. One of the Psalms has in it a call which every one should make to his own inner life: "Awake up, my glory." There is a great deal of senseless condemnation of ambition. The world is not by any means a bad one. No doubt there are ambitions which are not good, because they set only an earthly goal before them. But the young man who has no ambition is not worthy of the place he occupies in this world. He is here not merely to exist as if he were a worm, but to make something noble and radiant of his life. In every human soul there is a glory hidden, a life with immortal possibilities. It is the duty of every one to wake up this glory, that it may find itself and put on its beauty and strength.

A man had an eagle which had grown up among the barnyard fowls. For a time the bird seemed content to be only a chicken. But

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## Being Always Strong

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one day it looked up into the sky and something in it, sleeping until now, awoke. Flapping its wings, it soared away toward the sun and came back again no more. Too many men meant for the eagle-life content themselves with a barnyard existence. Now and then they feel something divine stirring within them, but they are too indolent to wake up their glory and to make the effort necessary to take their place in the upper air and among the mountain crags. So they spend all their days down in the dust, among the lower things, never waking up to the meaning of their immortality.

It is strength we need, strength at the heart of us, to stir within us the divine life that sleeps there, and to lead us out to become all that God would have us become, to do what he made us to do. Dr. Babcock's lines strike the right note:

Be strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift.

We have hard work to do, and loads to lift.

Shun not the struggle; face it. 'Tis God's gift.

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## Things that Endure

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Be strong!

Say not the days are evil,—Who's to blame?  
And fold the hands and acquiesce—O shame!  
Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's  
Name.

Be strong!

It matters not how deep intrenched the wrong,  
How hard the battle goes, the day, how long.  
Faint not, fight on! To-morrow comes the  
song.

Strength for a New Year

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## CHAPTER XII

### Strength for a New Year

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WE ought to make something of every year. They should be like new steps on the stairs, lifting our feet a little higher. We ought not to live any two years quite on the same plane. To be content with any attainment even for two days is not living at our best.

The best of Christians grow faint and weary in their very faithfulness—not weary of, but weary in their tasks and duties. Routine is intensely wearisome. Tasks are large and exacting, life is dreary in its monotony, work seems oftentimes in vain. We sow and do not reap. We find disappointment and discouragement at many points. Hopes bright to-day lie like withered flowers to-morrow. Life seems full of illusions. Youth has its brilliant dreams which come to nought. Work is hard. He that saves his life loses it. The price of success in any line is the losing of self. We



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## Things that Endure

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must wear ourselves out if we would do good. He who takes care of himself, withholds himself from exhausting toil and sacrifice, makes nothing of himself. It cost Christ Calvary to redeem the world. The mind that was in Christ Jesus must be in us, if we would be his co-worker in saving the lost. So we grow faint and weary, not *of* but *in* our service for Christ.

But we can be strong. God has strength for us. How does his strength come to us? It comes to us in many ways. St. James tells us that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights. No matter, then, how the strength comes to us, it really comes from God. We may find it in a book, whose words, as we read them, warm the heart and freshly inspire us for struggle or service. We may find it in a friendship whose cheer and companionship and helpfulness fill us with new courage and hope. Far more than we understand, does God strengthen us and bless us through human love. He hides himself in the lives of those who touch us with their

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## Strength for a New Year

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affection. He looks into our eyes through human eyes and speaks into our ears through human lips. He gives power to us in our faintness, and hope in our discouragement, through the friends who come to us with their love and cheer. The Bible tells us a great deal about the ministry of angels in the olden days. They came with their encouragement to weary or struggling ones. After our Lord's temptation, angels came and ministered to him in his faintness. In his agony in Gethsemane, an angel appeared, strengthening him. No doubt angels come now to minister to us and strengthen us, but they come usually in human love.

But God's strength is imparted in other ways. It comes through his words. We are in sorrow, and, opening our Bible we read the assurance of divine love, the promise of the divine help and comfort—that God is our Father, that our sorrow is full of blessing, that all things work together for good to God's child. As we read, and believe what we read, and receive it as all for us, there

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## Things that Endure

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come into the soul a new strength, a strange calmness, a holy peace, and we are at once comforted.

Some day we are discouraged, overwrought, vexed by cares, fretted by life's myriad distractions, weary and faint from much burden-bearing. We sit down with our Bible and God speaks to us in its words of cheer: "Let not your heart be troubled;" "Fear not, for I am with you;" "Cast thy burden upon the Lord;" "Peace I leave with you;" "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and as we ponder the words, the weariness is gone; we feel that we are growing strong; hope revives, courage returns. One who reads the Bible as God's own Word, and hears God's voice in its promises, assurances, commands, and counsels, is continually strengthened by it.

But there is something better than even this. God is a real person and he comes into our lives with all his own love and grace. The prophet tells us this: "He giveth power to the faint; to him that hath no might he increaseth strength." This means nothing less

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## Strength for a New Year

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than that there is a direct importation of divine strength for God's fainting and weary ones on the earth. This is a wonderful revelation. It tells us that the very power of Christ is given to us in our weakness, passed from his fulness into our emptiness. One may stand by us in our trouble and may make us a little stronger by his sympathy and love, by his encouragement and cheer; but he cannot put any portion of his strength or joy into the heart. Christ, however, gives strength, imparts of his own life. What the vine is to its branch, Christ is to us. If the branch is hurt in any way, bruised, broken, its life wasted, the vine pours of its life into the wounded part, to supply its loss and to heal it. That is what Christ does. He giveth power to the faint. His strength is made perfect in weakness. The greater our need, the more of Christ's grace will come to us. Therefore there are blessings which we shall never get till we come into experiences of trial. We shall never know God's comfort till we have sorrow; but then as we learn what grief is,

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## Things that Endure

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we shall learn also how God gives strength and consolation in grief.

How can we make sure of receiving this promised strength? The answer is: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." What is it to wait upon the Lord? It means to trust God patiently, to believe in God's love, to accept God's guidance, to keep near God's heart, to live in unbroken fellowship with God, leaning upon his arm, drawing help from him. Prayer is part of waiting upon God. When we go to him in our prayers, instantly we receive a new supply of grace.

As we wait upon God, abide in Christ, keep our fellowship with him unbroken, there flows from him to us, into our lives, in unbroken stream, strength according to our needs. When we are strong, the blessing given is less; but when we are weak and faint, the gift of power is increased. As the waters of the sea pour out into every bay and channel, every smallest indentation along its shore, so God's strength fills every heart and is linked

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## Strength for a New Year

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to him. Of his fulness we receive, and grace for grace.

Note also the word "renew" in the promise. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." As fast as the strength is exhausted, it is replenished. As fast as we give out, God gives anew to us. It is like the widow's barrel of meal and cruse of oil, which could not be emptied, but which were filled up again, as supplies were drawn from them. We are to go on with our work, with our struggle, with our doing and serving, never withholding what duty demands, never sparing ourselves when the calls of love to God or man are upon us, sure that, waiting upon God, we shall ever renew our strength. We are in living communication with him who made the stars and calls them by their names and holds all the universe in being, who fainteth not nor is weary. He is back of us all the while—all his fulness of life, all his important strength—and every emptying of life from us is instantly replenished, for he giveth power to the faint. Thus it is when

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## Things that Endure

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we give to others in Christ's name; he fills the emptiness. "Give and it shall be given unto you," is the Master's word. Thus it is when sorrow takes out of our life our loved ones. We think we can never go on any more, that the sun can never shine for us again, that we can never rejoice or sing as before, that we can never take up again our work, our tasks. But God does not leave the place empty.

We want to be strong, to be always strong—strong in purpose, strong to meet temptation. Strong for work, strong for holy living, strong in the bearing of sorrow, strong in influence among men. We want to walk erect and unwearied along life's paths, worthy followers of Christ. We do not want to be stumbling and falling every day. The call of God to us all is: "Be strong." But we are conscious of weakness. We cannot stand against the forces of evil that ever assail us. We cannot walk erect and steadfast under the burdens of life. What can we do?

Over all the unopened year God casts his light. There can be no experience till the

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## Strength for a New Year

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year ends for which there will not be strength. God never gives a duty but he gives also the needed power to do it. He never lays on us a burden, but he will sustain us under it. He never sends a sorrow but he sends the comfort to meet it. He never calls to any service but he provides for its performance. We need only to be sure that we wait upon God, and then all the strength we shall need will be given, as we go on, day by day.

“I asked for strength: for with the noontide heat  
I fainted, while the reapers, singing sweet,  
Went forward with ripe sheaves I could not bear.  
Then came the Master, with his blood-stained feet,  
And lifted me with sympathetic care.  
Then on his arm I leaned till all was done;  
And I stood with the rest at set of sun,  
My task complete.”



**More than Meat**

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## CHAPTER XIII

### More than Meat

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THE most important thing about us is not our condition or our circumstances, but our life itself. Experiences are only incidents; the reality in all of us is ourself. The house is not the family. The rough weather may tear away the roof, or fire may destroy the building; but the family life is not affected by either storm or flame. The body is not the life. Sickness may waste the beauty and strength, or accident may wound and scar the flesh. But the true life is the soul within, that which thinks, feels, loves, suffers, wills, chooses, aspires, and achieves. Amid ever-changing experiences—joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, gains and losses, smiles and tears,—the real life goes on. “Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?” It matters little what becomes of our money, our clothes, our house, our prop-

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## Things that Endure

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erty, but it is a matter of infinite importance what becomes of our real life. "What shall a man be profited," asked the Master, "if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?"

The problem of living in this world is ever to grow into more and more radiant and lovely character, whatever the conditions or experiences may be. It is in this that we most of all need Christ. We cannot escape temptations, but we are so to meet them and pass through them as not to be hurt by them, but to come out of them with new strength and new radiancy of soul. We cannot miss trial and difficulty, but we are to live victoriously, never defeated, always overcoming. We cannot find a path in which no sorrow shall come into our lives, but we are to live through the experience of sorrow without being hurt by it. Many people receive harm from the fires which pass over them. Many fall in temptation and lie in dust and defeat, not rising again. Many are soured and embittered by the enmities, the irritations, the frictions, the

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## More than Meat

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cares of life. But the problem of Christian living is to keep a sweet spirit amid all that might embitter, to pass through the fires and not have the flames kindle upon us; if ye take up serpents or drink any deadly thing, to be in no wise hurt thereby.

No one but Christ can keep our lives in the countless dangers through which we must pass in this world. Danger lurks in every shadow and hides in every patch of sunshine. There are tempters even in the circles of sweetest love. Peter, one of Christ's most loyal friends, became as Satan to his Master, tempting him to avoid his cross. Our best friends may tempt us to self-indulgence, seeking to withhold us from the self-denying service to which duty calls us. The sweetest joys have in them possible harm for our lives. Only by committing our lives day by day into the hands of Christ can we be kept in safety amid the perils of this world. He is able to keep us from falling, to guard us from stumbling, and to set us before the glory of his presence without blemish in exceeding joy.

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## Things that Endure

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In all the world there is no other but Jesus who can do this for us. The gentlest, purest, strongest mother cannot keep her child's life in absolute safety and bring it without blemish home at last to God's presence. The truest, wisest, whitest-souled friend cannot hold your life in such holy keeping that no blemish, no marring, no hurt, shall ever come to you.

Few thoughts are more serious than that of the responsibility under which we come when we take another life into our hands. A baby is laid in the mother's arms. In its feebleness it says to her, with its first cry, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit. Guard my life, teach me my lessons, train my powers, hide me from the world's harm. Let no evil touch me. Prepare me for life, for eternity." Yet every mother who thinks at all knows that she herself cannot keep her child's life. Her hands are not skillful enough. She is not wise enough nor strong enough.

Her part is faithfulness in all duty to the child,—example, teaching, restraint, training,

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## More than Meat

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the making of a home-atmosphere, like the climate of heaven, about the child.

“The baby has no skies  
But mother’s eyes,  
Nor any God above  
But mother’s love;  
His angel sees the Father’s face,  
But he the mother’s, full of grace.”

Blessed is the mother who truly interprets God in her own life and in her teaching and training of her child. Then Christ will do the rest.

The same is true in a measure of any friendship. Have you ever thought seriously of the responsibility of being a friend? It is a sacred moment when God sends to you one to whom you are to be guide and guardian, one who trusts you and comes under your influence. We are responsible for everything we do which may color, impress, or sway our new friend’s life. If our influence is tainted, if we fail to be absolutely true in our words or acts, if our dispositions and tempers are not Christlike, very sad will our accounting be when we stand before God.

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## Things that Endure

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So it is also when we commit our lives to the love, the guardian care, the influence of another. Pure, wise, good and rich human friendship is wondrously benign. But no human friend is perfect. None is wise enough to choose always the best things for us. None is strong enough to help us always in the truest and best ways. Then the sweetest and best human friends can stay with us but a little while. But the hands of God are safe hands for present and eternal keeping. We may commit our lives to him with perfect confidence, knowing that no harm can come to us while he watches over us. We shall be kept, guarded, sheltered, under wings of love, unto the end—preserved and brought blameless and spotless home at last.

## The Sin of Drifting



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## CHAPTER XIV

### The Sin of Drifting

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IT is entirely proper for a piece of wood to drift on the water. It cannot do anything else. It has no wisdom to choose a better way and no power to resist the force of the current in which it finds itself. It has no responsibility for its own movements, and is not to blame if it floats idly about in an eddy, or is carried into a whirlpool, or swept away in a wild torrent. It is right enough for a piece of wood to be a waif.

But it is altogether different with a man. Drifting is very unworthy in him. It is intended that he should choose his own direction and forge his own course, whatever way the tides may be running or the winds be blowing. Man was made to be master, not a mere creature, of circumstances. Yet there are many men who merely drift aimlessly through life. They fall unresistingly into whatever

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## Things that Endure

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current seizes them for the moment, and are borne upon it whithersoever it may carry them. When temptation assails them, they make no struggle to master it, but let it have its way with them. When something happens which discourages them, they yield to the depressing influence without an effort to overcome it. When they are confronted by an unfavorable condition in their business affairs, instead of gathering up all their resources and reserves of courage and energy to meet the emergency and successfully grapple with it, they simply give up and drift to failure. The habit of thus dropping into the tide, whatever it is, and going with it without resistance, when yielded to, soon becomes permanently fixed in the life, until a man seems at last to have lost all his power to help himself against any antagonism or opposition.

Resignation is sometimes a virtue, a most worthy quality indeed of the devout and reverent life. We should always be ready to resign our will to the divine will, to resign, or sign back to him whose right it is to rule

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## The Sin of Drifting

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over us, the control of our life. Nothing is worse than to struggle against God. It is a sin, and we are hurt also in the struggle, while if we succeed we have only got our own way in place of God's, which is the greatest possible disaster to one's life. We should always gladly yield to the will of the Lord whatever the cost of yielding may be. What seems loss in such yielding is gain.

“So, when there comes to you or me  
The Father's message, It cannot be!  
Let us rise from the weakness of selfish pain  
And gird our loins in his strength again;  
His plans for us are wide and sweet,  
His love and wisdom guide our feet  
Ever upward and forward and on:  
Deeper joys for the joy that is gone,  
Nobler days for the day that is dead,  
Higher hopes for the hope that is fled—  
These are our Father's gift and will,  
And the seeming loss is a blessing still.”

But there are times when resignation is not a virtue, when indeed it is sin. It never is the will of the Lord that we should yield to any evil influence, that we should drift in the

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## Things that Endure

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current of temptation into anything wrong. "When sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Nor should we allow ourself to give up to indolence. There are some people who suppose they are trusting God and are practising the grace of contentment, who really ought to be ashamed of their feeble, chronic resignation. They are too indolent to struggle. It is not God's will that their life should be so weak that they shall never try to conquer or overcome difficulty. God wants them to quit themselves like men, to be faithful in all duty, never to yield to discouragement. The best prizes in life do not come easily, cannot be won without struggle. The worthiest attainments in character and in possession can be reached only through toil and tears. Resignation means too often the missing of God's own plan for the life. Obstacles are put in the way, not to hinder us or check our progress, but are set as practical lessons to prove the earnestness and sincerity of our purpose and to discover what kind of spirit we are of. The paths have hindrances in them, not to turn

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## The Sin of Drifting

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us back, but to call out our courage and strength in overcoming them and in making a way for our feet through them. It is pitiable to see a man standing feebly resigned before hard tasks or in the face of difficulties which God meant him to conquer and triumph over.

“I hold

That it becomes no man to nurse despair,  
But in the teeth of clenched antagonisms  
To follow up the worthiest till he die.”

It should be the purpose of all young people to live victoriously. They should never consent to be creatures of circumstances—rather, they should create their circumstances, or certainly master them, and make all things in their life minister to their growth and their progress. They should decide for themselves the kind of life they are going to live—a Christlike life, and then live it in spite of temptation, opposition, and hindrance. Instead of drifting in the ways of the least resistance, going where others go and doing what others do, they should find out what is

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## Things that Endure

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right and should do that whatever it may cost.

There is a heroic saying of Nehemiah's recorded in the Scriptures. He was governor of the returned captives in Jerusalem, and he refers to certain questionable things which other governors had done. He then said, "But so did not I, because of the fear of God." It would have been easy for him to go on doing as other governors had done, but he did not do this; he did his duty before God, independently.

**The Value and Responsibility of  
One Life**

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## CHAPTER XV

# The Value and Responsibility of One Life

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NCE Elijah thought he was the only good man left. It certainly seemed so. The king and all the people had gone over to Baal and Elijah was the only one who stood up for God. In fact there were seven thousand others throughout the land who had not bowed down to Baal, but they were all in hiding and might as well not have been on the right side. Elijah was really the only one to stand for the Lord before the world.

There come times in the experience of nearly all of us when our life is the only one to represent God in the place where we are. There is a sense in which this indeed is true of every one of us all the time. We are always the only one God has to depend on at the particular place in which we are. There may be thousands of other lives about us. We



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## Things that Endure

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may be only one of a great company, of a large school, of a populous community, yet each one of us has a life that is alone in its responsibility, in its duty. There may be a hundred other men besides you, but not one of them can take your place, do your work, meet your obligations, or bear your burden. Though every other one of the hundred is doing his own part faithfully, your work waits for you, and if you do not do it it will never be done.

We can easily understand how that if Elijah had failed God that day on Carmel, when he was the only one God had to stand for him, the consequences would have been calamitous. Or we can understand how that if Luther had failed in the days of the great Reformation, when he was the only one God had to represent him and his truth, the consequences would have been tremendous, perhaps setting back the cause of Christ's Church for centuries. But do we know that the calamity would be any less if one of us should fail God in our mission any common day?

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## Value of One Life

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A story is told of a boy who found a leak in the dike that shuts off the sea from Holland and stopped it till help would come, with his hand holding back the floods through all the night. It was but a tiny, trickling stream that he held back, but if he had not done it, it would have been a torrent before morning, and the floods would have swept over all the land, submerging fields and homes and cities. Between the sea and all this ruin there was only a child's hand all that night. Had the boy failed, the floods would have rushed in with their merciless destruction. But do we know that our own life may not stand any day and may not be all that stands between some great flood of moral ruin and broad, fair fields of beauty? Do we know that our failure in our lowly place and duty any hour may not let in a sea of disaster, which shall sweep away human lives and human hopes and joys? The least of us dare not fail in the smallest matter, for our life is all God has at the place where we stand.

This truth puts a tremendous importance

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## Things that Endure

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into all living. We know not what depends upon our faithfulness any moment. We may think that there can be nothing serious enough in what we are doing to-day to demand our best, that no harm can come from our slightly relaxing our diligence. But in doing this we certainly are robbing God who expects and needs our best every moment, if the work of the universe is to go on according to his will and purpose. Then we do not know what hurt may result to God's cause or what harm may come to human lives from our lack of diligence in even the smallest matter.

There are other suggestions. We have only one life, but it is our own. No other one can live it for us. Our truest and best friend cannot choose for us, cannot bear our burden, cannot meet our responsibility, cannot do our duty.

“Of all who live I am the one by whom  
This work can best be done, in the right  
way.”

On the other hand, it will simplify our

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## Value of One Life

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problem of living to remember that we have only our one life to live and to answer for. Some people fail to realize this and seem to feel a responsibility for the lives and work of others. There is a sense in which we are to bear one another's burdens and look also on the things of others, but this does not mean that it is our business to sit in judgment on others, to assume to know more about the management of their affairs than they know themselves. We have quite enough responsibility in looking after our own life and attending to the tasks and duties which belong to us, without charging ourselves also with the tasks and duties of others. If we live our little life so as to please God, that is all we really have strength to do.

If only we lived after this plan it would save many of us a vast expenditure of strength and energy which we now give to finding fault with the way other people attend to their duties. It would save us, too, from a large measure of uncharitableness and from much envy and jealousy.

The Folly of Drifting into  
Marriage

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## CHAPTER XVI

# The Folly of Drifting into Marriage

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**A**MONG the other drifts of life many young people merely drift into marriage. The childhood friendships, or the casual associations of youth, are nourished until at length the potent spell of love falls upon the young man and maiden, and by and by there is a wedding. Or, the beginning of the attachment may be a great deal more sudden—"love at first sight," a speedy engagement, a marriage in a little while,—a marriage drifted into, or whirled into, as when a boat is swept down the wild rapids.

The matter of time, longer or shorter, makes little difference—in any case the marriage is drifted into. There was no serious thought about the meaning of the step and what it involved, no weighing of the responsibilities to be assumed, no questioning as to

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## Things that Endure

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whether the parties were ready for the serious work before them, no thoughtful study of the way to make the love dreams come true.

Yet of all things in life marriage surely is one of the very last that should ever be drifted into. If there is any step for the taking of which young people ought to make deliberate preparation, this is the step. If a young man discovers that he has made a mistake in his business, trade, or profession, he can change and take something else without serious detriment to his future. If a young woman buys a new dress and then concludes that she does not like it, she can discard it, hang it away in the storeroom and get another. If one takes a position, and afterward finds that the place is not satisfactory, nor the work congenial, it is easy to seek another place. But marriage is "for better, for worse, until death us do part." Therefore it should not be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, in the fear of God, and after most serious thought. It never should be drifted into.

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## Drifting into Marriage

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Yet it would seem that for nearly every other step in life there is more deliberation. For nearly all other duties there is instruction, training. Why should there not be for marriage? Why should not mothers talk thoughtfully to their daughters of the meaning of marriage, of the principle which should guide them in entering the relation, and of the duties which will be theirs when they become wives? Why should not fathers have quiet talks with their sons on the subject, telling them what a husband's duties are, how he must forget himself and live for the happiness of the woman he chooses for his wife, giving up his own selfish ways and unlearning habits he has formed which prove hindrances to the blending which alone makes perfect marriage?

Such wise instruction, given in youth, would certainly lead to more thoughtfulness on the subject, and thoughtfulness would prevent many inconsiderate marriages. It is often said that "marriage is a lottery," as if it were necessarily a sort of game of chance.



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## Things that Endure

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But there need not be such uncertainty about its outcome, if only young people would give serious attention to the subject before entering into it.

For example, the young man should consider whether the young woman he is interested in is fitted to be his wife. Perhaps it will be necessary for him to live economically, at least for a time. Has this girl had the training which will make her a good poor man's wife? Will she be able so to manage her household affairs that they can live on the small income he will have? Then will she be willing to live in a plain way, befitting their circumstances, and will she be contented in doing so?

Then has she the other gifts and qualifications that will make her the dearest woman in the world to him? Are her attractions such as will wear? There is a vast deal more required to make a woman interesting to a man three hundred and sixty-five days in the year for forty years or more, than to make her pleasing or winning for an evening two

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## Drifting into Marriage

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or three times a week or even oftener through one winter.

Then a young man's questioning should not be all on the side of the girl's ability to make him happy and to be a good, faithful, helpful wife. He ought to be quite as severe regarding himself,—whether he is the man to make this woman the husband she needs, whether he can make her happy, and whether he is able to devote himself to the holy task. This should be a really serious question with every young man who asks a girl to be his wife. It means that he must make himself worthy of her in every way, that he must be ready to give up his own preferences in many matters and live for her.

Then while he makes sure that the girl he is thinking of so warmly will be ready sweetly to share a plain home and close economy with him as his wife, he must also make sure that he is ready and that he will be able to provide for her in a way that will not lay too heavy a burden of sacrifice upon her. Too many young men never give serious thought

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## Things that Endure

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to this phase of the marriage problem. The result is that many a noble girl, willing to share privation and close economies with the man she loves, is taken out of a home of frugal comfort to endure pinching experiences and even wretched poverty, because the man who promised to keep, comfort, and cherish her, lacks either the capacity or the energy to provide for her a comfortable home.

Whatever other drifting you do, dear young people, don't drift into marriage. Know what you are doing.

**How Not to Show Sympathy**

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## CHAPTER XVII

### How Not to Show Sympathy

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NE of the suggestions to the guests at a noted sanitarium is, "Do not ask a neighbor the question, 'How are you feeling to-day?'" There is a great deal of wisdom in this hint. Indeed it contains a whole philosophy. There are a great many people who always introduce their conversation in this way when they meet a friend or neighbor, especially if the person has been ill, or is in the habit of complaining. There are many people, too, who like nothing better than to have this question asked them, for it gives them new opportunities to tell over the tale of their miseries, and almost nothing gives so much pleasure as this. Indeed, they feel disappointed when they meet a friend or neighbor, if some such inquiry is not made. Some are even offended if no chance is given them to recount their ills.

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## Things that Endure

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A good woman chided her husband for lack of sympathy with her because he never asked her how she felt, and never showed any interest in her recounting of the aches, pains, and discomforts, that fretted her. The truth is, the husband is one of the most sympathetic of men. He has a tender heart for suffering in any form, even in a dumb animal. It grieves him sorely to have any of his family really sick or suffering. But the good man has learned through the years that his beloved wife's ills are not serious, that they are, indeed, usually only tricks of her imagination. He has learned moreover that she has a most unwholesome craving for what she calls "sympathy." That is, she likes to have people listen to the story of her many afflictions, and then express their pity. Any one who will not do so is hard-hearted. Her husband loves his wife and in any actual sickness or suffering has the deepest sympathy with her. But he is sensible enough to know that to humor her would not be kindness to her, but would only pamper and encourage in her a miserable

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## How Not to Show Sympathy

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weakness which would make her increasingly miserable.

A few months since a young woman who was in a good deal of trouble, financially and otherwise, wrote to a friend, telling him quite in detail the story of her trials. Her family had suffered losses and her parents were in much distress at home in the South. She herself was teaching in an institution in the North and was receiving only a very small salary. The winter was coming on and she had no provision in the way of clothing adequate for its rigors.

The friend to whom she wrote replied as kindly as he knew how, sending also a sum of money sufficient to meet her immediate needs. He did not, however, refer at length to the troubles, the recital of which had filled her letter. He sought rather to put hope and courage into the young woman's heart, to help her to carry her burden more victoriously. Soon an answer came. She thanked the friend for the money, and then added: "But I must say that your letter hurt me

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## Things that Endure

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very much. I told you of all my troubles and of the sufferings of my poor parents, and you did not write a single word of sympathy. You did not even say 'I am sorry;' you only said, 'Cheer up, my child, be brave and strong and keep sweet.' "

The young woman really felt that she had been wronged and treated unkindly by her friend, because he had not gone over her troubles, showing pity for her. There are many other people just like this girl. Their idea of a friend is somebody to listen patiently and interestingly to the story of their woes and then to condole with them on the sadness of their lot. Any one who fails to do this is lacking in human feeling, unable to sympathize.

The request made of the guests at the sanitarium is an admirable one. It is well suited for a place where there are hundreds of persons who are sufferers in some way. The worst thing these can do is to talk about their ailments, to discuss their symptoms, to be led in any way to think of themselves.



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## How Not to Show Sympathy

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Half the cure is in getting them out of themselves, to forget themselves, especially if there is anything wrong with them, and to think of other things and other people, and talk of matters altogether apart from their own condition.

But what is a good rule for patients in a sanitarium is a good rule for people outside of sanitariums. It were well, indeed, if the question were universally prohibited. No one has a right to ask another how he feels. It is an impertinent question. It is nobody's affair how you feel, and you have a right, in a Christian way, to resent the liberty any one takes when he greets you in this way.

One of the instructions which Jesus gave to the disciples when he sent them forth was that they were to salute no one by the way. The reason generally given for this instruction is that it took a long while to go through salutations in the Orient, and time was so precious to these men bearing the King's messages that they could not pause to go through the long program of bowings and motions.

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## Things that Endure

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Our modern etiquette does not make it so burdensome to speak to people when we meet them. Yet there are those you cannot get away from quickly if you inadvertently ask, "How are you feeling to-day?" They will keep you a long while listening to the answer to your question. You will save precious time by always avoiding such an inquiry. "Good morning," is a better salutation. It is more gracious. It means more. It touches a more wholesome chord in your friend's consciousness. It is a truer way to be a blessing to men.

## Choosing Our Friends

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### Choosing Our Friends

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WE all need human friends, not only in the days of our gladness and joy, but still more in the days of our sorrow and suffering. We need a human hand to hold ours when we are passing through experiences of anguish. We want some one beside us in the days of our trial. I have read of a patient in one of the hospitals in London who was about to undergo a serious and dangerous operation. The surgeon asked her if she thought she was strong enough to endure it. She answered, after a moment's hesitation, "Yes, if Lady Augusta Stanley will come and sit beside me." We crave companionship especially in the time when our burdens are heavy and we are passing through experiences of anguish.

No life can reach its best alone. One log on a fire will not burn brightly, but if two logs are piled together then the one kindles

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## Things that Endure

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the other and the fire burns hotly. Two are better than one. We can do more work if we have companionship. We can fight more bravely in life's battles if another is fighting beside us. In all life companionship strengthens. Not only are two better than one, but two are better than two. That is, two together are better than two working separately.

Yet not every one that comes near to us or that might want to come into our life, is fit to be our friend. One of the most serious responsibilities of life is the responsibility of choosing friends. This is especially true in the case of young people. Youth is the time when friendships are most easily formed. All life is new, all the world is new. The friendships of the youthful days are apt to stay in the life unto the end. Really the choice of friends is in large measure the settling of a young person's whole future. The kind of friends we take into our life in the early days we are apt to keep always. If we accept and choose those who are good, refined, and inspiring,

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## Choosing Our Friends

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we are setting our life in the direction of whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely. But if, on the other hand, we attach ourselves in friendships in youth to those who are unworthy, whose life is earthly and sinful, who are not true and noble, we in effect fix our place and our character in a drift which will be toward things that are not good, that do not tend to honor and beauty of soul.

We grow like those whom we love, in whom we believe, with whom we mingle. If therefore we choose those who are not worthy, whose character is bad, whose influence is unwholesome, we cannot but be hurt by them. On the other hand, if we choose for our friends those who are good, those who are pure and true, whose lives are full of inspiration, we cannot but grow better. Many a person has been lifted up from a commonplace life into nobleness and beauty by the influence of a friend.

I know it is hard to make choice of friends. In a certain sense young people's friends are

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## Things that Endure

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chosen for them by their parents before they are able to think seriously of the matter. In the early childhood days companionships are formed which almost certainly make life's first friendships. Then Providence brings to us in various ways, through our daily associations, those whom we take into our life as friends. Young people meet others in school, in neighborhood gatherings, in church life, in the associations of work and society. They do not choose in this case—persons are brought to them and set down close beside them. But even in these cases, we should learn to discriminate between the good and the evil. Good seamanship does not let a ship drift on the waters. Whithersoever the winds may blow it or the tides and currents may carry it, good seamanship sails the ship even against the winds and the tides. So it should be in life. We should not drift anywhere. God has given us a mind and a will and we are to think for ourselves and choose promptly and determinately.

We should want friends also who have

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## Choosing Our Friends

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sympathy with us. I mean those who can enter into our life. No other persons can be true companions to us. Sympathy is important, not only in the days of sorrow, but also in the days of joy. It is easy enough to have friends who will feel with us in our grief. When trouble falls upon us, those who have been scarcely our friends in the past will turn to us with kindly feeling and sympathetic heart and word. It is well to have true friends in the hours of adversity. One of the best things about friendship is not what it does in the ordinary days, but what we know it will do when the hour of need comes to us. When therefore we are stricken down and are in trouble or in sorrow, a friend who is a friend indeed will come to us with true sympathy.

But we also need a friend who will come to us in our times of joy, who will understand our glad days and sympathize with us in our most happy moods. Some people are envious always of those who are happy and prosperous. More friendships fail at this point than



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## Things that Endure

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fail in the time of sorrow or want. True sympathy enters with us into every experience of our life.

We also want others who will think of our highest and best good. Too many friends bring no strength into our life. We get no upward aspirations from them. They put no brave thoughts into our mind or heart. They move along comfortably in easy-going ways, with a sort of placid companionship which takes its color from our own experience and gives to us no help. If we are in trouble these friends come to us and sympathize with us in a certain way. They pity us and cry with us, saying, "How sorry I am!" But they leave us no stronger. True friendship in such moods does not pity us too much, does not say too many soft things to us. Coddling is one of the very worst things friendship can do. It is not petting and pampering we need, —such manifestations only make us weaker and lead us to miserable self-pity. What we want is a friend who will put into our heart thoughts of better things than those we have

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## Choosing Our Friends

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yet reached, who will ever inspire us toward loftier reaches of life, turning us toward the mountain-tops and bidding us to climb the rugged slopes to the summit. Emerson says, "Our best friend is he who makes us do what we can." True friendship would inspire us always to do our best. When true friends come to us in our time of weakness or suffering, instead of pitying us, telling us how sorry they are, they speak brave words to us, heartening us, cheering us, arousing us to nobler efforts. What we want from our friends is not the lifting away of our burdens but new strength to help us to bear the burdens manfully and heroically. It is a misfortune when we attach ourselves to a friend who merely pities us and does not inspire us to anything nobler and truer.

There is another phase of the matter of friendship which is very important. I have spoken thus far of the responsibility of choosing friends, of thinking of their influence upon our own lives. This is the most serious phase of the subject. We are always respon-

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## Things that Endure

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sible for what we admit into our life. While God is our keeper, we are to watch continually, that nothing evil may ever be admitted, nothing that would stain or hurt us.

But there is another side. We are responsible also for our own influence upon those who call us friends. We are responsible for every word we speak, for everything we do, for every disposition, for every look which may leave its influence or impression upon any other life. While therefore we carefully guard the doors of our own heart, so as to admit nothing that would harm us, we must guard with equal care and diligence the influences which we put forth upon the lives of others. A story is told of Charles Lamb, that once a young person evidently wished to have his friendship and give him confidence and trust. Charles Lamb wrote to the person warning against such confidence, and saying, "I am not fit to be your friend." It was a brave thing to do. But it is something which every one should do unless he is sure that he can be true to the person who comes to him

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## Choosing Our Friends

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and that every influence of his life may be uplifting, purifying, inspiring and noble.

But of all friends in the world there is no one who can bring to us so much blessing as Christ will do. He wants to be our friend. He stands at the door of every life and knocks for admittance, that he may come in and take the inner place in our heart. The friendship of Christ is pure and holy and heavenly. Never in all the history of the world has any one been hurt by anything that Jesus has done. Therefore take Christ as your personal friend. Whatever other friends may do for you, he can do more. Sweet as human friendship is and rich as it is, it falls far short of meeting the deepest needs of our nature. Christ only can answer all the heart's cravings, and satisfy all the heart's yearnings. Christ's friendship alone can give us all the help we need. He is a very present help in every time of need. Human friendship can go but a little way with us. Soon we must part company, even with the holiest of them. One of every two friends must sit by the

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## Things that Endure

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other's bedside and hear the last words and feel the last hand-clasp and say the last farewell. But Christ's friendship goes on forever. He loves us with an everlasting love.

His friendship takes us also in our sinfulness and guilt, in our defilement and wrong, and restores us to beauty and brings us at last home to the blessedness of an eternal life. Whatever other friendships you may miss, miss not Christ's friendship, whatever else you may leave out of your life, let no one leave Christ out of his life.

**The Entanglements of Love**

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## CHAPTER XIX

### The Entanglements of Love

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HERE are other people; we are not the only ones. Some of the others live close to us and some farther away. The law of love brings all of these, far and near, into certain relations with us. They have claims upon us. We owe them love, duties, service. We cannot cut ourself off from any of them, saying that they are nothing to us. We cannot rid ourself of obligations and say we owe nothing to them. This relation to others is so binding that there is not an individual anywhere on the round earth who has not the right to come to us with his needs, claiming from us the ministry of love. These other people are our brothers, and there is not one of them that we have a right to despise, neglect, hurt, or thrust from our door.

We should train ourself to think of the other people. We ought not to leave them

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## Things that Endure

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out of any of the plans we make. We should think of their interests when we are thinking of our own. They have their rights and we must consider these when asserting our own. No one may set his fence a hair's breadth over the line on his neighbor's ground. No one may gather even a head of his neighbor's wheat or a cluster of grapes from his neighbor's garden. No one may enter his neighbor's door unbidden. No one may do anything that will harm his neighbor. Other people have rights which we may not invade.

Then we owe them more than their rights—we owe them love. To some it is not hard to pay this debt, for they are lovable and winsome. They are congenial, giving us in return quite as much as we can give them. It is natural to love these and to be kind and gentle to them, but we have no liberty of selection in this broad duty of loving other people. We may choose our personal friends, but we may not choose whom we shall love in the neighborly way. The Master said: "If ye love them that love you, what thank



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## The Entanglements of Love

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have ye? for even sinners love those that love them. And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? for even sinners do the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? even sinners lend to sinners, to receive again as much. But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil.”

So we see that our neighbor is anybody who needs us. He may not be beautiful in his character, nor congenial to us; he may even be unkind, unjust, in strict justice undeserving of your favor; yet if we persist in claiming the name Christian, we owe him the love that seeketh not its own, that beareth all things, endureth all things.

The love which we are taught to bear to other people means service. Love without serving is only an empty sentiment. It is not enough just to avoid doing people harm. Jesus taught that sin is not merely in positive

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## Things that Endure

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acts that are wrong, but also in the neglects to do the things we ought to do. Those on the left hand will be those who have not fed the hungry nor clothed the naked nor visited the sick. They may have been very respectable people in many ways, but their failure to do the ministries of love about them puts them in the wrong company.

We never can get away from these other people. We may have our fine theories of living for self, of laying up in the summer of prosperity for the winter of adversity, of providing for old age, but all these economic plans have to yield to the exigencies of human need. The love that seeketh not its own plays havoc with the plans of mere self-interest. We cannot say that anything we have is our own when our brother stands before us needing what we have to give.

Every day brings to us its opportunities for service of love. Every one we meet needs something which we have to give. It may be only common courtesy, gentle kindness at home, the patient treatment of others in busi-

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## The Entanglements of Love

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ness, the thoughtful showing of interest in the old, in children, or in the poor. On all sides the lives of others touch ours, and we cannot do just as we please, thinking only of ourself, unless we choose to be false to all the requirements of the law of love.

We should never forget that it is by obedience to this law of love that we grow. In this realm, at least, it is true that what we keep we lose, and that only what we give out do we really keep. Then in giving we do not rob ourself or empty our own heart. When we give out love, not less but more love remains in our heart. Sharing with others adds to our own store.

“No force is lost, no action dies,—

Let this great thought be ours;

No good once spent in sacrifice,

No effort of our powers,

Can ever pass, or ever die.

It changes, but remains;

Life, everywhere, grows rich thereby

And strength eternal gains.”

Learning the Lessons of Love at  
Home

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## CHAPTER XX

# Learning the Lessons of Love at Home

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OME life should be happy. Yet it requires thought, care and effort, to make it so. We sometimes forget that love's lessons have to be learned. We think they should come naturally, and so perhaps they should. But the fact is that it takes a great deal of self-restraint, of patience, of thoughtfulness, to learn and live out the lesson of love. There are hundreds of homes in which there is love and where great sacrifices are cheerfully made; and yet hearts are starving there for love's daily bread. There is a tendency in too many homes to smother all of life's tenderness, to suppress it, to choke it back. There are homes where expressions of affection are almost unknown. There are husbands and wives between whom love's converse has settled into the baldest conventionalities. There

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## Things that Endure

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are parents who never kiss their children after they are babies, and who discourage in them, as they grow up, all longings for caresses and marks of affection.

Mary Lowe Dickinson tells this story: A little child of eight was very ill and thought to be dying. In after years all memory of the suffering faded, but she said: "I owe to that sickness the knowledge that my mother loved me, for she kissed me again and again when no one else was there. That memory was the most precious treasure that I carried on into my womanhood, for until the night before I was married I do not remember that she ever kissed me again. When she was old, I asked her why she never caressed or petted us as children, and she said, 'I thought it would prevent your being self-reliant. I knew I could not always be with you, and I did not want you to be dependent on my presence.'"

There is very much more of this lack of tenderness in homes than most people imagine. There are many homes in which the life goes on day after day, week after week, in the

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## Learning the Lessons of Love

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dreariest and coldest routine. Many children are cheated out of the expression of love in the days when affectionateness would mean so much to them. "Many timid girls and boys have grown almost to maturity believing that nobody ever loved them, because nobody has ever told them so."

There are chilled homes which could be warmed into love's richest glow in a little while if only all the hearts in the household were to become affectionate in expression. Does the busy husband think that his weary wife would not care any longer for the caresses and marks of tenderness with which he used to thrill her heart? Let him return again, but for a month, to his old-time fondness, and then ask her if these youthful amenities are distasteful to her. Do parents really think that their grown-up children are too big to be petted, to be kissed at meeting and parting? Let them restore again for a time something of the affectionateness of the early childhood days, and see if there is not a great secret of happiness in it. Many who

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## Things that Endure

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are longing for richer home gladness need only to pray for a springtime of love with tenderness that is not afraid of affectionate expression.

“Comfort one another;  
With the hand clasp close and tender,  
With the sweetness love can render,  
And looks of friendly eyes.  
Do not wait with grace unspoken  
While life’s daily bread is broken:  
Gentle speech is oft like manna from  
the skies.”

We need never be afraid to speak our love at home, however careful we have to be outside, lest we foolishly seem to carry our heart on our sleeve. There is little danger of too much affectionateness in the family life. It needs all the tenderness we can possibly get into it. It will not make a boy soft and dependent to love him and tell him you love him. We should make the morning good-byes, as we part at the breakfast table, kindly enough for final farewells—for they may indeed be final farewells. Many go out in the



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## Learning the Lessons of Love

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morning who never come back at night. Therefore, when we separate even for a few hours we should part with kindly words, with lingering pressure of the hand, lest we may never look again into each other's eyes. Tenderness in a home is not childish weakness, a thing to be ashamed of—it is one of love's most sacred duties, one which never should be left out.

Here are some very practical counsels from a recent writer on the question. How to cultivate love in the home circle: "First, be willing to show the love that already exists. . . . Is the husband and father silent and gloomy, withdrawn into himself, brooding, perhaps, over the fact that no matter how hard he tries, he never can meet the family demands? Show him that you know he is tired,—that you love him for his constant effort, that you love him the same even if he has failed to do all he had hoped to do. Show him how well and cheerfully you can get on with a little for this time, sure that the next time he will succeed. If you are his daugh-

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## Things that Endure

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ter, and have acquired the habit of thinking of him chiefly as the man from whom the money comes for things you need, get out of that relation by planning to do, or get something for him. Has your mother been in the habit of reminding him that your birthday is at hand? Find out his birthday, and begin to plan for that, a little gift from every child, a song sung for father, a little speech from his little son, a little fun which you can coax him to share—it may mean a new life to him, because it means a new sense of how truly you love and believe in him.”

**Learning the Lessons of  
Patriotism**

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CHAPTER XXI

Learning the Lessons of  
Patriotism

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NE good thing every young man may do and should do is to think seriously about his duties to his country. One of the most pathetic stories in all modern literature is Dr. Hale's "A Man without a Country." The book should be read by every young patriot, and when once read it never can be forgotten. There are men who, though living in the midst of the best that their country has for them, enjoying all its privileges so far as their own life is concerned, really are men without a country. Their souls would seem to be so dead that they never say to themselves with any warmth or enthusiasm, "This is my own, my native land." They have no pride in their country. They know little of its glorious history. They never think of the cost of the liberties they enjoy as citizens.

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## Things that Endure

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They give no thought to the duties and responsibilities of patriotism.

But it is dishonorable for any man to be as if he had no country while enjoying the inestimable blessings which the country has brought to him. Patriotism ranks high among duties. In all lands treason is regarded as the blackest of crimes. Yet the lack of patriotism is a phase of treason. In time of war for a nation's life, neutrality is regarded as more dishonorable and despicable than open enmity.

One of the finest things in the culture of patriotism, is to know the history of one's country. It should be studied until its story has been absorbed into the very life. Thus it was that the ancient Hebrews were trained into patriots. They were taught from infancy the meaning of their nationality and its great destiny. Little else was talked of in the home, in the field, or by the way. The great hopes of the nation were held before their eyes until they became tremendous realities. So patriotic did they grow that when

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## The Lessons of Patriotism

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carried into captivity nothing could swerve them from their loyalty to their country. They worshipped God with their faces turned toward their holy city. No allurements of heathen splendors could make them aught but Israelites.

For another thing, we owe it to our country to make ourselves noble and worthy men. It is not broad lands, crowded cities, large wealth, and a world-encircling commerce, that make a nation great; always the real greatness of a nation is measured by its men. It is character that is needed if the nation is to grow into its finest possibilities.

One of the dangers of great prosperity in any country is that men shall lose their virility, their strength, their power of endurance, their moral stanchness, their nobility of character. Luxury always tends that way. A measure of hardship is not only safer, but is also a very much better school for the training of worthy lives than the ease which breeds self-indulgence and softness.

The great task before the boys and young

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## Things that Endure

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men who are now about passing through Fourth of July fervors is to make men of themselves. That really is what we are here for,—not to gather money, to do a few things large or small, to win fame, to achieve power, but to grow into worthy manhood. If he is a benefactor who makes two blades of grass grow where there was only one growing before, he is much more a benefactor who adds some new quality to his own character, making himself a somewhat better man. Patriotism demands of young men the very best manhood they can build.

They should be true. Truth is one of the foundation stones in every fabric of worthy character. It is not enough to be truthful in speech, never uttering any false word. One may conform to the law of truth in this way and yet lack truthfulness in other ways. Strength is another quality of patriotic manhood. It is not easy to be good in the business world, in politics, in society. One needs to be strong in order to live out noble prin-

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## The Lessons of Patriotism

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ciples and to do the things which a man must do if he would take his place among men and live righteously. He must be able to stand in the face of all manner of opposition and temptation and of all subtle influence. Then while the patriotic man must be strong and true, he must also be gentle. Gentleness is the flower of noble character. There are men who are true and strong, but are ungentle, and thus fail of a really noble manhood. Courage is another essential element in manliness. Courage is not merely a quality by itself in a noble life—it is a necessary element in all other qualities. It takes courage to be true, and to be strong, and even to be gentle in a worthy sense.

Another duty of patriotism is interest in all that belongs to the life of the country. Every young man should train himself in the affairs of good citizenship. Voting is not merely a privilege—it is a sacred duty as well. The voting should be intelligent. Young men should learn to think and to inquire, not casting their ballots blindly and



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## Things that Endure

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thoughtlessly with the party to which they are attached, but making sure that they are casting them for men who are worthy. The twentieth century patriot ought to be independent enough never to be compelled by party rules to vote for an unworthy candidate.

Then voting is not the only function of citizenship. It may seem little that one person can do in making his country better. But if each one sees to it, first, that his own life is true and worthy, and then, that he makes one little spot of his native land a sweeter and better place to live in, he has done that which is by no means a small or an unimportant part in the great work of making the whole country better.

## Is Worrying a Christian Duty?

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## CHAPTER XXII

### Is Worrying a Christian Duty?

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NOT many people seem to think of worrying as a sin. It would almost appear from the universality of the habit that many regard it as a virtue. Many persons almost resent the suggestion that they should be anxious about nothing, as if it were an effort to interfere with their personal rights.

It is quite time we should learn that worrying is neither a grace nor a duty, but rather a most unseemly blemish in a life, and a sin that hurts the soul and grieves God. The opposite of worrying is peace, and peace is enjoined in the Scriptures as the very ideal of Christian life. Christ's legacy to his friends was his peace. He never worried. He never lost his self-poise for a moment. His own peace he gives to every one who does not reject the gift. He taught, too, plainly and forcefully, that worrying is not only useless,

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## Things that Endure

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but sinful. "Be not anxious," he said. Our heavenly Father feeds his birds; will he not much more bountifully feed his children? He clothes the lilies and the grasses; will he not much more clothe those who bear his own image?

But how can we keep from worrying? St. Paul answers this question in a wonderfully practical paragraph in one of his epistles. He first lays down the rule: "In nothing be anxious." He leaves no room for exceptions to this rule. It is for every Christian, and it covers every experience of each one's life. No one can say, "But my case is exceptional." Still the quiet answer is, "In nothing be anxious."

What then should we do with the things that break so disturbingly into our life; that tend so to vex and fret us? If we are not to be anxious about these things, what shall we do with them? St. Paul answers promptly and tells us what to do. "Be not anxious; but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be

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## Is Worrying a Christian Duty?

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made known unto God.” That is, when things break in upon our lives which would naturally disturb us, we are to put them altogether out of our own hands into God’s, and then leave them there.

This is not a mere arbitrary rule—it is most reasonable. It means that we trust God with the hard things, the tangles, the complications, the perplexities, of our lives, instead of trying to look after them ourselves. There is no doubt that God has power to deal with these things. Neither is there any doubt that he is infinitely wiser than we are and more able to adjust such affairs so as to make them work together for our good. If his care for us really includes such matters, there is no question about his ability to carry them. The only question that can arise is: “Does God indeed care for such small things as the little frets and tangles of our daily common lives?”

“If I could only surely know  
That all the things that tire me so  
Were noticed by my Lord—

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## Things that Endure

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The pang that cuts me like a knife,  
The lesser pains of daily strife—  
What peace it would afford!

“I wonder if he really shares  
In all these little human cares,  
This mighty King of kings?  
If he who guides through boundless space  
Each blazing planet in its place  
Can have the condescending grace  
To mind these petty things?

“Dear Lord, my heart shall no more doubt  
That thou dost compass me about  
With sympathy divine:  
The Love for me once crucified  
Is not the love to leave my side,  
But waiteth ever to divide  
Each smallest care of mine.”

There is no doubt whatever that God does care, not only for the great things in our lives, but quite as much for the matters that concern us. We may bring to him everything that troubles us and know that he will take it into his own hands and do what is best. Of course, we are not absolved from responsibility—we must always do our duty. The secret of not worrying, which Jesus himself

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## Is Worrying a Christian Duty?

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gives, is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The trouble with us, however, is that we do not leave our affairs in God's hands. We take our perplexities and cares to him, but in a little while we gather them back into our own hands again, giving God neither time nor opportunity to adjust them for us. What he wants us to do is to take them to him in prayer and then keep our own hands off.

The promise in St. Paul's cure for care is, that if we take everything to God in prayer and leave it there, "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." The figure is military. As the army sleeps at night in quietness and confidence because sentinels keep their watch, so the peace of God stands guard over our hearts and our thoughts. We have the same assurance of divine keeping in the old promise, "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."

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## Things that Endure

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This is a lesson which young people should set themselves most earnestly to learn—the lesson of not worrying. Worry hurts our lives. It mars their beauty. It saps their strength. It unfits them for doing their best work, for no one with a worried mind can ever do his best in anything. Besides, it grieves God. “In nothing be anxious.”



**Making or Marring Beauty**

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## CHAPTER XXIII

### Making or Marring Beauty

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LITTLE things make perfection." In nothing is this more true than in character and conduct. There are many people who in great matters of principle and in the cardinal virtues are without fault, yet the lustre of whose life is dimmed by countless little blemishes and infirmities. One man who is upright and steadfast, with the firmness of a rock, is hard to live with because of his irritability or his despotic disposition. Another, who is faithful in all his dealings with men, whose word is as good as his bond, is so harsh and ungentle in his close relations with others that he is anything but a comfort and help to those with whom he comes in personal contact. Another is full of great benevolent and philanthropic schemes, doing good in many ways, yet those who know him most intimately discover in him an almost utter lack of the sweet

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## Things that Endure

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graces and amenities which are the true adornment of a Christlike life.

It is in the little things that most failures are made. Little faults honeycomb many a character. Little sins ruin many a life. Henry Drummond, writing of tropical Africa, tells of a species of white ants which work desolation wherever they go. One may leave his chair at night and go to bed. In the morning the chair is there, apparently in good condition, but let him sit down on it and it falls with him in a heap on the floor. During the night the white ants have eaten the inside out of the legs, seat and frame. Houses are in like manner destroyed. The timbers are bored through and through, until one day the building tumbles to the ground. There are human lives which seem strong and right to men's eyes, but countless infinitesimal faults and sins eat away their substance until they fall at last in hopeless ruin.

It is the little failures in loving which mar the beauty of the perfect ideal. There are many who would give their very life for a

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## Making or Marring Beauty

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friend, whose love yet lacks altogether the gentle things in disposition and expression which are needed to fill out the true measures of affection. The want of thoughtfulness causes untold pain and suffering.

An hour ago a strong and active man, who occupies a high place in the world, was telling how he had been going about all day, carrying a secret pain at his heart and a deep sense of shame because of a mere lack of courtesy at his own table in the morning. It was so slight that probably no one but himself noticed it. It was not a bitter word that he spoke nor anything harsh that he did, but only his failure to do a trifling kindness, a mere neglect to be gentle when gentleness would have meant much. A moment after he had left the breakfast table he became aware of what he had done, or rather of the opportunity he had missed to give sweet comfort and help to his wife, and in all the hours of his busy day there had been a deep shadow hanging over him and a feeling of regret and sorrow embittering his heart.

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## Things that Endure

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Ofttimes it is not the one who does the little unkindness or neglects to do the kindness who suffers, but the one to whom the unkindness or the neglect is shown. There is no doubt that the larger part of the pain and heartache endured in the world is caused by multitudinous little failures in lovingness rather than by life's great and conspicuous sorrows. A thoughtful writer says:

“Taking life through and through, the larger part of the sadness and heartache it has known has not come through its great sorrows, but through little, needless hurts and unkindnesses; not so much through the orderings of Providence as through the mis-orderings of humanity. Look back and you can readily count up the great griefs and bereavements that have rent your heart and changed your life. You know what weary months were darkened. There was a certain sacredness and dignity, like the dignity of a lonely mountain top, in their very greatness; and looking back, if not at the time, you can often understand their purpose. But, oh, the days

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## Making or Marring Beauty

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that are spoiled by smaller hurts, spoiled because somebody has a foolish spite, a wicked mood, an unreasonable prejudice that must be gratified and have its way no matter whose rights, plans, or hearts are hurt by it! There are so many hard places along the road for most of us, made hard needlessly by human selfishness, that the longing to be kind with a tender, thoughtful, Christlike kindness grows stronger in me each day I live."

It should be our care to watch the little things in our conduct, the minute attentions, the small courtesies, the delicate graces and refinements of our manner, since by all these we add either to the volume of good we do or to the measure of pain we cause.

There come every day a thousand opportunities to be thoughtful, in which are a thousand possibilities of giving happiness or hurt. In the mere tones of the voice in which we speak lie the widest opposites of gentleness or harshness.

"It is not so much what you say,  
As the manner in which you say it;

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## Things that Endure

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It is not so much the language you use,  
As the tones in which you convey it.

“The words may be mild and fair,  
And the tones may pierce like a dart;  
The words may be soft as a summer air,  
And the tones may break the heart.

“For words but come from the mind,  
And grow by study and art;  
But the tones leap forth from the inner self  
And reveal the state of the heart.

“Whether you know it or not,  
Whether you mean it or care,  
Gentleness, kindness, love, and hate,  
Envy, and anger, are there.”

It is not enough, therefore, that we seek to be true, honest, and just, in all our life; we should learn all the lessons of love, so that in every disposition and temper and word, in every shade of expression, we shall be Christlike.

**On the Footpath to Success**



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## CHAPTER XXIV

### On the Footpath to Success

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VERY young man, unless he be dead to the real meaning of life, has in his heart a desire to achieve success. He wants to do something that will make his living worth while. He has dreams of success which shine before him in splendor and woo him to earnestness and energy. He would like to make a name for himself that the world will remember and honor. It is always in order, therefore, to speak to young men of success.

Before we talk about success, however, we would better define the word. What do we mean by success? When we are told that a certain man is successful, that he began poor and is now rich, that he has risen from obscurity to great fame and power, we need to inquire how he reached his high place. If he crawled to it through slime and mire; if he trampled conscience and the law under his

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## Things that Endure

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feet as he went up; if he made his money by extortion or by dishonesty, his apparent success is wretched failure and his self-complacent pride an object for our just contempt.

“He fails who climbs to power and place  
Up the pathway of disgrace.  
He fails not who makes truth his cause,  
Nor bends to win the crowd’s applause.  
He fails not—he who stakes his all  
Upon the right, and dares to fall.”

There are certain qualities which always belong to the life that is truly successful. One is industry. There is no royal road to worldly attainment or achievement. Easy positions, as a rule, mean failure in the end. The pressure of hard work in youth builds noble manhood for later years. Charles W. Eliot has said:

“I believe that long hours and hard work are best for every man. . . . No man can work too hard, or too long hours, if his health will permit.” We all grow best under burdens. It is only the used powers that get strong; the unused remain undeveloped and

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## On the Footpath to Success

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shrivel up. "The stars would rot in the sky were it not for their ceaseless motion."

Dependableness is another essential quality in the winning of success. Lord Lytton says: "A man is already of consequence in the world when it is known that he can be implicitly relied upon." Whatever one's duty may be, there should never be the slightest doubt that it will be done promptly and carefully. Thus the man becomes essential to the life of the world—essential in his own place, large or small. This means that one's word should be sacredly kept, no matter at what cost to himself. It means that he will never fail in anything that is assigned to him. Life is very complicated, and failure in the smallest matter may bring great disaster. If a watchman does not swing his red lantern, or if a switchman does not turn his lever, or if the engineer does not see the signal as his train flies by, no one can tell what the consequences will be. One who is absolutely dependable in his place is on the way to success.

Economy is also an element in the making

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## Things that Endure

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of success. The cause of poverty is not always small income—ofttimes it is leakage in expenditures. The habit of saving, doing without things which one cannot afford, is one secret of prosperity, part of the foundation of fortune. There is no disgrace in living closely when one's resources are small; there is disgrace in living above one's means.

A writer on success says: "The way a young man spends his leisure time is a sure index to his future." One of the papers contained a good commentary on this wise saying: "Two men stood at the same table in a large factory in Philadelphia, working at the same trade. Having an hour at noon, each undertook to use it to accomplish a definite purpose. One of the men employed his daily leisure in working out the invention of a machine for sawing a block of wood in any desired shape. He succeeded and sold his patent for a large sum of money. The other man—what did he do? Well, he spent his noon hour for nearly a year in the very difficult and important task of teaching a little dog how to

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## On the Footpath to Success

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stand on his hind feet and dance. He succeeded, too, but he still works at his old bench and bitterly complains of the unjust fate that keeps him poor while his old fellow-workman has become rich."

Courtesy is among the qualities which lead to success. A man who is rude, uncivil, thoughtless, or ungentlemanly in his treatment of others will never make much of his life. A true gentleman will never intentionally or even heedlessly hurt another's feelings. He is as kind, too, to the poorest and lowliest as to the rich and the highest in rank. The mere commercial value of civility is almost incalculable. But true courtesy is not a superficial quality. It is not merely good manners. It begins in the heart. It is interest in people, real, not assumed interest. It has an errand to every one,—not to get something from him, but to give him something, to do something for him; not to be served by him, but to serve him. With this spirit in the heart, one is always sincerely and unaffectedly courteous, and he who meets others

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## Things that Endure

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in this way is recognized as their friend and cannot fail in his work.

It should always be remembered, too, that true success must take in all the life—not only up to the day of a man's death, but after that, through the vast forever. One of Mr. Sill's poems asks:

What may we take into that vast Forever?  
That marble door  
Admits no fruit of all our long endeavor,  
No faun-wreathed crown we wore,  
No garnered lore.

What can we bear beyond the unknown portal?  
No gold, no gains—  
Of all our toiling; in the life immortal  
No hoarded wealth remains.

. . . . .

Naked from out the far abyss behind us  
We entered here.

. . . . .

Into the silent starless night before us  
Naked we glide.

In the last analysis, the only real success is character, the building of a life which we may carry into the long hereafter.

## Causes of Failure

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## CHAPTER XXV

### Causes of Failure

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SOMETIMES, near the ocean shore, one sees a green flag, in shreds and tatters, bearing the word "Wreck," floating over the mast or some other part of a vessel, just visible above the water. The flag is to warn other craft off the wreck that lies there. Over many men's lives a like warning might float. What can be sadder than a wrecked immortal life? Yet the sea is not so full of wrecked ships which have gone down in storms or upon its fatal rocks, as in life's sea, down into whose dark depths have gone human hopes and possibilities and immortalities. We talk sometimes with pathetic sadness of what the ocean contains, of the treasures that lie buried beneath its waves. But who shall tell of the treasures that are hidden in the deeper, darker sea of life, where they have sunk in times of defeat and disaster?



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## Things that Endure

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The following question was sent, with others, to a number of gentlemen: "So far as you have observed, what are some of the principal causes of the failure of young men—meaning failures in the wider sense, in character and also in business career?" The answers have taken a wide range, covering both the business and the moral side of life.

A merchant writes: "I and my brother commenced in the house in which I am now senior partner, when we were boys of twelve or thirteen. With one exception all the boys who were then in the house have made shipwreck of life, by bad company, wine, etc. The same story, almost, could be written of nearly all the houses on the street,—since I began business—two or three young men saved and succeeding, the others failing, lost."

Another writer, a younger man, but observant and thoughtful, answers: "The causes of failure are, no positive aim in life, no special preparation. Lack of appreciation of the many opportunities for self-improvement in youth; satisfied to be in the swim

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## Causes of Failure

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of fashion and pleasure; haste to get rich; selfishness.”

Another thoughtful man replies: “Indirection, lack of systematic habits, of thoroughness, of moral rectitude. As a rule, men do not succeed because they have no definite purpose; also, because they fail to make a proper use of the means of improvement at hand. I know many young men who are to-day filling obscure positions and simply because in their days of opportunity they neglected to prepare themselves for what the future might bring them.” Napoleon once told some school-boys that every missed lesson left an opening for future disaster. Wellington said that Waterloo was fought and won while he was still a school-boy; that is, the preparation which made the battle and the victory possible, was made in his early years. So it is in every successful life. The things the boys are doing now will make or unmake their future.

“The common things of the common day  
Are ringing bells in the far away.”

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## Things that Endure

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Another writer says: "I have observed that young men often are very thoughtless. That is, when they start out in life they do not consider or take hold of the many opportunities that offer, but think more of present pleasure and ease than of the building of character or making a business success." In other words he means to say that selfish indulgence draws them away from hard work. Blessed be drudgery in early life! That young fellow is to be pitied who in his first years has short hours, easy work, good pay, luxurious surroundings, and a good many golden hours without their tasks. He thinks he is fortunate, and his mother thinks he is fortunate; but in truth he is not. He is getting a false idea of life, for no such easy life ever can amount to much in the end. He is leaving great patches of the fields of his blessed days empty, without their burden of work and discipline, and very soon the devil will sow tares in these unfilled hours.

Another thoughtful answer is this: "Lack of confidence in self is a cause of failure. A

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## Causes of Failure

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careless habit, not thorough, the tendency to slight his work. 'Oh, that will do!' is his standard and becomes his habit, and a bad habit it is. It has wrecked many a young man's prospects. Nothing inspires confidence on the part of an employer more quickly than thoroughness and reliability in a boy. He may not be specially quick or bright, but if he can be depended on to do well the task assigned him, his position is assured. The 'plodder' we sometimes call him."

The fourth reason is given. "Lack of a high ideal of concentration and tenacity of purpose. Lack of self-control and self-denial. They (young men) have not a proper conception of the divineness of life, and are unwilling to pay the price of success. They work only to the extent necessary to keep positions, and really live and work to get pleasure outside of business hours."

Another says: "Lack of thorough earnestness and a failure to grasp opportunities. Usually it is not lack of brains or of intelligence that keeps men down; but strangely

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## Things that Endure

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many get the impression that the position should seek them instead of their seeking the position. So they fail to try to honor the place they fill." There is here a very important suggestion. No man can succeed in a position whose duties he tries to do merely with the least possible work. He must take his share of the burden of the work or business and make the responsibility his own.

Again a writer—a man whose life has reached rare nobleness in character and rare success in business, says: "The principal causes of failure in a business career are, granting that natural ability is sufficient—lack of application, lack of integrity or reliability, or lack of contentment with one's situation. I have in mind men who might have succeeded if they had been contented with the ordinary duties in which providence had placed them, but through an ambition to accomplish something much more striking, they have failed to make even an ordinary success."

Most of the quotations made thus far refer

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## Causes of Failure

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to the causes of business failure primarily. But the moral side has also had a place in many of the letters. One names: "Moral cowardice; fear to say no to the invitations of companions to take the first drink or to visit houses of questionable repute; the perusal of vile literature; accepting and choosing the companionship of impure and unworthy persons." Another names: "Estrangement from home and its consequence, bad company. When boys and young men learn to dislike home and love to be any place more than at home, they have taken the first step downward."

Another names gambling as a cause of moral failure. I am glad of an opportunity to refer to this vice which to-day ranks alongside the saloon and the sin of impurity in its ruinous work among men. I do not believe any of us are aware of the extent of gambling in our present-day life. It begins in the groups of school-boys playing marbles on the sidewalks and it extends up to the stock-rooms where men gamble with railroads

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## Things that Endure

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and mines and great trusts and millions of margin for stakes. You find it in parlors and in pool-rooms, in railway trains and on ocean steamers, in charity entertainments and even in church fairs. And the extent of the curse of it no one knows. The young man who first entertains the suggestion that he may make money by chance, without legitimate work or the exercise of skill has opened his heart to a seed of moral poison which, unless quickly cast out, will produce moral ruin. A wise man has said, "There is no dry rot that spreads so fast from the smallest speck upon the character as the gambling passion."

Life is too noble, too great, too rich in possibilities to be thrown away. God has given to each of us a soul, a life, to keep, to build up into beauty, to use in holy service, to account for at last, at God's bar. Let us be faithful. Let us make the most possible of ourselves. God will help us. Let us put our hands in Christ's. Let us yield to Him. Then come what may, we cannot fail.

## Sticking to One's Calling



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## CHAPTER XXVI

### Sticking to One's Calling

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THE wandering habit is not a good one. It is apt to breed restlessness of mind, which is not a wholesome spirit in any life. Besides, one never can do one's best work as a nomad. Going from place to place gives no opportunity for leaving a deep and abiding impression anywhere. At the end of such a life, however long it may have been, there is but little left to tell the story.

Another disadvantage of such a career is its effect upon the person himself. He does not grow into strength of character. He never achieves the capacity for endurance, for long-continued and persistent effort. He never wins in the confidence of his fellows the quality of dependableness. He never becomes a man to whom others turn for a wise judgment. He never acquires a strong and wide influence.

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## Things that Endure

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Far different is it, however, with the man who forms settled habits and devotes himself to one great purpose with undeviating persistence. He is like a tree planted. He takes root and grows. He becomes a feature of the place in which he is rooted. This may not always mean, either, that a man lives all his life in the same house. The work of some men requires them to go from place to place. St. Paul was a missionary to the whole world, eager to carry the gospel to every land. He would preach a little while in one city and then press on to another. He was restless with a passion for souls. Yet he could say and truthfully, "This one thing I do." His aim was single, and there was one great purpose filling his heart in all his journeying by land and by sea. Other men, in like manner, travel much and yet never take their eyes off their life's goal.

But there are some men who never settle down to anything. They begin one thing and are enthusiastic in it for a little time, until they hear of another place or occupa-

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## Sticking to One's Calling

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tion which seems more promising. They then try this for a short while, until they are lured from it by something else yet more attractive. Thus year after year they are continually moving on, and when the end of life is reached they have nothing to show for the time they have been in this world.

There are many advantages in a settled life. It enables a man to put all his energies into one occupation, to sow all his life in one field. That is all the average man can do with any hope of success. Not many of us are versatile enough to succeed in two or three callings. Most of us have but light enough to brighten one little corner of God's great world. If we try to scatter our light more widely, its shining will be too dim and diffuse to be a benediction to anybody. A man who lives in a dozen different towns or cities during the forty or fifty years of his active career has made but slight impression anywhere, however good a man he may be. On the other hand, one who spends most of his life in one town or neighborhood, giving it the best of

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## Things that Endure

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his wisdom, his energy, his thought, his love, his influence, has wrought himself inextricably into all the life of the place.

This principle has wide application. There is a liberal education in the discipline which trains a life into a settled purpose and into persistent devotion to one thing. Such a habit has its influence, for example, in the matter of one's friendships. There are many who so scatter and thus dissipate their affections that they become altogether incapable of being any one's real friends. People are to them what flowers are to bees. They fly about everywhere, and wherever they discover a sip of honey in a flower they descend upon it, extract the sweet, and then fly on again. Of course, one must love all in the Christian sense and be kind and courteous to all, ready to help; but that is not what friendships mean or should mean. Jesus himself poured out his love on every life, the lowliest, the most debased, as the sun pours his beams on weed and bog as well as on the flower and garden; yet he had his few personal friends

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## Sticking to One's Calling

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who were admitted to the inner circle, and to whom he turned for love and sympathy and bread for his heart's hunger. If we would know the meaning and the blessedness of friendship, we must choose our few friends wisely and cling to them until death us do part.

The same principle applies to church life. The best and most fruitful Christian life is the one that takes root in one place and grows there, unless uprooted by Providence, unto the end. There is a large class of people, however, in these days who go from church to church, take root nowhere, are of no use anywhere. They are gadders-about. Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll, in writing of our Lord's counsel, "Go not from house to house," has this to say about those who wander from preacher to preacher and from church to church: "Of all degraded Christian types the sermon-hunter seems perhaps the lowest. One step higher is the religious tramp, who never stays more than a few months in any church, treating it like a casual ward. This gypsy

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## Things that Endure

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spirit proves in the end as hostile to true holiness as to real usefulness.”

In contrast with this wandering habit is that of the good people who love their own church so much and are so devoted to its work and worship that they are never absent unless ill, or unless some other clear duty calls them away. Such people get the best a Christian church has to give to its faithful members and then give to others the best that they can give.

**The Misuse of the Gift of Speech**

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## CHAPTER XXVII

### The Misuse of the Gift of Speech

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PEECH is one of the noblest endowments of humanity. We are so familiar with its use that we do not appreciate the wonder of it. It is a gift, too, that is capable of measureless development. Now and then, we see or hear a person who has attained something marvellous in the power of expression in speech or in song, as in the eloquence of Demosthenes and the songs of Jenny Lind. But these remarkable achievements are only hints of what is possible in high degree, at least, in every human voice. No doubt there have been countless men and women who never attained any special power, who never became famous as speakers or singers, yet who had the natural gifts and needed only education and training to make them as remarkable as the few whose eloquence or music has thrilled countless hearts. There is a serious misuse



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## Things that Endure

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of the gift of speech, therefore, in the failure to make the most of it.

There is also a misuse of this glorious gift in the matter of speech in the quality of the words which are spoken. The faculty of speech is bestowed upon us not merely as an ornament, but primarily as an instrument with which to do good. It is intended that we shall speak only such words as will help others, giving them pleasure, comfort, or cheer, imparting knowledge and instruction, inspiring in them noble thoughts, gentle feelings, kindly impulses. We never can understand the full measure of the good we may do with our power of speech. Single sentences have lifted lives from despair to hope. Words have saved souls. By a few minutes' talk human destinies have been changed from death to life.

The power of speech is simply incalculable. Think of the words of Jesus, for example, spoken while he went about over the country, and then try to estimate the blessings to the world from their influence. Some one has

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## Misuse of the Gift of Speech

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compared these words to a handful of sweet spices, cast into a bitter sea, to sweeten its waters. The words of Jesus have sweetened and are still sweetening the world's bitterness, wherever they go. No other words have such power as these words, and yet there is not one of us who could not enrich the world and scatter blessings through the words which we drop from our lips, day after day.

Yet how many of us fail to make the most of our gift of speech! How many people there are whose words, instead of giving cheer, encouragement, inspiration, and help, only give pain, start bitter thoughts, or hurt lives! The Bible speaks of the poison of asps as being under men's tongues. With all its marvellous power to give pleasure and good, how often is it that the gift of speech is debased into an instrument of hurt and harm!

Conversation is an index of character. Our words approve us or condemn us. The wisest of all teachers said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." So our speech reveals what is in us, whether good or

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## Things that Endure

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bad. We sometimes see persons whose appearance is attractive. We are much prepossessed in their favor, while we only look at their features. But when they open their mouths and begin to speak, the pleasant illusion vanishes. Perhaps the tones of the voice are enough—they are harsh, or angry, or fretful, or denunciatory. Or the tone may be unobjectionable, and yet the words they speak may be ungentle, bitter, censorious, defamatory. “Thy speech betrayeth thee.”

We judge by one's accent, even in a brief conversation, from what part of the country he comes—from the South, from New England, from the West, or from this or that country over the sea. So we discover in a little while in talking with a stranger what manner of man he is,—refined or unrefined, modest or self-conceited, kindly disposed to people or critical and harsh in judgment.

There is a large class of people whose conversation is almost entirely about their neighbors. If you overhear two of them talking together anywhere, you will find that some

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## Misuse of the Gift of Speech

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other human being is the subject. It is not often, either, that they are saying good and kindly things of the person. In ninety-nine cases in a hundred, it is some fault-finding that you hear, some criticism, perhaps some unsavory gossip which involves the good name of the one who is being talked about.

There is a great deal of disloyalty in conversation. It is too rarely that we hear earnest commendation of others. Even of their most intimate friends people are likely to speak disparagingly when they are absent. If it is always true that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," what shall we say of the sincerity of the friendship which, the moment the friend's back is turned, is unequal to the task of speaking loyally of him, and is ready even to join in depreciatory words concerning him?

In many other ways is the gift of speech misused. The Master says that for every idle word we must give account; yet how many idle, chaffy words are spoken every day! How empty is much of the staple of

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## Things that Endure

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the conversation of the parlor! Then there are countless words which are not idle and empty only, but are full of evil—bitterness, unkindness, and falsehood.

Is it not time that the New Testament teaching should be applied to conversation? “Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor.” “Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear.”

The Danger of Talking too  
Much

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CHAPTER XXVIII

The Danger of Talking too  
Much

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ANY people talk too much. There are scarcely any of us by whom are spoken no words which it were better to have left unspoken. All unkind words belong to this class. We talk too much when we speak angrily, when we say a word that hurts another. Some people seem nearly always to be talking this way. They rarely ever say a generous word of any one or to any one, or a word which gives comfort or help. Their speech is full of uncharitable criticism or fretful complaining. If they spoke only when they had really good words to say, they would be silent much of the time. We talk too much whenever we say anything unkind or anything that needlessly gives pain to a gentle heart.

Another kind of speech that would better not be indulged in is that condemned by our

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## Things that Endure

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Lord when he said that we must give account for every idle word. It need not be a hurtful word—if it is only idle, it is unfit to fall from a Christian's lips. Idle words are those that are empty, empty of love and of good, words of no value. There are many such words spoken. They may appear harmless; and yet they are useless and uselessness always disappoints the Master. They give no comfort, they put no cheer into any heart, they inspire nothing beautiful in any soul. Too much of the conversation of the parlor, of the wayside, of the table, is of this vapid and empty order—talk about merest nothings, inane, without thought, without sense, without beauty, without meaning. How it must astonish the angels to hear immortal beings using their marvellous gift of speech in such a trivial, idle way! We talk too much when we use idle words.

We talk too much when we speak rash words. It was a wise counsel which the town clerk of Ephesus gave to the people, when he said to them: "Ye ought to be quiet, and



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## Talking too Much

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to do nothing rash." No lesson needs to be urged more repeatedly than this. Inconceivable harm comes from rash talking. Many people are rash in giving their opinions on subjects concerning which they really have no knowledge, of which they have never seriously thought. Many are rash in blaming and condemning others, without taking time to inquire into the circumstances, or to hear explanations. Others are rash in giving way to temper and saying words that are not only unseemly, but are also cruel and unjust. In some families, the home life is greatly marred by rash words spoken in the common intercourse of the home. Sometimes it is a habit of contradicting and disputing which has been allowed to grow until it has become inveterate. Usually the questions wrangled over are of no importance. The other day there was a serious dispute over the question whether it was two o'clock or a quarter past two when a certain thing occurred, and the contention caused bitter anger and sharp words. There are families in which gentle and kindly

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speech is the exception—the staple talk is ill-tempered, dictatorial, or unloving. Outside, people dare not speak petulantly or angrily, for their neighbors would resent such language. But in the inner circle of love they remove the restraint, and their words too often cut deep into tender hearts. Though love forgives hasty speech, the wounds remain and bleed. We talk too much when we speak hastily and rashly.

We talk too much, too, when we talk about ourselves. The wisest men scarcely ever speak of themselves. Certainly those who are most highly honored in any community do not. The man who habitually talks about himself and his affairs and his doings declares himself a self-conceited egotist, and this practically neutralizes his influence. The better judgment of good people everywhere approves the man who, if great, is not aware of his own greatness; if a saint, is unconscious of his own saintliness. One of the finest things in the story of Moses is that when he came down from the mountain bathed in

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heavenly radiance, he "wist not that his face shone." If he had been aware of the brightness of his features, the moral glory would have been dimmed. But too many seem to be aware that their faces shine, even though the radiance be not very bright.

It may be set down as a rule, without exception, that the man who talks about himself is talking too much. But who will tell people about our attainments and achievements if we do not? We need not trouble ourselves about that. It is not necessary that people should know how great we are or what good things we do. There is nothing either lovely or Christlike in the desire that the world should know of the fine things we do. On the other hand, our Lord said some very plain things about those who blow trumpets, when they do anything good or fine, to call the world's attention to themselves. Suppose we do our work well; it is no more than it is our duty to do. And are we the only people who have done and are doing their work well?

Talking about one's self is perilous because

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when we begin it we are sure to go on from bad to worse. There is a strange fascination about it. It intoxicates us and lures us on. We would better not begin. It may rob us of the pleasure of saying some things we would like to say, but it is better we should endure the pain of such self-denial and self-restraint rather than incur the danger into which beginning to talk about ourselves would lead us.

## Books Worth While

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## CHAPTER XXIX

### Books Worth While

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MUCH is said in commendation of books. But, as in other matters, there is need for wise discrimination in what one reads. Not all books are worth reading. There are many that are utterly empty of anything that is good or worthy. One might read them continually all one's life and yet be no wiser and no better. A hundred of them do not contain a dozen sentences that it is worth while to keep in one's memory or that can be of any help or cheer or strength in one's life. This is true of many novels. They may excite a passing interest or emotion as they are read, but when they have been laid down they have left in the life no trace of beauty, no inspiration, no visions of loveliness, no impulses toward higher things, no enrichment. The best that can be said of such books is that they are harmless. They could not be in-

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dicted for bad moral quality. They leave no débris of vile rubbish behind. Yet the effect of such reading is really harmful. It vitiates the mental appetite and destroys the taste for anything solid or substantial. It enfeebles the power of attention, thought, memory, so that the mind is less able to grapple with important subjects.

Then there are books which are positively pernicious in their influence. There are all grades and degrees of evil in this class. Some of them carry a subtle poison in their atmosphere which even seems delicious to those who breathe it. We need to keep most careful watch over our hearts that nothing ever shall tarnish their purity. Any corrupt thought, dallied with even for a moment, leaves a stain upon the mind which may never be effaced. It is told how a certain painter could not look upon a revolving object when engaged in his work without seeing the effect of it in the productions of his brush afterward. If we would keep the tender joy of our heart experiences unbroken, we must hold rigid watch

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## Books Worth While

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over our reading, conscientiously excluding not only whatever is obviously impure, but all in which lurks even a suggestion of evil.

A writer says: "Never read a book that is not worth reading for some end beyond the short-lived pleasure of a little excitement. A book is mainly to be judged by the gold dust which it leaves in the mind as it sweeps like a river through its channel. You may get to be like a river bed that is full of the riches of a lifetime, borne to you by the streams from noble lives." Here is a word also from Richter: "The wish falls often warm upon my heart that I may learn nothing here that I cannot continue in the other world, that I may do nothing here but deeds that will bear fruit in heaven."

When we think of the influence which our reading has upon our lives, we see at once the importance of selecting only books that are worth while. At the best, none of us can read one book in a thousand of those which are within our reach. Manifestly this one book ought, then, to be the best in all the thousand.



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Yet many persons make no choice whatever. They take the "last novel," regardless of its character. Many books are made only to sell. They are written, set up in type, electrotyped, printed, illustrated, bound, decorated—all for money. There was no high motive in the writer, no thought of doing good, of starting a new impulse in some life, of adding to the treasure of the world's knowledge or joy. They were made simply to sell. So it comes to pass that every year a flood of really worthless publications is poured over the country. People go into ecstasies over trivial works which please or excite them a day and are then old and forgotten, while books every way admirable are passed by unnoticed.

Young people should read tried and proved books. Many who have not the courage to confess ignorance of the last novel regard it as no shame to be utterly ignorant of the classics. It is quite safe to say that not one person in a hundred now reads Milton's Paradise Lost, and that not one in a thousand has

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## Books Worth While

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ever read a translation of Homer's Iliad. With all our glorifying of Shakespeare, how many really read even his great masterpieces? The Pilgrim's Progress is known to the masses of the people only from being referred to so often. Very few read it. We should get courage to remain ignorant rather of the mass of ephemeral books than to miss reading the great masters in poetry, science, history, religion, and fiction.

No book is really worth reading which does not either impart valuable knowledge or set before us some ideal of beauty, strength, or nobility of character. The ancients were accustomed to place the statues of their distinguished ancestors about their homes, that their children, by continually seeing them, might be stimulated to emulate their noble qualities. Noble lives embalmed in printed volumes have a wondrous power to kindle the hearts of the young, for, as a writer says, "A good book holds as in a vial the purest efficacy and instruction of the living intellect that bred it." There are great books enough

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to occupy us during all our short and busy years. If we are wise, we will resolutely avoid all but the richest and the best.

“We need to be reminded every day,” writes one, “how many are the books of unapproachable glory, which, with all our eagerness after reading, we have never taken in our hand. It will astonish most of us to find how much of our industry is given to the books which leave no mark—how we rake in the litter of the printing press, while a crown of gold and rubies is offered us in vain.”

**A Talk about Temper**

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## CHAPTER XXX

### A Talk about Temper

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YOU are a Christian. You have confessed Christ before the world. You say Christ is the dearest Friend you have. You say he is the noblest in his character, the fairest in his beauty, the sweetest in his spirit, the gentlest in his disposition, the richest in his beauty, of all things in the universe. But the people about you, the world's people, those who do not know him, have no thought of his beauty. They have not seen him as you have. And you want them to see him as he appears to you, for you want them to love him and trust him and follow him. Now have you thought that about the only way you can show others the beauty of your friend Jesus Christ is in your own life? When astronomers want to let you look at some wonderful star through a great telescope, they have you put your eye to an aperture where you see

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## Things that Endure

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the star in a mirror, brought down close to you. People cannot see Jesus, up in his glory; but you are a little mirror in which his beauty is reflected. He shines in your heart, and then your neighbors look at you and see his image in you, as the astronomer sees the image of the star in his reflecting glass.

Surely bad-tempered Christians do not think how repulsive their bad temper appears in the eyes of others, or they would spare no pains to cure themselves of the fault which so mars their character. Cannot some one invent a looking-glass in which men and women can look at their souls, so as to learn what beings they make of themselves when they allow their old evil nature to show itself in fits of anger, irritability, quarrelsomeness, sulkiness and other moods of unamiability?

Surely if we love Christ truly we will not allow ourselves to continue to do him dishonor in life so unworthy of his dear name. We ought to dread giving any false representation of our Lord, and to strive in all our life

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to show his gentle love. Whatever we may do for Christ, in gifts to his cause or work in his service, if we fail to live out his life of sweet patience and forbearance, we fail in an essential part of our duty as Christians.

Now we come to the most important matter. How can we cure our bad tempers? Or can they be cured at all? Bad temper is not to be regarded as a mere unfortunate infirmity, over which we may weep bitter tears of sorrow, but which we cannot help. It must be regarded in its true light, as a grievous sin, part of the old bad nature, which is not to be condoned nor allowed to stay in the new life, but which must be cast out. It is just as essential in a Christian life that one become amiable and sweet-tempered, as that one become truthful, honest, pure, just. If a man who has been in the habit of lying, is converted and becomes a Christian, you expect him to put away lying and speak truth. If he has been dishonest, you expect him to become honest. So if he has been bad-tempered he ought to be expected to become

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good-tempered. Here is what St. Paul says about it: "Put ye also away all these: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth. . . . Put on . . . as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye." Bad temper is just as unchristian as lying or stealing and we are to strive just as earnestly to get rid of it.

No doubt the lesson of good temper is a hard one to learn, one that cannot be learned in a day; nevertheless it is one that we must set ourselves to learn at whatever cost, if we would be worthy disciples of our Lord, worthy children of our Father. It is a lesson, too, that can be learned. Mr. Ruskin says: "Many mighty harmonies have been discoursed by instruments that have been dumb or discordant, but that God knew their stops." This is very true. There are many human lives that are like instruments with



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## A Talk about Temper

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jangled strings and most discordant keys. None but God could ever have made any music at all on them. But he has taken them in hand, has repaired the broken strings and put the keys in tune, and then sweet music has breathed from them.

There are some who say, "I never can live a truly sweet and gentle life. My temper is quick and my tongue is sharp, and I cannot control either my temper or my tongue. I want to be always kindly and loving—but I cannot." True, so far as you yourself are concerned, but God can take the poor jangled chords and put them all in tune. You remember that sweet word in the Psalm—"He restoreth my soul." You know what "restore" means; it is taking the broken instrument, all out of tune, giving out only harsh discords when any fingers touch the keys, and putting it in perfect repair, so that it yields the sweet music it was first made to yield. "He restoreth my soul." That is, the worst tempered people may be made gentle and loving in all speech, act and disposi-

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## Things that Endure

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tion, by the renewing and transforming power of divine grace. God can take the jangled keys and put them in tune, if we will but put them into his hand.

But we have something to do ourselves in this work. God does not take out the old nature and put in a new one, as a watchmaker might replace the worn-out works in your watch with new works. He works *in* us and *through* us. He shows us the pattern that he wants us to reach. Then he puts into our hearts the desire to be like the pattern. Then as we strive to become like it, he helps us. But we must strive ourselves to be sweet-tempered. We must watch the rising anger and choke it back. We must keep down the ugly dispositions. We must learn to control ourselves, our tempers, our feelings, our passions, our tongues. We must seek to develop the gentle things and crowd out the nettles.

You have a little garden spot beside your house. The natural growths for that patch of soil in the spring days are weeds. Just let it alone and it will soon be filled with rank

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## A Talk about Temper

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noxious weeds. But unless you are a very indolent gardener you will not let it alone. You will dig out the weeds and by the summer days you will have your little garden filled with lovely flowers. Your heart is a patch of garden-soil. Naturally there grow in it weeds, nettles, briars, thorns. But do you intend to let it yield nothing better than these noxious growths? I hope not. It is your business to cultivate that bit of garden, to dig out the weeds and nettles and briars, and to have sweet flowers blooming there. Do not blame your religion for your ugly tempers; your religion will do its part if you will do yours. But religion is not intended to save us from effort, from striving, from struggle. Religion binds us to God and insures us God's help; but we must help too. We must fight against the ugly tempers; we must put on the beautiful gentleness, patience, meekness, and kindness of Christ's own life. We must very earnestly try to be Christlike.

Let us not forget that we have but such a little time to be together, and that the things

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## Things that Endure

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in others that vex and try us so will seem very small when we stand by the coffins of our friends. Surely, too, the memory of our surly tempers and our irritable feelings and our sharp words will give us added pain when all we have left of our dear ones shall be their cold clay or their new-made graves. Let us be earnest, friends, in our effort to put off our bad tempers and be like our Master.

The Advantage of Keeping One's  
Temper

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CHAPTER XXXI

The Advantage of Keeping One's  
Temper

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OME people will scarcely admit that bad temper is sinful. They call it an infirmity, and apologize for it or seek to excuse it on the ground that they cannot help it. This, however, is a too self-indulgent view. Bad temper is sinful. It is an infirmity which even charity is not a wide enough cloak to cover. Or if we do have patience with it in others we have no right to condone it in ourselves.

It is a miserable fault and one to which we should never consent to give hospitality. It grieves God. It hurts our friends. It is one of the unseemly things which St. Paul tells us love does not do; one of the childish things which we ought to put away when we become men.

It may be well to look at bad temper from its practical side. There are advantages in

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good temper which should commend it to every one who desires to get the best out of life.

For example, there is one's standing among one's fellows. We all like to have others think that we are at least fairly good. One has reached a rather low depth of degeneracy when he really cares no longer what people think of his character. There are many who have not the fear of God before their eyes who are dominated in their conduct, at least in external ways, by the fear of men. It certainly is an advantage to have people think one sweet-tempered, and in order to have such a reputation, where one is intimately known, one must have at least fair measure of control of one's feelings and words. Good temper is a quality which cannot well be simulated. One cannot always time the outbursts of an un-governed spirit so that nobody will know of them. It would seem, therefore, to be worth while to acquire self-mastery and to discipline one's self into reasonably good temper, if for nothing else, in order that one may be well

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## Keeping One's Temper

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spoken of among one's fellows and daily associates.

Another advantage of keeping good temper is in the comfort it gives to one's self. We are always ashamed of ourselves when we have given way to anger and have spoken or acted in an unseemly fashion. A bit of bad temper in the morning spoils the whole day for us. We do not feel like looking any one in the face for hours afterward. It leaves a sort of moral or spiritual malaria in our blood which casts a miserable hue over all fair and lovely things. We can scarcely even pray after a fit of bad temper, certainly not till we have passed through a season of penitence and have wooed back again the grieved Spirit of God and the sweet peace which this holy Guest alone can restore.

Certainly the cost of uncontrolled temper is too great to be indulged in by any one who loves happiness. It brings too much self-reproach. It darkens too many hours. It takes too much out of life. It is well worth while to learn to control one's spirit if only



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for the sake of the peace it keeps in one's heart.

Good temper also plays a very important part in friendship. A bad-tempered man cannot make close friends, neither can he keep the friends he has made. Love is very patient. It beareth all things. It covereth a multitude of sins. But even love cannot grow to its sweetest and best if it is subjected continually to violent outbursts of anger and to harshness and bitterness of speech. Not many people care to expose themselves to such humiliating experiences for the sake of continuing a friendship. The home loved ones are almost the only ones whose friendship is equal to such sore testing.

If a man is to have friends with whom he can enter into close and familiar relations and whose friendship he can hold securely through the years, he must be friendly himself; he must at least refrain from words and acts and moods which would pain the hearts of those whose love he would cherish. We must be prepared to give as we would receive. Only

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## Keeping One's Temper

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gentleness will draw out gentleness. Only thoughtfulness and honor will win thoughtfulness and honor in return. No man can know much of the sacredness of friendship who has not achieved such self-mastery as will enable him always to be sweet-tempered and kindly in act and speech.

Good temper is an essential quality in all true manliness. No doubt there are those who think that to be a man one must be ready to strike back at every offense, to resent every insult, to resist every wrong, to stand up for one's rights at whatever cost. But is that Christian manliness? Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek." He himself illustrated his own beatitude. "When he was reviled, (he) reviled not again; when he suffered, (he) threatened not." He never lost his temper. Christlike manhood is not the world's type, but it pleases heaven. The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians certainly sets a copy which it is not easy to follow, but when one has mastered it one is living the noblest life possible in this world.

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Is it not worth while to strive to attain "whatsoever things are lovely" in manly spirit and character? It may not be easy to do it. It may be easier to let our natural feelings have sway, but we should be willing to deny ourselves the indulgence of temper in order to grow into noble strength of character.

These are suggestions of the advantages of gaining self-control. We have the highest authority for saying that he who ruleth his own spirit is greater than he who taketh a city. The victory is not an impossible one. With the help of Christ we may win it, and in winning it take our place in the ranks of the noble and worthy.

## The Grace of Being Obliging

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## CHAPTER XXXII

### The Grace of Being Obliging

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HERE is a great difference in people in the matter of obligingness. Some are always ready to do a good turn, to be of service, to be accommodating. Others are always wanting in this grace. They never show a disposition to confer a favor, to do a kindness, to go out of their way in the slightest degree to be helpful to any one.

Obligingness is a Christian grace. It is one of the manifestations of love. It belongs, therefore, among the essential qualities of a beautiful life. Perhaps one may be a Christian and be disobliging, just as one may be disagreeable or discontented or fretful or ungentle, and yet be a Christian. We may not say at how many points one may be wanting in beauty of character and yet be a Christian. Christ sets a very high standard for his followers, but he is very patient with be-

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ginners, in the stumbling of their early steps. A disciple is a pupil, and a pupil may enter school at the lowest grade. They are pupils when they first enter, though it may be years before they have completed their course.

Hence one may lack altogether the quality of obligingness when one begins the Christian life, but this is one of the lessons that must be taken up at once, one of the graces in which we must grow from the first. Love cannot be disobliging. Love is kind. Love seeketh not its own. The very central quality in love is the desire to serve. If we have the love of Christ in our heart we will wish to be helpful to every human being we meet or see—this will be our attitude toward all. This feeling will lead us to accept every opportunity to be useful, not only in cases of great need, when large service may be required, but also when only some simple, common kindness is called for.

The training of one's self in obligingness is, therefore, an important part of Christian culture. It is easy to allow selfishness to hold

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## The Grace of Being Obliging

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back the hand from kindness. "Every man for himself" is one of the world's maxims, and it is easy to become so absorbed in thinking of one's self and one's own affairs, that the heart shall grow cold toward all others.

But selfishness is always most unlovely and most un-Christlike. The only beautiful life is one that love inspires and controls. The Christian rule is, "Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others." This does not mean that we shall meddle in other people's affairs. There is another spiritual injunction which puts the meddler in other men's matters in the same black list with the murderer, the thief, and the evil-doer. One of the last things a Christian should consent to be is a busybody. The way Christians are to look at the things of others is in interest, sympathy, and helpfulness, ready always to lend a hand, to do anything in their power to lighten a burden or help along.

Obligingness is a good word. When we say that a man is of an obliging disposition,

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we mean that he is always ready to do what he can to assist others. If we are in some trouble, he comes with his kindly help. If we are carrying a heavy load, he offers to share it. If we need assistance, in any way, he is eager to give it.

There is a great deal of this obliging spirit among the poor. The rich are more independent of each other, for they have in themselves nearly all they need, so that there is not the same necessity for mutual help that there is among the poor. Consequently, even when the relations are entirely friendly, there is less opportunity among the wealthy for rendering helpful services. But the poor, having fewer resources of their own, need more the kindly aid of each other, and the need draws out the practical ministry. In many instances, the relations between neighbors among the poor are very beautiful indeed. They share with each other what they have of conveniences and comforts. When there is sickness in a home all the families near by make the troubles their own. The



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## The Grace of Being Obliging

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women help each other in nursing. When there is sorrow, the whole little community sympathizes not in a sentimental way, merely, but in most practical ways. If disaster comes to one household, all the others contribute their part in seeking to repair the loss.

We all have it in our power to do a great deal for the comfort of others simply by striving always to be obliging. It usually does not require much self-denial nor involve the giving of large gifts—what is wanted is only the warmth of heart that will make us quick to see needs and ways of helping, and then the readiness to do the little services, to show the common kindnesses. It may be to give a classmate a start with his lessons when he cannot quite master them himself, or to lend a boy or girl the book you have greatly enjoyed, or to help a friend with his work when you have leisure and he is a little behind.

The ways of being obliging are numberless. If only we have the spirit and are ready to put ourselves out a little or to give up some

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## Things that Endure

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comfort or ease to help another, we shall find plenty of opportunities. The lesson is worth learning, too. It makes us far more useful. An obliging person brightens the way for many others. He makes life easier for every one he meets. It is a great thing to have a genius for helping others. When we begin to get this beautiful grace into our life we have begun to be like the Master.

# What to Do with Our Money

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## CHAPTER XXXIII

### What to Do with Our Money

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UR money may destroy us. The love of money is the root of all evil. There is a way of using money which makes it a curse.

But there is a way of using money which makes it a blessing. Christ told of this when he said, "Make for yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth." That is, there is a way of using our money by which we shall lay it up in heaven. This is a wonderful revelation—that we can take our riches with us into the other world; or rather, that we can bank our possessions in heaven, as we go through this world, send our money on in advance, so that when we reach there we shall find all our treasures laid up waiting for us.

In one of our Lord's parables—that of

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## Things that Endure

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the rich man and Lazarus—we are told of a man who had not learned the secret. On earth the rich man lived in luxury and splendor. He was dressed in purple and fine linen. He fared sumptuously every day. That was one scene. But the rich man died. Wealth cannot bribe death. No palace walls can shut out the messenger whom God sends for a man's soul. The rich man died and was buried. But that was not the end. The veil is lifted, and we see him in the other world—rich? Oh, no; in torments. He is beggared now. He has no sumptuous banquets. He wears no fine linen. He has no honor. We hear him craving Abraham to send Lazarus—who once lay, a beggar, unhelped, at his gates—that he might dip the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue, to ease his torment. This man had missed the secret of laying up treasure in heaven. He has treasured up only sorrow for himself. This man teaches us how *not* to use our money on the earth. He lived only for himself, to accumulate and to spend in enjoy-

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## What to Do with Our Money

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ments and luxuries for his own selfish gratification.

I fear there are too many men in these prosperous days who are making the same mistake that Dives made. We are not told that he got his money dishonestly. There was no taint of fraud or embezzlement on it. So far as we knew, it was not amassed through oppression of the poor, through robbing of laborers. The man's sin lay in the use he made of his money.

And it was not used in wicked schemes of any kind. Dives was a highly respected gentleman, a prosperous citizen. He spent money freely among the merchants and the tradespeople. He was popular in the city. He was probably a good Pharisee, orthodox and religious. There was no taint on his character. He was honorable in his business and just in all his dealings with his fellow-men.

What was wrong with Dives? Why is he shown to us in torment beyond the gate of death? So far as we know it was all because he did not use his money in the right way.

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## Things that Endure

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That is, he used it only for himself. He did not use it for God. He did not use it to bless his fellow-men. He used it only for his own gratification. He spent it for luxuries in dress and for luxuries on his table. The beggar lay by his gate unfed, unhelped. Human misery surged by his doors without receiving any pity. Are there not many men in every community who are living just as Dives did? Honest, honorable, respected, with no taint on their business, but living only for themselves—what sequel to their earthly life can they hope for, different from that of Dives? It is not enough that money be gotten honestly; after it has been obtained in the most righteous way it may be so used as to destroy the soul of its possessor. Nor is it only dishonest or wicked using of it that brings down a curse. It is enough that it is spent only for self and for selfish gratification.

It is a serious thing to have money—even a little of it. It brings weighty responsibility to him who has it. It is a talent entrusted

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## What to Do with Our Money

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to us by God, and like all other talents, it must be used and then accounted for.

Then the practical question for us is, "How shall we use Christ's trust-funds?" How would he use the money himself, if he were in our place, and were to spend it? Part of it he would use in providing for his own wants. He would have us receive food and raiment. Nor does he condemn business energy. Money-making is not sinful. There is no sin in growing rich, provided a man does it as Christ's trustee and for Christ. Only he must keep his own name off it. He must not say "my fruits," "my store," "my bonds," "my gains." We must learn to leave the "I" out of our speech. We must learn the lesson of self-effacement. We must do all for Christ. We are only trustees for Christ.

It is when we have learned to handle our money as a trustee for Christ that we have gained the secret of laying up treasure in heaven. All that we truly use for Christ we lay up in purses that will not wax old. The



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## Things that Endure

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only safety when one is always getting is also to be always giving. Giving is living. The pool that has no outlet stagnates and breeds death. The stream that ever flows lives and keeps pure and sweet. Giving is living; hoarding is dying.

In India they tell the story of the golden palace. Sultan Ahmed was a great king. He sent Yakoob, the most skilful of his builders, with large sums of money, to erect in the mountains of snow the most splendid palace ever seen. Yakoob went to the place, and found a great famine among the people, and many of them dying. He took all his own money, and the money given him by the king for the building of the palace, and gave it to feed the starving people.

Ahmed came at length to see his palace, but he saw none. He sent for Yakoob and learned his story, but was very angry and cast him into prison. "To-morrow thou shalt die," he said, "for thou hast robbed the king." But that night Ahmed had a dream. There came to him one who said: "Follow me." Up from

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## What to Do with Our Money

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the earth they soared, until they were at heaven's gate. They entered, and lo! there stood a palace of pure gold, more brilliant than the sun, and vaster far than any palace of earth.

"What palace is this?" asked Ahmed, and his guide answered, "This is the palace of merciful deeds, built for thee, by Yakoob the wise. Its glory shall endure when all earth's things have passed away." Then the king understood that Yakoob had done most wisely with his money.

The story has its lesson of truth. The money spent in doing Christ's work in this world is laid up in heaven. It may seem to be thrown away, but while it piles up no temple, no monument, on the earth, it builds its palace beyond the skies.

## What to Do with Our Hands

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## CHAPTER XXXIV

### What to Do with Our Hands

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IN the lives of most young people there is a period when they have great trouble in knowing what to do with their hands. Indeed there are a great many people who never learn what to do with their hands. They may overcome their awkwardness and grow out of their self-consciousness; but they never realize the possibilities that are folded up in their hands.

Man is the only animal that has hands. Hence the hand is one of the marks of man's superiority. With his hands he conquers nature, and does the things which distinguish him among God's creatures. With his hands he cultivates the soil, fells the trees, tunnels the mountains, builds cities, constructs machines, belts the globe with iron rails, navigates the sea, and turns the wheel of industry. It is the hand, too, which gives form and reality to the dreams and visions of the

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## Things that Endure

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brain and soul. With his hand the thinker puts his thoughts into written words to become a power in the world. With his hand the poet weaves into graceful lines the inspirations of his muse. With his hand the musician interprets on his instrument the marvellous harmonies which move and stir men's hearts to their depths. With his hand the artist puts on his canvas the wonderful creations of his genius which immortalize his name and become part of the world's heritage of beauty.

The story of a hand is the whole story of a life. Hawthorne, when he saw the marble image of an infant's hand, said that it ought to be kept until the infant had grown to womanhood and then to old age; until her hand had felt the pressure of affection and returned it; until it had worn the wedding ring; until it had nursed babies and buried them; until it had gathered the flowers of earth's pleasure and been pierced by the thorns; until it had wrought its part in the world's work; until it had grown old, wrin-

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## What to Do with Our Hands

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kled, and faded, and had been folded on the bosom in death's repose; and that then another cast of it in marble ought to be made, when the two hands, lying side by side, would tell the story of the life.

It is interesting to look at a baby's hand and try to read its prophecy. Perhaps sleeping in the little fingers there is music which some day may thrill men's souls; or pictures which by and by will be made to live on the canvas, or poems whose lines will sometimes breathe inspirations for many lives. At least, there must be folded up in the baby's chubby fingers possibilities of countless beautiful things which should take form as the hands learn to do their allotted task work.

Our hands have to be trained. The skill that sleeps in them must be brought out by education and practice. No doubt God has put into many fingers music which never has been drawn out, pictures which never have been painted upon canvas, beauty which never has charmed men's eyes, and noble deeds which never have been wrought into acts. It

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## Things that Endure

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is our part to find the possibilities in our hands and develop them.

We should train our hands to do all their work carefully and thoroughly. Even the smallest things, though they seem insignificant, we should do as well as we can. Thus God works. The most minute animalculæ, millions of which are said to swim in a drop of water, are as perfect in all their functions as are the largest of the creatures. We do not know what is small and what is great in this world. Little things may be seeds of future great things. We should train our hands, therefore, to do all their work faultlessly. It is a shame to do anything in a slovenly way, even to work negligently, to slight what we are set to do, to hurry through our tasks, marring the workmanship that we ought to fashion just as carefully, though it be but the writing of a postal card, the dusting of a room, or the building of a coal-shed, as if it were the painting of a great picture, the furnishing of a palace, or the building of a cathedral.

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## What to Do with Our Hands

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“Though thou have time  
For but a line, be that sublime,—  
Not failure, but low aim, is crime.”

Our hands should also be ready always for their tasks. For a time the child does not find anything to do but to play. Soon, however, it begins to discover duties. Youth is full of bright dreams. We are apt to think of life at first as only pleasure. But soon we learn its more serious aspect, and find that every moment has its task. It has burdens to carry, crosses to bear, trials to endure, and our hands should never fail to do their part.

“Life is a burden: bear it;  
Life is a duty: do it;  
Life is a thorn-crown: wear it.  
Though it break your heart in twain,  
Though the burden crush you down,  
Close your lips and hide your pain:  
First the cross, and then the crown.”

Some people go through life and keep their hands white, unroughened, unworn, but at the end they may find that they have failed altogether in the true object of living. When an army comes home from victorious war, it is



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## Things that Endure

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not the regiment with the full ranks of unscarred men that the people cheer most loudly, but the regiment with only a remnant of soldiers and these bearing the marks of many a battle. Hands scarred in conflicts with life's enemies are more beautiful when held up before God, than hands white and soft, covered with flashing jewels.

## Some Indirect Ways of Lying

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## CHAPTER XXXV

### Some Indirect Ways of Lying

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HERE are many forms of untruthfulness. One may lie by a tone of voice, or by an emphasis, so playing with the words he uses as to make them give an impression altogether different from that which the same words would give if written or printed. It is said that figures do not lie, but figures are oftentimes so arranged that they do lie egregiously. Some one has been attempting a sort of classification and says that there are three kinds of lies—white lies, black lies, and statistics.

The essence of a lie is in the intention which the person wishes others to take from what he says or does. He may juggle with words as he pleases and claim that he is perfectly truthful; but if he has intentionally left a wrong impression upon those to whom he has been speaking, he has lied.

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## Things that Endure

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One too common form of lying is exaggeration. The narrator tells the truth, but tells more than the truth. He clothes his commonplace statements in such elaborate drapery that they are scarcely recognizable. Plain prose becomes fascinating poetry as it flows from his unctuous lips. It is perilous for people with more imagination than conscience, to allow themselves even the smallest license in the way of exaggeration. Men have been known to become such slaves to the power of exaggeration, that they could not relate the simplest fact truthfully. If something has happened twice they will report it as having happened ten times. If three men were hurt in an accident, the three will become a dozen when these exaggerators tell it. They always use superlative adjectives.

A special phase of exaggeration is that in which things are colored by the self-conceit of the narrator. He sees everything as related to himself and as affected by his opinion of his own importance. The result is that all the attainments and achievements of others

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## Some Indirect Ways of Lying

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are seen by him through diminishing lenses, while all that he himself does is looked at through magnifying glasses.

The vagaries of self-conceit in this direction are almost incredible. The writer knew a young man who seemed honestly to think that he immeasurably surpassed all other men in knowledge, in wisdom, in experience, in genius. He talked glibly of the greatest men, and was ready, without a suggestion of humility, to criticize and disparage them. Judging from his freedom in speaking of men, and their abilities, there was not a position anywhere in the land which he could not have filled far better than it was filled by its present incumbent.

Another peculiarity of this man's self-conceit was that he would always surpass, out of the depository of his own vast personal experience, any feat or achievement that any other person might recount. If you would tell him of being once in Bombay, and begin to mention some persons or some things you saw there, he would listen a little while and

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## Things that Endure

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would then tell you of his visit to Bombay and the peculiar opportunities he had of seeing remarkable things there, through his intimacy with some notable man, some one connected with the Government. If you referred to a visit to Egypt, he would let you tell your story and then would begin to talk of his winter spent in Cairo, when he was guest of some prominent citizen, and when he was permitted to see many things which ordinary tourists were never allowed to see. If you told of seeing Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons, he would supplement your opinion and information by giving an account of the visit he once made to the home of the great Premier, when he was cordially welcomed to the hospitality of the family, and was induced to spend several days at Hawarden. The only basis for either of these distinguished achievements was a luxuriant fancy, inspired by conscienceless self-conceit, since the young man had never even crossed the ocean, and of course had never in his life seen either Bombay, Cairo, or Hawarden.

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## Some Indirect Ways of Lying

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The same tendency led this young man so to misrepresent what others said to him as really to misrepresent them and practically falsify their words. Especially was this the case when the conversation had reference to some other matter in which he himself was concerned. For example, he called one day on a prominent gentleman and sought an interview, when he laid before him a scheme in which he very much desired this gentleman's aid. At least he hoped for a strong endorsement and for practical encouragement. He reported to his friends that he had been most cordially received, that this busy man had given him nearly two hours of his valuable time in the middle of a morning, that he had listened to him interestedly, asking him many questions concerning the enterprise, that he showed remarkable familiarity with the scheme, regarding it as wise and hopeful, and that he was ready to identify himself with it, backing it up, no doubt—although he had not actually subscribed,—by a large amount of money. When this gentleman was told what

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## Things that Endure

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his interviewer was reporting, he replied that the story was absolutely false. He remembered receiving the young man's card one morning and admitting him to his office, where he listened for fifteen minutes to what he had to say. Then his only reply was, as he ended the conversation, that he would think the matter over.

Just what the psychological processes in the young man's mind were it is difficult to say. The charitable view is that he thought he had made a profound impression upon the gentleman's mind, and that he really believed that the statements he had made regarding his attention and readiness to join in the enterprise were true. It is scarcely to be supposed that he deliberately lied. His self-conceit had played a trick on his own conscience.



## Putting away Childish Things

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## CHAPTER XXXVI

### Putting away Childish Things

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HERE is a wide difference between childlikeness and childishness. Childlikeness is commended as very beautiful in life and disposition. The Master exhorted his disciples to become as little children, and said that until they would do so, they could not enter the kingdom of heaven. The finest things in character are childlike things,—humility, simplicity, trustfulness, the absence of scheming and ambition, guilelessness.

But childishness is something altogether different. It is something to get as far as possible away from, and not something to cultivate. It is one of the things we are to put off and leave behind as we grow into the strength and beauty of mature manhood. Instead of being noble, the mark of rank and greatness in spiritual life, it is the sign of weakness, of puerility.

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## Things that Endure

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Childishness in a child may be endured. "He is only a child," we say of one of infant years, in apology for actions and ways which are not beautiful. But when these childish things appear in one who has come to manhood in years, we find no excuse for them. When we are children, we speak as children, we feel as children, we act as children, but when we become men we should put away childish things.

Yet there are too many people who keep their childish ways after they are grown up. For example, pouting is not uncommon in quite young children. Something disappoints them, and they turn away in sullen mood, thrusting out their lips and refusing to speak to any one or to take part in what their companions are doing. It is no wonder the other children in a party jeer such puerile behavior in one of their number, crying at them, "Pouty!" "Baby calf!" "Cry baby!" or other taunting epithets. The lesson of good-naturedly bearing slights, hurts, or defeats, usually has to be learned by experience, and

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## Putting away Childish Things

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the lesson is long ; it need not be wondered at, therefore, if very young children are sometimes slow in mastering their sensitiveness in this regard.

But every now and then—and not so rarely, either—we find full-grown people who have not got beyond the pouting phase. They are very genial and happy in their relations with others while nothing occurs to impinge upon their self-esteem. But the moment any one seems to slight them, or when one appears to treat them unkindly, or when some scheme or proposal of theirs is set aside, instantly go out the lips in a childish pout, down come the brows in a bad-tempered frown, and the offended person goes off in a fit of babyish sulks.

This spectacle is not uncommon among young people in their relations with each other. There are some who demand absolute and exclusive monopoly in their friendships. They are ardent in their devotion to the young person on whom they fasten their affection, but that person must become wholly

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## Things that Endure

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theirs, scarcely treating any other one respectfully, certainly showing no cordiality toward any one. If the object of their attachment fails to be thus "loyal," the doting friend pouts and sulks and whimpers, "You don't care for me any more." All envies and jealousies belong in the same class of childish things, which are not only unlovely, but are also utterly unchristian.

Not infrequently is this childish spirit manifested in societies and associations, where members are chosen to official places or appointed on committees, or shown other honors. There are apt always to be some among the number who keep in the best kind of mood when they are filling any position of honor or authority, but who cannot come down gracefully from the official rostrum. The descent from any elevated position to the level of common membership is too much for their stock of magnanimity. They act as if they felt that they should be continued in office indefinitely, and when some other one is chosen in turn to wear the honor which they have worn for a

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## Putting away Childish Things

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term, they take it as a personal matter and feel aggrieved. Sometimes they display their hurt feelings publicly; sometimes they say nothing, but go about afterward with a martyrlike air, as if they were patiently enduring a wrong or injury. In either case, they probably do not take an active part thereafter in the work of the organization, pouting, sometimes, the rest of their days.

These are only illustrations of a most unhappy spirit that is much too common in the world. We all know how such conduct mars the beauty of manliness. Nothing is a better test of character and disposition than the way one meets defeat or bears injury. "Blessed are the meek," is a great deal more human beatitude than we are wont to think. Commendation is sweet, but we show a pitiable weakness if we keep sweet only when people are saying complimentary things to us or of us, and then get discouraged and out of sorts when the adulation does not come. There is a good teaching which counsels us to prefer others in honor, and when

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## Things that Endure

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a young man has had a term as an officer or a committee chairman in his society, he ought to be delighted to yield the place to another, and should go back into the ranks with the best of cheerfulness, to work more earnestly and beautifully than ever in the unofficial place.

Let us put away childish things forever. Let the young people begin to do so very early. If you find the slightest disposition in yourself to pout or sulk or be envious or jealous, or to play the baby in any way, you have a splendid chance to do a Christlike thing. Will you do it?

## Remember the Day



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## CHAPTER XXXVII

### Remember the Way

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HERE is a Scriptural exhortation which bids us remember all the ways by which the Lord has led us. This exhortation is always timely, but at the close of a year it has special timeliness.

Memory is a wonderful faculty. If we did not remember, our past would mean nothing to us. All the beautiful things we see, the noble or inspiring words we hear, the gentle emotions we experience, would pass and leave no trace behind. We should learn nothing as we go through life. But memory holds and treasures up for us all that the day brings to us. Thus it enriches us in mind and heart and makes our life like a river, widening and deepening as it flows.

It is God's leading that we are especially exhorted to remember—the way by which he has led us. Has God truly led us all the year?

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## Things that Endure

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It is unquestionably our privilege to have the divine guidance at every point, but whether we have it or not depends largely upon ourselves. God does not force himself upon us even in his love for us. Christ came unto his own, and his own received him not. We may refuse to be led, insist upon going as we wish, turning every one to his own way. If trouble or misfortune come to us through our own wilfulness and waywardness we cannot charge it upon God.

But if we are submissive to God, if we accept his will, and, laying our hand in his, quietly go as he guides us, then we shall have the divine leading in all our life. This means that God will order our steps day by day, giving us our work, unrolling to us the chart of our life in little sections as we go on. Sometimes the way he leads is easy and pleasant, just the way we would have chosen for ourselves. Sometimes, however, it is hard and painful, not the path on which we would have gone. Still we know that all the way the Lord our God has led us is a good way, how-

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## Remember the Way

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ever full of disappointments and trials the way may have been to us. Nothing was more beautiful in the death of President McKinley than the spirit in which he laid all in God's hands when it became evident that he must lay down his work and leave this world. "It is God's way. His will be done, not ours." Thus always Christian faith should meet even the keenest disappointments, taking God's way with confidence and joy, knowing that it is best.

When we are called to remember all the way by which the Lord hath led us, it is intended that we should think of the goodness and mercy of the way, and of all that God has done for us. We are too apt to forget. Many of us have an unfailing memory for the unpleasant things, for the losses, the sorrows, the difficulties of the way, while we are most forgetful of the love that attends us every step. Murmuring seems more natural and more easy to many people than gratitude. They will take blessings, common and uncommon, from God as they come in continu-

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## Things that Endure

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ous flow through the years, with scarcely a thought of praise or an emotion of thanksgiving. But the moment there is a break in the current of pleasant things they cry out in complaint. There are people who never see the lovely things in nature. They walk through scenes of inimitable beauty in garden and field and see nothing to admire, experience no emotion of pleasure. So there are those who live three score years and ten amid manifestations of divine love, yet never get a glimpse of God's face.

“Earth's crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God;  
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;  
The rest sit round it, and pluck black-  
berries.”

God has been in all this year's life. We should look over the story now at the close to find the tokens of his love. As we fold up the volume to lay it away among the books to be opened on the judgment day we should write upon it “*Laus Deo.*”