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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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## Religious.

### Secret Faults.

"Cleanse Thou me from secret faults."

Sinful acts are but the developments of secret faults. Evil habits grow from these acts, and become the broad characteristics of men and communities. Whilst we seek only to correct the outward acts, without attacking the hidden principle, we fail to effect a permanent reformation. Let such a prayer as that of the Psalmist be offered and the life will be corrected and the man renewed. A short article from the *N. Y. Observer* puts this question in a very proper light:—

This may mean not so much faults concealed from others, as those which are hidden from ourselves. Do you think this impossible?

Long ago a friend made the startling suggestion that men are usually ignorant of their greatest faults. Said my friend, "I did not make the discovery myself, but it was suggested by a minister, a man of much experience in life and in the world. It set me to thinking, and what I at first denied, I afterwards concluded must be true.

In the first place, if we really saw a thing to be our greatest fault, if we had any true desire for improvement, the first impulse would be to correct that fault, and then it would cease to be the greatest. For our own sakes we do not go on wilfully indulging what we know to be a fault or a blemish in our character, and one which others must recognize; our desire to stand well in their esteem is too strong for that.

Then we may mistake in our estimate of our own characters, and so remain ignorant. For instance, what others regard as obstinacy may appear to us but proper firmness, or perhaps fixed principles. Men do not always know themselves.

I have seen an avaricious man who called himself, and who really thought he was, liberal and benevolent. He had generous impulses and was always going to do something at some future time. The only trouble was that he had so many schemes for gain, so many present uses for his money, that his generous plans were always in the future and receding. He loved benevolence, but he loved gain better. Nothing could have surprised him more than to be told he was not a liberal man. He was and is ignorant of his greatest fault.

I know a woman who is uncharitable and severe; she speaks out just what she thinks, and so says a great many hard things. Yet she does not mean to be harsh and hard; she considers it only commendable frankness and would be surprised and led to an indignant denial, if she were told that she disregarded the law of love. She does not mean to do so; she has kindness in her heart, but her severe judgment is stronger than love.

I know a person who is thoroughly selfish, and yet is exceedingly kind to his own family or friends, and he thinks he does a great deal for others. But, indeed, he never puts himself out of his way, and what he does, is done for those who are his own, his second self. He would be astonished, if you accuse him of selfishness. Said my friend, "Tell me my greatest fault, and see if I do not know it." "No, you would not believe it, and would only be disturbed; you could gain nothing, and I should not stand as well with you."

That is a hard case, if we are not only ignorant of our faults, but will not bear to be told them. Then the help lies in this: there is One "who searcheth the heart." If we are truly desirous to be better, let us search and try our ways and turn unto the Lord. Let us honestly pray, "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults."

### Superiority of the Educated.

"The mind is the standard of the man," was part of Dr. Watts' reply to a remark of a friend respecting his smallness of stature. Time and money employed in cultivating this highest part of our nature is often but im-

perfectly appreciated. We fail to estimate, at its proper value, the labor bestowed on mind, and regard riches that may be counted, stores that may be weighed, and broad acres which may be measured, as having in them real value, whereas these are utterly worthless when compared with mental acquirements, and moral qualities.

The hand is found to be another hand, when guided by an intelligent mind. Individuals who, without the aid of knowledge, would have been condemned to perpetual inferiority of condition, and subjected to all the evils of want and poverty, rise to competence and independence by the uplifting power of education. In great establishments, and among large bodies of laboring men, where all services are rated according to their pecuniary value—where there are no extrinsic circumstances to bind a man down to a fixed position after he has shown a capacity to rise above it—where, indeed, men pass by each other ascending or descending in their grades of labor just as easily and as certainly as particles of water of different degrees of temperature glide by each other—under such circumstances it is found, as an almost invariable fact, other things being equal, that those who have been blessed with a good common school, rise to a higher and a higher point in rate of wages received, while the ignorant sink like dregs, and are always found at the bottom.

### Self-development.

John Newton once said that if two angels were commanded to govern a city and sweep its streets, there would be no strife between them as to which should be governor or street-sweeper. A similar spirit would lead all Christians to find their duty and their development in doing the work to which the providence of God called them. Dr. Brainerd, in his life of John Brainerd, relates the following incident:

"We once introduced a young minister to a missionary congregation in the suburbs of a great city. The people were highly pleased with him, and invited him to settle among them. He came to consult me on the subject. As he was an unmarried man, he regarded the salary as adequate. He had no fault to find with the number, the attendance, the attention and interest of the congregation. I urged him to give an affirmative answer. He hesitated. 'I am afraid,' said he, 'it is not a place for me to develop myself—alluding to the plainness of the people.'

"I replied: 'It is an excellent place to develop the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, but I know not whether it is the place for you to develop yourself.'

"He left the field, and has since 'developed himself' by giving up the ministry. He that exalteth himself shall be abased."

"The little congregation, under the labors of purer and better men, has also 'developed' itself into one of the most numerous, intelligent, affluent churches in the land. Are there not other young ministers corrodng in idleness, rejecting difficult fields, and waiting for a place to 'develop themselves'?"

### Vagrant hearers.

"Who is going to preach?" I overheard a gentleman ask this question from the sexton of a church one day this summer, and, upon the question being answered, the inquirer started off to another church to ask the same question, and if the answer was not such as he coveted, to continue his wandering in search of a preacher who should suit his fancy. Now, in one view of the case, the vagrant hearer was perfect justified in his wanderings. He evidently thought, as too many good people do think, that the chief end of going to church is, not to glorify God, but to hear agreeable preaching. There are different ideas, too, as to what is agreeable, for that which feeds one is very distasteful to another; and hence there is a great obance for vagrancy on Sunday, if all who are unsettled, or strangers in a place, wander until they find satisfactory spiritual provisions.

The question of every Christian on a Sabbath morning ought to be, not where shall I

hear the best preaching, but where can I worship and serve God most acceptably today? If I am a stranger in a place, where shall I be able to draw nearest to my Master, and in what place of worship shall I be most likely to find him? Certainly the answer will not be, in that place where a man claims the greater part of the attention of the audience—where more is thought of the periods of the orator, or the solos from the choir, than of the Word of God which is read, and the Being to whom the eloquent prayer is offered, or the sweet praise sung. Not there shall I be able to draw near to God, where the human medium binds my soul as it goes forth after God, "even the living God." And if I go out upon a chase after eloquence, or popular preaching, or originality, or sweet music, my heart will not be in a state to desire, supremely, communion with God, spiritual refreshment, growth in grace, and the many blessings which they receive who "wait upon the Lord" rather than upon men. Perhaps the evil of vagrancy is too difficult and subtle to be cured, but it might be mitigated in the community very much, if all Christian people would unite with and regularly attend some church of Christ in their own neighborhood, and if Christians, when away from home, would remember that the primary object of attending the house of God is to worship Him who is a Spirit, "in spirit and in truth."—*Observer*.

### Count Bismarck.

From some cause or other, the great movements of society in the Old World, give rise to an individual ascendancy which in our own affairs is seldom if ever attained. Nearly everything in Europe, especially on the Continent, comes sooner or later to be shaped very much by the agency of some one man, be he monarch or statesman, who becomes identified with the cause and leads it forward, often with an authority well nigh absolute. This was so in England during the first French Revolution, when the policy of the Government, and almost the entire current of public opinion, were controlled by the marvellous genius of William Pitt. Equally true was it that the Austrian statesman, Prince Metternich, during the latter part of the same period, held in his single hands not only the destiny of Austria, but also the grand political combination known as the Holy Alliance, of which he was long the very life and soul. In later years the Revolution of 1848, in France, seemed for a time to depend for its support upon the eloquent harangues of M. Lamartine, and those in Italy and Hungary would have been powerless without the leadership of Mazzini and Kossuth; while even at the present moment the stability of the Empire of France is thought to hang upon the prestige acquired by the Emperor Louis Napoleon.

But recent history affords no more remarkable example of individual ascendancy in the great movements of a nation than that of Count Bismarck, the famous Prussian Minister of State, at this moment certainly one of the foremost men in Europe. He is identified with the present position of his country in a sense and to an extent that is true of no other man, not even the monarch himself. And what makes his ascendancy the more remarkable is the rapidity with which he has attained it. Within the brief space of four or five years he has risen from comparative obscurity, or at best from the rank of an ordinary member of the Diet, to a position in the affairs alike of Prussia and of Europe, which makes him a power in every part of the Continent. He is now fifty-one years of age, and his great capacities are in that full development which the education and the routine of public service ordinarily assigned to young men of rank in Prussia, are so well fitted to secure. He studied at the Universities of Berlin and Göttingen, attended special courses at others of the great schools in Germany, in all of which he was distinguished for that athletic energy both of mind and body which is still his conspicuous characteristic. After the customary three years' service in the army, from the age of twenty-one to that of twenty-four, he was attached for several years to the embassies at foreign courts. From 1847, when he returned from abroad, to 1859, he was for the most part a member

either of the German Diet or of one house or the other of the Prussian Legislature. In 1859 he went as Minister to St. Petersburg, in 1862 as Minister to Paris, but, after a few months, was summoned to a seat in the Cabinet at Berlin, and was very soon placed at the head of the Ministry.

It is during this brief period in which he has held the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, and been President of the Council, that he has achieved the reputation which is now coextensive with the civilized world. Nor is it a mere factitious fame, depending on the favor of a monarch or the advantages of a high position. It rests on the solid basis of successful statesmanship—on a rare devotion to the interests of his country—on a sagacity which discerned from afar the road to national success, and an energy which roused his countrymen and urged them forward to secure the glittering glories which he held before them. It is said that he long ago conceived the idea of freeing his country from the overshadowing ascendancy of Austria, and making her, as she ought doubtless to be, the leader of Protestant Germany. It is probable, also, that his aspirations go even farther than this, and that he sees how inadequate the present or any possible Confederation must be for the fulfilment of anything like grand ideas of German destiny. Petty States voting in the Diet, struggling with each other in the motion of rival interests, and combining together to thwart the purposes of Prussia, cannot long be satisfactory to a statesman like him, and we may naturally anticipate that sooner or later he will become the champion of German centralization and national unity.—*N. Y. Examiner*.

### Always in a hurry.

An old proverb says: "Punctuality is the essence of virtue." Like all proverbs, this is but a half-truth. Punctuality is a virtue; it is also an element of greatness. All successful commanders have been characterized by it. Military success is impossible without it. In the common business of life, it is a cardinal virtue; but, as the world moves, the punctual man loses time, patience and comfort.

The first man, at a public meeting, builds the fire, provides the lights, and becomes an errand-boy for the tardy congregation. I once heard of a good deacon who was severely censured by a shivering company of worshippers, because he once failed to build a fire which he had gratuitously supported for years. Thus self-sacrifices are often required as duties, and no one inquires how the burden was imposed or why the service is exacted. A nervous temperament usually makes a man prompt to the hour, and impatient of the delays of others; hence he is deemed by the phlegmatic captious, censorious and difficult to please. He waits for his tardy companions, becomes irritated by their delay, and when they arrive, scolds them for wasting his time, and is in no proper state of mind to hear or speak. His excitements unfit him for business, and he is, very likely, regarded as a disturber of the public peace. I once heard of an old gentleman of punctilious habits who gave specific directions for his own funeral. In selecting the bearers a man notoriously slow was mentioned, "He will never do," said the dying man; "he will detain the procession an hour by his tardiness." The ruling passion is strong in death.

I am a teacher. My habit is to be the first at the recitation or lecture; my anxiety to meet my appointments occupies my thoughts long before the hour arrives. I listen for the bell; I look at my watch; I walk the room expecting, every moment, the call to duty. Thus I waste precious hours in expectation of duty. If I am to take the cars at night, I lose my rest; if in the daytime, I imagine that I have been forgotten by the coachman, if he does not call for me half an hour before the time. Such a habit of mind is a constitutional infirmity. It makes one always in hurry, abridges the hours of useful labor, and brings constant disquiet.

The benefits which accrue from excessive punctuality are more than counterbalanced by the evils that grow out of it. What shall a man so constituted do? "Let your moderation be known unto all men," you reply. It