

Sunday Reading.

"SHALL I WORK ON SUNDAY?"

The Jews called it the Holy Sabbath, we call it Sunday, but I like best to call it the Lord's Day, because that reminds me that I keep the day holy because I am a believer in and worshiper of Jesus. Now, boys and girls, I believe in the old adage, 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' I don't like to see a boy or a girl kept at their tasks all day long, and I am sure from what the Bible teaches that in heaven there will be all kinds of pleasure. Zechariah says of the restored Zion, 'The city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.' And if I don't like to see children working always without play, I don't like to see men and women slaving day in and day out without rest for body, soul and spirit.

I remember that in the city where I spent my boyhood the mechanics used to work fourteen and even sixteen hours a day; and the stores were open till ten o'clock, and till midnight on Saturdays. This was in Scotland, and the law did not allow them to open on Sunday. Now that was awful slavery, and I used to think how dreadful it would be for any boy to have to work all day and night like that. That would be as bad as slavery. We Scotch boys used to think slavery the most awful curse in all this wicked world. Then, when I came to Chicago do you wonder at my astonishment and horror to see free Americans working on Sunday? Why is it? I thought are they white slaves? By and by in Scotland they got a half holiday on Saturday, then the stores were closed at six and eight; and what do you think was the cause of this vast change? It was because the Christian people had always kept the Sabbath holy, and its influence reduced the hours of work.

What I want to tell you, boys and girls, at the very beginning of your life is this: Don't work on Sunday for any man on earth! If you do you are no longer a free man, but a slave. You are selling your birthright. What is the good of Magna Charta, the Declaration of Independence and the Fourth of July to a boy or a girl, a man or a woman who is not free to rest, and worship God on Sunday?

You know the old Arabian fable of the camel and the tent. A camel came along one cold morning and poked his nose into the tent where the Arab and his family were sleeping. 'Won't you let me keep my nose inside the tent? It is so cold.' And when he got his nose in he soon got his head in, and then his whole body. Then the camel stamped around and the man had to snatch up his children and run for fear they would be trampled to death. So we are taught to keep things in their proper places, for if we once let in the camel's nose, the whole body will soon follow. This is just what always happens when some employer says to a youth, 'I want you to come down and do some work for me Sunday.'

I once found an old Scotch ironworker working on Sunday. 'Mr. Mason, how does it come that you have to work Sundays?' I asked. 'It is the bitterest sorrow of my life,' he replied, 'for he was one of the finest old Christian men of the place. But this is how it happened. Just when the furnaces were started, the employers said, Now you men must come down and fettle the furnaces early Sunday morning. You will get back in good time for church.' At that time, you see, we had no experience of Sunday work, and we thought it would take only an hour or so in the very early morning. That is thirty years ago, and the work was increased little by little till we don't get home now until far into the afternoon. Our Sunday has been stolen from us, and we are helpless.'

It is better to have a smaller salary and your Sunday than to be a Sunday slave and rich. In Newfoundland the great whale steamships sail on the tenth of March every year to catch seals. The work is a great venture, for they can never tell when or where the seals are to be found. They are floating down on the great sheets of ice by the coast of Labrador. Some day the man in the 'crow's nest' at the mast head will shout, 'Seals on the port bow twenty miles ahead.' Suppose it is Saturday afternoon and the ship gets up to them Sunday morning after breaking through the ice. 'Shall I take them on Sunday?' Mind you if the captain waits till Monday they may be gone; for the ice may break and fly before the gale. There they are, perhaps one hundred thousand of them; he can fill his ship with half of that and make a grand voyage. What would you do, my lad? This is the time and place to test you. Well, I will

tell you what one good Christian man, Captain White, did. He refused to allow his crew to take seals on Sunday. He said, 'God's law, of a rest day to be kept holy, ought to be obeyed at sea as on land; and God will, I believe, provide for those who honor him.' This captain was an old man when I knew him, and the law of the holy rest day had governed his long life in all his voyages. Had he lost by it? On the contrary. He brought more seals home in his ships than any other one man in St. John's. That is the way to test your plan of life. Not what will you give an apparent advantage today, but what will be an advantage to-day and during all the years.

A friend of mine who crossed the plains in the early fifties told me: 'We determined to rest every Sabbath on our journey over the plains. One of the company said it was all fanaticism, Sabbatarianism and nonsense. "Well," said my friend "I and my horses are going to rest every Sabbath day, and if you don't like it you can go." Go he did and joined another company that kept on without any regards for the laws of God or the welfare of man and or beast. They soon forged ahead, passing my Sabbath-keeping friend with a contemptuous laugh. About five or six weeks after my friend overtook them their horses tired and broken down, and the camp demoralized. He passed them with his horse fresh and his own body rested, and enjoying the journey. This man knew that God's law was based upon a great fact in nature—that man and beast can do more and work better by resting one day in seven than by a working without rest day after day. Freedom is God's rule, not slavery. Joy and a large life is God's purpose; not incessant toil and misery. It looked at first as if the man who travelled right on without regard to God's Sabbath would get across the plains first; but the man rested his beast and himself won the race after all. Captain White made as much money by honoring the Sabbath as those who took seals that day, and he had in addition a consistent Christian character and the benediction of God. My pioneer friend got to his destination as quickly by resting on Sunday, and he had the rest by the way, and the joy of the journey.

Boys and girls, you do not need to make slaves of yourselves; you will 'get there just the same.' God's law will be under you and your joy in life will be tenfold more as the boy or girl who does no work on Sunday.—Rev. David Beaton.

ON BOARD THE "ATLANTA."

Sometimes Children Teach us Very Helpful Lessons.

How often our most helpful lessons of faith and trust are taught us by little children! In the moments of our clearer vision, we wonder how it is possible for us ever to neglect the guidance and protecting love of the Father whose power is omnipotent, and whose promises are 'sure'; but we sometimes need such an instance of a child's faith in his earthly father as the following, to recall this to our minds.

The 'Atlanta' had blown her last long whistle and moved slowly and majestically away from the Chicago dock. Down the narrow channel she steamed, between the long wooden piers, past the breakwater and out into the blue waters of Lake Michigan. The harbor light shone crimson and white in the evening's dusk and in the west the last fires of sunset glowed in the sky above the smoke-wreaths of the distant city.

On board the steamer a few of the passengers were sitting on the rear deck watching the light as at intervals it shone out across the waters, farther and farther away with every flash. Others had climbed the narrow stairway at the bow of the boat and from the airy upper deck looked forward along the steamer's course, the freshening breeze bringing color to pale cheeks, though making sad havoc with crimps and curls not wholly natural.

Close to the railing surrounding the deck and as far forward as possible stood a tall strong man, one arm thrown around a little lad in a blue sailor suit who stood on the rail beside him, perched in careless ease between the darkening sky and the darkening water. The little fellow was all

excitement, watching the water as the sharp prow divided it and swept it away to the sides in foam-topped ridges, and certain women who saw him were much distressed in mind lest a false step of the dancing feet should plunge the child headlong in the steamer's path. At last one of them mustered up courage to speak her fears.

'Aren't you afraid you'll fall, dear?' she asked anxiously. 'I'm so worried for fear you'll get hurt.'

The boy looked at her a moment in surprised silence. Then he answered gravely and politely:

'No. I'm not afraid, and I hope you won't be either. You see, father has his arm around me, so I'm all right. If it was anybody but father, maybe I'd be afraid,' he added, as if willing to yield a point to feminine fears. 'But he knows what's safe for me, and he won't let me slip.'

To one of those who heard and saw, the incident was like a flash-light revealing an old and ever-beautiful truth in new distinctness. Tried in body and troubled in mind timid and travelling alone, the horizon toward which the steamer moved seemed to her dark and forbidding, while the smoke of the city left far behind looked like a black and ominous stormcloud. Yet she, too, smiled with a lightened heart and whispered to herself:

'Father has his arm around me, so I'm all right.' Dear child, you are wiser than we older ones. Yet why should I worry, either? My Father has promised to watch over and care for me wherever I go, and he is infinitely strong and wise and loving. Surely, what this father is able and willing to do for his son, my heavenly father will do for me, his child. 'He knows what's safe for me, and he won't let me slip.'

THE PLEASURE BOOK

How an Aged Lady Remembered Her Daily Joys.

A great many school children keep a pleasure book in the form of a volume of 'memorabilia.' Here are favors, sprigs of flowers, programmes of entertainments, bits of writing, and sometimes photographs each one representing some happy hour that has been passed. But it is to be feared that such a book is sometimes the index of empty pleasure rather than of real happiness, and it may become a regret rather than remain a satisfaction.

A far better book was that kept to the end of her life by a lovely old lady, whose serenely beautiful countenance was unmarred by lines of care or irritation. So placidly happy was she that a woman given to fretfulness, and almost annoyed by the unassailable peace that shone from the other's face, once asked her the secret of her content.

'My dear,' said the elder woman, 'I keep a pleasure book.'

'What?'

'Yes, a pleasure book. Ever since I was a girl at school I have kept a daily account of all the pleasant things that have happened to me. I have only put down the pleasant things; the disagreeable ones I have forgotten as soon as possible. In my whole experience I cannot recall a day so dark that it did not contain some little ray of happiness.'

'The book is filled with little matters—a flower, a walk, a concert, a new gown, a new thought, a fine sentiment, a fresh sign of affection from my family—everything that gave me joy at the time. So if I am ever inclined to be despondent, I sit down and read a few pages in my book, and find out how much I have to be grateful for.'

'May I see your book?'

'Certainly.'

Slowly the peevish friend turned the leaves. How insignificant the entries seemed! How much they meant! 'Saw a beautiful lily in a window.' 'Talked to a bright, happy girl.' 'Received a kind letter from a dear friend.' 'Enjoyed a beautiful sunset.' 'Husband brought some roses home to me.' 'My boy out to-day for the first time after the croup.'

'Have you found a pleasure for every day?' inquired the fretful woman, wistfully.



'Yes, for every day, even the sad ones.' The answer came in a low tone.

'I wish I were more like you,' said the discontented woman, with a sigh. Then she looked up at her aged friend, and a beautiful reverence grew in her face. 'I don't think,' she said, as her eyes filled, 'that you need to write them down any more on paper. Your pleasure book is written in your face.'

In the Book of Life God sometimes writes sorrows, but He does not omit the joys. The determination to make the most of happiness and the least of trouble is the truest philosophy, as well as a sign of a beautiful character and a Christian hope.

HIS LITTLE ONES.

To Criticize Beginners Efforts is to Show our Unworthiness.

Sometimes when boys or girls come into the church, or the Endeavor Society, the young people who have been longer in the way regard them critically, and are very ready to find fault with any word or action which is not quite consistent with their new profession. It almost seems as if their especial interest was whether these newcomers could help and reflect credit upon them.

When a new baby comes into a family, we do not find the various members regarding him from a severely critical standpoint. He is not beautiful according to the accepted standard. He is very weak and helpless. He costs many people a great deal of inconvenience and anxiety and hard work. But he is taken as a gift from heaven, and father and mother, and the brothers and sisters if they are wise and loving, do their best to make the way easy for those tiny feet. They do not think of what the baby can do for them, but only of the ways in which they can care for him—how they can help his little body to become strong, and teach him the lessons he needs to know. And it day by day he grows healthy and beautiful, they have all the reward they wish for.

Is this not the spirit we should show in dealing with Christ's little ones? If any of them are weak, it is our business to help them to grow stronger. If they stumble often, we should be ready to pick them up again, and show them how to avoid a fall in the future. If they do that which we know to be harmful and full of danger, we ought to teach them a better way. To stand aloof and criticize, without extending a helping hand, is only to show our unworthiness to be the older brothers and sisters in God's great family.

RATING THE SEED CORN.

It is Wise to Think in Time of Next Year's Seed Corn.

Ambitious boys who are impatient at the thought of beginning at the bottom of the ladder may find good counsel in the following advice given to a bright young friend of the writer.

Eddie was the boy's name; the question of what he should do for a living was brought up at home, and Eddie was very much pleased with an offer of almost man's wages for the summer's work. At the same time he had the chance to learn a profitable business, but for the next three or four years his pay would barely clothe him. He wanted to take up with the summer's tempting offer and trust for other similar openings afterwards. His father wisely advised Eddie to learn the trade which would be of permanent value, to lose the present offer of good wages for sake of life-long profit.

'When I was a boy,' said his father, 'my father used up pick out the very best ears of corn and put them away to plant. One hard year a neighbor came for seed corn. He had let his own corn all go for bread and was destitute. My father had planted his and had none to give.'

'Always think of next year, Eddie, and don't eat up your seed corn!'

RESPECT YOUR WORK.

Attending to the Details is What Leads to Sure Success.

A boy is usually set to do drudgery when he first begins any trade. He must kindle fires, sweep stores, care for stables, etc. These things are tiresome and appear to be of little use in teaching him his future business. They are very important tests of his character, however, and he is wise if he treats them as such and attends to them as though he believed they were of consequences.

A distinguished merchant owed his first advancement in business to the way he attended to mere drudgery. He had to take care of two horses, look after the lamps and care for the horse sheds. His lamps always shone and gave good light; he kept the barn where the horses were clean and neat; the ground in the sheds was carefully swept every morning, and some loose bricks which were apt to fall down would be carefully piled. One day the head partner of the firm, who lived at a distance, put his horse under the sheds. When he backed him out the horse knocked down some of the bricks.

'Pick up those bricks!' said the man to the boy who had come to put some packages in the carriage.

That was all the recognition the boy received, and it was the first time that the great man had spoken to him. But the next day the same man came again. He was seen looking about the stable and talking with the manager of the store. In a week the boy was promoted to the charge of a department which called for especial faithfulness, and from that time rose rapidly.

Soar Above Them.

A friend once illustrated to me the difference between three of her friends in the following way: She said if they should all three come to a spiritual mountain which had to be crossed, the first one would tunnel through it with hard and wearisome labor; the second would meander round it in an indifferent fashion, hardly knowing where she was going, and yet, because her air was right, getting around it at last; but the third would just flap her wings and fly right over. I think we must all know something of these different ways of locomotion, and I trust, if any of us in the past have tried to tunnel our way through the mountains that have stood across our pathway, or have been meandering around them, that we may from henceforth resolve to spread our wings and 'mount up' into the clear atmosphere of God's presence, where it will be easy to overcome the highest mountain of them all.—Hannah Whitall Smith.

TOO SMART.

A Very Funny Story That has an Equally Funny Moral.

The professedly comic papers are not above printing stories with a moral. Thus we find in Judge the following electioneering anecdote, the moral of which is, in Judge's language, 'Don't hustle too hard.'

Jim Russe wanted the nomination for county treasurer in Beggs County last fall, and his success was conceded by those who knew him. He was as energetic as a tugboat, and as tireless as a mule. The other candidates groaned when he entered the lists.

But he failed to reach the goal. One day he drove fifteen miles through a pouring rain, over roads hub-deep with mud, to see a man—a farmer of considerable influence.

The farmer received him coolly.

'So ye drove through that mud in three hours, did ye?' he inquired.

'I did,' replied Russe.

The farmer pondered a few minutes.

'I s'pose ye want the delegation from this town?'

'I do.'

'Well, my boy, I'm afraid ye can't have it. You was solid with me up to a few minutes ago, but by thunder! a man who can drive fifteen miles over such internal roads in three hours wouldn't be a safe man to trust with the county money; he'd be too hard to catch.'

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