

GREATNESS OF LITTLE THINGS

by Charles R. Morrison

Morrison's theological exploration of how God values seemingly small and insignificant actions, using Zechariah 4:10 to demonstrate that faithfulness in little things is highly esteemed in God's economy.

10 Chapters

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00 Greatness of Little Things

Greatness of Little Things

Charles Robert Morrison, 1905

INTRODUCTION

By L.R. Meyer

History is full of the overwhelming importance of little things. They are the hinges upon which turn doors of opportunity and destiny. Turning points in the lives of men and nations are generally the ordinary everyday and commonplace events and things of life.

It was a little thing that detained the young Lincoln a minute on the streets of New Orleans where he saw a slave market. "If I ever get a chance to hit that thing, I'll hit it hard," he said--and there was a great war and four million human beings were emancipated.

It was a little moment--the one in which Luther arose from his knees, after toiling painfully up the sacred stairway in Rome, saying, "The just shall live by faith!" But from that moment he walked down to a soul-enslaved people, and the Reformation began. A little child was born and laid in a manger, in a little Judean town--and the whole world swung toward the light.

It is God's plan to use little things, in the creation of greatness.

1. Little Things that Make for Destiny
2. Little Things that Make for Character
3. Little Things that Make for Happiness
4. Little Things that Make for Wealth
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7. Possibility of Good from Things Apparently Evil
8. Possibility of Evil from Things Apparently Good
9. Lessons Learned Too Late

1. Little Things that Make for DESTINY

1. Little Things that Make for DESTINY "Who has despised the day of small things?" Zechariah 4:10 The question of comparative values is an important one. How to estimate properly the worth or service of one event in comparison with another, how to form a just judgment of the relation of one truth or fact to another--cannot be permanently determined.

Values change with the changes of time and circumstances and conditions. That which was adjusted yesterday, in the scale of relative importance--may tomorrow rise in value or become of little worth. Hence, he is reckless who undertakes to classify in order all the events or forces of human life, despising the one and exalting the other according to his judgment, finite and limited as it is. The possibilities of good or of evil in any act or person cannot be ascertained by other than God Himself. The far-reaching influence of a word or a deed is limited by the horizon of the finite one, while great expectations have been subjected to sore disappointment. That which cost time and thought and treasure, that which occupied the attention of a nation and stirred into activity--may have soon subsided and assumed its proper place in history as only a ripple on the placid sea of human interest. But what momentous events have been recorded whose beginnings could scarcely be traced, so insignificant were they! History is crowded with facts illustrative of this truth.

Scientific discoveries are due largely to simple hints, which to an unobservant mind would never have been heeded. As the whole realm of nature, of mental activity, passes in review before us, how large do "small things" appear!

If, then, these little things with which we have to do conceal within them such possibilities--is it not wise for us to reconsider from time to time our former estimate of their values--and look, indeed, upon perfection and magnitudes as having been made up from, or the outgrowth of--the minute and simple things of nature and of life?

Horace Bushnell said: "God descends to an infinite detail, and builds a little universe in the smallest things. He carries on a process of growth in every tree and flower and living thing. He is as careful to finish the insect as He does the planet, both because it consists only with His perfection to finish everything, and because the perfection of His greatest structures is the result of perfection in their smallest parts or particles. On this patience of detail, rests all the glory and order of the created universe."

If, then, God does not trifle--how can man, His supreme work on earth, consider any item or atom of His creation, or any law or event of His ordering--as insignificant, and despise its day or its deed?

1. Value of Surroundings.

Things material and things immaterial are moved, shaped, influenced by little things surrounding. If, as it has been said, we are largely the creatures of circumstances--then how can we be

indifferent to those things that harm us, or negligent of those that make for our growth and development? A page in Herbert Spencer's great work, "Synthetic Philosophy," contained a picture. It was a simple thing, and yet it suggested a great question. It was an imperfect leaf, curled and deformed, because it grew too near a branch of the tree and was denied space and light and motion. Its companions were large and well-developed and beautiful. Not so this hapless one. From this illustration the author proceeds to show that natural objects and man and nations are effected, shaped, molded by surroundings. Where a man lives may determine what he is, or what he may be. The dwellers among the mountains are more independent and fearless than those whose view of life is clouded by the density of the forest. "Backwoodsman" is a term descriptive of surroundings. Take his children to the broad expanse of the prairie, let them catch the inspiration of mountain height, or feel through youth and manhood the breath of old ocean's ceaseless swell--and a different class of human beings will result therefrom.

2. Influences of the Past. That which modifies, counteracts, and influences the more positive and powerful things of the present, as they surround us and make us know of their presence by their constant contact--are the little and yet large things of the past. Our names connect us with generations that have ceased to live, and yet who live in us far more than we are willing to admit. Our speech perpetuates a language replete with thoughts, opinions, ideas, not our own in originality--ours only by heredity. Try to escape it as we may, the shadow or the light of the past is here with us in the life of the present.

Because of the cosmopolitan spirit of our age, it is no uncommon thing for an East Indian student to find his way into an Anglo-Saxon civilization; or a Japanese to find a home and a companion in an American Commonwealth. The effect of study, travel, religion, social customs--may harmonize the extremes of a world-wide origin and of a long distant past--with the life and thought and feeling of the present. Yet the influence of the past, whatever the surroundings of the present may be, whether we will it or not--has its decided effect upon the life of today; for it is in the blood, in the brain, in the heart. Change of dress, change of speech, change of religion even, adoption of new methods of domestic comfort and business life, preference for different means and measures for human happiness--will not utterly cut us off from the influence of the long line of deeds, words, and thoughts, born and nurtured in the ages of the past.

3. Effects of Things to Come. But the civilization of the present is not the sum-total of the things of today, nor yet of the civilizations of the past, mighty and powerful--as those "small things" are which enter into life and character.

We catch the breeze of a coming day. If the ideal did not readjust itself and expand on the coming of the morrow--we would soon cease to plan, to strive, and would be content with the measure of each day's work done or attempted. The coming season compels planning. The reformation needed, gives hope to righteous endeavor. What life would be with this improvement and with that, enters into our thought, our conversation, our choice of companions and fellow-associates. The vision of a better state and condition of affairs, universally pervades and influences the present. But pass beyond the limits of the immediate future, and note the effect of eternity upon the things of time. There is a power that sustains and blesses, that builds up and makes strong this present life that comes to us from the endless life. If tomorrow we die, and death ends all--then how different all life would be! The beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the insects of the day and of the hour,

live to better purpose, from instinct, than would man, with highest possibilities of vigorous thought, if there comes not to him the knowledge or the assurance, or even the hope, of a future life. "To eat and drink and be merry," would be the universal creed and practice if tomorrow death put an end to all. The merriment of a limited life would be tinged with the sadness of abandonment, if in this life only we had hope.

So, add the effect upon us of a future life, to the influence of the past, and the hard lines of the definite and conscious present will be modified, and we become less and less the helpless creatures of circumstances, and more and more the creators and modifiers of all that surrounds us.

4. The Inner Life.

How great and how serious life becomes, when we consider the conflicting forces of the things present, the antagonistic influences of the things of the past, the uncertainties of future days and years and realms--all of these little things centering within us, producing another set of emotions that have so much to do with human life. The things we think about,

those things we love or hate,

the judgments we form,

the words we speak,

the life we live--

all these, small as they may be, concern us infinitely.

Judgments that are formed upon insufficient knowledge; based upon limited observation; influenced by personal feelings; circumscribed by narrow views; expressions that fix our relation to others, that are the exponent and representation of our convictions--"little things," we say, yet so effective and sometimes so destructive upon human life.

"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." "For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly!"

Yes, and our Lord said also, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." As the fountain is--so shall the stream be. If the issue, the result of life, is ever to be foreknown, its prophecy may be read in the condition of the heart.

5. The World Beneath.

There is an element of evil that must be considered in the consideration of the forces with which one must deal in the development of character: "Things also from beneath."

Such things do not overwhelm the soul with an irresistible avalanche of destruction, but with cunning, with subtlety, with deceit, with false promises; by the little things, overlooked because of their insignificance, yet fearful in their results--these are the forces and the methods of the things from beneath.

They are not to be ignored. They are not always easily discerned. Not as sorrow known in all the world but had its origin from beneath. Not as a tear but can be traced to that active agency, that has made and is making such havoc in this world of ours. Despise not the day, the hour, the moment, when there come to you suggestions, intimations, inducements from the dark underworld of evil. For by our indifferent attitude to these "little things," come the horrors of death.

6. Things from Above Our hope is not from within, nor of the present or past, nor indeed of the future, blissful as we may imagine it to be--surely not from beneath. The little things that have to do with life come from every source, from all directions. This central life is swayed by breezes from every land, from every climate. He has not begun to live, who does not realize the seriousness of life, who has not learned that pressure and influence are exerted upon him from various quarters. Independent and free as he is, man is yet subject to impressions, persuasions, allurements, weighty and powerful, although apparently insignificant and trivial.

Into that life may come also, the saving grace of God--love and light from above, to reform, to re-establish, to rebuild for time and eternity. Despise not you the day of the coming of a still small voice, for God may be in that voice. God can . . .

change the being within,

dominate and conquer those things without,

make helpful the things of the past,

rearrange the plans of the future,

drive back into the bottomless pit the demons of destruction from beneath,

and make peaceful and perfect the soul itself!

It is because we have despised the day of small things that such unbelief possesses us. The destruction of sin, the salvation of the soul, the revelation of the Father, and an example of a sincere and pure soul in a world of deceit and vileness--was the object of God's coming into this world in the person of Jesus Christ. Like unto the influences of the things about, beyond, beneath, behind, the things from above come quietly; "come not with observation;" come to influence, not to overwhelm; and because we do not know how sensitive, how delicate, how easily affected is this being within us called a soul, we esteem lightly, if not despise--the agency, the influence, and the day of small things.

Open the windows of your soul, let in the life, the light, the love that comes from above--and then down into this lowly abode will come the Holy Spirit, to germinate, develop, and to grow, bringing forth blossom and fruit for another world.

Each holy thought,

each breath of prayer for better things,

each belief in a promised blessing,

each kindly word--

is so much toward strength and beauty of character, multiplied a thousand times because God is in the thought and the deed. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty." God was not in the great and strong wind that rent the mountains before Elijah. Neither was the Lord in the mighty quaking of the earth. Nor was He yet in the direful conflagration that burned so fiercely in the sight of the prophet. But after the storm and earthquake and the fire--there came a still small voice. There was power in the voice. It brought the prophet out from the darkness of the cave, out of his fear and his anguish, out into the presence of duty and his Lord. Things from above! How much needed in our world! They come as fast as we make room for them, and, by their coming . . .

keep out things from beneath,

sweeten things present,

glorify things to come.

Said a great artist: "One ought to see at least one good picture each day, hear one pure sweet song, say a few reasonable words daily, and thereby be all the better for the day."

How many servants to help us may we have, if we will! They may be little, but, being many, make quick work. How many hard masters we may serve, if we so choose! Which shall it be, serve or be served? If we seek to serve the highest and the noblest, we shall in turn be served, because we have thus allied ourselves with Him who has put all things in subjection to Him. If our talents are few and small--then all the greater reason for diligence and activity in their employment. If we had ten talents--then we would have ten times the responsibility resting upon us that comes as a burden to the neighbor possessing but one talent. If we do not seek to increase the talent God has given us, would we be more faithful with the larger treasure of time and talent and opportunity? The combination and co-operative services of the marine insect builds for us the coral reef. "All at it, and always at it!" So the mighty task is done by these mites of feebleness, in the multiplied moments of time.

Systematic persistence is needed in the material and intellectual world. So great do small things become, that we might well tremble at the thought of any word expressed, or deed done, or influence exerted.

Prayer for Divine guidance is absolutely needed to be able to make the most of life. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." "When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with Him." The mighty forces of the universe are, after all, quiet--they are combinations of minute things that hold in even balance magnitudes of infinite value. The human soul is subject to a multitude of forces seeking to sway it, having an influence one way or another. These forces are often small in ordinary estimation, yet are not to be despised. They are all about us, are the circumstances of our every-day life, making or marring our happiness. They come also from the past--constant reminders of other days, of a time beyond our time--and must be made to adjust themselves with the present or become anarchists and outlaws, destructive of present peace and order. They are met by the forces from the future, the aspirations and hopes and dreams of better times and better things and a brighter hopes. But all these enter the crucible of the inner consciousness, and, according to the will of him who lives within, there comes forth a belief, an opinion, a judgment, right or wrong, as the dross or the pure truth has been accepted or

rejected. From beneath, waging warfare upon the forces from above, secretly, stealthily come evil spirits to entice us. In the center of all these conflicting, antagonist oppositions, the life of every individual soul exists.

Woe, then, to him who, witnessing the marshaling of these forces under mighty leadership, shuts his eyes to the result and despises the day and the deed of small things!

2. Little Things that Make for CHARACTER

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"My father, if the prophet had bid you do some great thing, would you not have done it?" 2 Kings 5:13

Consider the words of kindly caution and of well-merited rebuke spoken by the servant of the leprous Naaman, who, seeking a remedy for his diseased condition from the prophet Elisha, refused, in a rage, to follow the simple condition: "My father, if the prophet had bid you do some great thing, would you not have done it?"

Your disease is loathsome--but your pride, your false notion of the use and benefit of great things, is still more to be loathed. Rise above the narrowness and bigotry and blindness, and find hope and health, not alone in the waters of Jordan, but in the clear, pure air of submission, of obedience, and faith in God. Naaman had wealth in abundance; would not some great gift be better than some little act? He had great power; would not some exhibition of that power upon the enemies of Elisha's God be more acceptable than a surrender of self? The world is always overestimating "great things"--and undervaluing simple things. Those things that are really great, which hide their greatness from us by their very unappreciated and unrecognized nearness--are often passed over, in the vain effort of mankind to do the "great thing," as men note greatness.

"The best things are always within reach." Study that statement. Let it have the closest scrutiny and the largest application. "The best things are always within reach." These best things, then, must be little things, and these little things must make for greatness, here or hereafter.

Is wealth beyond our reach? Perhaps wealth may not be best for us. Is health gone--gone so far that, even with effort and expense and care, we seem not to be able to reach and recover it? Then there may be a discipline in patient resignation, which will sweeten life and brighten hope of Heaven, in the very experience through which the soul is dragged by a disease-stricken body.

"Godliness with contentment is great gain"--great gain. He who looks upon life in this lowly sphere as a state or condition whose highest end is self, will fail miserably in securing permanent blessedness.

Why are we here? What purpose had God in our creation? Why do we have individual and personal existences?

Surely not for bodily or physical pleasure. Not for intellectual delights and the higher forms of mental intoxication. Not to amass wealth, or achieve fame, or secure and exercise power and authority over others. Surely not to gratify our pride and ambition.

We could not all be kings or queens, else who would be subjects and serve? Our wealth would be little worth if all were millionaires. Truly some wise and universal reason may be found to account for conscious existence in a world of material things--to justify the fact most evident of all facts,

and yet most marvelous of all, that of human life. There is a response to that question that will be full and complete and satisfactory to all men, in its application.

"Why are we here in this life?"

Answer: "We are here to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." That 's the stately answer of the Catechism--the condensed statement of the thought of devout scholarship of all ages. To enjoy life and God is to bring to Him the fruit, the developed form, of that which He has given to us. The most that we can get out of life, and the most that we can make of it, is summed up in that most descriptive term, Christian Character. Could we discipline and develop and perfect character as outlined in Christ, in any other realm, without this first preliminary stage of existence, experience, contact, and conflict?

Godly character, then, for all men, is the goal. By it we glorify God, and, because of it, we enjoy God and goodness and shall enjoy Him forever. Much every way hinges on character.

We may not be rich in material things; but we may have the wealth of character far surpassing the power and the possessions of the millionaire. We may not have physical strength; but we may have health and wholeness in soul strength, that smiles and is content in the presence of the athlete. The one will soon reach a limit, and fail in its cunning. The other will increase daily, because the outward man must perish; but the inner man is renewed day by day. This great thing called character is so simple, so easily recognized, so readily attained, while still in a state of continued development, that its possession may be individually universal. Do you, then, like Naaman, desire to do some great thing in order to feel and know freedom from bondage, deliverance, and conquest in the presence of spiritual foes, the cleansing of the soul from the leprous effects of sin, in order that you may glorify God and enjoy Him forever? Be content to do the simple things that make for that great thing called Character. The materials for the structure are near at hand. Build daily. Begin aright; find a firm foundation. Begin now, and you will soon note progress. By and by your friends will observe it; then strangers cannot but remark at what they see and feel of strength and beauty and largeness of your masterpiece.

Some begin wrong. They are indifferent as to foundations. They are careless as to the choice of materials. It is the stranger who is first impressed with the appearance of wisdom and wealth and strength and attractiveness. He wonders that such an exhibition of excellence is not recognized and admired in the community where it exists. But, on further inspection, he discovers that . . .

the wisdom displayed is superficial,

the wealth that dazzled is borrowed,

the appearance of strength and beauty is veneer or tinsel,

and underneath all no foundation, but shifting sands! This is well known to acquaintances, and best known to the man himself.

Reputation is not character! This short cut to character is deceptive, and in the end most self-destructive. Beware of a cheap grade. The best is none too good. If we would glorify God and enjoy Him forever; if we would make the most of life, let us seek the best!

Study with me, then, the little things, the despised small things, that go to make up character. Note wherein you seem to yourself to be deficient. Cultivate that especial quality by an act of the will, by prayer, by study of God's book of precepts and principles, by observation and emulation of those men and women whose character you most admire. Then, there will be no day without its influence.

1. Self-Denial. The hardest blow must be struck first of all. The foundation must be laid on the firmest rock. No noble soul gets, without giving. As hard as denial of self may be, it is always easier to let go than to hold on, in the beginnings of the test, before a grip is fastened upon the soul by the world and the flesh and the devil, as all will testify who have tried both. This is an act within our power, this subordination of self. We cannot take from another, without his consent, anything that would enrich us, so easily as to give to him from our own store that which he needs. The principle of self-sacrifice keeps us in touch with helpless humanity, without self-improvement. Even Christ pleased not Himself, chose not to withhold for Himself, when that giving and self-denial lifted us, exalted us, to a plane somewhere along the level of the highest possibilities with Himself.

"In honor preferring one another." It is not the gift in itself, whether of time or service or of material possessions, anything that pleases and relieves the discomfort or provides for the necessities of the needy--that most aids and brings the best blessings to the giver. These, in a sense, do bring satisfaction to the soul, and make true the saying of our Lord, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." But self-denial is absolutely essential to largeness of soul-growth, because of the disposition it begets within the self denier of yearning sympathy and helpful interest concerning the helpless and hopeless ones in the world around him. The disposition to make others happy is always fruitful and reactive. It counteracts the fatal tendency, so common among men of conquest, of overreaching, of withholding more than is right, which tends to poverty. Soul-strength, soul-richness, soul-sweetness, and a multitude of excellencies, come to keep company with the heart that dwells within self-denial.

It is begun by a determination to serve. "Take this place;" "Let me do that for you;" "You are looking so well;" "I was pleased at what you said;" "Let me help you;" "Come with us,"--anything, everything said and done that is the outgoing of self to another; and by that life of "otherness" comes the Christ-life. Herein is the greater truth of our Lord, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Can a selfish, grasping, indifferent life result in a character that shall glorify God? How could such a soul enjoy God, when every thought, feeling, sentiment, and desire is wrapped up in "me and mine," while others in despair are abandoned without care or consideration? There must be a dying to self at the foundation of all Christian character. This, then, is the little-large thing that lies within our power to do--that maybe done, that must be done, in order to develop character aright; namely, Self-denial.

2. Patience.

Ruskin says: "Patience lies at the root of all pleasures, as well as of all powers. Hope herself ceases to be happiness when Impatience companions her." Do you get that thought? Think it over carefully. "Patience lies at the root of all pleasures, as well as of all powers. Hope herself ceases to be happiness when Impatience companions her." Patience may be consistent with energy, with unremitting toil up to the full measure of our strength; but worry weakens, hastens to secure or see

results, puts off the culmination of thought and effort, and disturbs all that has been done to bring about solidity, beauty, and perfection.

"Learn to labor and to wait." The giant oak in its earliest stages fretted not because the stalk of corn or the sunflower reached up and touched its limit in a season, for in a season it also faded away.

Peevish discontent destroys all opportunity of making the most of conditions and circumstances. Every enterprise that has strength, that has permanency--has had to be indifferent to time, and allow the coming of days, and months, and years before its growth has fully matured. Every weakness in reformation, in discovery, in invention, in social organization, may be traced to undue haste in its accomplishment. The leaders in astronomical science have held their discoveries in abeyance for years, in order to test their theories or prove the accuracy of their laws. He is strong who is content to plod on, to bide his time, to wait the slow coming of the years, for the development of thought and purpose, for the acceptance and approval of his work and of himself. Do not become impatient; commit all things to the Lord. Let self-denial have an opportunity, if results are slow in coming, that patience may have her perfect work.

3. Courage.

There is opposition to everything. The timid soul is easily frightened. The dangers and difficulties we meet are not so formidable as those we never meet, but that threaten us, yet, at our coming, vanish from our path.

Courage comes from conviction, and conviction from truth. "First be sure you are right, then go ahead." Such progress, however, may cost something, but it may be worth all it costs. You may lose friends, separate yourself from associations otherwise delightful, and begin life over again amid new scenes and strange surroundings; but if you are right, have the courage of your righteousness, and move sweetly and steadily on.

How many souls have lost wealth, lost health, lost home and Heaven, because they lost courage! They were sneered at, quit work, took counsel of their fears, and fled in dismay. Blessing companions enticed to dissipation--they could not say "No," hesitated, and were lost. The quality of this courage is not physical. The boy or man is least possessed by it, who, because of physical strength, overawes his comrades or his community by his ferocious power. The gentlest, most unassuming, most self-denying, surprises the opposition by a dignity and heroism that cannot be destroyed, even if death itself is the result. How essential is this steadfastness, this moral courage, in the growth of character! It is a little thing, big with results. Without it, character is as a wall of untempered mortar. It is defenseless.

4. Love.

"Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." Love never fails; all else shall cease, of hatred and malice, opposition, fame and the pomp and glory of the world; but love shall abide forever. He who loves, allies himself to God, for God is love. He begins here to breathe an atmosphere of that realm and of that dispensation for which this is preparatory. It is not the love for the lovable alone, which ennobles and expands the soul. It is a divine vision which concerns itself with the possibilities of

good and the probabilities of peril in all sorts and conditions of mankind.

"It suffers long, and is kind." All may not bewise and bless humanity with their wisdom; but a loving, tender heart may be possessed by all men, and be a blessing always. Material wealth may not be possessed by the masses; but love may be a treasure for all, to keep warm the hearthstone when storms beat without, and make glad the fatherless and the widow in the rainy day of adversity. Who cannot love? Love children and aged ones; love helpless and sorrowing souls out of their helplessness and grief.

Drummond says: "The greatest thing a man can do for his Heavenly Father, is to be kind to some of His other children." "Much of Christ's life," he says, "was spent in doing kind things--in merely doing kind things." Kindness, then, is the active principle of love, just as patience is the passive principle. It is so easy to say unkind, to do unkind things; but it is just as easy to learn how to do and say kind things, if we will--and to be kind.

It is a little thing to love, yet love is the greatest of the graces of Christian character. It sweetens self-denial, and makes it easy and delightful. It is the staying quality of a believing soul; it is the crowning glory of Christian character. If we are asked to do some great thing, remember, it is to be done in the doing of this simple thing. My brother, my sister, if God, by the voice of His Spirit, by the word of truth, by the preaching and practice of His children, should bid you do some great thing, and that great thing be the building of a character in accord with His will, would you not do it? Do, then, the little things that make for character! Use the material within your reach, and do it today! Be self-denying;

Be patient;

Be courageous;

Be kind and loving.

If there is any other virtue, think on that; and, with Divine help, do it also!

3. Little Things that Make for Happiness

3. Little Things that Make for Happiness "Many are asking: Who can show us any good?" Psalms 4:6 The universal search of man is for a state or condition of undisturbed happiness. Men toil and scheme, early and late, to secure wealth, in order that they may use it for their own happiness.

Let us do this, they say, in order to be "happy." Let us go yonder to increase our happiness. Or let us have this or that--and then we shall be "happy." This is the thought, the plan, the conversation of multitudes of restless mankind. Can happiness really be found? Is it not like the fitful fire of mocking fate, that allures and leads on--and disappears just as one is about to seize it? Is it not the fabled pot of gold at the rainbow's end? In childhood, is not happiness somewhere in the Grown-up-land? In manhood and womanhood, is it not "When I'm married?" "When I've settled in business for myself?" "When I have a home of my own and can do as I please?" Does not a quiet retreat on the sunset side of life (old age), work all done, watching the shadows as they "grow a little longer"--seem to be the place and the time of happiness? Or shall we say with the preacher, in his unsuccessful search for happiness amid the things of earth and time, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit!" Shall we, then, conclude that up yonder, away from uncertainty, from sin and consequent sorrow; up yonder in Heaven, undisturbed, we shall be at rest, shall enter into eternal bliss, and not before?

No. Happiness is not all withheld from us to overwhelm us at one fell stroke, and that, when we "Have shuffled off this mortal coil." It is here. There are in childhood, in youth, in maturity, and in old age--seasons of innocent pleasure, peace, joy, contentment--and their memory still abides.

Someone has said that "the idea has been transmitted from generation to generation that happiness is one large and beautiful precious stone, a single gem so rare that all search after it is vain, all effort for it hopeless. It is not true. Happiness is a mosaic composed of many smaller stones. Each taken apart and viewed singly, may be of little value, but when all are grouped together and set, they form a pleasing and graceful whole--a costly jewel. Trample not under foot, then, the little pleasures which God's gracious Providence scatters in the daily path, and which, in eager search after some great and exciting joy, we are apt to overlook."

It is good of our Heavenly Father to place within the reach of the poorest and lowliest of His children, those little things that comprise real pleasure--beyond the reach of the king on his throne or the millionaire in his palace.

Consider, then, briefly some of the little things that make for happiness.

1. NEGATIVELY.

It might safely be said, indeed, that the way to happiness clusters around the admonition of what NOT to do. How easy, then, are the terms upon which this most desired blessing may be secured!

(a) Do not seek for it.

What misery attends the vigorous and persistent search for happiness! What a chase does this supposedly real thing lead one, when it becomes a phantom, after the soul has determined to possess it in order to gain happiness. Sometimes it seems to be within the grasp of the seeker. He is envied, flattered, followed; but, alas! deep in the heart there is anguish and disappointment, for a time unknown to the world, but in the end disclosed with startling effect.

"Happiness," said President Nott, "is a shy nymph, and if you chase her you will never catch her! Don't try to be happy. Go quietly on in life and do your duty, and this shy nymph we call happiness will come to you of her own accord, by and by."

Said the Historian Froude: "Happiness is not what we are to look for. Let us do right. If, then, happiness comes, life will be sweet; but if not, it is of no mighty matter--life can be borne." This ability to bear up in life, is happiness. It is the mastery of self under adverse circumstances. No greater joy can come to a soul in this life, beyond the calm repose which the consciousness of doing right will surely bring. The serious trouble with us, in our attempt to seek happiness, is that we are not wise enough or of sufficient strength, to avoid the miseries that are just a little beyond the state or condition we are seeking.

"I'll be content and happy with just one drink," is the resolution of the wine-bibber; but, alas! misery is the other phase of the countenance now turned toward him in fiendish mockery.

"I'll only taste once of stolen waters," and in that slippery path the feet were unstayed, and the sweetness sought turned to wormwood!

"I'll make this shortcut to wealth," and in the deal, a multitude of unforeseen robbers rise up to wrest from him all that he held dear, and more. The search for happiness, so common to mankind, is not only made by unwise or sinful means, but also with extremely selfish purposes. Self, self always first!

Put self in the background. Make an effort to cheer some other sorrowing soul, to reveal to others a happy state, and through some unexpected door of the heart will come an approving, smiling angel, saying, "I must abide with you, for I am found by those who sought me not."

(b) Do not envy.

How quickly and how far we drive this spirit of happiness, when we brood over, by way of contrast, the elevated condition or seemingly contented lot of others! The begrudging spirit narrows and contracts the soul. To envy others brings misery. If some of their wealth, some of their skill or fame, some of their friends, were his--the envious one would surely reach the desired place of supreme joy.

Why should he think so?

First, because of the loss others would have to suffer. That is the fruit of the envious spirit--delight, secret and self-contained at first, yet certain and positive delight at the discomfort, the losses, and sorrows of others. Truly this is a fiendish delight.

Second, if from others, these items of supposed happiness could be possessed, they would be held in triumph to tantalize and annoy the victim. Happiness? Only in name, and in time to

turn tormentor.

It is true that this spirit of envy at first does not intend to take away anything of wealth or worth from its owner--only a wish, a desire, either to have something equally good, or to share with the possessor some of his abundant comfort. Yet, in time, failure to receive, begets a spirit of anarchy, a desire to see all inequalities destroyed, a leveling down of all conditions and classes of men to his own plane.

"You shall not covet" is a prohibition that hedges up and saves the soul from the danger of moral suicide. If another has wealth, and you have none, remember, to possess it without the trained habit of keeping the same from waste and dissipation, would place you in a more miserable condition when it began to slip from you--as doubtless it would--and leave you with the memory of their luxury, with habits of ease and prodigality, without means of gratifying the same.

Better a thousand times the joy that comes with the slow accumulation of a little, than the false and fleeting pleasures because of the envy of the happiness and splendor of the life of another. Say, rather: "He has wealth, but I have no perplexity concerning thieves and false friends, intrigue of competitors, schemes of enemies and losses in a multitude of ways." "He may have fame and applause because of genius, but I may have the honor of his acquaintance, the pleasure of his friendship, and less of annoyance and daily demands that honor and fame may make."

2. POSITIVELY.

Happiness comes to us along certain lines of life marked out by duty. They are the simple services well done in the little world where we dwell. Not at some distant shrine, not in any movement of a magician's wand, are we to find and enjoy the secret of a happy life--but in the use of the common and mundane things around and within us.

(a) Contentment.

A discontented spirit is always an unhappy one. To call up in order, and frequently, the names of the things we do not possess; to rasp and ruffle our feelings and the feelings of others by the inconveniences of our surroundings; the limitations, diseases, aches, and pains of our bodily existence; the things we might have had; the losses and crosses we have endured--such a peevish spirit, who can bear and be happy!?

Paul sent out to all the world a prescription for happiness, when he said: "For I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content." Such a state is in harmony with the highest diligence and most constant industry; but it guards against the bitterness of repining when success is not attained.

He is to be commended who said: "I never complained but once in my life, and that was when I had no shoes, and it was bitter cold. As I wrapped my feet in rags, I bemoaned my miserable condition, when there hobbled by me on crutches a man who had no feet; I then saw how much better off I was than that poor cripple!"

"Count your blessings, name them one by one!" Make the blue sky the dome of your own magnificent palace; the shining sun your own private electric-light and heat plant; the whole wide world of teeming life, all a part of your vast possessions! How rich you are! and, having food and

clothing and shelter, therewith be content and you will be happy.

(b) Purpose.

Much of the discontent and consequent misery in life, is caused by lack of a definite plan, the absence of a well-defined and fixed purpose. The listless, careless, slothful, can never be happy. He who has no heart in his task, will hasten to finish it, or leave it but partly done, and return to it only under protest.

Hard work was never intended as a burden, much less a curse. Before sin came, the newly created was directed by the Creator to service in connection with the care and culture of the garden. No greater curse could come to man than that which would relieve him of all effort, and permit him to be merely the recipient of life's blessings, without a corresponding service and self-denial. The convicts in the prisons of the State would consider their penalty unendurable, if left without employment.

Among the little things that make for contentment and happiness let this be noted, that time and talent must be busy with a task up to the full measure of opportunity and ability--or else life becomes a burden. A quaint writer says: "What is happiness? It isn't being idle; no idle man or woman ever was happy since the world began. Employment gives both appetite and digestion. Duty makes pleasure doubly sweet, by contrast. When pleasure is the business of life, it ceases to be pleasure!"

Respecting that purpose, the employment of time and strength, see to it that it combines three especial elements:

First, let it be noble; for herein has it to do with the development of character.

Second, that it be congenial. Suit the taste and the inclination in the choice of a task, and then it will not be abandoned when reverses come, or become irksome amid the dull routine of dreary detail and necessary drudgery.

Third, let it be useful. That entitles us to respect from our fellow-men, and their respect thrills the soul with satisfaction, and a determination to do well the task undertaken.

"But," you say, "most of us will be called upon to lead very ordinary lives. The work we can do, or the work we can get to do, may not be very congenial, or very noble, estimated by the world. How can we be happy in any uncongenial and very ordinary service?"

Remember! There is nobility in labor of whatever task undertaken, be it the digging of a ditch, the sweeping of a floor, the sawing of wood, or the making of a garment; every useful task is noble, and in that task one may have pleasure if he wills it.

Joy in the doing of little deeds, comes from the conscious satisfaction of a greater task soon to be completed. The weary steps are soon all forgotten, in the accomplished fact of a journey ended. Word and then line, page and then chapter--and soon the book is read, the subject mastered. Nothing very inspiring about a word or two, a few lines, or a number of chapters merely; but thus the world's great literature may be brought up in splendid review. This hour, and then another, spent in some commonplace, poorly paid service, viewed alone, may bring discontent

and unhappiness--until the hours have measured off the day, the sum of the day's wages wisely invested, the days grow into weeks, the dimes count up to dollars, skill is acquired, stability cultivated, and the life is nearing the end.

Consciousness of service faithfully done, competence, if not affluence, secured through the long years of multiplied hours of lowly toil and then extended effort, changes discontent into supreme satisfaction, and crowns the life with blessings.

(c) Friendships.

Among the little things that make for happiness, is the art of making friends and deserving them. What a dreary world ours would be, without companions! Half the joy we have in getting, is due to the satisfaction of imparting to others. The "miser" is a miserable person. The philanthropist not only loves mankind, but is loved in turn by his fellow-men. The misanthropist hates man, but is the hated of men also. If, then, happiness stands in the midst of friends, how wise is he who adds to that number, and by his conduct retains them because he is deserving!

Friendship that is worthwhile is not secured by the abandonment of principle, or by an agreement to every word or deed that is noted in the life of those you admire. Favors and flatteries may not always establish ties of sympathy and love; they may be bribes or bonds of slavish servitude! The cultivation of friendship is an art requiring studious skill. Some men and women will love and be friendly--when run after and besieged. Others will come to you, and sing your praises only when dealt with in generous way. Some people can be won by doing them favors; others, when induced to do you a favor. The race of mankind, in general, is easily won by kindness; nevertheless the vast variety of peculiar people in the world make exceptions to all rules.

Some people will respect and admire you, when you show respect and admiration for them. Some will be your best friends when, by a dignified and noble independence, you thereby demand of them rightful consideration.

Concessions must always be made in non-essential matters, in order to secure amity; but concession ought not to be one-sided. The best of blending is in mutual adjustment. A sincere, unselfish, steadfast course in life--administering praise wherever deserved, sympathy when needed, reproofs seldom, then, in utmost kindness, lending a helping hand to the helpless--is in general a fair rule for multiplying friends and strengthening the ties of friendship. In conclusion:

(a) be content with your present possessions, even while engaged in adding to them;

(b) have a fixed and definite purpose in life and diligently adhere to it, even in the dreary details of ever-recurring duty;

(c) make friends, multiply friendships and deserve them; but first of all and most of all, though coming last in the list, note that the one thing most essential to a happy life is:

(d) Sincere religion.

This is by no means a little thing. It is all-embracing and all-transcending. Dr. Johnson said: "The fountain of contentment must spring up in the mind; and he who has so little knowledge of human nature as to seek happiness by changing anything but his own disposition, will waste his life in

fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove."

Horace, the Latin poet, said: "You traverse the world in search of happiness, which is within the reach of every man; a contented mind confers it on all." A French writer has said: "This truth ought to be deeply printed in minds studious of wisdom and their own contentment, that they bear their happiness or unhappiness within their own hearts; and that all outward things have a right and a wrong handle. Take a knife by the handle, and it will serve you; take it by the blade, and it will cut you. There is no good thing but is mingled with evil; there is no evil but some good enters into the composition. The same truth holds in all persons, actions, and events. Out of the worst, a well-composed mind, endowed with the grace of God, may extract good, with no other chemistry than piety, wisdom, and serenity."

Said Ryle: "So long as you do not quarrel with sin, you can never be a truly happy man. Thousands go on for a time in this way, and seem merry before the eyes of men, and yet in their heart carry about a lurking sorrow."

If, then, you are to be happy now, with the uncertainty of the future left to adjust itself and the question of eternity answered with sanity and satisfaction--get right with God! Then, and not until then, will you be in harmony with all circumstances and conditions, because there will be peace and right relations within the heart--because God is there. The things that make for happiness are all within our reach; they come at our bidding. They are summed up in Christ's words: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

4. Little Things that Make for WEALTH.

4. Little Things that Make for WEALTH.

"But you shall remember the Lord your God; for it is He who gives you power to get wealth!" Deuteronomy 8:18 A false impression prevails as to the possession of wealth, and its consistency with a righteous character. The common idea is, that goodness and poverty go hand in hand; that to possess wealth, is to be possessed by the wicked one.

Money is not the root of all evil. It is the love of money that excludes a higher and nobler affection, and is the beginning, the source, the root of all evil.

Abraham was the friend of God, yet he was rich, had been, and was, abundantly blessed in that friendship. Job was rich, and his integrity was not impaired by his prosperity. Even in his distress and affliction, he maintained his righteousness, and in the end was blessed even more abundantly in flocks and herds, lands and money. Joseph of Arimathea, who, with Nicodemus, was a friend of Jesus, was rich in worldly goods, as also in spiritual experiences.

God's plan in conferring upon us the dignity and self-respect of ownership--as a steward of His--is often thwarted by the abuse of that stewardship and the criminal disregard of the trust committed to us. The undue haste to get rich, occurs only when the relationship between God the Giver and man the steward, is forgotten or ignored. Such forgetfulness or rebellion results in degradation of soul to the sordidness of things of time and sense and the material world.

God plans and places everything at the disposal of His children. He lays His kingdom at their feet, and bids them become His stewards. "For all things are yours . . . whether the world, or life, or things present, or things to come--all are yours." He made all things for the good of His creatures and for His glory. He said: "Truly, there is no man that has left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for My sake, and the gospel's--but he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

God's creation and preservation of all material things are for the use, the comfort, the necessity of His children, who are here in material form, with very material wants that must be supplied; hence He bids us possess, own, become masters of all things. When we cease to exist in bodily form, when we pass into eternal existence, with a spiritual body--no longer will we need these houses, and lands, and institutions, and implements of material conquest--agencies of communication and transportation; for we shall have passed the limitations of our lowly sphere and hampered condition, and become possessors of greater wealth, in a realm where we may in perfection hold all things in common.

Rev. Joyce said to a body of laymen: "Make money; make all you can; make it honestly; use it wisely for God's glory and the good of men." It was a wise exhortation, and harmonizes with God's Word and the truth of the Gospel.

Why did He give us power to get wealth, if the getting is wrong? Would He mock us with strength that was not to be used in material conquest? Would He give us skill and genius to discover and invent and become the masters of material forces, if such mastery is inconsistent with highest manhood and deepest reverence? Would opportunities of making the wilderness bloom and blossom as the rose, the desert to become a garden, the mines of the mountains to pour their untold wealth at the feet of His children--if He did not design all these to be items of wealth for them, tokens of His love and helpfulness?

"For it is He who gives you power to get wealth." But having gotten it, having taken advantage of God-given opportunities, exercised God-given strength, God-allotted time, and God-endowed skill and discernment--woe to that soul that says: "I have much goods laid up for many years; behold, all the good things I have made, I have produced, I have worked for, and I have earned. Soul, take your ease--eat, drink and be merry!" Hear God's comment on such Self-Conceit, such folly: "You fool! this night your soul shall be required of you! Then whose shall those things be which you have provided?" Was he the same man--or only a brother--who fared sumptuously every day, clothed in purple and fine linen, who permitted a beggar to be left at his gate day after day, and still be a beggar? "And in Hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment!" and heard that most tantalizing reminder of misused wealth: "Son, remember that you, in your lifetime, received your good things," sufficient, but still such limited satisfaction, in exchange for infinite wealth in the bosom, in the home and heart of father Abraham--"the figure of the Father Almighty."

God gives you power to get wealth, not alone for self, or for the sake of getting--but for His glory, for your comfort, and the comfort of your fellow-man. In the getting, remember your relationship to your Heavenly Father and to your Heavenly Father's other children around you. But is it possible for us all to get wealth, become possessors of sufficient of material resources as to be independent? Yes, and No.

If we were now, and had been from the beginning, and were to continue to be, faithful to God--the diligence of each family would accumulate sufficient for daily, yearly wants and to spare. But sin came, and at its coming came . . .

weakness, physical, mental, moral;

selfishness, ambition, oppression of the weak by the strong;

all humanity became out of harmony with righteousness;

robbery, conquest, war, vices that waste and eat up in a year the earnings of a lifetime.

If, then, that desirable state ever again is reached, even in a measure, in a measure will it be possible to see every family in possession of reasonable comfort secured by the accumulation of wealth. But we shall always be dependent upon each other. It is not possible, even with fabulous wealth and vast resources, to be even comfortably independent of our fellows. Drive out quickly every living thing, man, woman, and child, from some great city; let it become the home and habitation of the strongest, wisest man on earth--how helpless and hopeless and unhappy such a soul would be, alone and unattended amid the wealth and splendor of an abandoned city! Warehouses filled with the products of field and forest and factory; banks with the money of all nations; machinery, motionless, in all the mammoth buildings waiting his touch to produce the

cunning products of skill and usefulness; libraries, music halls, echoing gloomily the tread of this one lonely owner! Plenty to eat, plenty to wear throughout a lifetime of ten thousand such as he; fuel, food, furniture; all the comforts, nay, luxuries abundant--but abandoned.

Plenty, yet poverty in the midst of a wilderness of wealth. Though the monarch and master of it all should live to enjoy it all a thousand years, not one of those long years would pass without a longing for companionship--for the very things men seek to avoid--dependence, and service for others. For with this interlocking of interest comes social life and its blessed, reciprocal relations.

Cooperation is the law of the largest liberty in human life. The law of the Lord is, "Subdue and have dominion." This wide world must be made habitable. Its wildness must be conquered, or else man himself will be overcome by the encroachment of nature, animal and vegetable, around him. He, then, is a benefactor of the race who, by skill and diligence, makes two blades of grass or grain grow where one grew before; who brings one more square foot or one acre more of wildness into a state of culture; who digs a well, builds a fence, a machine, a city, a nation, though he may not live forever to enjoy all the fruits of his labor. Each individual effort at wealth accumulation, is a contribution to the sum-total of the world's wealth. Each wasteful life, each day lost, is so much of a burden on the energies of others.

"You have lost an hour!" said the manager to a tardy engineer for whom he was waiting.

"O no, sir. I'm only five minutes late."

"Yes, but there are twelve of us. By your delay, each of us had to wait five minutes. That loss is all because of you."

If the present civilization, the present wealth of the world, could be summed up, and over against it could be placed the hours of idleness, destructive wickedness, the avoidable losses, the unnecessary wars, the willful obstructions--it might easily be seen that twice as much has been earned as has been saved. If added to this, we place floods, fires, storms, decay, delays by death, misdirected energies--then we shall have a view of the struggle for existence that puts the price of present civilization at an enormous figure.

Indeed, social civilization has had a heavy burden to bear. Some men never cost the State a cent to govern. They have learned and practice self-government. But how expensive to the State are a few men among every thousand law-abiding citizens! A bad boy in a school may retard the work of a score of diligent students, and cause more anxiety, take more of the teacher's time, than is exercised for the good of a number of his fellows! Police force, jails, court officials, militia, penitentiaries, are expensive necessities--and most of the cost must be borne by the inoffensive and innocent.

Add to all this the wastes and burdens of the liquor and opium habit, protected because permitted by law--and we are not surprised at the staggering steps of sober citizenship in the efforts toward progress, because of the heavy load carried. Parasites are in every community, able-bodied men and women, who live off of other people.

Therefore he is doing a valuable service who instructs youth, trains the rising generation to usefulness. The "trust in God" that is the exhortation and entreaty of His Book, and of the Church and good men in all ages of the world, is not inconsistent with the most diligent and painstaking

effort at the increase of material wealth for human comfort.

Consider, then, some of the little things that make for wealth.

1. Industry.

Lord Clarendon said: "There is no art or science that is too difficult for industry to attain to. It is as the gift of tongues, and makes a man understood and valued in all countries and by all nations. It is the Philosopher's Stone that turns all metal and even stones into gold, and allows no poverty to break into its dwellings. It is the Northwest Passage that brings the merchant's ships as soon to him as he can desire. In a word, industry conquers all enemies and makes fortune itself pay contribution." The world owes no man a living. The Creator has made it possible for every man, not only to earn a living, but make a contribution to the vast store of wealth needed by an expanding and oncoming civilization.

Dr. Ray has said: "I persuade myself that the Author of man's being is well pleased with the industry of man in adorning the earth with beautiful cities, with pleasant villages and country houses, with gardens and orchards and plantations, with pastures clothed with flocks and meadows richly carpeted, and whatever else that makes a difference between a civilized and well-cultivated region--and a barren and desolate wilderness."

What but labor, hard, persistent application to the task, could bring about a change so well described? Every stroke of the ax, every spade diligently used, all efforts vigorously prosecuted, have their reward. Not by ascheme,

not by the visionary coming of Dame Fortune to your door,

not by the death of some wealthy relative,

nor the lucky discovery of some gold-field,

nor the successful patenting and sale of some invention

--does wealth bring its sweetest or largest gifts; but by the hand of the diligent, the well-directed, unremitting toil of the individual workman, "whose setting sun sees some task completed, whose early rising saw it first begun."

Preparation for service is the first advice needed by all who would serve well. The tool should have a keen edge, or else much of the strength is wasted in wielding a dull instrument. Discipline the hand, by the most careful culture of the mind. Be not in haste to sell your time and strength and skill at a meager price, when a keener edge may command a higher premium by preparation.

Make yourself indispensable to him who gives employment. Please him, and you will be best pleased in turn. Always be employed, if for no other reason than the cultivation of an industrious habit. Be your own employer as soon as possible. There will always be competition in all lines of unskilled labor. Begin to give employment to others, and the industrious habit and the experience as a wage-earner will serve you well.

If no work is at hand, study. Seek instruction. Read books, papers, magazine articles, especially those that concern your calling. The example of very many around you may be of the indifferent sort. Its effect might be enervating, misleading, destructive. Do not trifle. When at play, play. In hours of relaxation give yourself over to sports and pastimes for a purpose. When study or work is resumed, make the most of it. By a resolution of the will, seek for excellence along all lines of honest toil.

Money makes money. The first one hundred dollars earned and saved, and rightly invested, may tell of hardships, sacrifices, and anxiety, beyond that experienced in the accumulation of the next nine hundred. But still the story of the conquest of the first thousand dollars will read like a romance, compared with the dull prose that describes the coming of nine companions of like number. All this has . . .

its beginning in determination,

its progress in self-denial,

its success in studious habits,

its end in victory and satisfaction. But what does industry avail, if its fruits are all wasted? The next little-great thing that makes for wealth is:

2. Economy.

If, at the end of the year, there has been no saving, there has been an absolute loss; for time has gone, and strength is going, and something must be saved to show for the year besides a mere living.

Dr. Johnson has said: "Without economy, none can be rich; and with it, few can be poor."

Haliburton said: "No man is rich whose expenditure exceeds his means; and no one is poor whose income exceeds his outgoings."

"Frugality," said another, "may be termed the daughter of Prudence, the sister of Temperance, and the parent of Liberty. He who is extravagant will quickly become poor, and poverty will enforce dependence and invite corruption."

What is happiness? Living within one's income.

What is misery? Spending more than is earned.

See what splendid results flow from annual savings with interest: Suppose \$50 per year is saved, and put out at 6 percent interest, and compounded. In ten years it has amounted to \$650. In twenty years, \$1,860; in thirty years, \$3,950; in forty years, \$7,700, and in fifty years it has grown to \$14,500. Think of it! A snug sum for an old man to retire on at the age of seventy! The wastefulness of the average man or woman would, if corrected, put him or her in a fair way of practical financial independence.

3. Investment.

Money earned and judiciously invested, becomes a helper at further earnings. As to the manner and place of such investment, only general suggestions can be made. Let safety be the first consideration. The promise of quick returns and unusually large profits, is always accompanied with an element of risk that is not wise to take.

Consider your earnings well invested, when spent for mental and manual instruction. What you store up of knowledge will be your permanent possession. The best capital any man or woman can have, is a well-trained mind. The best education, one can possibly secure with the time and means and opportunity at hand, is great wealth. This truth will be felt more keenly in the coming years than ever before in all the past. Competition will make it an absolute necessity. The coming to America of such vast armies of unskilled laborers will either drive out the unprepared native, or push him to climb for a superior position.

Place your earnings, next, most largely in the business or calling in which you are engaged. Improve the facilities and conveniences and agencies of your own profession or enterprise, and thus keep your investments largely under your own control. One may wisely enter into cooperation with others, using discretion, considering in order the questions of safety, congeniality, and profit. There are many such opportunities. You may have skill and experience; your friend may have means and facilities, but failing health. He leases you his farm, his factory, or shop, or asks that you share with him his office and a percentage of the receipts in return for services. Be as diligent with other people's interests as you would they should be with yours. Make deposits of stated sums weekly or monthly in savings banks, until sufficient has accumulated to be used in more remunerative investment. Be willing to consult with business men of discreet and conservative reputation respecting the character of any and all inducements offered concerning investments. They have not lived in vain. They have seen optimistic expectations doomed to disappointment. They may be "slow" and "Old Fogy," but they doubtless have paid well for what they know. They have had experience that is always wise to respect. As a protection, if not an investment, take out a life insurance policy for an amount you can readily pay for, in one of the many safe, sound, and conservative companies, upon the endowment plan. The prejudice and superstition that once existed against life

It was once argued that to insure one's life was a distrust of God--a form of wager with a corporation that you would live out the allotted period written in your insurance paper, or that you must die in order to win. The guarantee that, by the payment of a certain sum per annum for a certain term of years, you should have a certain sum of money returned to you in case you were alive, or if you did not live, your heirs or dependents should have it at your death--was but a straight, strict business transaction, based upon definite calculations and long years of observation--removed the element of chance from the proposition. To the little things that make for wealth must not be omitted:

4. Liberality.

I do not mean the wealth of soul that comes from sympathizing in a substantial way with the distressed, but, as a means to wealth, systematic, proportionate giving, beginning with the tithe of one's income, and increasing as God prospers, is as essential to the accumulation of wealth as industry or economy. It is a form of judicious investment.

"He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will reward him for what he has done." (Proverbs 19:17.) Isn't that good security? Will He pay less interest than an ordinary savings bank?

"There is one who scatters and yet increases; and there is one who withholds more than is fit, but it tends to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he who waters shall be watered also himself." (Proverbs 11:24-25.)

"Whoever stops his ears at the cry of the poor--he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard." (Proverbs 21:13.) That a portion of our earnings belongs to God, and the withholding of it from Him is robbery--is a truth of divine origin. We save only when we are honest with God. "Give, and it shall be given unto you." Enter into partnership with the Almighty. Say at the beginning of your life's pilgrimage: "If God will be with me and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to put on--then shall the Lord be my God, and of all that You shall give me I will surely give the tenth unto You." That's a common-sense contract!

He who gives you power to get wealth, will not withdraw Himself from you, but will be your stay, and your shield, and your exceeding great reward! Be industrious;

Be economical;

Be judicious;

Be liberal and just--

and your God will never leave nor forsake you!

5. Little Things that Make for HEALTH.

5. Little Things that Make for HEALTH.

"Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well." 3 John 1:2

Bodily health is a great blessing. To be free from pain, to have the right use of all the organs of our physical constitution, places us in a position to enjoy life, and make life enjoyable to others.

"A sound mind in a sound body" has been for ages the highest conception of earthly bliss, viewed from the standpoint of the philosopher and the student of the human form divine. That there have been brilliant minds developed in bodies of frailty, as there have been souls cultured by suffering--does not disprove the general law that the normal condition of physical soundness is necessary to the best service and most perfect development of mental and spiritual life.

Steadiness of nerve,

clearness of brain,

strength and endurance of all the bodily powers--

are essential to best results in the realm of the intellect. So also in the realm of the spiritual, the highest attainments are to be gained, with physical and mental soundness--and are hindered by disease and impaired health. That this body of ours, wonderfully wrought and fearfully made, is to receive our care and our attention continually, is solemnly and strongly set forth by the apostle Paul, who said: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 The prayer of the beloved disciple John for his friend Gaius, that he might prosper and be in health, was a wise and tender petition. The mind needs a healthy body in order to do its best work; the soul develops wisely and well when dwelling in a house where every part harmonizes with the highest laws of physical being.

But, alas! how many and how fierce are the enemies that attack and wound and weaken this body of ours! Who of us is free from pain, from weariness at slight exertion--and who is not in search of a remedy for the ills the flesh is heir to? Who has perfect health? Who has never been sick a day in a score or more of years? Who is vigorous and strong, ready for any task, any kind of exposure, or any service along the lines of ordinary service? The fevers of the South, the "white terror" of the North, the plague-spots and contagions of the crowded East, the hurry and haste and worry of the West, are like invading armies, bent on the utter destruction of the frail citadel of man. The skill of the physician, the marked progress in surgical knowledge, the skill of the trained nurse, the multiplied appliances of hospital service, the patience and genius that has wrought in laboratory and brought to pharmacy the wealth of helpful remedies--all have done much to make life worth living. Yet again I ask: Who has reached manhood or womanhood without the lingering reminder of an attack of severe illness successfully warded off, where yet the scars are seen?

Boast as we may of athletes and champions of the sports and in the arena of physical contest, nevertheless we are but a race of emaciated, unsound, sickly people. This is still more remarkable when we consider the multitude of remedies that a kind and thoughtful class has provided for us; "no cure, no pay." Look at the shelves of any druggist; note the large assortment of liquids and minerals and what not, all of them warranted "sure cure," and all of them under a patent. Cures there are, many and interesting. Disease cure, fatigue cure, mind cure, mirth cure, pain cure--you take your choice. They are harmless, even if they do not cure you of your "pain" or "mind" or "disease."

Then, there are the baths. Note their number and variety: Sea baths, mineral-water baths, electric baths (shocking!), vapor baths, Turkish and sun baths; and in Indiana there are mud baths. A gentleman inquired of another if he had ever taken one of those wonderful "mud baths." He said: "Yes, once when I ran for office." It must have been a mud-slinging campaign. It is to be hoped that he was cured.

Then, there is the Health-food plan, the advocate of vegetarian diet, the plan and practice of "no breakfast" or one-meal-a-day theories.

Every once in a while some new "fad" springs up among the people, has a great rage, flourishes for a season--but then subsides and is unheard of again, being superseded by something else equally sensational and equally absurd.

Some years ago there was a "blue glass" craze. The theory was that instead of the pure golden light of the sun beaming into the sick-room through the transparent window-pane or open window, there should be a division of these rays, and by the use of blue glass only the blue light should thus be admitted. So sudden and great was the demand for blue glass, that the markets of St. Louis, Chicago, and all the Eastern cities were overwhelmed with orders for the article, in order to try the new remedy. That craze died away almost as quickly as it was born.

Recently a fad took a start, that the early morning dew had in it medicinal qualities, and to walk barefooted on the grass before the sun drove the sparkling diamonds from the green--was a sure cure for a multitude of ills. It had its day (and doubtless had some cleansing effects beside the value of early morning rising and exercise); but it went the way of all other fads. The proof of a diseased and credulous humanity is certainly very evident, not alone in the substantial support given to a variety of schools of medical practice--allopathy, homeopathy, hydropathy, osteopathy, and a combination of some of each for a very accommodating and general practice called the Eclectic school--but also in the rise and wonderful flourish of a host of "isms" that allure with great promise, and, by cures produced by other causes, deceive the helpless victims and their faithful friends for the sake of the dollar. Was not "Weltmerism" a growing panacea for suffering humanity's ills--until denied the use of the mail for their long-distant and far-absent treatment, but always pay-in-advance system? Does not magnetism furnish a field for the display of individual skill upon individual subjects, more or less successful? Do you know of the sacred relic at St. Anne, Illinois, where dupes of the nervous-spinal-rheumatic-trouble come, see, touch, leave their crutches, go their way, and say: "Great is the miracle of St. Anne!" Has Schlatter, the modern medical Messiah, been forgotten? Does Dowieism flourish? Is there much of science or of Christianity in Christian Science, numbering its followers and its testimonials by the thousands? Are we indeed growing wiser as weakness grows upon us? Perhaps the world is in possession of

much valuable knowledge concerning the cause and cure of disease. The failure to disseminate that knowledge, the inability of the masses to appreciate and understand it--above all, to make use of it in a general way--may account for much of the distress and consequent weakness in the world. The violent outbreak of fanaticism, now and then, running mad after some supposed supernatural or mysterious deliverance from bodily suffering, would seem to question the oft-quoted statement as to the growth of wisdom in a race evidently growing weaker. Were it not for the more conservative, the evenly balanced remnant of the race, who set out to correct the error after which the multitude has gone, before these wise men are even aware of its presence--we might despair of the permanency of progress among us. The more there is of an appearance of Divine intervention, the more stubborn the opposition. So healing by prayer becomes a belief and a practice. Its limitations have never been established. What can be cured, and what is not proper subject of prayer, has not been definitely stated; but that, after all, death is final victor has never been questioned. To prolong life and relieve pain is the most that can be claimed.

Let it be understood that here, in the affairs of the flesh and body as in other affairs of human life, there is a ruling divine Providence; there is law and order and system and consistency in every department of the infinite realm of the spiritual. The spiritual and mental are superior to the physical and the material. That the soul should find relief and resignation in the compassionate and all-wise and infinite One is not surprising. But to believe, to pray, and then ignore the plain and explicit directions of the laws of our common being--is to presume upon divine Mercy, and expect good to come, when the conditions of a righteous life have not been met. Will faith heal us if we refuse food and drink? Will prayer save us if we avail not ourselves of the simple and necessary remedies that cleanliness, exercise, rest in sleep afford? What, then, about surgery, and the remedies suggested by the experienced and skillful physician?

Two thousand years ago Ecclesiasticus spoke a true word, that finds confirmation in both God's Word written and God's Word spread out before us in nature and events. Hear it:

"The Lord has created medicines out of the earth; and he who is wise will not abhor them. My son, in your sickness be not negligent. Leave off your sin, and order your hands aright, and cleanse your heart from all wickedness. Then give place to the physician, for the Lord has created him; let him not go from you, for you have need of him. There is a time when, in their hands, there is good success." Is there anything wrong about that?

We are too much inclined to ignore God in the ordinary affairs of life, and some of us seem to think we have nothing to do in the matter of our own restoration of health, when once it has been impaired by our own indiscretion, but to turn it over to the Lord. That is faith "without works."

It is true, confirmed by every honest druggist and every conscientious physician in the land, that there is a tendency to resort to medicines, to appeal to physicians, more frequently than is necessary. The testimony of doctors in the matter would come a little nearer being unanimous if the custom prevailed of paying an annual fee for advice and needed service, than payment on account of special visits. More frequently we would hear it said: "You are not seriously ill; you will be yourself again in a few days. Don't get uneasy."

Patients themselves make it necessary for the physician to look solemn, shake his head, compound some bitter but harmless medication, in order that nature may have a chance to help

the frightened, grown-up child of a imagined ailment. That is supposed to be the most desirable state of bliss, where one is as ignorant of the existence of vital organs and their functions, as it is possible to be. The more one knows, of the little learning sort, the more certain he is that he has received a death-dealing blow when a slight pain strikes him in the region of the heart or the lungs, or a little lower down. Some people cannot regale themselves with the freshness and wisdom of the annual almanac, issued by some proprietary medical company, but are sure to feel a sympathetic anxiety, somewhere in their bodily make-up, calling for that very remedy, which has effected such marvelous cures in the case of others. The facts are, the better informed concerning this body of ours and the things that help or injure it--the better off we are. The introduction of the study of physiology and hygiene in our public schools, within the lifetime of those now teaching, and the later requirement of scientific study of the effects of stimulants and narcotics upon the human system, has had, and will continue to have, a beneficial influence upon public health. All laws looking to the abatement of nuisances, plague-spots; all quarantine regulations; all addresses at institutes, and lectures devoted to the principles of health, help to prolong life and make it worth living. We need physicians; we need instruction; we need rules, regulations, requirements for the public health. But with all these guides and guards, this body will, in spite of care and patching and tinkering--die; and out from the material will pass that which animated it, which gave it personality and power, into another and spiritual body, eternal in the heavens. It is for the

soul within, that the house without, should have our constant care and our unremitting attention. What, then, are the little things that make for bodily health?

1. A Healthy Diet. This has to do, not only with the food we eat, the liquids we drink, but also as to their quantity and quality, the time and the condition of eating and drinking. The application of just ordinary common sense would save many hours of pain, and prevent serious sickness, if not loss of life.

From infancy we have been prone to put almost everything into the mouth, whether it was digestible or not. In growing youth the "taste of things" governed. We ate or rejected whatever the capricious palate said was good or bad. In manhood and womanhood, with little knowledge and no judgment as to food values, we came into possession of a complete set of rebellious organs, and soon became the victims of dyspepsia and a host of other disagreeable aches and pains--the heritage of overeating, feasting on "good things" that were very bad for us. The habits of overeating, and eating of rich foods, has done for the man animal what is seldom known of among other animals--created disturbances not easily allayed. That we have been also the victims of much that is impure in the food articles of commerce is very generally known. The canned goods, the baking powders, the various condiments supplied us from the mammoth establishments of our day, may have in them elements of danger unknown, unthought of by our fathers and mothers of a generation or two back. The bread, the pie, the cake that our mother used to make may have been more substantial, even if less palatable, than that of present-day science. We are not anxious to return to the "good old days" of early cookery; we hope yet to see better foods prepared, and to enjoy them, than any boasted of in the past.

More and more are we beginning to appreciate the necessity of good cooking; not the elaborate and peculiarly concocted dishes of special occasions--but instruction concerning the preparation of seasonable food for the system. Cooking schools, like other professional schools, or hours of

special training in cooking in the public school, as in matters of manual training, will be honored and appreciated when it is found out how essential such things are to health. Consider well when you are at the table, eat to live; eat slowly; be temperate in all things. Let Dr. Diet be your attendant physician. Heed his instruction; follow closely his prescription.

2. Adequate Sleep.

Beecher said: "Working consumes, sleep replaces; working exhausts, sleeping repairs; working is death, sleep is life. The man who sleeps little, repairs little; if he sleeps poorly, he repairs poorly. If he uses up all the day less energy than he accumulates at night, he will gain in life and vigor. If he uses up all the energy that he gains at night, he will just hold his own. If he uses more energy by day than he gathers at night, he will lose; and if this last process be long continued, he must succumb. A man who would be a good worker, must see to it that he is a good sleeper."

John Wesley exhibited a page in his note-book, on which was written, after a number of dates, the significant entry: "Lost thirty minutes of sleep;" "Lost an hour of sleep;" "Lost an hour and a half of sleep,"--until the total counted up an equivalent of two weeks. "This," said he, "must all be made up. It represents so much time taken from the allotted seven hours of sleep out of every twenty-four. I do not intend to regain it all at once--but shall retire so much earlier each night than I have been accustomed to, and make up all this loss." The great haste and hurry of our modern life, the prolonging of day and its duties long into the night, has been disastrous to the health and vigor of the average American. The high stress, the tensions of school and trade and travel, necessitate more of counteraction in sleep than ever before. Excitement of city life, demands in social circles, concentration of thought upon a multitude of interests, attention drawn from the peaceful village and farm life to the stirring scenes in Asia, in Africa, in Alaska, will, unless in some way relief is found, make us a nation of stressful, nervous, hysterical, if not insane people! The commercialism of our age, its excitement and stir and strife, is bringing men prematurely to old age and the grave. Need is more evident of seasons of relaxation and vacation days; by the merchant, society people, the banker, the lawyer, the preacher, the housewife, the teacher, everybody urged on by this task and that, until, either broken in health or doing poorly in the business, a change is demanded.

Now, a very simple remedy is found, not in costly pilgrimages to seashores, or total abandonment of all home and business interests for a two months' vacation--but in rest, quietness, sleep, as the days and nights come and go.

Children should have sleep regularly, and undisturbed. Growing boys and girls should not be allowed to dissipate the hours assigned by nature to the recuperation of the system, but should be trained to regularity of hours of retiring and rising; for many of the disasters to bodily health come along the line of disobedience to the demand for sleep. Next after Dr. Diet, consult Dr. Quiet for valuable hints on health.

3. Sunshine. To eat well, to sleep well, one must feel the effect of fresh air, exercise, and the invigorating influence of sunlight. Let the house welcome this blessed health-bringer, through window and open door. Let each one catch a glimpse of the sun's first dawning, stay with him while he lifts the load from depressed spirits during the day, and sends him to the room and to the bed that the blessed beams have visited during the waking hours. Then will sleep be refreshing.

Sunshine is the tonic and soporific medicine for all God's children in poverty and distress. It purifies the air, warms it for the lungs, invigorates the body, kindles a light in the eye, and enriches the life of all who court its glory. Make sunshine a regular and constant physician.

4. Shelter.

Protection from the severity of winter, from oppression of the heat of summer, is necessitated by this very susceptible body of ours. From the storm, from the rain, from the heat and the cold, we need houses in which to live. But remember, the house in which we live is not as important as the man or woman who dwells there, just as this bodily house is not as important as the soul that lives within.

Shelter, then, should be the means to an end, and not the end itself. Fine houses, like fine clothes, may serve the purpose of shelter, but there may be much discomfort and little protection in the finery of both house and clothes. "I feel so chilly!" said a fashionably dressed lady in a stagecoach, as she shiveringly drew her thin lace shawl about her shoulders.

Don't sacrifice comfort, endanger health by any foolish behest or unreasonable demand of fashion or rule of propriety. Don't let false modesty prevent the observance of rules of health; nor allow ridicule to cheat you out of comfort, health, education, or Heaven. Protect your body; surround yourself with safeguards. Endurance and exposure have limits, refuse to go beyond reasonable bounds.

Shelter the feet. Great battles have been lost because the feet of the common soldiery were not properly shod. More diseases have had their beginning in ill attention to the comfort and protection of the feet than are commonly supposed. A great company, engaged in the manufacture and sale of shoes, has adopted a wise trademark advertisement, which contains four words--hear them in behalf of your lower extremities--namely: "Make Your Feet Glad." A cost of a pair of overshoes may be saved by a woman wearing thin shoes, and health upheld. Look to the comfort of the feet, even if you have to deny yourself of a piece of stunning neckwear or a new-style hat.

Shelter the throat and lungs. Breathe through the nose. Warm up the wintry air by having it pass through the longer channel than that which admits its chill to the lungs from the mouth. Breathe deep, and expel the poison by the introduction of fresh air. Keep the body clean; keep it from danger as well as from disease. Be in health, and prosper with the prosperity of the soul. Seek the advice of those who are qualified to speak, and beware of kindly-intentioned, well-meaning friends, who may send you to mountain heights--when seashore influences may be best. Be sure that Drs. Diet, Quiet, and Sunshine are given a respectful hearing. Consult them daily. Let the kindly comfort of that trained and experienced nurse, "Shelter," be always welcome. Commune with the laws of physical being and God, your Creator--and you will have done much to make a sound body for a sound mind and an eternal spirit. But some day this tenement of clay will be no longer serviceable. It will die, give place to another, which is being prepared for us. "For we know that if this earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!"

6. Little Things That Make for EDUCATION.

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"The word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little" Isaiah 28:13 The processes of education, both religious and secular, are practically the same. In each we advance step by step, pass through a series of gradations, attain a degree of excellence--as a reward for all the previous years of patience, willingness, and self-sacrificing denial.

Beware of the man or woman pretending to teach a short-cut method to either scholarship or saintliness. But take heed also lest you be deceived respecting the possibilities of an education for yourself, or the attainment of the highest New Testament standard of Christian experience and life.

Both mental culture and spiritual development must accept precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. Both need atmosphere and surroundings favorable to growth; either of them may triumph over adverse conditions, master circumstances, and stand supreme in the midst of difficulties, by meeting the conditions essential to success.

What is education? It is primarily a leading forth; a training of the mental powers; the informing and enlightenment of the understanding; the formation and regulation of the principles and the character; the preparation and fitting for any calling or business.

Channing said: "The true end of education is to unfold and direct aright our whole nature. Its office is to call forth power of every kind . . .

power of thought, affection, will, and outward action;

power to observe, to reason, to judge, to contrive;

power to adopt good ends firmly, and to pursue them efficiently;

power to govern ourselves and to influence others;

power to gain and spread happiness. The young are to be helped to help themselves. They should be taught to observe and study the world in which they live, to trace the connections of events, to rise from particular facts to general principles, and then to apply these in explaining new phenomena. This power, as thus described, dwells within; perhaps unknown to its possessor until awakened, until called out by processes simple, various, yet valuable.

Dr. Beaumont said: "Knowledge is to be taught as nature teaches--gently, softly, kindly; a little now and a little then, a little here and a little there, a little this way and a little that way. See how nature trains her plants in the field--the sunshine, the rain, the combination of air and soil, slowly, gradually; germ, blossom, growth, form; then fruitage, awaiting the harvest."

Dr. John Todd said: "Education begins with life. The touch first ministers to it; afterwards the sight, and then the hearing. This is our guide in seeking to assist the progress of nature. We must begin with the present and tangible things; we must then give absent things a visible form by picture; and the picture which meets the eye may lead to the description which finds its way to the mind only by the ear. Before we are aware, the foundations of character are laid, and no subsequent instruction can remove or destroy them." The urgent necessity of this leading forth, this development of brain power in order to measure up to the full requirement of nobility of character--is seen and felt every day and everywhere. No man should content himself with but meager attainment, when it is possible for him to climb the mountainside of intellectual excellence, and view with soul appreciation and satisfaction a wide world of beauty and activity. The wealth of the ages is today laid at our feet. The problems with which men have struggled, and which have hindered them in their progress, have been, or are being, solved for us. These accumulated treasures are present-day possessions, and for any man to die in poverty in the midst of plenty, to remain ignorant when truth and teachers are all around him, is a sad comment upon his ambition, or his lack of it.

Some men feel keenly the deprivation of early advantages, deplore sadly the circumstances of boyhood that prevented study and the helping hand of instructors. These men are all the more anxious that their children should have that of which they were unfortunately deprived, and from their view-point seek to prevent a repetition of their experience by their children. The best facilities and the best instructors are none too good for them. But something more is needed than facilities. Richly equipped libraries, laboratories, mechanical contrivances, splendidly endowed institutions and well-qualified instructors in different departments of learning, may all fail in education, in leading out and expanding the power within of intellectual conquest. Men without these have become educated; men with them have failed to rise above the ordinary.

Channing said: "A man in earnest finds means, or, if he cannot find, he creates them. A vigorous purpose makes much out of little, breathes power into weak instruments, disarms difficulties, and even turns them into assistances. Every condition has means of progress, if we have spirit enough to use them."

Hence, to begin with, the education of the man must originate within, or respond to the call from without. Education is for the man who is in earnest, the man or woman with a vigorous purpose, the individual who resolves, who determines, who wills.

Lack of purpose, absence of ambition, is a sure evidence of destined defeat. Unwillingness to undertake, or, if undertaken, to continue--has done more to hinder the coming of a better intellectual dawn, than all the other difficulties combined.

It is true, talent and taste may be lacking, timidity may turn away a soul from so formidable a task as that of attacking error; but these are difficulties easily overcome, if there has first been made the wish, the desire, the longing for intellectual power.

Begin with easy things; learn the simple elements of a task, of a service, of a book--and then will come, by and by, an enthusiasm, an excitement, a resistless abandon to reach the outer edges, or delve to the lowest strata of the subject in hand.

A taste for reading can be acquired. A talent for study may be developed. Only desire and will it, and a world brings contributions to you, throws open her doors of unmined wealth. Only resolve, and the rich treasures of thought of all the ages may come, slowly but surely, to you as honey from many hives. Be determined, and the hand and eye and ear will be trained for service and become servants to the mind. This, then, is the first of little things that makes for education.

1. Attention. That 's the cry of the drill-master, the call of the teacher, the necessity of the student. To fix the mind steadfastly upon this one subject in hand; to bring it back from its wanderings, and keep it at work--this is essential to the mastery of the theme, necessary to mental development. In the intellectual world, how many and how strong are the inducements to leave the task at hand and consider other subjects--to try to do two things at once, and fail in both! The temptations in the mental world are just as many, and just as hard, as those in the realm of morals.

Attend, then, to the task assigned; bring the mind to consider it; make a vigorous effort to exclude all other thoughts, all other calls, until at least you can go away from the task or truth, and yet so fix it in mind that, unconsciously and without evident volition, your mind is still at work adjusting itself to the problem and considering the factors involved, or returns to the task with vigor and increased pleasure.

Ask questions. A question is said to be next to an idea. Said Lord Bacon: "To ask questions is the half of knowledge." "Life without questions," said Socrates, "is no life at all." Follow up the answer with other questions. Compare, form a judgment. Keep the mind on the subject; whether it be a statement of history, a question of science, a problem in mathematics, or a lesson in morals--ask questions--not to cavil, but to know, and to bring all other truth into harmony with the one at hand, and to fix the mind attentively upon the truth stated.

If the will has brought the mind to seek knowledge and possess power, and the habit of attention is formed. The second little thing that makes for education, is that of

2. Discipline. By constant repetition we soon make truth our own by daily training; the mind is mastered, ceases to wander, and becomes an obedient servant. By discipline, the inert and nerveless fingers become active and responsive to the wish of the mind; then the power of self-mastery is attained. This makes the difference between the man of civilization and the barbarian; namely, the power of self-mastery, ability to understand, and to reason, and to execute.

It is not an altogether easy or delightful task, this of discipline. Most of us would rather pass carelessly and quickly from one thought to another, from one truth to another, staying just so long here or there, as the thought or truth gave us temporary pleasure; then leaving it when its greater depths were opened up, or dismissing it altogether when it gave signs of serious study required, or became, as we say, "too deep." The failure to master, step by step, the lesson in hand, thinking that "this can be omitted; it will be more interesting farther along, and perhaps a little easier," has been the cause of much trouble and consequent intellectual weakness. These forts of the enemy must be conquered, or their guns at least silenced--else we shall have an annoying experience of an enemy both in front and in the rear. Make progress slowly, but surely. That we shall never be able to master all the problems, even of a blade of grass, of a bird's wing, or the pebble at our feet; that these and similar simple objects may require a lifetime to fully discover and answer, is very evident. Therefore, we would be foolish to refuse to go forward until we know all

about the first blade of grass, or the feather from the wing of a bird, or the why and how and what of the grain of sand by the seashore.

A survey of the vast world is the best we may be able to do; but devotion to someone part of the vast world's treasures may be the call our being makes upon us. In this, and FOR this, long years and constant service in training and discipline is absolutely necessary.

3. Teachers. From infancy to old age, in this matter of education, we shall have need of teachers. Man is the most helpless of all the animal creation, and needs, from the first, instruction, direction, training, and discipline.

He who has gone ahead--comes back to tell us what he has seen, what he has learned, and to warn us of errors he has discovered, and encourage us by his experience and observations. How constantly do we need correction, advice, help, reproof, as well as sympathy, in the effort to become educated!

We have been fortunate, in our day and generation, in the excellence and number of well-trained and conscientious teachers, and in the advantages of a free public-school system. With the disadvantages of the past, or the folly that is seen in parents not taking advantage of opportunities granted them, there are a multitude of children in our public schools who, were it not for its freedom from cost, could not fit themselves properly for life's duties and responsibilities.

We need teachers; we shall always need them. When we have passed out from schoolroom privileges, and away from restraints and rules of discipline, we shall find teachers everywhere, ready to help and encourage us, if we are wise enough to seek them and use them.

There is not a speaker, be his speech public or private, but can teach us something. The possession of an unteachable spirit is a great possession. To be willing to learn, to increase one's stock of knowledge from every source, eager to know, to compare, and, in turn, impart instruction to others--makes life a great university--the men and women we meet, its teachers and instructors. As knowledge increases, the less critical one becomes of the non-essentials in manner and style of these teachers. The wider vision of the vast ocean of truth humbles and subdues the truth-seeker, making him wait, reverently, with suppressed anxiety, the revelation of knowledge by any and all agencies, high and low.

Next to the living instructor and the aid of the schoolroom and the college--are BOOKS, the living thoughts of the dead, or the present forceful facts of the absent--with which one may become liberally educated, if the first few steps of willingness, application, and discipline be taken.

If in the realm of the intellectual any one exhortation above another should be given, let it be, "Give attention to reading!" Learn to love books; make them your choicest and closest companions. Read for information; read for culture; read for advantage. Master the best and truest thoughts of the age, and of the ages. Read history; read poetry; read descriptions of places and peoples; read essays; read sermons; read biography; read books of humor; read fiction; but be choice in this, as you would be in the choice of other companionship. He cannot be ignorant, lonely, or poor--who has all the wisdom of all men and the thought of all time, at his disposal. He is wise who will gather about him standard writings, adding to their number from time to time, until, in the presence of such company, he can defy all unrest, all perplexity, poverty, or sorrow, and become in turn a

helper to the helpless.

It is by precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, that the unlearned and ignorant pass into the company of the wise and prudent. It is not by the work of a day, nor merely the experience of a year, that men are made good or wise or great. The patient plodder, the resolute soul, making diligent application of time and strength and talent, submitting to tiresome discipline, attention to teachers whose truths, spoken or written, light up the way and make life broader and better--this is the student who will become educated and make the most of life. Who is the educated man? There have been great minds that could drive a dozen sciences abreast, and manage well all of them. There have been linguists, who could speak and read and write thirty languages. But such men are few. Yet of educated men there are many, and women too, who have trained themselves for the arts and sciences and economies of life, who yet may be but learners, or know but vaguely of many other things.

I saw a man, rough and grim in appearance, pass around a locomotive engine, oil-can and wrench in hand, stop here and there in examination, adjust this, tighten that, apply oil where needed, then leap into the cab, and, in response to a signal, lay his hand upon the lever, move out and on across the fields and streams, with that mighty engine and train of cars loaded with precious freight and still more precious lives--and do the deed with such calmness and assurance and sense of mastery, that I said: "Here is an educated man."

He may have known little of books, less of language, nothing of esthetics, but his mechanical skill had been developed; he had trained his hand, his eye, his brain, and in the position he occupied he was worth a score of men who had mastered the theory, who had learning and culture, but had no practical knowledge of the "iron horse," how to handle, feed, and manage him aright.

I went into an electric-light and power plant; the dynamos were throbbing with life; the lights shone brightly, while a multitude of wire and delicately constructed instruments were here and there in orderly bewilderment. Properly clad, a man moved in and around, adjusting this, checking that, and then sat down amid the immense room of generators and engines, just as calmly as a farmer would observe a field of growing corn, and took up a paper to read, to pass the time away, and learn what was going on in some other field of labor and of thought. By the same processes of resolution, application, discipline, and instruction--he had arrived at that responsible place, as had the professor in the college or the judge on the bench. A well-known lecturer was giving a definition of an educated man, taking in the training of hand and eye and ear, as well as the brain--the ability to know and to do as a part of the process. A friend, who was a mechanic and knew his trade better than he knew books, said to him: "Mr. Smith, I can give you a better definition of an educated man than the one you gave."

"Can you? What is it?"

"An educated man," said the mechanic, "is a man who knows and performs his job well." This may be commonplace, but it has the merit of terseness and accuracy. But every such man, who knows how to do the task assigned him, may, by just such an experience and further study, be able to assign men himself to that place he occupies, and be "on to another job," requiring more skill and knowledge, in the same realm of mechanical science. A well-known college professor, lecturing lately before a college society, told the members that there were five principal evidences

of education. The man or woman presenting these five evidences could be fairly called educated, whether by a college training or without any. The first evidence of education, he went on to say, was "correctness and precision in the use of the mother tongue."

The second, "refined and gentle manners, which are the expressions of fixed habits of thought and action."

The third, "the power and habit of reflection."

The fourth, "the power of growth."

And the fifth, "efficiency, or the power to do."

Without these characteristics, knowledge can never become power--but in their possession lies the secret of gaining an education, no matter where that education is secured. Education means:

Good English; do we speak it?

Good manners; do we observe them?

Good, hard thinking; do we do any?

Good, steady growing; do we keep it up?

Good work; do we accomplish any?

Philip Gilbert Hamerton says that the intellectual life is really within the reach of every one who earnestly desires it. It is the constant preference for higher thoughts over lower thoughts. Books are necessary to such an education; but books alone cannot give the best part of it. No diploma confers it. We can begin and finish it without ever entering a college. We can gain it for ourselves; and when gained, no stranger can meet us, no comrade live beside us, without recognizing that we are educated, and well educated, men or women. Our civilization is becoming more and more complex; multiplied industries and vast agencies are being developed, so that, from the public schools, colleges, and universities, men and women are coming to engage in life's duties with more or less of accumulated power. These should seek by constant effort, in whatever department of work or oversight they may find themselves, to make each year, each month, nay, each day, a step in advance of all other previous attainments. "Line upon line, here a little there a little." But education, highest culture, like wealth or religion, fails of its highest purpose if sought merely for itself, or attained for self-gratification. The man who earns and saves and refuses to join in any public enterprise, or to cooperate in the development of helpful things, becomes a miser, an abject object of contempt. The very religious man, whose holiness drives him into seclusion or to expressions of severe criticism of the activities of others in the busy marts of trade (a man without sympathetic helpfulness), becomes an ascetic or a fanatic, which state ends his growth and circumscribes his usefulness. The educated man, to enrich and enjoy his stock of knowledge, must measure himself with others; must submit to criticism as well as serve as critic; should become a teacher to others; for in no other way can that best be accomplished which is the primary idea of education--to communicate ideas to others.

While there may be much to depress in a community, such as a missionary finds in a heathen land, yet every effort at enlightenment will draw upon the resources of the man, and cause him to

devise expedients whereby truth may be conveyed to the simple and ignorant about him. So it is everywhere. Hence, if the educated man would retain and increase his power of thought and his measure of culture, let him impart to others.

"I feel my deficiency," said a musician to another, "and I have concluded to find a teacher to help me."

"Nonsense," exclaimed the other, "find a pupil instead of a teacher, and you will learn while you teach."

It is not the imposition of our learning, our ideas of truth and our knowledge of fact and principle upon others--that will help them or us. It is the contact of truth-seekers, one with the other, as flint strikes flint, that produces the light.

Determine to know, to learn from any source; apply the mind attentively; go over and over the fact and the formula and the act, until it is your own by self-discipline; owe loyal allegiance to teachers; make yourself a faithful subject of Truth wherever found; read books--the recognized standards; study events; become helpers to those who also are struggling up the mountain-side of truth and knowledge, until they stand beside you and rejoice in the wider vision of human and eternal life.

One final and most important truth. The education of the man is but partial, if only the intellect is cultured and disciplined by the processes already indicated. These principles and rules are most faithfully taught and emphasized in the public schools and colleges of our land.

Unless, however, the moral nature, the spiritual life, which is superior to the intellectual as the mind is superior to the body, receives attention--all the vast wealth of the world's accumulation of thought and truth will be but the prelude to a magnificent ruin. "Know yourself;" but know God first and always. The conversion and culture of the soul is essential to the completion and permanency of mind-culture and the training and discipline of the powers of the intellect.

Capacities may not be equal in the field of the intellect. All may not be wise in the wisdom of the world; but soul culture, soul growth is possible to all rational creatures, and that education which will bring the greatest satisfaction may be secured by communion and contact with Jesus Christ, who is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.

Give God an attentive hearing;

Compel allegiance to His law;

Maintain a teachable spirit;

Seek counsel of His Word;

Lead a prayerful life.

Thus, with precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, from the facts of nature and the experiences of life and the lessons of God's Word, will the processes of education be maintained.

7. Possibilities of Good from Things Apparently Evil.

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"And Nathanael said unto him: Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him: Come and see!" John 1:46.

The long-looked-for Messiah had at last made His appearance. He had been the Desire of the nations, the expected One of the people Israel, throughout the centuries. He came in fulfillment of the promise made by the Father, that evil might not prevail forever. He came at the time foretold, at the place predicted, under circumstances long before described, in order to do God's will. His coming called out the glad chorus of thanksgiving and praise, both from the intelligences of Heaven and the faithful and devout of earth.

"Heaven and nature sang

When earth received her King."

He came, fulfilling the strange and marvelous description that Isaiah had written of Him, that He should be a Son--yet the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father; One on whose shoulders the Government should rest, yet still a Man of Sorrows and deep acquaintance with grief. But when He came, those who had long looked for Him did not understand or welcome Him. He came to His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

It was on His return from the wilderness and the Temptation, that John, His forerunner, is privileged to introduce Him to two of His disciples. "Looking upon Jesus as He walked, he said: Behold the Lamb of God!" and the two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. This is, then, the beginning of that mighty following which today encircles the globe, loyal loving hearts, determined on eternal fellowship. But in the midst of the blessed work of securing recruits for Jesus, a difficulty unlooked for is encountered; a prejudice met with, that was at least unexpected. He was from Nazareth! It mattered not, if He came from the throne of Glory, came in the royal line of David and Solomon, came with the blessing and attested authority of Heaven itself. Was it true that He stopped on that long journey, for awhile, at the despised village of Nazareth? Then surely there is something amiss; for--can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Right wisely does the patient Philip meet the objection of this prejudiced one by the only effective argument in such a case: "Come and see!" From this incident, let us consider how it is possible that good may proceed from agencies, events, places apparently evil--at least from things despised, ignoble, and insignificant. Two factors are noticeably the cause of this incredulous state in which we find ourselves respecting the possible good that may come from insignificant or evil sources, and they are our prejudice--an opinion without a reason--and our lack of faith in God. The wrath of man has again and again been made to praise Him who brings good out of evil. That which is small and despised has had in it elements of greatness, and possibilities of unquestioned good, in spite of our prejudice or our lack of faith in God.

Dr. Cummings said: "Minute events are the hinges on which magnificent results turn. In a watch the smallest link, chain, or cog is as essential as the mainspring itself. If one falls out, the entire machinery will stand still."

It is well known that the art of printing, probably the parent of more good than all others, owes its origin to crude impressions taken, for the amusement of children, from letters carved on the bark of a beech-tree. This was a slight matter, which thousands would have passed over with neglect. The stupendous results of the steam engine may all be traced to an individual observing steam issuing from a kettle, just emptied, and placed casually close to a fire. So almost all the great discoveries in science were apparently stumbled upon. Their first intimations of usefulness were slight, but were not ignored or despised. To these intimations the world owes much for its present greatness in commercial and mechanical arts. They are the Nazareths of science, out of which have come great good. Let them not be despised. But our theme does not demand from us a defense in behalf of evil. That would scarcely be possible. We are under no thanks to sin for any of the blessings we enjoy. No apparent good is ours, because of the existence of evil. If we have been privileged to reach higher heights after having touched lowest depths--the thanks are due to Him who has had compassion upon us in our low and lost estate, has heard our cry, and has stooped to save us. All the good that has come to us, and may yet come, is because of God's sovereign mercy. "All things work together for good to those who love God." "For we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ;" not through sin, but through Christ. That which is apparently evil, or apparently small or inadequate, may not really be so. The weak things of earth have been chosen to confound the mighty. These may be weak, looking at them from a human standpoint, but not so when we discover that God is in them. They are the Davids that stand before the Goliaths of sin; the Gideons, armed only with trumpets and lamps; the Moses and Aarons, with but a rod in the presence of Pharaoh and before the Red Sea.

Yet above, and guiding the hand of a David, the insignificant stones in the shepherd's sling do effective work. There is the breath of the Almighty in the cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

So, too, in all the ages past and in the centuries that are yet to come, the good that God has done, or may yet do, has a hiding-place in the despised things of earth. Paul saw a reason in this, and is led to say, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Our prejudices! How they cheat us out of blessings, and blind our eyes to higher values, and depreciate men and events of real worth! Our previously conceived notions of what is for the best, may be far from correct. That which, under the blessing of God, may result in largest returns, does not always meet our approval or secure our cooperation. There is the possibility of good in the beginning of many movements that have, for support and advocacy, agencies and instruments unheard of before, or despised because of fewness or feebleness.

Note the beginnings of great reforms. See the men and means employed to carry them to success. Can any good thing come of such inadequate agencies? Wait and see. If God is present, these feeble beginnings will mature into mighty proportions, though the efficiency of methods and means at first are small and despised. In the sixteenth century an unknown yet vigorous monk took his stand against Papal Rome and her corrupt practices. He stood upon the clear declaration

of the Word of God, "The just shall live by faith." He had no influence at court or among the nobility, yet this is the man called of God to do for Him and His children a needed work of spiritual reformation. Looking at him and at his surroundings, one would be a bold prophet indeed who would have said: "There is the possibility of great good in this man apparently destitute of the very forces of real greatness." So also in the eighteenth century, when vital piety had seemingly died out from the homes and hearts of our English ancestry, God looked down into that parsonage home at Epworth, and forthwith the preliminaries for a mighty revolution in aggressive Church work along evangelist lines began to arrange themselves, and Methodism is the result. Men sneered and stormed and defied; but opposition was overcome, prejudice gave way, and the possibilities of good from such insignificant sources were at last unquestioned. Can any good thing come from Wittenberg? Protestantism answers: "Come and see!" The temporal power of the pope reached its highest assumption of arrogance in that day, and the tide began to turn when Luther and his little band stood out in behalf of an open Bible, liberty of the individual conscience, and the doctrine of justification by faith. Can any good thing come from Epworth and Oxford? Methodism, in its extended branches of closely allied fellowship, replies: "Come and see." Churches in every community; schools and colleges scattered far and wide; a religious press, with publications singing the truth in every language; millions of children gathered together week after week for Bible study, and instruction in active service for Christ--all this, and more, at home and abroad, tell of results from small beginnings. So has it been with every movement against iniquity and in behalf of organized effort for the suppression of vice. Great reforms do not begin with the masses, but with the individual.

If a system of human slavery is to be attacked and overthrown, the beginnings of that revolution must pass through the dark days, through humiliating scenes of ridicule and violence. But from the disgraceful acts of mobs, the burning of houses, the destruction of property, the movement gained substantially until it called to its support--argument, fact, publicity, members, and enlisted sympathy and moral support. It then moved on to success, for God was in it. Are there today moral or social movements, in or out of the Church--movements aimed at the destruction and complete overthrow of great evils, or designed to secure a better state of affairs in society? They may have originated unhappily, may be advocated by those poorly qualified in many particulars to help the cause along; but, in spite of unfortunate origin, in spite of prejudice, notwithstanding the feebleness of the support--these reforms of a philanthropic nature will in time exhibit to the world a proportion and a dignity that will entitle them to universal respect.

It may be the reform in international arbitration that will dissolve to peaceful pursuits, vast standing armies. It may refer to a confederation of Churches of like faith and doctrine that shall confer together in the interest of economy and efficiency respecting colleges, publications, missions, local Churches, refusing to enter fields already occupied by Churches of like faith, or to overlap each other in fields at home or abroad. Or it may be there has begun an agitation that looks to fitness and capability in the civil service, rather than to partisan zeal or complexion in color; or, better still, an uprising of a long-suffering class against a gigantic evil--a movement that has been slow and perhaps at times devious, yet always against a common enemy, at times engineered by noble men and women, and then directed by those whose motives may have been questioned, against whom there may exist great prejudice, but whose ultimate object may be hailed with unsurpassed delight--the prohibition of the liquor-traffic.

These and kindred reforms contain the germ of great good, though they may be surrounded by the husks or shells of apparent evil. When inclined to doubt the outcome of any desirable good because of its meager origin or support, remember Epworth and the Wesleys; remember Wittenberg and Luther; remember Nazareth and the Master Himself, who said that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God has perfected praise. Can any good come out of evil? "Come and see." The little group of patient followers along the shores of Galilee and the Jordan has grown to a vast multitude of earnest people, going among all nations, in all climates. These followers of the Nazarene are among the advance guards of civilization--the pioneers of deepest thought and highest attainments in culture.

There is nothing in the religion of Christ that is detrimental to the freest discussion or the most careful investigation. The Christly spirit has founded all our colleges with scarcely an exception. It has also been the best patron of the press. If, in this enlightened age--an age of popular inquiry and general information; a state of things made possible only by the Gospel and its influence--if, in this enlightened age, the good that has come to us from Nazareth could not stand the glare of public criticism, the brilliancy of this twentieth century, then would its supporters cease to found colleges, establish newspapers, send out into all the world its advocates to cope with the skill and learning of its enemies. Light and liberty are ours because of Christ and Nazareth.

Contrast our position with the position of those nations who have not the gospel. Who fears the result of a comparison of the condition of the sincere Christian, with the best examples of any of the religions of heathendom? As it respects childhood, one may see the superiority, the Divinity of the Nazarene, in His instruction and influence concerning the sacredness of human life. Infanticide or criminal negligence, in the case of the child, has no encouragement among those who remember the Babe of Bethlehem and the Boy of Nazareth. But the motherly feeling in darkened lands has been benumbed by the deadening influence of nature-worship and superstition, or else has been sacrificed to a supposed demand of an offended Deity. That which some look back upon as the happiest of life's experiences--childhood--has no sweet memories where Christ is unknown.

Come and see the good that has flowed as a sparkling stream from Nazareth's rocky hills, making rich and happy the homes of all who dwell beside its banks. Each rollicking group of merry-hearted boys and girls speaks of Christ and of Nazareth. Such scenes are only possible where human life is held sacred, and where due regard is had for the child and its mother. The more thoroughly the investigation is pursued, the more thoroughly will all prejudiced Nathanaels be convinced that not only some good may, but that all good has, come to us from Nazareth, through Christ our Lord.

Let no one despise the place, the agent, the means from which great good is reported to have come. It is possible and very probable that God has chosen to put His Spirit in the simple and despised ones of earth, in order to call out the wonder and praise and adoration of men. He was wiser than Nathanael, who said: "If this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it; lest you be found even to fight against God."

"Beloved," said John, "try the spirits whether they are of God." Let our judgments be not merely from appearances, but be righteous judgments. With God all things are possible. He may have it in the order of His providences that some slight thing, some little word, some frail deed--shall effect a revolution, produce a conversion, form a character, secure a change--and such a change as shall be felt even in eternity. Let not prejudice or unbelief defraud us of a possible blessing; for there is

always the possibility of great good from things apparently evil--from things insignificant and trivial.

8. Possibilities of Evil from Things Apparently Good.

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Then the man of God began to weep. "Why is my lord weeping?" asked Hazael. "Because I know the harm you will do to the Israelites," he answered. "You will set fire to their fortified places, kill their young men with the sword, dash their little children to the ground, and rip open their pregnant women!" 2 Kings 8:11-12

Warwick is known in the annals of English history as the king-maker, a title well adapted to describe his political influence and his power among the leaders of that troublous time. The title takes us back to another time, when God conferred such a name upon a man more worthy to bear it, who made and unmade rulers for the nations, under the direction of the King of kings Himself.

Elijah, by the hand of Elisha, anoints Hazael to be Syria's king. Elisha, by the hand of a nameless messenger, crowns Jehu king in the place of Joram, son of the wicked Ahab, over the kingdom of Israel. "And it came to pass that they who escaped the sword of Hazael, Jehu slew; and they that fled from Jehu, Elisha slew;" and thus, through vigorous means, changes were brought about according to the word of the Lord. The devices of men are thus brought to naught through appointed agents; these agents have their authority from One in whose hands are the reins of all governments. From an historical standpoint, Warwick was surpassed by Elijah as "king-maker." From the standpoint of a believer in an overruling Providence, God, who puts down one and sets up another, is truly the "King-maker" of all nations, and throughout all time! In the study of the events of Elisha's day, we are confronted with the fact that godly men are often unwilling witnesses of great evils. Before the prophet stands a young man of noble appearance, fair countenance, just arrived from his master, the king of Syria, on an errand concerning the king's health. When the question was asked and answered--answered in that doubtful way which indicated death, but not the result of his present sickness--then it was that the prophet settled his countenance steadfastly upon the young man, looking with that feeling of pity and deep sorrow of heart, which caused the young man to be embarrassed and to ask: "Why is my lord weeping?" And Elisha answered: "Because I know the harm you will do to the Israelites." Then, with increased emotion, this man of God revealed to him the depth of iniquity that lay concealed in his own nature, gave a vivid description of the desolation he would bring about, what cruelties he was capable of committing, and how he would destroy by fire and sword the finest cities and the choicest of God's people.

Then Hazael, astonished at the revelation of the prophet, and, like all men when their worst nature is revealed or the possibility of great crime is suggested, exclaims: "But what is your servant--a dog, that he should do this gross thing?"

Then it seemed more probable, when the prophet added: "The Lord has showed me that you shall be king over Syria." With that vision before his mind, Hazael went out from before the prophet a changed man. The evil nature within grew rapidly, and before another sunset he was a murderer,

and sat in royal state on the throne of his former master. For forty-five years he ruled, and though leagued against him were both Judah and Israel, his triumphs were complete. He would have marched against Jerusalem itself, and destroyed it, but was bribed to retire without accomplishing his plan. All the towns and cities east of Jordan were wrested from Israel, their inhabitants treated in a most ferocious manner--all in accord with the vision seen by the prophet, at a time when all in his life seemed so fair and promised so well for goodness.

What an example have we here of the possibility of evil from that which was, from all appearance, good! All that was needed to make the man a monster was the prospect of success of some ambitious scheme, and lo! the work is done. That which at first thought shocked the man into a vigorous resentment, soon became a secret passion, until crystallized into hardened crime. The hand that caresses may carry in its veins the blood of a murderer. In every man's nature there is this awful possibility of evil, which makes Divine grace and power an absolute necessity among men. The playful spirit manifested in the tiger's lair, when the family of young and old are undisturbed, gives no intimation of the dormant fierceness that may be aroused in a moment of time. Let the tiger of human hate and vengeance be unloosed--and who shall chain him again? The Orientals have a proverb, "Keep the red dog tied;" for when once released, who can tell what words of malice, what slander, what unkind speeches, the tongue may speak? Therefore, "keep the red dog tied."

"I wish somebody would burn his barn," said a man of high character, in one of those petulant seasons that may come to any man when a wrong has been done by a neighbor. Nobody thought anything about it, not even the man himself, until after it was uttered; then the idea shocked, but haunted him. That building, filled with the product of the farm--with choice farming implements, excellent livestock--stood close to the road, and was a constant reminder of his wish as he passed and repassed.

One night, after a fresh provocation, a sudden blaze lighted up the sky and brought out an alarmed community. In an unsuspected ravine near the burning barn this man was found, where, with a broken leg and a battered lantern, he had fallen hoping to escape unnoticed.

"Is it possible?" was the question from everyone. Yes, in every man ungoverned, uncontrolled, unmastered, there is this awful possibility. Beware, then, of evil thoughts, evil words, evil influences; for unless saved and kept by power Divine, there may be awakened in the best apparently of men, the very worst of their nature. A company of young people are spending the evening in a social manner. There is music, and conversation, and social enjoyment, because there is sense and satisfaction. Someone brings forth some curious-looking playing cards, and a number gather about a table while the cards are being distributed. Can evil come from a thing like that, so apparently good? Look beyond. The gambling spirit, more or less strong in every man, is quickly aroused, and these same tools, fingered by fair and faultless hands that night, are clutched in the not far future by those whose touch has been polluted by the wine-cup and the dagger.

More than one Elisha has wept at the sight of a group of innocent beginners at the card-table, who from that first game go out to kill time, and be killed in character by those who lie in wait for their coming, far removed from those where first they learned the easy lessons that led to perdition.

There's the look of apparent good in the early stages; but further along there is evil, and only evil. You should not need burglars' tools in your keeping, nor counterfeiters' dies or stencils, nor gamblers' outfit, with which to familiarize the young and innocent with deeds too dark to mention. A thousand other games, innocent yet instructive, may be devised, that do not carry with them such evil associations, or lead into such evil influences or to such results as these! The home parlor must be kept pure--or the home and the heart will gather to itself the impurities of the street, the saloon, and the place of social resort, through the parlor. It may be refined and elevated, or it may be degraded. Therefore, keep the parlor pure. But some will argue: Shall we not keep our sons and daughters from the public dance by an encouragement of the home and parlor amusements with a select company of friends from their own circle, and restrict their dancing to that number? Never was there a greater mistake made than that which undertakes to ward off a great evil--by instruction and encouragement in the fascination of the fundamental elements of that same evil. The door of the parlor cannot be so guarded as not to admit in some form or other--by the admission of these practices of the promiscuous gatherings--the suggestions of such places, as well as the atmosphere that breeds moral disease and leaves its poison in passions inflamed; and, unless speedily counteracted, drives its victims to moral death.

Anxious mothers, discreet fathers, watchful pastors, and all good people generally--weep when they know of the beginning or growth of this form of so-called amusement. They know what it will do, as Elisha knew the result of Hazael's life; and they lift the warning word: Beware! How people can hope to be wise and good, how they can expect to increase habits of virtue and industry, or how they can call this foolish, harmful, wicked practice of dancing an apparent good--is difficult to tell. The hours of idleness it has encouraged; the habits of sobriety in thought and life it has broken up; the doors to a religious life it has closed and bolted; the influences of good from the home, the school, the Church, it has quenched; aside from the avenues of dark days and shameful lives it has opened--makes it the genteel yet unscrupulous robber of society's best ornaments--innocence, purity, piety, of youth and social life. When people begin to dance, they forget to pray. When prayer is neglected, God is out of mind. If it is disastrous for a nation to forget God, the beginning of that disaster is when its individual citizens fail to retain a knowledge of the Creator. Woe to us when God goes out of life, because the dance has come in!

The THEATER has its defenders, and for its apparent good there are those who would argue long and learnedly, that no harm or evil can come therefrom. Let us not hide the awful sense of alarm and sorrow that we feel as we look into this institution of vice, and read the story of its immorality, and forecast its future. The great tragedian actor McCreary would never allow his daughter to enter the theater. A recent memoir of an actor of brilliant genius, written by his daughter, states that his children, during their childhood, were kept from everything connected with his profession. A son of this actor, on being recently consulted by a young lady in reference to going on the stage, earnestly entreated her to abandon the idea, on account of the immorality of such a life.

Another eminent actor, George Vandenhoff, on quitting the profession for the bar, gave the following gratuitous advice to any ingenious youth thinking of becoming an actor: "Go to sea; go into the law; go to the Church; go to Italy and strike a blow for liberty; go to anything or anywhere that will give you an honest and decent livelihood--rather than go upon the stage. To any young lady with a similar proclivity, I would say: Buy a sewing-machine and take in plain sewing; so shall you save much sorrow, bitter disappointment, and secret tears."

Hannah More speaks thus: "I do not hesitate for a moment to pronounce the theater to be one of the broadest avenues that lead to destruction! Fascinating no doubt it is, but on that account the more delusive and the more dangerous. Let a young man once acquire a taste for this species of entertainment, and yield himself up to its gratification--and he is in great danger of becoming a lost character, rushing upon his ruin. All the evils that can . . .

corrupt his morals,

blast his reputation,

embitter his life,

and destroy his soul--

lurk in the purlieus of the theater! Vice in every form lives and moves and has its being there. Myriads have cursed the hour when they first exposed themselves to the contamination of the theater.

Light and darkness are not more opposed to each other, than the Bible and the theater. If the one is good--then the other must be evil. If the Scriptures are to be obeyed--then the theater must be avoided. The only way to justify the theater, as it is, as it has ever been and is ever likely to be, is to condemn the Bible--the same individual can not defend both!"

"The peril of the theater," said Dr. Cuyler, "is to purity of character. Your eyes and ears are windows and doors to the heart. What enters once, never goes out. Photographs taken on the memory are not easily effaced or burned up; they stick there, and often become tempters and tormentors for a lifetime. The whole trend of the average American theater is hostile to heart-purity. A converted actor once said to his pastor while passing a play-house, 'Behind those curtains lies Sodom!' As an institution, the American theater tolerates sensual impurity in its performers, and presents scenes of impurity to its patrons. If you become one of its patrons, you go into moral partnership with the theater."

Vincent said: "The tendency of the theater is, on the whole, exceedingly bad. This statement cannot be contradicted. Therefore, let who will patronize it--the motto of the consistent, earnest, unselfish Christian youth must be, 'Better not!' The whole question of patronage of the theater depends upon the legitimate uses of the dramatic taste and the dramatic power. What may be wholesome in rhetorical and oratorical expression may, with spectacular accompaniments, produce overwrought imaginations and do damage to both the intellectual and moral elements in man. The spiritual nature that needs culture by the contemplation of the unseen, may be so dazzled as to be benumbed and deadened by the vividness, boldness, and splendor of the spectacular display." Did you ever notice the effort that is made by some people to hide the possibilities of evil by modifying it with the word "quiet"--a "quiet" game of cards, a "quiet" dance, or a "quiet" attendance upon the theater? There may be forms of evil that are less destructive, simply because they are "quiet." That they do not disturb others, is no sign that they may not develop in one's own self a disregard for the feelings and rights of others, and by and by be outbreaking, arrogant, and destructive. The

progress in sin and a sinful life is simple: first we abhor; then we endure; then we "quietly" practice; then we embrace. "Quiet sin" is sin, nevertheless!

It is no less a sin in the eyes of Him who, looking upon its apparent innocence, sees the beginning of the criminal life and of the abandoned soul. Beware of the "quiet" beginnings of great sins!

These practices, as well as all evil habits, have a beginning. Their first steps are not so difficult; their first offenses not so repulsive; their quiet committal did not seem so objectionable. But, with the vision of an Elisha, one might see in the countenance of these Hazael's, the possibility of a continued life of increasing wickedness, and the end one of awful despair. Keep far away from these enticing Delilahs, if you would retain your moral strength. For who can tell how strong he is when practices apparently good and innocent invite his companionship? One may stand where a thousand have fallen; and, again, one may fall where hundreds have passed in safety. "Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall." "See that you walk circumspectly." Walk with care; remember the influence of little things, and beware!

"Sow a thought, reap a deed;

sow a deed, reap a habit;

sow a habit, reap a character;

sow a character, reap a destiny."

9. Lessons Learned Too Late.

9. Lessons Learned Too Late.

"Oh, that you had heeded my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea!" Isaiah 48:18 When Charles IX of France, who gave the order for the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, was dying, bathed in his own blood, he exclaimed: "What blood! what murders! I know not where I am. How will all this end? I am lost forever, and I know it."

"Ah! Mr. Harvey," said a dying man to that excellent minister, "the day in which I ought to have worked is over. And now I see a horrible night approaching, bringing with it the blackness of darkness forever."

Such are the expressions of remorse of those who learn, too late, lessons that are of no avail. It might have been well for all such if the active faculties of the mind and soul could have been deadened to the awful facts of a mistaken life--dead to the scenes of blessedness that came in sight, then vanished never to return, except in taunting, tantalizing vision. Our Lord put it into the mouth of Abraham to say to the distressed Dives in his place of torment: "Son, remember! Remember that you in your lifetime had your good things, and likewise Lazarus his evil things." In this declaration, Jesus clearly meant to convey the solemn truth that it was indeed not only possible to learn when the lesson so received would be of no avail, but also that there will always be before such tardy students the barrier that separates, but does not conceal, the bliss of a rejected truth.

Said Professor Swing: "It is most pitiful that we all see the greatest duties of the world, only in the solemn hour when we are leaving it. We are willingly blind to the great things around us, and as the prodigal son, when he had found the desert world, looked back, and for the first time saw the sweetness of his father's house--so we wander away in our vanity and folly, and at last, from a bed of bodily disease and spiritual husks and rags, look back and see the matchless charms of an age and a land to which we are bidding farewell. This is not Nature's fault or plan. It is her revenge. She gives us a glimpse of the glory we declined to pursue and accept." The prophet Isaiah looked with sad heart and deep emotion upon the sorrows of a people who had been patiently taught and earnestly pleaded with, but who had persistently refused to hear and heed his words of instruction. It was no satisfaction to him, or to any godly man, to note the coming of the calamity he had been privileged to foretell. It only increased his grief to behold the misery of a people who heard a warning voice, had been instructed in right doing--yet had received too late the lesson to profit thereby--at least too late to turn aside the predicted evil. These sad facts of history cry aloud their warnings to all the future. They are bits of instruction for those who, passing that way, may, if wise, profit thereby. So the grief-stricken prophet--recalling his words of warning, remembering their rejection, and marking the disastrous effects of disobedience and arrogance--breaks forth into the language of regret, saying: "Oh, that you had heeded my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea!" The statesman, also, is

a seer. He stands upon a loftier eminence than that occupied by the people, and from that standpoint is an observer of the tendencies of his people and the times in which they live. In spite of argument and appeal, contrary to reason and judgment, decisions are made, policies are entered in upon, leaders are chosen--resulting disastrously. Then, with grief and regret, the statesman exclaims, after the deed has been done that cannot be undone: "Oh, that you had heeded my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea!"

Such also is the feeling of the teacher whose pupils are heedless of his instruction; so also the grief of parents over wayward children--of pastors at the bedside of wrecked manhood and womanhood, where grief over misspent lives recall timely warnings; where penitence secures pardon, but fails to undo all the evil that waywardness has caused. Lessons that might have been learned without the bitterness of experience, loss, grief; lessons that might have been learned before it was too late to stay the tear of mother, the lament of teacher, the sorrow of pastor, or the penalty of disease or the punishment of the government.

If after all the centuries of experiment, men have not found that good could come by doing evil--then why should we persist in trying the same? Lessons learned by others when it was too late to be of value to them--may yet serve us well, if we are willing to profit by their experiences. The burnt child not only will dread the fire, but, by his scars, beg and beseech others to avoid the fatal contact.

1. Lessons of the Temperate Life.

"No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." But men say, "We are not drunkards." They will drink, but will stop drinking the fiery liquid before the senses are destroyed--before the soul, created in God's image of reason and righteousness, is made idiotic by strong drink. Year after year they tamper with and toil against the tide, trying to prove the truth of God untrue.

Against him coming with unsteady step--or even with the poison upon his breath . . .

the gates of social purity are shut,

employment is denied,

love grows sullen and disappears, and

the kingdom of grace closes her portals.

If at last, by a resolute will, aided by Divine mercy, the drinker reforms and seeks the path of sobriety, he may wish, and wish in vain, to be back where the paths parted, and where first he was assigned a lesson he refused to learn. Go where he will, the ex-convict cannot find the place where innocence left him, and felony became a part of his history. If he could, what pilgrimages he would make to get where the deed had never been done; where the consciousness of wrong-doing was not only absent, but not a part either of any other being in all God's universe.

John B. Gough looked back upon seven years counted as worse than lost, as a period of blackness that stood out in horror before him. Seven years that can never be regained; seven years of sin and self-degradation; seven years that might have put him far along in moral likeness

to Him who knew no sin, though the Friend of sinners. Do you know of men who have hoped to live until they should reform, and yet in the end have failed? These are our teachers. They learned, too late for them, that a single day is too long to put off obedience to God. Their life is like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. Better far that men should take the Word of God as their guide, than to be compelled to contemplate these sad experiences, and bemoan their folly and their loss.

2. Lessons of Social Purity.

Virtue is its own reward. Vice is sure of punishment. A life of strict integrity and purity may seem, to some, so dull, so devoid of spice and fun, that the temptation to escape the exactions of the narrow path often prove successful. Stolen waters are said to be sweet; but at the last, how bitter, bitterly bitter, do they become!

"Surely," said the Tempter, "if you but taste, you will be as gods, knowing good and evil." They tasted--and evil they knew, and all the world has known, alas! after it is too late! Better not to know, if the knowledge brings such disaster.

The dark river may be called upon to hide from a cruel world, a shame the victim cannot, will not face. The questions of right and wrong have but one answer. These problems are not hard to solve. In fact, both in revelation and experience, the answers are written out so plainly that, if we will, we cannot help but know them. Why, then, tamper? Why experiment? Why learn by the hard and remorseful way of trial, when the lesson will be too late to serve any advantage? To these morally corrupt, disease-tainted, sorrow-laden souls, God's Word cries in anguish: "'Oh, that you had heeded my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea!'"

3. Lessons about Money.

Said the Wise Man: "I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner!" Ecclesiastes 5:13

It is a pathetic lesson taught every day and everywhere, but whose truths are so seldom heeded--this blinding, perverting, degrading, selfish love of money. Men and women are to be commended for the industrious, economical, and judicious habit of wealth accumulation; but are surely to be pitied when those hard-earned dollars are dissipated by children who know little of their cost, and care less. When wealth increases, without a corresponding increase of the benevolent spirit, it is at the expense of those nobler qualities that bind together in sympathetic compact all the children of men, and strengthen the tie that unites us all to God. No man can afford to pay so high a price for all the wealth the world contains; for our hold upon property is not permanent. Riches make themselves wings--and can only be made secure when they enter into affection, sympathy, well doing, and well-being. No longer will wealth be ours, when death has laid his heavy hand upon us, and separated all material things from the spiritual being. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust does corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." The bestowment of gifts in large amounts at one time, is neither commended by results or by the Word of God, as compared to the regular and constant and watchful giving practiced all through life, as God has prospered. Those who have watched the wasteful processes of courts in adjustment of estates, have often wished that a few years of

personal supervision of his gifts might have been the privilege and blessedness of the giver himself. No man, or set of men, can possibly carry out the intentions as economically or as wisely and well as the testator, as he himself could have done while living.

Even when money is personally kept under one's own supervision, and the children are denied its use in small measure and in a co-operative way, they are deprived also of that wise counsel and discreet assistance in its management that none but father or mother may be able to give.

"Had I a boy and one hundred thousand dollars, I would keep the two as far apart as possible," is credited to a recent member of the United States Congress. Men who have come up from the ranks, who have known what denial of self and subjection of spirit means, as well as the valuable lessons of industry and economy and judicious investment of time and means, could wish no better experience and result for their children, than they themselves have had.

Let the failures of others, be a lesson that benefits us, before it is too late! The best gift any man can bestow upon his child is a good name. If this is done, it will be followed by careful instruction in the fundamentals of an education--in mental, moral, and manual training. Help the young to independence. Take out from under them, all artificial and unnecessary supports; instruct them in the value and happiness of self-earned wealth, and they will then have a permanent source of income. The unwise and wicked accumulation of wealth without a constantly increasing benevolent spirit, will be seen in soul-shrinkage, in distrust of God, and wasteful distribution in the third generation, if not in the second, that will mean more than loss of money. It will be felt in indifference toward God's children of misfortune; of hurtful excesses in luxurious living; in examples of extravagance beyond the means of the family of the next generation; in an overestimate of world values, and undervalue of eternal things.

Lessons learned too late multiply in the money marts of the world. Destruction of property by fire and flood and famine are to be deplored, but are not to be compared with the sadness that is seen in the wrong use of means that brings the owner to poverty in old age, or scatters it to the winds when death comes to settle up accounts. Why should not God be taken into partnership when wealth and worth are sought? Why should not His counsel be heeded in its use and distribution? "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" "Whoever stops his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard."

4. Lessons of Graciousness. To be discreet in speech and conduct, should be the desire and effort of every social being. The unkind word or ungracious act, like an arrow speeding away from the bow and the archer, cannot be recalled. How much of regret, how much of sorrow--such thoughtless, heartless actions have caused! The scandal-monger is not a murderer, yet he waylays the innocent and unsuspecting, robs them of their best ornaments of a good name, assassinates reputation, ruins character, and is in turn an object of ill-repute among his fellows.

"Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by Hell!" James 3:5-6. Easy indeed is it to scatter to the winds these seeds of the thistle, but impossible to gather up again all these germs of an evil crop. The cultivation of a gracious spirit

goes far toward abating the strife and contention of the world. Grievous words stir up strife. One is not a hypocrite because he hesitates to say all that might be said upon every occasion; for silence, at times, is golden. The least said--the sooner mended. To be able to refrain from harsh and unkind criticism, is far easier than to attempt the recall or secure the forgiveness for saying what ought not to have been spoken. Seal your lips, if poison is on your tongue. Put a guard over your words, lest they lead you a sad chase. Learn to sweeten your spirit, if you would master your speech. Who has not lost much out of life--a loss beyond recovery--by the churlish action of the ungracious soul? Friends become few, enemies multiply, when there is no honey in the tongue, and only a sting in the speech.

Too late in life has the lesson and its value been learned, of graciousness, to be an effective force in many a soul left to nurse regrets in solitude and sorrow.

5. Lessons of the Christ-life.

More valuable than temperance, social purity, material conquest, and even graciousness itself, is the gift of the Christ-life, which may not be appreciated until it is too late. To all men there comes a call to righteousness. All history and human experience, all nature, all visions of the poets and seers and statesmen, all voices of the Spirit and speech of the Infinite One--teach, exhort, and plead that this truth be accepted and obeyed. In opposition to all these entreaties, in spite of love and law and learning, mankind has taken advantage of the liberty of the human will, and made it license to defy truth and reason and life and God. But, after all, such liberty is limited, such license is within bounds, and, when too late, the lesson is learned between hard lines, and the loss sustained is irreparable. Can we berichwithout God? Men have tried it. Parks and palaces have been multiplied, fertile acres have increased in number, and wealth in bonds and banks and buildings has abounded. To the self-satisfied and greatly gratified soul, has come the complacent exhortation: "You have much goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But the "many years" were soon, at the very longest, at an end, and as the pauper and the beggar, the body of the princely one must lie in the narrow cell and be forgotten. Can we haveknowledgewithout God? Men have ignored and defied God, yet have succeeded in knowing much of the world; of the earth beneath; of the starry heavens above; of man, his history, thought, and emotions and desires; but, with all his learning, made to admit a limit to his thought away in the dim mist of the Morning, and in the gathering clouds of the Evening of human life. Can men behappywithout wealth, without learning, without God? Men have been poor and ignorant and defiant, and yet have lived out a round of pleasurable excitement--existing within themselves and without God. Narrow, sensual, selfish souls! But these, too, have died within the walls of a very limited life. Did they know or care ofwealthunlimited beyond the grave; ofknowledgeinfinite in a school of unsurpassed facilities in the higher realm; ofpleasures for evermoreat the right hand of the Father? When they considered all this, it was too late. It overwhelmed their petty possessions, their little learning, their simple sensuousness--with the rejected splendor of things to come. The opportunity that is restricted to the narrow life of time and sense compels the soul, in its narrow cell, to eat itself away, and yet live hungry forever in sight of abundance. Limits are upon everything that does not reach out after God. In order to lift the horizon of a sin-cursed world, God came to us in the person of His Son, and lived with us the God-life. He showed us the Father, and, by His life, love, and sacrifice, lifted the pall of that death that separates, and lengthened infinitely the vision of soul possibilities. He went back to His Father, but sent His Spirit to abide with

us--Comforter, Teacher, Life-Giver. Shall we accept or reject His office, work, and ministry? Shall we bid Him wait our convenience? He is long-suffering, patient, not willing that any should perish; but He will not always strive, or yearn, or wait. "Today, if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts;" do not presume upon the morrow; it may never come. "O that men were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" "At midnight there was a cry made: Behold the Bridegroom comes, go out to meet Him. Those who were ready went in with Him to the marriage, and the door was shut!"

"Oh, that you had heeded my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea!" Isaiah 48:18

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