

"He Careth for You."

How strong and sweet my Father's care!
The word, like music in the air
Comes answering to my whispered prayer—
"He cares for thee."

The thought great wonder with it brings;
My cares are all such little things,
But to the truth my glad faith clings,
He cares for me.

et, keep me ever in Thy love
Dear Father, watching from above,
And let me still Thy mercy prove
And care for me.

Cast me not off for all my sin,
But make me pure and true within,
And teach me how Thy smile to win
Who carest for me.

O still, in summer's golden glow,
Or wintry storms of wind and snow,
Love me, my Father; let me know
Thy care for me!

And I will learn to cast the care
Which like a heavy load I bear
Down at Thy feet in lowly prayer,
And trust in Thee.

For naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since Thou, with tenderness divine,
Dost care for me.

—Marianne Farningham, in *Christian World*.

"Taffy" And Its Use.

BY PROF. J. W. CHICKERING, JR.

Not long ago a father was repeating to his daughter some pleasant things a friend had spoken in her praise.

"O, father," said she, "he was only giving you taffy."
"Well," was the reply, "taffy is at times a very good thing, if genuine and not excessive. It has its uses. It is generally preferable to vitriol."

The little English story of *The Oiled Feather*, showing how as the drop of oil on the end of the feather put a stop to the creaking of the door hinge, so a kindly word would pour oil on the troubled waters and diminish friction in the social machinery, how "a soft answer turneth away wrath," is full of helpful suggestion in the same general direction.

Probably no one ever lived, man, woman, or child, who did not like commendation, praise, even flattery, if it be applied skillfully, and not laid on with too lavish a brush or too indiscriminately. As in almost every thing in life, much depends upon proportion, time, place, circumstances, and quantity. Few things are always and absolutely either bad or good, compared with those whose character is determined by their surroundings. Sin *per se*, to use a once familiar phrase, is far less common than sin as the result of misuse or abuse of things in themselves harmless or even beneficial.

One of our good thinkers has said that sin began with the conscious use of means as ends. For instance, the pleasurable and restful change from hard work, to which the name of recreation is rightfully given, as the means of preparation for new labors, becomes and is rightly named dissipation—the wasting of the vital forces—when made the end of life. So as to the worth and the effect of praise, much depends on proportion. With people of modesty and culture it is well that the approbation should be implied rather than expressly formulated. With those of less delicacy you can hardly lay it on too thickly. Henry Ward Beecher was once introduced to an audience with such a glorification of his father and his family, and himself, that he whispered to a friend sitting near, "Now I know just how a fly feels when he has fallen into the molasses pitcher." But while proportion and good taste are to be observed, yet the fact remains that nearly every one is pleased with appreciation and its at least occasional expression. And yet further, it is a fact that we, as a people, are rather afraid of this open, frank expression of approbation, lest we should be suspected of "giving taffy."

The French, perhaps, go to the other extreme, and indulge in an amount of compliment both in word and manner that is not in good taste, and is very apt to beget doubt of its sincerity, to make one feel that it is mainly for effect, mere flattery. It would possibly be a good thing for each, could the Anglo-Saxon and Gallic peoples and languages each borrow somewhat in this regard from the other, the one gaining courtesy, the other frankness. For it is ever carefully to be borne in mind that in order to be worth to either party, such expression must be absolutely honest and hearty.

Never "damn with faint praise," much better say nothing. Never praise that which is not worthy of it. Never tell a lie for the sake of courtesy. If you wish to "give taffy," let it be the pure saccharine article, not terra alba or glucose. Do not for the sake of being polite tell the young mother how greatly you are charmed with her beautiful

child, when you do not like babies any way, and privately consider hers a little monster. Do not assure a dull, prosy speaker that you have greatly enjoyed his latest effort; for not only do you encourage him to go on in his mistaken career, but you sin against your own soul.

When you cannot honestly speak in praise, say nothing, or take refuge in generalities, like the kind-hearted minister who, whenever a particularly ugly infant was presented for his admiration, would always cheerfully exclaim, "Well, that is a baby!" which has the merit of being true in fact, and yet gratifying the parental appetite for some expression of astonishment. Or tell the prosy speaker, if you must say something, how you enjoyed his peroration, or how thoroughly you agree with his principles.

And, now, to make a few personal applications of this subject. First of all, in the family, as between husband and wife. If your wife has been successful in her house-keeping, if a good meal has been prepared either by her own hands or by the cook whom she has trained, do not be afraid and do not forget to praise it, as you would commend it at a friend's table. It will not injure the flavor of the food for either of you. Tell her that her biscuits are delicious, that her doughnuts are light as foam (if they are not otherwise, for then you have simply aggravated bad cooking by falsehood.) If her new dress is a success, showing taste in selection and skill in construction, tell her so. You would have had no difficulty in expressing your satisfaction, and even admiration, under such circumstances before you were married. Try it now once in a while, and see if it does not work as well as then. And when the husband has taken pains to gratify his wife, made her a present, brought her some flowers, invited her to walk or to ride, shown thoughtfulness for her and her pleasure, as he used when she bore another name, let her recognize it, praise the gift if she can honestly, and if she cannot, at least thank him for the kindness. It is true that some wives would not find this very exhausting from its frequency, and it is doubtless a fact for husbands to reflect upon, that the lack both of attention and of appreciation is much more apt to be on the part of the husband than of the wife.

As to the children the same rule holds good. Most children, alas! often need counsel, admonition, caution, criticism, reproof, and punishment. And when they need this, let them have it, rod and all, if you would not have them grow up to shame you and to blame you. But, on the other hand, when they have deserved praise, as they often will if you do your duty, let them have that hearty and outspoken. If they have brought home a good report from school, if they have worked well, if they have shown kindness, generosity, thoughtfulness, praise them. Do not content yourself with saying, "Now see that you always do as well as this."

If it be a fact in natural history that honey catches more flies than vinegar, it is equally true that in family life praise may be made a factor potent for good, not half-hearted, not indiscriminate, but deserved, just, well-timed.

In school the same is true. The judicious teacher has here a powerful means of influence. While just, strict, severe, even, when that is needed, he should be equally ready with hearty commendation when that is deserved. It should not be so common as to lose its value, it should never be bestowed undeserved, but it should be given cheerfully when earned. If the scholar has studied hard, and solved a knotty problem or mastered a tough lesson, a cordial "Well-done" will be better for him than merely to be marked ten in the class-book. This fact goes far to explain the success of some teachers apparently not specially endowed for their work. They arouse the enthusiasm of their scholars.

This habit helps to eradicate that old idea held by not a few scholars, at least, in the olden time, that between teacher and pupil a natural and necessary antagonism exists, leading him to think, if not to say, paraphrasing the familiar declamation, "Teacher! between me and thee there is eternal war."

In mechanics it is estimated that we must always allow for a loss of one-third of our working force by friction. In educational work friction is often more serious even than this. Try the effect of the oil of commendation. Nor is there any less opportunity than this in social life. A little of the small change of honest expression of kindly feeling would often greatly facilitate the operations of both business and society. Continued fault-finding criticism is like "a continual dropping in a very rainy day." Unvarying compliment is like the hospitable housewife's idea of suitable tea for her minister, "all molasses." A cordial word of approbation now and then is like the drop of oil on

the sewing-machine or the wagon axle.

Years ago lived a minister, in whom years of physical suffering had begotten such a habit of criticism that he had become proverbial for that trait. One of his parishioners thought he would try for once to get the better of this habit. So he with great care selected a barrel of the largest apples he could find from his best tree, carried them to his minister, and unloaded them upon the piazza. The good man came out, looked them over, could see no fault in the apples, and then remarked to his friend:

"Couldn't you have found a nicer barrel than that?"

His hearer's first impulse was to load the barrel, apples and all, again into his wagon and carry them home; but he did not. And speaking of the calling, it might not be amiss occasionally to try this "taffy" prescription upon your minister, unless, indeed, he be young, newly come, and unmarried, in which case he has very probably already had all that was good for him. But the average hard working country pastor seldom has his digestion interfered with in this way. It will ordinarily be perfectly safe to try the experiment. If he has preached a good sermon, tell him so, once in a while, not so often as to make it a matter of course, but when he has really done well. If he has met your wants, given you clearer views of truth and duty, brought you help, comfort, peace, give him the encouragement of knowing it. Do not let him go on week after week, and even year after year, without a word, till he sometimes wonders to himself, and possibly to his wife, "Does any body know or care for anything I say?" All the way through life are frequent opportunities of trying the soothing, cheering, helpful effort of a word of honest praise. "Pleasant words are as a honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones."

Wasn't Wanted There.

She was a little old woman, very plainly dressed in black bombazine that had seen much careful wear, and her bonnet was very old-fashioned, and people stared at her tottering up the aisle of the grand church, evidently bent on securing one of the best seats, for a great man preached that day, and the house was filled with splendidly dressed people who heard of the fame of the preacher, of his learning, his intellect and goodness, and they wondered at the presumption of the old woman. She must have been in her dotage, for she picked out the pew of the richest and proudest member of the church, and took a seat. The three ladies who were seated there, beckoned to the sexton, who bent over the intruder, and whispered something, but she was hard of hearing, and smiled a little withered smile, as she said gently, "O I'm quite comfortable here, quite comfortable here."

"But you are not wanted here," said the sexton, pompously. "There is not room. Come with me, my good woman. I will see that you have a seat."

"Not room?" said the old woman, looking at her sunken proportions, and then at the fine ladies. "Why, I'm not crowded a bit. I rode ten miles to hear the sermon today because—"

But the sexton took her by the arm, and shook her roughly in a polite underhand way, and she took the hint. Her faded old eyes fled with tears, her chin quivered, but she rose meekly and left the pew. Turning quietly to the ladies who were spreading their rich dresses over the spot she left vacant, she gently said, "I hope my dars there'll be room in heaven for us all."

Then she followed the pompous sexton to the rear of the church, where in the last pew, she was seated between a threadbare girl and a shabby old man.

"She must be crazy," said one of the ladies in the pew she had just occupied. "What can an old ignorant woman like her wait to hear Dr. — preach for. She would not be able to understand a word said. Those people as so persistent. The idea of her forcing herself into our pew. Isn't that voluntary love? There's Dr. — coming out of the vestry. Isn't he grand?"

"Splendid! What a stately man! You know he has promised to dine with us while he is here."

He was a commanding looking man, and as the organ voluntary stopped, and he looked over the vast crowd of worshippers gathered in the great church, he seemed to scan every face. His hand was on the Bible, when suddenly he leaped over the reading desk, and beckoned to the sexton, who obsequiously mounted the steps to receive a mysterious message. And there the three ladies in the grand pew were electrified to see him take his way the whole length of the church to return with the old woman, whom

he placed in the front pew of all, its occupants making willing room for her. The great preacher looked at her with a smile of recognition, and then the service proceeded, and he preached a sermon which struck fire from every heart.

"Who was she?" asked the ladies who could not make room for her, as they passed the sexton at the door.

"The preacher's mother," replied the functionary in an injured tone. How few remember that "while the man looketh on the outward appearance, the Lord looketh at the heart."

True To God.

Never lower your principles to the world's standard. Never let sin, however popular it may be, have any sanction or countenance from you, even by a smile. The manly confession of Christ, when His cause is unpopular, is made by Himself the condition of His confessing us before men. If people find out that we are earnestly religious, as they soon will if the light is shining, let us make them heartily welcome to the intelligence. And then, again, in order that the lights may shine without obstruction, we must be simple and study simplicity. This is by no means so easy as it at first sight appears; for in this highly artificial and pretentious age all society is overlaid with numerous affectations. Detest affectation as the contrary of truth and as hypocrisy on a small scale, and allow yourself to be seen freely by those around you in your true colors. There is an affectation of indifference to all things and of a lack of sensibility which is becoming very prevalent in this age, which is the sworn foe to simplicity of character. The persons who labor under this moral disorder pretend to have lost their freshness of interest in every thing; for them, as they would have it believed, there is no surprise and no enthusiasm. As Christians, we must eschew untruth in every form; we must labor to seem just what we are, neither better nor worse. To be true to God and to the thought of His presence all day long, and to let self occupy as little as possible of our thoughts; to care much for His approval, and comparatively little for the impression we are making upon others; to feed the inward light with oil, and then freely let it shine—this is the great secret of edification. May He indurate us into it, and dispose and enable us to illustrate it in our practice!—*Dr. Gouldburn.*

Charity.

The direction: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," has a charitable side as well as an exclusive aspect. It implies that there may be good in many things that are exceptional or of doubtful character. Amid all the medley of opinions and practices upon religious and moral questions we should encourage the good wherever discovered and nourish it in weakness that it may be able to overpower the surroundings of evil. It is not to be assumed that one is opposed to a cause we hold dear because he does not favor our mode of promoting it. Charity is to be shown towards his good intentions and he bidden God-speed. Let each mode show by the results the better way. Changes in spite of us have come into all our religious movements, endangering many things held sacred. We must recognize the good and give it an encouraging word wherever discovered.

Spiritual blessings are the best blessings; and those are blessed indeed who are blessed with them. God's blessings are realities and produce real effects. We can but wish a blessing; he commands it. Those whom he pleases are blessed indeed.—HENRY.

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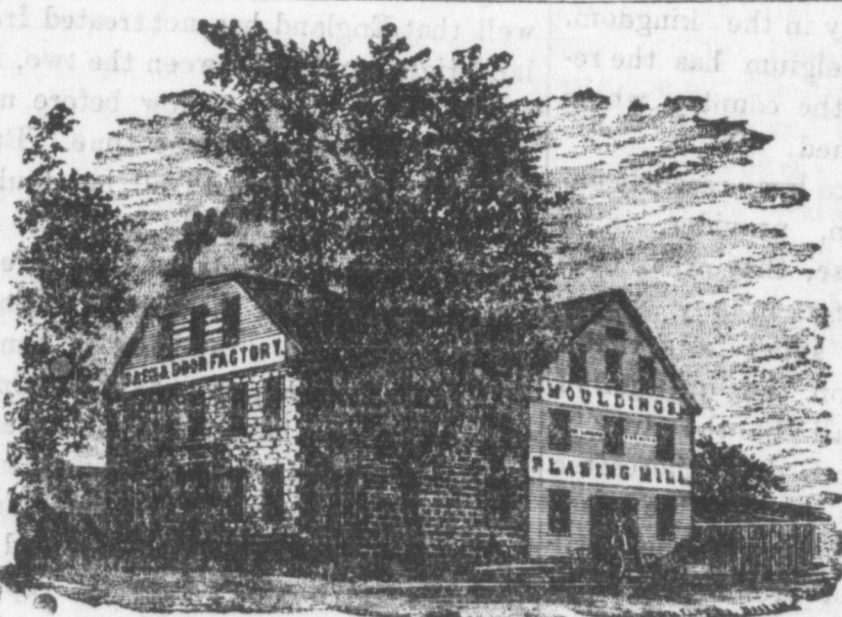
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1876.....	102,822.14	715,944.64	2,214,093.00
1878.....	127,505.87	773,895.71	3,374,683.43
1880.....	141,402.81	911,132.93	3,881,478.14
1882.....	254,841.73	1,073,577.94	5,849,889.19
1884.....	278,378.65	1,274,397.24	6,844,404.04
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