"In This, Thy Day."

One of the most significant words in human speech is the word *opportunity*. Opportunity is every thing, opportunity stands for every thing; opportunity means success or failure; opportunity is prosperity or loss of prosperity; opportunity is duty done or duty neglected; opportunity is life used or life wasted; opportunity is the soul saved or the soul lost.

The great importance of time lies in the fact that time is opportunity; in the New Testament there are two words which are rendered "time;" one of these signifies duration, as when it is said, "Time shall be no more;" that is, we suppose, the ordinary measurements of time will cease to be used; the days will no longer be measured by the rising and setting of the sun, or the months or the years be measured by the motion of the heavenly bodies. The other word which is rendered "time" means, in fact, "opportunity." The words rendered "Redeeming the time," twice used in the epistles, might more properly be rendered "Improving the opportunity.

While opportunity is everything, one of the most tremendous facts in human experience is the fact that opportunity not improved passes by and is withdrawn. This is a fact written all over human life and human history, as well as all over the Scriptures. A boat is floating down the rapids; the easy, careless oarsmen may check its course, and turn it to the shore; but very shortly the opportunity has passed, and destruction is inevitable. To-day the husband man may advantageously sow his seed; but to-morrow it will be a waste of labor and of material. The young man has his opportunity, when he may attain standing, prosperity, everything that life can bring; but presently the opportunity has gone by, the work which belongs to youth cannot be begun in the middle life, still less the work which belongs to middle life be done in old age.

The Jewish nation had its opportunity; it might have been the greatest of nations: it might have attained a prosperity, material and spiritual, an elevation, political and moral, such as no other nation has ever dreamed of, this opportunity was offered through one prophet after another; then the opportunity culminated in the words of invitation spoken by the beloved Son; and then, once more, the opportunity was offered, but under less favorable auspices, by the apostles; but already the opportunity had passed, for though there was an external occasion, yet the habit of ungodliness had become fixed in the nation, and it hastened to ruin. Opportunity is offered every Sabbath, every day, with every rising and setting sun. God in His Word, God in His works, God through His people, God by His mercies, God by His judgments, calls on men to improve the opportunity.

When the opportunity ceases, it is not that there is a change in the character of God; it is that the character of man has become so far fixed that opportunity is, henceforth, unavailing.

Another momentous fact is, that as we do not always know when opportunity is at hand, so we do not know when opportunity ceases; opportunity comes under a disguise. Years ago, the writer heard Mr. Moody tell this story: A convict in prison, under sentence of death, was very anxious to get access to the governor that he might plead with him for a pardon. One day a gentleman, of unpretending appearance, visited his cell, and spoke to him very kindly, but without producing any special impression upon him. After the gentleman had gone, some one said to the prisoner, "Did you know that that was the governor?" "O," he said, "why didn't I know it, that I might have asked him to pardon me?" So opportunity comes unheralded, unrecognized, and, no less, its departure is unannounced. No one can draw a line across the Niagara River and say, "Above this is safety; below this is danger." No clock strikes the hour when the young man passes the line of possible success; no voice tells the moderate drinker at what point he will become a hopeless sot. How little did the Jews know that the crisis of all time for them was the day when the plain peasant carpenter stood among them.

The more favorable and rich the opportunity, so much the earlier comes the time when opportunity ceases. The heathen may go on to middle life, to old age, in habits of the most revolting barbarism, crime, and cannibalism, and yet be within the reach of recall; but the line is passed much more quickly by him who has been brought up in a land of Sabbaths and of Bibles.

The only way to avoid losing forever the opportunity is to improve it to-day, this hour.—*The National Baptist.*

Near God.

He is far off from us until we have learned to feel Him, know Him, trust Him, love Him. But His secret is with them that fear Him; blessed are the pure in heart, for they see Him; the eternal God is their refuge, and underneath them is the pressure of the everlasting arms. There is no intimacy like the intimacy of love; no fellowship like that of hearts aglow with mutual affection. "If a man love Me," said Jesus, "he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." It is as we are quickened into new being, and become temples of the Holy Spirit, and feel the touch of God's hand, and hear His words, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," that His nearness comes home to us.

"Near! so very near, I cannot nearer be;
For, in the likeness of His Son, I am as near as He."

It would be hard to exaggerate the worth of this to a devout soul. To rest in something that shall satisfy the intellect and the heart is the soul's supreme longing. The history of religion and of philosophy is evidence. The cry of the earnest spirit is "Nearer, my God, to Thee." "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee," sings the psalmist. His soul had been as a bird frightened from its nest, but finding shelter nowhere else—"I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I will trust;" "In the day of trouble He shall keep me in His pavilion; in the court of His tabernacle shall He hide me."

In such words have men sung their joy in the keeping of God; nor is it less dear to us children of a later day. Niebuhr, the great critic and scholar, is spokesman for millions when he says: "I do not know what to do with a metaphysical God. I will have none but the God of the Bible, who is heart to heart with us." Such waiting on God has been the strength and solemn joy of men. They had fainted unless they had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

And yet, on the other hand, this closeness of God has been the agony and despair of men. Some have longed to tear out of the soul all sense or remembrance of Him, even as Hercules strove to tear from his burning flesh the poisoned tunic of the Centaur. While one cries, "The Lord is my light and my salvation," another finds God to be a consuming fire. The heat that quickens life hastens death; the glow that flushes the petals of the flowers and clothes the hills with verdure converts the noxious weed into a poison and stench. And so one gladly trusts that "He who dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty," another calls on the rocks and mountains to fall on him and hide him from the face of Deity.

O to know Him, to know Him as He is, is eternal life. He is not far from any of us. He is nigh unto all that call upon Him in truth. Above, about, within us His abundant life enswathes us and works out its high mission. He flows through one man's being as a stream through a fertile meadow; through another's as a choked torrent down a mountain gorge, leaving ruin in its wake. With the pure He shows Himself pure; with the froward, froward.

What shall God be to us? What shall divine love, what shall divine life, give us? "I am come that men might have life," said Jesus. If we be as little children in our readiness to learn, we shall pass into the light and glory of existence, into the kingdom of God. We must not despise the oracles that speak to us; nature, the words of the wise who have walked with God, the instincts and needs of the soul itself, the life and speech of Jesus, will guide us aright. Let us be still and know that He is God. By childlikeness of mind men guessed the secrets of the winds and waves, of steam and gravitation and the electric current and the sun. By the mental honesty of a child Newton saw the meaning of a falling apple. So are we to be wise as to God. Take Him, touch Him, try Him, and let Him be His own interpreter. How near, how real, He is made in Jesus! Here is a door, here a "way of access," that no one who is humble toward the truth can despise.—*The Rev. G. F. Chipperfield, in The Christian Union.*

Sin Not.

No matter how pleasant it looks, nor how much "better situated" it promises to render you, nor how innocent the face of it, do it not if the Word of God forbids it. You may think "no one need ever know." That is the delusive tempting of the enemy. All your world will know. You will tell them yourself, if no one else does. The nature of sin is to roll out into the view of everybody. It can no more be kept hidden than can a fire in a bandbox. Why, you may go in your sleep and tell your sin to the very one it has injured. Such things have been and will be. The poor girl who stole sugar from her mistress for her lover, rose in her sleep, and went and told her mistress that she wanted thread and a needle to tie up God's Commandments with, for she had broken them. Then she told of her theft.

There is but one way in which to be sure of escaping exposure and shame: it is never to do anything that deserves such punishment. Be warned in time. If you have already entered into temptation, back out at once and fly. Drop the thing you have no right to take, be what it may. Terrible falls are sounding all over our land. Do not you add to their number. If you have meddled with the cup, touch it no more. If you have learned to love impure company, and have to lie to deceive the home friends regarding your haunts and habits, make haste away from all such associates, and company with them no more.

Heartily repenting of every sin, and wholly forsaking it, it may be that a merciful covering will be drawn over your past, so far as concerns your fellow beings; but you will never be able to forget your sins: you will mourn in secret for them all the days of your life. Blessed are all they who fear the Lord in their youth, walking in His ways.—*Evangelist.*

Thy Way.

"Teach me Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path," was the earnest plea of the Psalmist. His way concerning each one is not only His own, but the manner also in which His way is made plain unto us is His own, and is often contrary to what we might have chosen. We wish to be instantaneously illuminated by Him, or have the path made plain by an easy intuition, rather than by His wiser methods of discipline. At the opening of each day we cannot wait for the providential unfolding of its hours, but demand to know immediately what He wishes us to do, or suffer. We are often unwilling to perform the small duty next in order because it seems insignificant, or too earthly to be planned for us by our heavenly Father. We acknowledge that we must be taught and led by a Supreme Will; but we hesitate to accept His wisdom in His manner of imparting divine instruction. And so it often comes to pass that we are restless and unbelieving, and do not have strength to overcome our spiritual foes, as we otherwise might.

It is therefore important to remember that we are, in all respects, under divine tuition; and our own impetuosity of spirit may arrest spiritual progress; that our heavenly Father seeks in His treatment of us nothing less than our perfection in holiness, so that in the end we may be like Himself and made meet for His eternal presence. Tardiness in making known to us His will may be, therefore, only a part of that schooling which He sees necessary for our ultimate good—just as the wise instructor frequently withholds the explanation of some difficult problem for the time in order that there may be on the part of the pupil a full and free exercise of his own faculties.

What are some of the benefits that will surely come to us from this ready acceptance of God's method of teaching us? We would place among these benefits an increased reverence for His authority. Nothing is more necessary than this grace if we would advance in spiritual knowledge. The heart filled with "godly fear" is truly receptive, and ready for all spiritual illumination. No one can retain this grace only as there is a prompt acknowledgment of God's wisdom displayed both in the truth revealed and in the manner of imparting it to men. Therefore, "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him."—*Christian Advocate.*

It is Curious Who Give.

"It's curious who give. There's Squire Wood, he's put down two dollars; his farm's worth $10,000, and he's money at interest. And there's Mrs. Brown, she's put down five dollars; and I don't believe she's had a new gown in two years, and her bonnet ain't none of the newest, and she's them three grandchildren to support since her son was killed in the army; and she's nothing but her pension to live on. Well, she'll have to scrimp on butter and tea for awhile, but she'll pay it. She just loves the cause; that's why she gives."

These were the utterances of Deacon Daniel after we returned from church the day pledges were taken for contributions to foreign missions. He read them off, and I took down the items to find the aggregate. He went on:—

"There's Maria Hill, she's put down five dollars; she teaches in the north district, and don't have but twenty dollars a month and pays her board; and she has to help support her mother. But when she told her experience, the time she joined the church, I knew the Lord had done a work in her soul; and where He works you'll generally see the fruit in giving. And there's John Baker, he's put down one dollar, and he'll chew more than that worth of tobacco in a fortnight. Cyrus Dunning, four dollars. Well, he'll have to do some extra painting with that crippled hand; but he'll do it, and sing the Lord's songs while he's at work."—*Missionary Messenger.*

A Pastoral Experience.

The late Dr. Guthrie was very diligent in visiting, and quite equal to any emergency. One day he came to the door of an Irishman, who was determined that the doctor should never enter his house. "You can't come in here," said he, "you're not needed nor wanted." "My friend," said the doctor, "I'm only visiting round my parish, to become acquainted with my people, and have called upon you as a parishioner." "It don't matter," said Paddy, "you can't come in here," and with that, lifting the poker, he said, "If you come in here I'll knock you down." Most men would have retired or tried to reason; the doctor did neither, but drawing himself up to his full height, and looking the Irishman square in the face, he said: "Come now, that's too bad; would you strike a man unarmed? Hand me the tongs, then we shall be on equal terms." The man looked at him in great amazement and then said, "Ouch, sure yer a quare man for a minister; come inside," and feeling rather ashamed of his conduct, laid down the poker. The doctor entered and talked, as he could so well do, in a way both so entertaining and instructive as to win the admiration of the man, so that when he rose to go, Paddy shook his hand warmly and said: "Be sure, sir, don't pass my door without giving me a call."—*Baptist Weekly.*

Force of Character.

The road to glory would cease to be arduous if it were trite and trodden, and great minds must be ready not only to take opportunities, but to make them. Alexander dragged the Phythian priestess to the temple on a forbidden day. She exclaimed, "My son, thou art invincible," which was oracle enough for him. On a second occasion, he cut the Gordian knot which others had in vain attempted to untie. Those who start for human glory, like the mettled hounds of Actæon, must pursue the game, not only where there is a path, but where there is none. They must be able to simulate and dissimulate, to leap and to creep; to conquer the earth like Cæsar, or to fall down and kiss it like Brutus; or to throw their sword, like Brennus, into the trembling scale; or, like Nelson, to snatch the laurels from the doubtful hand of victory, while she is hesitating where to bestow them. That policy that can strike only when the iron is hot will be overcome by that perseverance, which, like Cromwell's, can make the iron hot by striking; and he that can only rule the storm must yield to Him who can both raise and rule it.—*Colton.*

Ripeness in Character.

One mark is beauty. Ripe fruit has its own perfect beauty. As the fruit ripens the sun tints it with surpassing loveliness, and the colors deepen till the beauty of the fruit is equal to the beauty of the blossom, and in some respects superior. There is in ripe Christians the beauty of realized sanctification, which the word of God knows by the name of "beauty of holiness."

Another mark of ripe fruit is tenderness. The young, green fruit is hard and stone-like. The mature Christian is noted for tenderness of spirit.

Another mark of ripeness is sweetness. The unripe fruit is sour. As we grow in grace we are sure to grow in charity, sympathy, and love. We shall, as we ripen in grace, have greater sweetness toward our fellow Christians. Bitter-spirited Christians may know a great deal, but they are immature.

Those who are quick to censure may be very acute in judgment, but they are as yet immature in heart. I know we who are young beginners in grace think ourselves qualified to reform the whole Christian church. We drag her before us and condemn her straightway; but when our virtues become more mature I trust we shall not be more tolerant of evil, but we shall be more tolerant of infirmity, more hopeful for the people of God, and certainly less arrogant in our criticisms.

Another and a very sure mark of ripeness is a loose hold of earth. Ripe fruit easily parts from the bough.—*The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

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OBITUARY.

Harriet Gale Hunt, of St. John, N. B.

HUNT.—At Westfield, on the 7th ult. Mrs. Harriet Gale Hunt, aged 81 years. Mrs. Hunt was born in Gloucester, England. Her father was Benjamin Gale, an architect and timber merchant. Miss Gale was educated in London, and afterwards removed with her family to St. John, where, with her two younger sisters, she established a boarding school. After her marriage to Mr. Hunt, she, with her husband, resided for a time in Boston and afterwards in Fredericton, but returned in 1844 to St. John, which continued to be her home for the remainder of her life. Mrs. Hunt was a woman of great industry and much strength of character. She was recognized as a progressive and successful teacher, and the financial results of her work afforded a competency for her old age. Her kindness and generosity, evinced by the number of pupils whom she taught gratuitously, no one suspecting it, and her economy and strict integrity, were as marked as her ability for teaching. Mrs. Hunt was a member of the Leinster-street Baptist church, but during the last years of her life she attended St. John's Episcopal church. Throughout her life she was devoted to the service of the Master, and her Christian influence was widely felt and acknowledged.

The subject of this sketch, Harriet Gale Hunt, was a pioneer of female education in New Brunswick. Come of a sturdy race, and possessed of an iron will, she conquered almost insurmountable obstacles. She was armed with a double purpose, a firm determination to educate her children, and to make her school the best of its kind in the Province. In the face of every difficulty, her efforts were crowned with success.

Harriet Gale was born in Gloucester, England, on the 2nd January, 1809. On the maternal side, she was descended from a cloth manufacturer in England, who referred to his Welsh blood as an excuse for his passionate nature. Her father belonged to the Gales of Wiltshire, where the family are now widely distributed, the only living representative in London being her cousin, Wm. Gale, the artist.

Benjamin Gale was an architect and timber merchant. In this day the architect was also the contractor. He erected, as we understand, the Officers' Barracks, the old Kirk on Germain St. and the old College building in Fredericton. Brought up in the Church of England, in middle life, he joined the Baptist denomination, of which he was a prominent member.

When Harriet was two years old he came to St. John, where he was engaged in business for a few years. He then returned to England, in order to give his family a better education than they could procure in this country. After completing her own studies in London, Miss Gale was entrusted with the management, successively, of two boarding schools in the great metropolis. The family came once more to St. John, when her enthusiastic love of teaching led her to persuade her two younger sisters to join her in establishing a boarding school, their mother consenting to undertake the housekeeping.

One sister was afterwards married to the late Wm. H. Needham, Q. C., and the other to the late H. M. G. Garden, of Woodstock. Harriet married the nephew or adopted son of an American clergyman. The first two years of her married life were passed in Boston. The teacher's instincts were strong within her, and while in that city Mrs. Hunt had private classes in the modern languages and painting. During that period one of her crayon sketches, "The Head of Achilles"—well remembered by her pupils—took the first prize at an artist's exhibition.

In 1841 Mr. and Mrs. Hunt removed to Fredericton, where a boarding school was conducted for three years. They then, with two surviving children, made a final move to St. John, and at once established a boarding school and piano manufactory on Prince Wm. street. Mr. Hunt was a musical composer as well as piano manufacturer, and, like many men of genius, was erratic and unbusinesslike. His wife's early experience was invaluable to her, now that she found herself obliged to teach for the maintenance of her family and also of the manufactory, which was not financially successful. When the factory was unfortunately burned to the ground, with a number of valuable pianos and all of the workmen's tools, she had the courage to undertake rebuilding, meeting all expenses and repaying the cost of the burned tools from her own hard earnings. When her husband's affairs became so much involved that it was quite impossible to continue his business in the city, Mrs. Hunt facilitated his departure for the United States. Gradually, in a few years, by the greatest sacrifices, she met every claim upon him.

Her school was improved year by year to keep abreast with the times. Pupils came from all of the Maritime Provinces, from Canada, and a few even from the United States and England.

The competency that Mrs. Hunt secured for her declining years, nearly all of which she distributed while she lived, was not made in the last and best days of the Seminary, when Holyoke methods were introduced by her daughter, who succeeded her as head of the teaching department. The increasing outlay for teachers of different branches, and for school appliances of various kinds, quite consumed all profits, although the building was crowded to its utmost capacity. During one of these later years, when one of the teachers, Miss Johnson, was associated with Mrs. and Miss Hunt, the profits were exactly three dollars—a dollar each for a holiday trip!! No, it was secured in the *early* days, when this indefatigable woman gave music lessons at six in the morning and ten at night. Often without assistant teachers, she gave instruction in music, drawing and painting, French and Italian, apart from the regular school work. At one time, her face would be seen in market or shop while purchasing supplies for her large household. Again one would meet her marshalling the pupils for a walk to Howe's Lake or some equally distant point. With school and housekeeping duties, and the care of two young children, it remains as a thing to be wondered at that she never failed to conquer obstacles, but reached every point that she had aimed to attain.

Her social disposition will be remembered by those who assisted at the frequent musical parties that were such a pleasure to her. Her kindness and generosity, evinced by the number of pupils whom she taught gratuitously, no one suspecting it, and her economy and strict integrity, were as marked as her abilities for teaching. She had a horror of debt, and what she could not pay for at once was not purchased.

As an instance of her patriotic feeling perhaps a little anecdote may not be out of place. During the excitement consequent upon the Trent affair, she was visiting at Lynn, Mass. One Sunday morning she accompanied her friends to a church where the officiating minister sought popularity by preaching a political sermon and roundly abusing old England. In the course of his remarks he said: "And why did not England face the French? Because she did not *dare!*" The congregation applauded audibly. With an impulse not to be controlled, Mrs. Hunt sprang to her feet and said, "It's a lie!" Perhaps her Welsh blood was stirred. Certainly we have never heard of her expressing any regret for this indecorum.

Mrs. Hunt was a member of the Leinster St. Baptist church, the Episcopal members of the school attending St. John's church (Stone), which she also attended during the last years of her life.

The death of her son, who was drowned in South America during the earthquake of 1868, was a terrible shock to her and probably led to the development of the disease that afterwards caused her death.

In 1874, desiring to inspect the methods employed in the English schools, Mrs. Hunt and her daughter visited England, where, through the kindness of Sir Charles Reed, president of the London school board, they had every facility for carrying out their plan. After their return to St. John the school was carried on for a few months only, when Mrs. Hunt suffered from a slight paralytic stroke, which left her the victim of gradual paralysis for fifteen years.

In 1889 Westfield was chosen as a summer residence, and the remainder of her life was passed in the most lovely and retired part of this beautiful region.

After an illness of two months, in which she lay speechless and helpless, and in which she exhibited remarkable patience and serenity, she breathed her last on the 7th ult., leaving behind her the most pleasant memories of a sweet and placid old age. Her illness, and even her dying, were prolonged by a vitality alike marvellous to physician and watchers. But the end came quietly and peacefully, without a struggle. Consciousness returned, and long after the pulse had ceased to beat, the intelligent eyes rested upon the one whose privilege it was to minister to her to the last.

Throughout her life she was devoted to the service of the Master, and her Christian influence was widely felt and acknowledged. And now, looking upon the perfect repose of the white face, divested of every wrinkle, and almost youthful in its beauty, the black hair that had never lost its color resting in soft waves on the calm brow, one could but rejoice that the throbbing heart was stilled, and the soul at rest with its Maker. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—*Globe.*

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— Many of the sharp things in a newspaper are from the exchange editor, who is a very cutting person.

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Silk Needlework.

The latest edition (1890) of that series of instructive and entertaining books on Home Needlework, published yearly by the Corticelli Silk Co., is now ready. It will repay any lady interested in fancy work to send to their address (St. Johns, Que.) six cents in postage stamps and receive one of these books. The 1889 edition had many novelties in designs and patterns which are so useful in the Home Circle, and, as in all the work done by this company, this edition is fully up to the standard. The advice given as to the selection of silks alone will save time and disappointment to many. Both editions can be had, we understand, by addressing the Company as above. The Corticelli Silk Co. are selling the well-known Wash Colors Art Silk made by the Brainerd & Armstrong Co., United States.

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