

"His Care."

God holds the key of all unknown,
And I am glad;
If other hands should hold the key,
Or if He trusted it to me,
I might be sad.

What if to-morrow's cares were here
Without its rest?
I had rather He unlock the day,
And as the hours swing open say,
"My will is best."

The very dimness of my sight
Makes me secure,
For, groping in my misty way,
I feel His hand—I hear Him say,
"My help is sure."

I cannot read His future plan,
But this I know,
I have the smiling of His face,
And all the refuge of His grace,
While here below.

Enough; this covers all my want,
And so I rest;
For what I cannot He can see,
And in His care I shall be,
Forever blest.

—Advocate.

The Willing Hearted.

When the Lord gave Moses commandment concerning the building of the Tabernacle he bade him speak unto the "children of Israel" that they bring him an offering, and added:

"Of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering." When Moses laid the commandment before the people, they returned to their tents and "came again" to him, "every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whose spirit made him willing; and they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted," and brought their offerings unto the Lord. We learn further on in the story that "the people brought much more than enough for the service of the work of the Lord, for the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much;" so that Moses had to send out a proclamation staying the further offerings of the people. Now herein is a marvelous thing; that the people of God not only responded to the call of the Lord for offerings and service but responded so promptly, so willingly and so generously, that not only was there enough, but even too much. Later on in Israel's history, God laid a great charge against them because they "had robbed him in tithes and offerings." They had grown careless of the necessities of his house, selfish as to their own personal lusts and desires, and so, through covetousness, had allowed the worship and service of God to fall into "innocuous desuetude."

As we read this story and follow out all its sequences, we are led to say as Moses said of the people who prophesied: "Would God that all the Lord's people were" willing hearted. It is, perhaps, more the lack of this element in our religious and church life, than that of any other, that accounts for whatever of barrenness and inefficiency there is which so much distresses us. Certainly there is no lack of willingness or power on the part of the Lord to make our work efficient and fruitful. Indeed, he has in his dealings with Israel distinctly challenged us on this point. "Bring ye in all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, and see if I will not open the windows of Heaven, and pour you out such a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Elsewhere we are told that God's day of power is when his people are "willing hearted," or are a free-will offering to the Lord. An expression sometimes used in the Bible to denote consecration is, "to fill your hands" and to serve the Lord "with both hands."

It is worth while to note some of the elements of "willing heartedness." It is a movement of the heart from within and not the stimulation of the will from without. Their "hearts stirred them up," and their "spirits made them willing." It is true that Moses had set the whole matter of the service asked for before them, and had explained to them the great honor and privilege there was in having God in their midst, and in being permitted thus to contribute to the building of the sanctuary for his dwelling-place and the tabernacle for his service. Still they did not act impulsively. They went from the presence of Moses and came again; showing that they had thought over the whole matter, and as they "mused the fire burned" within their hearts, so that the impulse to offer to the Lord came from within and not from without. Their action was not now a cold and formal act of obedience to the Word of God, a mere act of duty, but a glad and generous movement of their affections toward God. Indeed, God has made this element of willing heartedness a condition of receiving his gift. It is even so now. God does not accept from a grudging hand, nor from a cold

and loveless heart. Many a gift is cast down at the feet of God in the name of religion which is never taken up by Heaven and is never used to accomplish a spiritual result. Such gifts, it has been said, "evaporate downward." Sometimes we hear it said that it does not matter from whose hands money is given or with what motive it is given, it is still good money, and if used for God will answer just as well as if it were given by the most devoted heart and consecrated hand. A dollar given to the Church or Missionary Board will go just as far in building the house and supporting the missionary, whether given by an infidel or a believer, a "willing hearted" disciple, or a grudging "skinflint" professor. Outwardly this is true, but looked at from the point of view of God's Word it is a serious question whether such money ever results in any spiritual good. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." We do not believe that he ever receives or uses in his spiritual kingdom the offerings of a loveless heart. It is one thing for the Church and Missionary Society to receive it and appropriate it; it is another thing for the Holy Ghost to accept and use it. It is possible for good money to perish with the false heart that offers it to God.

The "willing hearted" givers are enthusiastic givers. Their "hearts stirred them up." Enthusiasm is purpose set on fire. When all right purposes of a man are thus set on fire, he is in a state of enthusiasm. Half-heartedness in a good cause is but cold-heartedness, and a cold-hearted service or gift never did much good in the world much less in the Church. There are Christians who render service to God out of pure motives and in a devout spirit, who are yet so cold-hearted that their service chills where it ought to warm. We heard once of a man who responded to the cry of another who had fallen overboard from a pier. The man took hold of a plank lying on the pier, one end of which was covered with ice. He reached out the plank to the man with the icy end to him. The man seized the end of the plank, and again and again his hands slipped off. At last he cried out in despair: "For God's sake give me the warm end of that plank." The willing-hearted man serves God with the warm end of the plank. His money burns with heat, not from the tightness of the grip with which he has been holding on to it, but with the pulse of his eager heart as it runs down through his fingers, and sets his gift on fire with love. All his service is hot. If he speaks to a fellow-being about his soul it is with an enthusiasm which communicates heat while it does not degenerate into "zeal without knowledge." What we need to-day in our Christian and Church life is a holy enthusiasm. Cold-hearted Christians, no matter how correct, so far as righteousness of act and life is concerned, are a hindrance rather than a help in the kingdom of Heaven. Indifference in the Church is vastly worse than infidelity out of it.—Independent.

Mother's Hour.

BY NELLIE WATT M'VEY.

I was very tired that evening—very tired. My head and limbs ached with the unaccustomed labor, for I had but just returned from a long summer's idling, and there was much to do.

The supper was over at last, the dishes stacked in the pan, the table shoved back into its place, and the lamp-light lay with a cheerful glow over all the roomy kitchen. The autumn moonlight lay like a silver vision over everything without, creeping shyly in at the open door, and flooding the floor with its mellow beams. Our guest lingered, chatting with my husband, and I looked across to where my baby boy sat, sleepily nodding in his chair, beside which my little student bent earnestly over book and slate.

The silent finger of the clock pointed to the hour of eight, and I said: "Come, Birdie, we will go to bed now;" and, followed by my thoughtful, sober eldest son, we went up into the moonlit chambers above. The lispings prayers were listened to, the little brown heads were pillowed restfully, and then there was questions to be answered—questions always reserved for the bed-time hour—and then with good-night kisses, I left them alone in the soft radiance of the moonlight, returning wearily to my work.

"You were long away," smiled my husband.

"Yes," I said, "it takes a good deal of thought to put the little bodies and minds to bed aright."

Our guest sat silently regarding the patch of moonlight lying across the open doorway, his hands clasped over the back of his head, his chair half tilted back.

"I wonder," he said, dreamily, "if mothers realize the importance of this 'putting to bed aright' business. I remember when I was a little tot of a boy, like the little fellow up-stairs how I used to look forward all day to this hour. It was one glimpse of heaven and peace in the tempestuous season of boy life. If I had any question troubling my mind during the day, mother would solve it then. If any trials, any crosses, had darkened my spirit's sunshine, mother would soothe them away with the gentle touch of her loving hand. If any dark shadows of disobedience, unkindness or stubbornness lay like a blot on my memory, haunting the daylight, I knew the twilight hour would bring peace and forgiveness and love."

"So, through all the storms and griefs of the day, the anticipation of the evening's comfort came like a star, struggling through the gloom of night, and I knew that at that hour, I could go to one ear ever ready to listen to my complaints and confessions, and mother would comfort me."

"One day—I will carry its memory with me to my grave—mother had been fretful and impatient, and I had been rebellious and had not tried very hard to please. The baby had been restless and cross, and I had not been very kind to him. I had performed slowly and reluctantly the little services asked of me, and I did not feel very happy; still, I thought I would tell her I was sorry, when I kissed her good-night, and she would forgive me."

"When the long, trying day drew to a close, she said to my father, wearily, 'Things drag so with me, to day; everything goes wrong, and my work is not half done.' So he took the task from her tired hands; and said tenderly:

"Well, dear, go with the little ones to their room, and don't do anything more to-night."

"She put out her hands, and we, tired, trying little fellows, went gladly away with her. When our prayers were said, and the baby sank away into slumber, with his prayer half finished upon his sleepy lips, she put her arms about me, and, leaning her forehead—I can feel its hot throbbing yet—against my cheek; said:

"Mamma is sorry she was cross with her boy to-day; but she is not well, and you know she loves you."

"O, mamma!" I said; "it was I who was not good to you. It seems I could not be a good boy." "Did you try?" she asked, smoothing the hair away from my brow with a gentle, caressing touch. "You must always ask God to help you to be a good boy."

"I will never forget the picture she made, sitting there in the silver radiance of the full, round moon—her soft brown hair lying like a cloud over her shoulders; her fair, wan face, white and weary, her tired hands lingering, O, so tenderly, on my brow and hair—my gentle, fading mother."

"She bent her face to mine, kissing me on brow and cheek and lips, and said: 'Mamma does not mind, dear; she knows her boy loves her; and some days, mamma herself has a hard struggle to be patient and kind. Mamma knows all about how hard it is to be good. But, remember my son, God always helps those who help themselves.' Then she straightened the white covering over our tired limbs, kissing us both, lightly, lovingly, tenderly saying, 'Good-night, my son; and then she drifted, like a white cloud, out into the darkened hall beyond. I remember I fell asleep wondering what the world would be without my mother. I knew, all too soon, I saw her but once again alive."

"In the night-time, I was awakened from a sweet dream, and they told me my mother was dying. They took us to her bedside, where, pale and pinched with pain, lay my one faultless friend—dying. She opened her soft, sweet eyes, a wan smile came to her lips, and she said, kissing us—"God bless and keep my darlings; then a great change came to her face, and they told us she was dead."

After a pause, he continued, in a voice through which ran a quiver of tears: "That was years and years ago, and the flowers have blossomed and faded many a long, long day, between her face and mine. But the vision of a white robed figure, with warm brown hair drifting over her white shoulders, eyes, strangely tender, shining out of a wan, weary face, and the memory of a soft, caressing hand upon my upturned brow, a low, sweet voice saying to my soul: 'Remember, my son, God always helps those who help themselves,' comes to me in every hour of trial, in every hour of bitterness and despair, and evermore, between me and temptation, that memory comes like a spirit of warning; and I feel that my mother still leads me with her spirit hand, and the influence of the twilight hour is strong enough to hold me back from many of the vices and weaknesses of the world about me."

There was a long pause. At last our guest arose quietly and walked away to the door, and as he passed out into the darkness, he spoke a husky-voiced "good-night" and left us in the awed silence which his story had thrown about us.—The Christian Evangelist.

Excuses.

There are those in all stages of life and in all fields of duty who live, or try to live, upon the policy of excuse. As if there could be any policy in it. Many a man feels as well satisfied after having made a good excuse as if he had achieved success and needed no excuse. And here is just the depravity of the whole business. The best excuse is but a confession of failure; but it is so deceptive that he who offers it does not usually realize the fact. A scholar in school may explain to the teacher that he has not his lesson, because his book was stolen. A good excuse, to be sure, but that lesson goes unlearned all the same. The college student is "not prepared" because of headache, and professor and pupil are satisfied. The verdict of "not guilty" is secured, and the fact that a link of the chain of instruction is forever missing is not taken into account. If there are many whose chief study in life is how not to do it, there are quite as many who occupy themselves chiefly in explaining why they did not do it. It is a fatal day when one learns how to make a plausible excuse. It is the most fascinating and fatal folly imaginable. A general who can explain just how and why he lost the battle should be cashiered at once. It is a poor substitute for victory, and only aggravates defeat. Every man intrusted with great interests should be left without excuse, and so feel that he must succeed. Excuses are bridges of retreat. Burn them. At the great naval battle of Copenhagen, when the fight waxed hot and terrible, Sir Hyde Parker became alarmed and hung out the signal for retreat. Nelson grew furious and swore he would do no such thing. He growled, "I have the right to see badly," and clapping his glass to the eye which was blinded at Aboukir he cried, "I see no signal, blaze away!" They did blaze away, and the great battle was won. Here was the best excuse in the world, ready made, to escape from a perilous and doubtful task; but Nelson trampled it under his feet. They are the heroes of earth who despise excuses. They are the poppies that put to ignoble slumber all the heroic qualities.

Excuses would be more excusable—rather less blameable, for there is little excuse for excuses—if the maker of them would bravely and honestly shoulder the responsibility. But this is not the rule. We lay the blame elsewhere, and are guilty at once of murdering opportunity and attacking innocence. Tardiness in meeting an engagement, or at school or church, is heartlessly put over upon the faithful watch that has not missed a tick nor lost a minute for a month. Slow progress in school, or failure to pass the college examination, is saddled upon the faithful and painstaking teacher; negligence in religious duty, and un-Christian conduct generally is excused off upon the pastor; failure in business is set down to somebody's rascality instead of our own sloth; and never do we find ourselves lost and bewildered in the thickest of failure of any sort but we begin to look about for a ram, or a lamb, which may be offered up instead of self. Many a poor crop is grumblingly laid to the charge of bountiful Providence, when the fields adjacent are fat with plenty. Not only, then, is an excuse a confession of failure—the best excuse learns no lesson, wins no battle, raises no crop, achieves no success, nor makes any amends for failure—but it also affords a ready temptation to wrong the innocent and screen ourselves.

There is another depravity lurking in this matter of excuse making—the temptation to lie. Whosoever makes excuses desires to make it as strong as possible. A poor excuse may be better than none, as it may be an excuse of an excuse, but it is generally used with such tone of irony as to discredit the trite proverb. Excuses are made, home-made at that, and we want no flaws in them. The student who is "not prepared" had the "worst headache last night that anybody ever did have." I have heard more than one preacher declare in the beginning of his discourse that he was laboring under very severe indisposition, when afterwards, he gave no evidence of the fact, even at the dinner table. Father's house was a preacher's home in my boyhood. Excuses beforehand are not only prophetic confessions of failure, but are usually lying prophecies besides. Not only are excuses made, and home-made, but they are often, as we have seen, made of whole cloth—created out of nothing, and are very bad. Never look for a possible excuse for failure beforehand; nor try to invent one afterwards.—Standard.

A Home For Christ In The Heart.

BY THE REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

If Jesus actually lives with you, other people will be sure to discover the fact. When he went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, he "could not be hid." If you travel through a certain district in Southern France in lavender time, you are sure to know that it is a lavender country by the sweet fragrance in the air. Christ is always self-revealing. No genuine Christian will ever desire to conceal him; he could not even if he would.

Many absurd things have been written about "secret hopes," etc., but, my friends, if nobody in this world, not even your most intimate friend, suspects that you are a Christian, I do not believe that you are one. If there is any fire in a stove, a touch will show it. Here, then, is an infallible test. Do I feel and recognize that Christ is in my heart, controlling my conduct, quickening my conscience, and helping me every day to resist evil and do right? Then he is there; but if no such internal evidence exist, then Christ has never been there, or has gone away.

For the question whether the Master will always stay with us depends largely upon ourselves. Self-will and pride may drive him out, for he promises to dwell only with them who are of an humble and contrite spirit. Neglect may provoke him to depart—and so may a persistent disobedience to commandments. Dr. Maclaren beautifully remarks that "the sweet song-birds and the honey-bees are said always to desert a neighborhood before a pestilence breaks out in it." So the ineffably holy Saviour will not dwell with evil, and we may so poison the heart atmosphere with indulged sin, that He will not stay in it. Free agency does not cease after conversion; if Christ enters our hearts through faith, he must be kept there by faith. O what wondrous condescension, that the Lord of glory will consent to occupy such a hut as my poor heart; yet he is kindly saying to me: "Give me room in this thy heart, and I will give thee a place in my heaven."

A practical thought not to be lost sight of is that if Jesus dwells in our hearts we should be carrying him with us. "Let your light so shine before men" that they may recognize that Jesus is within you. Show your Christ-like kindness to people while they are living, and do not take it out in heaping flowers on their coffins. I have sometimes thought when I looked at such posthumous displays, if these poor, silent lips could speak they would wish that a few more flowers of love had sweetened their hard, weary lives! Carry Christ with you to your unconverted friends. If you win their respect for you and get a hold on them, you can talk to them about their souls; tell them what Christ has done for you, and, as it were, add your knock to his knock at their heart's door. Reverently be it said, the Christ in you will appeal to them through you. Just here lies the only real power which any Christian has with the sinning and the suffering around him. As for such of my readers as have never had this glorious Son of God living in their hearts, it is because you do not want him there. He will be in the way of your favorite sins. Beware, my friend! Christ gives last knocks; and if you bolt him out of your heart, he will shut you out of His heaven.—The Independent.

Our Months.

We derive the names of our months from the Romans, who conquered Great Britain soon after the commencement of the Christian era. January is named from *Janus*, a two-faced Roman idol, to indicate that it points toward the old season ended and the new one begun. It was not universally adopted by European nations as the first month until the eighteenth century. February is said to have been named by Romulus from *Februus*, the mother of Mars, because during this month there occurred the Roman festival called *Februalia*, March is named from *Mars*, the god of war. April receives its name from *aperire*, to open, because it was the season when the buds began to open. Day was so called from *Maia*, the mother of *Mercury*; and June from *Junio*, the wife of Jupiter, all favorite deities of the Romans. July was named by Mark Antony, in honor of the celebrated Roman emperor, Julius Caesar, the first of his nation who attempted the conquest of Great Britain. August, which means *grand* or *great*, received its name in compliment to another Roman emperor, called Octavius Augustus. September was named from *Septem*, the seventh; October from *Octo* the eighth; November from *Novem*, the ninth; and December from *Decem*, the tenth month of the Roman year, counted from March. These names are still retained, though inappropriate according to our numbering of the months.

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For a number of months I was troubled with Constipation, in consequence of which I suffered from Loss of Appetite, Dyspepsia, and a disordered liver. My eyes also troubled me. I was compelled to wear a shade over them, and, at times, was unable to bear exposure to the light. I was entirely

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three boxes of Ayer's Pills. I have no hesitation in pronouncing this medicine to be the best cathartic ever made.—James Eccles, Poland, Ohio.

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6.40 A. M.—For Fredericton Junction and for McAdam Junction and St. Stephen, Vancorb, Bangor, Portland, Boston, and all points West; St. Andrews, Houlton, Woodstock, Presque Isle, Grand Falls, Edmundston, and all points north.

11.40 A. M.—For Fredericton Junction and for St. John and all points East.

ARRIVE AT FREDERICTON.

9.20 A. M.—From Fredericton Junction and from St. John and all points East.

2.15 P. M.—From Fredericton Junction, and from Vancorb, Bangor, Portland, Boston, and all points West; St. Andrews, St. Stephen, Houlton, Woodstock, Presque Isle, Grand Falls and all points North.

7.15 P. M.—Express from St. John and intermediate points.

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