

You Can Never Tell.

"You can never tell when you do an act Just what the result may be; But with every deed you are sowing a seed, Though its harvest you may not see; Each kindly act is an acorn dropped In God's productive soil; Though you may not know, yet the tree shall grow And shelter the brows that toil.

After This He Never Prospered.

An Athenian was reporting to his superiors in Greece upon his government and successes in the State. By his utterances and by his every demeanor he would impress upon the authorities at Athens that he was the author and finisher of all success. No other one had a hand in the good fortunes that had come his way. With a vaunting air he is recorded as having declared—"In this fortune had no hand." Quick-witted Grecian masters detected in their agent the omission of a qualification that is essential to every honored man. With the agent it was all "I." "None of us liveth to himself" Paul said. But this man did live to himself up to this present. Every thing mighty entered in himself Fortune had no hand in this that he had accomplished. The report was given, but not received as it was intended it should have been by him who reported. Pride and selfishness received such a shock that the chronicler has left it on record that after this the deputy never prospered. Shortly he was disgraced and soon after died in exile.

From one of the classic authors we read that a man Simon changed his name to Simonides because so many beggars were called Simon. Simonides did another thing that Lucian has seen fit to commit to writing. He set on fire the house in which he was born because people would not point to it. The heart was set on self. Pride ruled. God was not remembered. And when a man is out of right relationship to God he will do all manner of foolish things.

The Rev. G. Campbell Morgan has written a little story of his life that appeared in one of our exchanges of last week. From the story this is a reminiscence connected with his early evangelistic work which he gives in this way.

"The scene was away on the Mendip Hills between Cheltenham and Gloucester. I had walked through six miles of snow to talk to a handful of people in a cottage, and my text was this:—'Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be forever and my righteousness shall not be abolished.' I remember something more than the six miles' walk there, and more than the meeting, and that is the six miles' walk home. For my companion, a godly colporteur named David Smith, gave me a six miles' lecture on my pride. He told me 'You did not prepare that to help anybody: you wanted to show how well you could speak.' I have gotten those words written down in my heart, and I thank God for David Smith's honest faithfulness with me. I went out again the next Sunday night. There were the same walk, the same companion, the same room, the handful of people. But this time I broke down in the middle of my address. I had been praying all the week, and that night half a dozen men were won for Christ."

Foresters tell of the destruction wrought in days gone by through the pine moth. They explain that the caterpillars of the pine-moth which come into existence in August do little damage before the autumn frosts set in and compel them to go into winter quarters in the carpet moss at the foot of the trees. But in the spring-time they revive and set to the work of destruction up among the green needles and lower down a trunk. But a remedy has been found. In lands where the pine-moth has appeared in greatest numbers men have scraped a smooth band in the rough bark around the trunk of the pine tree. That band cavity they have filled with a mixture of tar, glue and grease, and an obstacle has been raised to the progress of the moth. It has been remarked, What a pity to disfigure the noble pine by the scraping and the smearing! It has been answered, Better this and save the tree than be without this and have destruction.

So with human lives. The evangelist's six miles lecture was unpleasant but it did good to a noble man. Bitter humiliation is needed to keep off worse evils. Paul had to undergo discipline to keep him from being proud.

Spurgeon set forth that there never was a saint yet that grew proud of his fine feathers but what the Lord plucked them out by and by. There never yet was an angel that had pride in his heart, but he lost his wings, and fell into gehenna, as Satan and those fallen angels did. And there shall never be a saint who indulges self-conceit and pride and self-confidence but the Lord will spoil his glories, and trample his honors in the mire, and make him cry out yet again, "Lord, have mercy upon me, less than the least of saints, and the very chief of sinners."

The same wise man declares that the demon of pride was born with us and it will not die before us. It is so woven into the very warp and woof of our nature, that, till we are wrapped in our winding sheets, we shall never hear the last of it.

Yet the grace of God is all powerful here. Through it we conquer. He giveth it to the humble. Gratitude springs from humility. And while pride goeth before a fall, before honor is humility. The ancient Athenian at the beginning of this article teaches the lesson in one way which Bishop Taylor teaches in another when he says:—"Remember what thou wert before thy birth, nothing: what thou wert for many years after, weakness; what in all thy excellencies a mere debtor to God, to thy parents, to the earth, to all the creatures. Upon these or the like meditations, if we dwell, and frequently retire to them we shall see nothing more reasonable than to be humble, and nothing more foolish than to be proud."—Presbyterian Review.

Pastoral Visiting.

Being present recently at a meeting of presbytery where a pastoral relation was dissolved, we enquired of an elder of the church the real cause of the dissolution, and heard an unusual story of unfaithfulness. The young minister during a pastorate of several years had never been in many of the homes of his people and had persistently neglected to visit even the sick and afflicted. The elders had advised and admonished him and had offered to go with him but in vain. He was well liked as a preacher and as a man, but his failure to meet the people in their homes and to minister to them in their need alienated them and made a change in the pastorate necessary. More recently still a similar case was brought to our notice in which a long pastorate was terminated, not through lack of preaching ability, but through pastoral negligence. It seems almost incredible that a pastor should so far fail in his pastoral duties as never to visit many of his families, and even to neglect the afflicted. One wonders what can be the views of the ministry held by a pastor who so signally and apparently so wilfully fails in the discharge of its duties. It is not believed that there are many pastors who are so neglectful or deficient in this part of their service, but it is well for all pastors at times to examine themselves in this respect.

Pastoral visiting is a full half of the minister's service. His preaching, of course, is a vital part of his work, and he dare not neglect this. Good sermons full of interesting and helpful truth are the first and a constant demand made on the minister, and he should endeavor to make the week, or rather his whole life, head towards and culminate in the pulpit every Sabbath. Yet preaching will in a large degree fail of its purpose unless it is backed up with pastoral visiting. Only a preacher of genius can hold his place without visiting his people; and even he would be stronger and more helpful if he would keep in personal touch with them. A visit to the home of a family brings the pastor into sympathetic and vital relations with its members as no sermon can. The personal hand clasp and presence and conversation knit the pastor and people together in familiar acquaintance and fellowship. A word spoken in such circumstances on spiritual matters, a prayer, or a personal appeal, is far more effective than when spoken from the pulpit. Even if religion is not mentioned, yet a cheery visit from the pastor puts him in better relations with a family and also tones it up spiritually, for his presence is suggestive of divine things and right living. Affliction especially calls for the pastor, and it is then that he can minister most helpfully to a family and bind it to himself with the strongest ties. Every pastor can trace the results of his pastoral visiting during the week the next Sabbath morning in his congregation; all the families visited are sure to be represented;

some of them may have been habitually absent for weeks or months, but a pastoral visit always brings them out.

It is true that pastoral visiting is a heavy tax on the time of the studious and busy pastor, and it is also distasteful to some ministers of a retiring disposition; yet it is a duty that demands its full share of time, and it can be cultivated so as to become an agreeable part of the minister's life. The minister makes a mistake who spends too much of his time in his study, absorbed in his books or moping all the week over his sermons. Let him spend half his time in the study and the other half out in the open air and in the world in sympathetic and cheerful intercourse with men and especially with his own people, and his sermons will be better, his hold on his people will be stronger, and his ministry to them will in every way be more useful.—Presbyterian Banner.

Common Lives.

The common people have always been Christ's best friends. It was the common people who heard him gladly when the great were persecuting him. From the common people his church has been most largely recruited. Even so to-day the hearts of the common people are the greatest bulwark of the faith. If the common people have honored Christ, still more has Christ honored them by using them in the defense of his truth and the spread of his gospel. Through them, in a thousand quiet ways, he is daily being preached. They are the mainstay of every movement for righteousness; they comprise the bulk of his church. Verily, Christ uses common lives.

Christ uses common lives, not because they are common lives, but because they are willing to be used by him.

God requires not talents, but submission. It matters little to him whether a life be common or great, as the world views it. He only asks that the life be yielded to him; he is perfectly able to fill it with all power, and to use it to accomplish mighty works in his name. There is no life too humble to be greatly used of God. He wants not worth, but willingness.

Most of the work that needs doing in this world does not require exceptional ability. The diffusing of cheer in discouraged surroundings; the repression of sharp and critical words in the ever-recurring moments of temptation; the speaking of messages of encouragement and sympathy; the habit of kindly forbearance; the daily humbling of self for others' sake—these are the common ways in which common lives may be used by Christ.

Greatness in heaven is not measured by greatness on earth.—Forward.

Culture vs. Conversion.

There are some people who put culture in the place of the new birth. Culture is certainly all right in its place, but culture will not admit anyone into Heaven.

Suppose I had a field of ground, and shall begin to plough it on the first day of April. First I plough it one way, then I plough it crosswise. Then I would plough it again, and harrow it, and roll it, and brush it, and cultivate it; working at it six days in the week, from April to October.

My neighbor comes along and says: "Moody, what are you doing in that field?" "I'm cultivating it." "What are you going to put nothing in it?" "I believe in a high state of cultivation."

My neighbor would laugh at me for my folly. Yet that is just what people are doing who are substituting culture for conversion. Unless the seed is sown in the field, its cultivation will amount to nothing. Unless the grace of God is planted in the heart, we cannot see the kingdom of God. "Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again."—D. L. Moody.

The Pitcher Broken at the Fountain

While lunching in a fig orchard at Sish, I noticed the women and girls of a neighboring village come to a fountain close by to wash their clothes and fill their pitchers. It is needless to say that carrying a pitcher Eastern fashion is one of the fine arts. These women poised their pitchers on their heads, and walked with naked feet over the rough, uneven, stony path without hesitation and without steadying the pitchers with their hands. But the broken earthenware around the fountain proved that, however steady and careful they are, accidents will happen. My thoughts instinctively reverted to the passage in Solomon's description of old age, where he says, "Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain" (Eccl. 12: 6). So, however carefully life may be lived, it often comes to an end suddenly. But a Syrian afterward told me that the

Eastern women sometimes break their pitchers while quarreling! Even so violent men often hasten their own end and the end of others by their violence. Such men "shall not live half their days" (Ps. 55: 23).—Preachers' Magazine.

In the Laboratory.

Noticing over the chemist's table a magnet which hung loaded with a collection of various tools and weights I asked, "What is the magnet doing?" "I am loading it up," the chemist answered. "It has been lying on the table, doing nothing and losing its power, so now I am giving it something to do, a little more every morning, and it's gaining, it's growing stronger every day," and he added a small file to the clump attached to the magnet.

"That's the way," he continued, "God makes magnets and men. If they loaf round and do nothing they can't do anything; they lose their force. But give them some work and they'll soon be good for more than you ever dreamed they could do. Magnetic power and muscles are developed by something to do; yes, and brains and souls of men. Some of those who are doing hard work and bearing heavy burdens will be doing grand things for the Master in His heavenly kingdom through the eternal years."—Wellspring.

The Finger of God.

During a season of revival a friend was praying one evening for a certain unconverted neighbour. After this manner he prayed: O Lord, touch that man with thy finger; touch him with thy finger Lord! The petition was repeated in great earnestness, when something said to him: "Thou art the finger of God! Hast thou ever touched thy neighbour? Hast thou ever spoken a single word to him on the question of salvation? Go thou, and touch that man, and thy prayer shall be answered." It was a voice from the throne. God's servant rose from his knees self-condemned. He had known that man as an impenitent for a quarter of a century, yet had uttered not a word of warning. Hundreds of opportunities had come and gone, but the supreme question of life had been set aside for such topics as "the weather," "the latest news," "politics," and "trade." His first duty as a Christian had been left undone.

Never Fails.

True prayer never fails to bring its reward. Prayer consists of supplication and thanksgiving. Petition is but an incident of prayer, and it may well be doubted whether that which consists of petition alone is true prayer. Prayer is communion with God. Spending a large portion of time in company with God, we become more and more like God. Intimate relations are established between our heavenly Father and the man of prayer. He finds a resting place secure from the dangers and ills of life in the secret place of the Most High. And as he grows in likeness to Christ, and is kept in nearness to God, the almighty arms of the living God are around him. God's ministering angels have charge over him, and in God's ways he finds the peace which Christ left his dying legacy to all his followers.—Christian Observer.

WHY CROUP IS FATAL.

When croup attacks your child you must be ready for it. It comes as an accompaniment to an ordinary cough, or it may attack without warning. All ills of children develop quickly, and when any kind of cough appears there should be something at hand to stop it with promptness. Many a child has choked to death with croup because the right remedy was not convenient. Every one should know that the right safeguard for a child's cough or any cough is Adamson's Botanic Cough Balsam. With this soothing compound in the house, croup is always easily checked and relieved.

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Salvation is of God.

"It is well that a man can't save himself," says Mr. Moody, "for if a man could only work his own way into heaven you never would hear the last of it. Why, down here in this world, if a man happens to get a little ahead of his fellows, and scrapes a few thou-

sand dollars together, you'll hear him bragging about his being 'a self-made man,' and telling how he began as a poor boy and worked his way up in the world. I've heard so much of this sort of thing that I'm sick and tired of the whole business, and I'm glad I shall not have men bragging through all eternity how they worked their way into heaven."

Patience.

Patience is the truest sign of courage. Ask old soldiers who have seen the bravest men, the men who endured best, not in mere fighting, but in standing for hours to be mowed down by cannon shot; who were most patient and cheerful in shipwreck and starvation and defeat—all those things ten times worse than fighting; ask old soldiers, I say, and they will tell you that the men who showed best in such miseries were generally the stillest, meekest men in the whole regiment. That is true fortitude; that is Christ's image—the meekest of men, and the bravest, too.—Rev. Charles Kingsley.

Do you remember the old story about the soldier who shouted out that he had caught a prisoner, and the officer said, "Bring him along," and the answer was, "He won't let me"? That is the kind of victory over the world that many of our successful people have got—so hampered and held in chains that early noble visions have passed away and are smiled at now, and God and His angels are a great deal farther off from the successful man than they were from the starving youth.—Alexander McLaren.

The "Only Rule of Practice"

Christians all the Bible the only rule of faith and practice; but is it the only rule of practice? Do we take his Bible when any question of doubtful propriety comes up, and ask ourselves what the Bible says on the subject? Do we make the Bible the standard of our life? Do we take the Bible when difficulties arise and say, "How does Paul's teaching or Jesus Christ's teaching bear upon this?" Nay; we are more apt to be governed by what people will say, by what they all do, and by what the law allows.—Francis L. Patton.

INFLAMMATORY RHEUMATISM.—Mr. S. Ackerman, commercial traveler, Belleville, writes: "Some years ago I used Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil for inflammatory rheumatism, and three bottles effected a complete cure. I was the whole of one summer unable to move without crutches, and every movement caused excruciating pains. I am now out on the road and exposed to all kinds of weather, but have never been troubled with rheumatism since. I, however, keep a bottle of Dr. Thomas' Oil on hand, and I always recommend it to others, as it did so much for me."

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