

Not My Own.

Thine alone, entirely thine,
Purchased by a right divine
Never more mine own to be;
Lord, I would be lost in thee!

Thine my strength, or more or less,
Thine my hand, its work to bless;
Only thine my passing days,
Thine my hours to fill with praise.

Not my own the gifts I bring,
Tribute to my Lord and King,
Only mine as treasure lent,
For the owner used or spent.

Of it comes, O blessed thought,
With a strange delight inwrought,
Thine forever, thine alone,
Lord of life, and not my own!

When my spirit is perplexed,
When by devils currents vexed,
Calmly I look up to thee,
Best of friends and guides to me.

Thou wilt keep me, thou wilt save,
Thou wilt make me ever brave;
In the utmost stress and strife
I may trust for death or life.

Never bearing pain or loss
But in shadow of the cross,
Never walking on alone,
Always with thee, not my own!

Nothing would I hold as mine;
Joy of joys, my will is thine;
Lord, the full surrender take,
Own the seal, for Jesus' sake.

—Mrs. M. E. Sangster.

The Pernicious Effect of Novels.

In *Harper's Magazine* of last month, W. D. Howells, the novelist, says some plain things concerning novel-reading. "It may be safely assumed," he says, "that most of the novel-reading which people fancy is an intellectual pastime, is the emptiest dissipation, hardly more related to thought or the wholesome exercise of the mental faculties than opium eating; in either case the brain is drugged, and left weaker and crazier for the debase. If this may be called the negative result of the fiction habit, the positive injury that most novels work is by no means so easily to be measured in the case of young men whose character they help so much to form or deform, and the women of all ages whom they keep so much in ignorance of the world they misrepresent. Grow men have little from them, but in the other cases, which are the vast majority, they hurt because they are not true—not because they are malevolent, but because they are idle lies about human nature and the social fabric, which it behooves us to know and to understand, that we may deal justly with ourselves and with one another. Bad as the fiction habit is, it is probably not responsible for the whole sum of evil in its victims, and we believe that if the reader will use care in choosing from this fungus growth with which the fields of literature teem every day, he may nourish himself as with the true mushroom, or at no risk from the poisonous species.

The tests are very plain and simple, and they are perfectly infallible. If a novel flatters the passions, and exalts them above the principles, it is poisonous—it may not kill, but it will certainly injure; and this test will alone exclude an entire class of fiction, of which eminent examples will occur to all. Then the whole spawn of so-called immoral romances, which imagine a world where the sins of sense are unvisited by the penalties following, swift or slow, but inexorably sure in the real world, are deadly poison; these do kill. The novels that merely tickle our prejudices and pall our judgment, or that coddle our sensibilities or pamper our gross appetite for the marvellous, are not so fatal, but they are innutritious, and clog the soul with unwholesome vapors of all kinds. No doubt they, too, help to weaken the mental fibre and make the reader indifferent to plodding perseverance and plain industry, and to matter-of-fact poverty and commonplace distress.

The Mother's Lost Hour.

There is a lost hour among house-keeping women, an hour which is lost in the way certain arts are, so lost, indeed, that there seems to be very little likelihood that it will ever be found. This is the "hour to herself," for which every mother of a family longs, and too often longs in vain. She used to know what it was to have a little time entirely to her own now and then in the days of her girlhood, but a matron's duties have absorbed her life completely, and she never knows what it is to be secure from interruption even for so short a time as is required for the writing of a letter. Very often this is quite her own fault, for fault it is, in spite of the angelic qualities which go to make many women back-houses of patience and long-suffering in their own homes.

It is true that the young wife and mother is more often too self-sacrificing than otherwise. She sinks her own individuality altogether too much in the service of her family. It is the easiest thing to do, to

reserve nothing in the way of devotion, but it is not the wisest way. It develops selfishness instead of thoughtfulness in the beloved ones whom she serves, and it too often happens that the wife and mother who denies herself constantly in waiting upon others, and demands no consideration for herself, wakens later in life to find that she has made a mistake. Out of the fulness of her heart she has given more than she ought for the sake of her family as well as herself.

The daughter whose comfort has always been consulted before that of her mother, the son whose hours of study or play must never be interrupted for his mother's sake, the husband who knows that his wife is a saint for unselfishness, impose unconsciously upon her goodness. And they develop a dulness of sympathy, an unreadiness to think of her deeds, which is as hurtful to their own moral growth as it is heart-breaking and incomprehensible to the woman who has uselessly laid down her very life for them.

It is the woman who serves as a queen serves her subjects who makes the happiest home, the woman who, with her high self-respect demands the courtesy and thoughtfulness which are her due, who prepares for herself a happy old age, honored by those whom her life has blessed within and without the four walls of her home.

Lincoln's Scorn Of A Life.

A. H. Chapman, a step-nephew by marriage of Mr. Lincoln, has this to say of him as to why he was called "Honest Abe": "In his law practice on the Wabash circuit he was noted for his unswerving honesty. People learned to love him ardently, devotedly, and justly listened intently, earnestly, receptively to the sad-faced, earnest man. He was never blamed for bribery; nothing could move him when once his resolutions were formed. There was nothing scholarly in his speeches, and he always rested his case on its merits, only asking for simple western justice, and the texture of the man was such that his very ungainliness was in his favor before a pioneer jury. His face always wore a sweetened and kindly expression, never sour, and burning to win them, his tall frame swaying as a pine, made him a resistless pleader. I remember one case of his decided honest trait of character. It was a case in which he was for the defendant. Satisfied of his client's innocence, it depended mainly on one witness. That witness told on the stand under oath what he knew to be a lie, and no one else knew. When he arose to plead the case, he said: 'Gentlemen, I depended on this witness to clear my client. He has lied. I ask that no attention be paid his testimony. Let his words be stricken out, if my case fails. I do not wish to win in this way.' His scorn of a lie touched the jury; he laid his case before them magnificently, skillfully, masterly, and won in spite of the lie against him. From such work came his 'Honest Abe.' I never knew Abe to have a coat to fit him; all were ill-fitting, but underneath was a big, hot heart that could adjust itself to all humanity. He had at his tongue's end the little items that make up the humble world of the pioneer farmer. Once at a hotel, in the evening during court, a lawyer said: 'Our case is gone; when Lincoln quit he was crying, the jury was crying, the judge was crying, and I was a little damp about the lashes myself. We might as well give the case up.'—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat.*

Sowing Seed

I haven't lived to be seventy years old without learning some things 'twould be useful for young people to realize. You can't plant poor seed and have a good crop come up. You can't mix good and bad, and expect the good to overgrow the bad. Neither will the good excuse the bad; there's no gettin' around it any way. I've seen boys go from good homes and talk that unmanly nonsense about sowing wild oats. Yes, and I've seen them come back again, poor souls, after the crop was all reaped; and of all the sin-stained, soul-sick, Lord-forsaken looking beings on earth, a man that's chosen to sow a crop of wild oats, is the most to be pitied when the harvest comes. It's true after a long season of plowin' and harrowin' and tearin' out of old habits the soil of the human heart gets purified at last, but there's wounds and scars and traces of old sins most apt to be left; so much better to have kept things pure and untainted.

It's pretty safe for young folks to trust to teachin's and experiences of those who have tested this matter of sowing and reapin'. I sometimes wish young folks could be old just for a spell, and then go back to youth; 'twould teach them so much 'bout sowing the right kind of seed to begin with.

But there; the sprouts never wave in full ear for a bit, then go

back to sprouts again, and God's way is best, of bidin' one's time in the slow rule of growth. But it is beautiful to have the Spring sunshine of God's love in an old heart; so if I were gifted in speech, and could preach just one sermon to the young folks, I'd beg of them to sow in youth what they'd want to reap in age, and I'd tell them over again how blessed it is to have God walk beside you when you are growing old.—*Christian at Work.*

To The Doubting Ones.

When a man has to go over a river, though he ride once and again into the water, and come out, saying, "I fear it is too deep for me," yet, considering that there is no other way for him, he resolves to venture. "For," saith he, "the longer I stay the higher the water will rise, and there is no other way for me. I must go through at the last, why not at the first?" And so he ventures through. Thus it is with you. You say, "Oh, but I am a great sinner—and how can I venture upon Jesus Christ?" Will thy heart be more humbled by keeping from Jesus Christ? and wilt thou be less a sinner by keeping from him? No, certainly; for the longer you stay from Christ the harder it will be to venture on him at last. Wherefore, if there be ever a poor, drooping, doubting, fearing, trembling heart reading these words, know that I do here, in the name of the Lord, call out to you and say, "O soul—man or woman—venture, venture, venture upon Christ now! for you must come to trusting in him at last; and if at last, why not now?"—*Sword and Trowel.*

Consecration.

The story is told of a young minister who went to Bishop Simpson, and said, "Bishop, I can not go to that appointment. The salary is too small, and it is too far away from the city." The bishop tenderly remonstrated with him, told him not to decide too hastily, and urged him to pray over it. On Sunday the noble bishop occupied the pulpit, and preached his famous sermon from the text: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus." As the bishop was vividly describing St. Paul crying, after every peril and agony, "None of these things move me," a great commotion was observed in the rear of the congregation, and the voice of a young man was heard by the startled audience, crying: "Anywhere, anywhere, my Lord." Nobody understood that outcry except the young preacher who uttered it, and the bishop in the pulpit. That is the motive, and that the influence, which will evangelize the world.—*Baptist Weekly.*

Belief in a Fire.

"A man came to me one day and said, 'Moody, I can not believe your doctrine.' I said, 'Why can't you?' 'Why,' said he, 'how is a man going to be affected by believing?' 'You can not?' I returned; 'I can prove to you in three minutes what effect believing has on you. If a man should come in here and say that this place was on fire and you believed him, you would get up and get out, wouldn't you?' He replied that he would. And now, my friends, drop that word 'try,' and look, look, believe, and be saved. Believe—now will you believe? If you were drowning and I threw you a rope, you would grasp it and let me save you. Now I throw the rope of salvation out to you; grasp it and be saved. Let the cry go out to heaven.'—*D. L. Moody.*

The Nearness of Christ.

You may be nearer to Christ than you think. Those men who went stumbling along the road to Emmaus, weeping and mourning that their Christ was gone, poured into his very ear the tale of their bereavement. They told him of their bereavement. They told him of their trouble—that they had lost Christ; and there he was talking with them. In the midst of their deep grief there was their victory, and they did not know it. There is many a man in embarrassment, overwhelmed with care, who does not know what to do. It is the pressure of God's hand upon him for the purpose of betterment. It is God present in affairs; Christ near to him for the sake of winning him to himself.

Make your home the brightest place on earth if you would charm your children to the high path of virtue and rectitude and religion. Do not always turn the blinds the wrong way. Let the light, which puts gold on the gentian and spots the pansy, pour into your dwellings. Do not exact the little feet to keep step to a dead-march.

RANDOM READINGS.

There is love in every command of God; as if a king should bid one of his subjects dig in a gold mine, then take the gold.

The chief end of a college is to fit in the best way the most men and women to be and to do what nature gave them talent for.

The highest truth will not save me further than as it brings me to the Saviour, that he may give, and I may get eternal life.

All the doors that lead inward to the secret place of the Most High are doors opening outward—out of self, out of smallness, out of wrong.

We need not ask, "Will the true, pure, loving, holy man be saved?"—he is saved; he has heaven; it is in him now and he is soon to possess the whole.—*F. W. Robertson.*

While Reason is puzzling herself about the mystery, Faith is turning it into her daily bread, and feeding on it thankfully in her heart of hearts.

Wondrous is the strength of cheerfulness, altogether past calculation its powers of endurance. Efforts to be permanently useful must be uniformly joyous—spirit all sunshine, graceful from very gladness, and so beautiful because bright.—*Carlyle.*

Gates of pearl, cope-stones of amethyst, thrones of dominion, do not stir my soul so much as the thought of home. Once there, let earthly sorrows howl like storms and roll like seas. Home! Let thrones rot and empires wither. Home! Home!—*Talmage.*

If you want knowledge, you must toil for it; if food, you must toil for it; and if pleasure, you must toil for it. Toil is the law. Pleasure comes through toil, and not by self-indulgence and indolence. When one gets to love work, his life is a happy one.—*Ruskin.*

You have seen a ship on the bay swing with the tide, and seeming as it would follow it; and yet it can not, for down beneath the water it is anchored. So many a soul sways toward heaven, but can not ascend thither, because it is anchored to some secret sin.

A wise parent cannot afford to treat with impatience or intolerance even the crude or foolish opinions of his child. If so, the strong presumption would be that the parent was wrong, whether the child was or not.—*D. B. Updegraff, in Friends' Expositor.*

Helps For The Home-Life.

O see that your faces are windows through which a sweet spirit shall smile!

Don't fret. Fretting is often a worse fault than the thing that causes it.

Then I saw in my dream that it is much easier going out of our way when we are in it, than getting into it when we are out of it.—*Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.*

Our nobleness is really tested by our ability to perceive and to honor the nobleness of another's simple duty-doing, when it is worthy of such recognition.—*Sunday-school Times.*

The man who gives his children habits of industry, provides for them better than by giving them a fortune.—*Whately.*

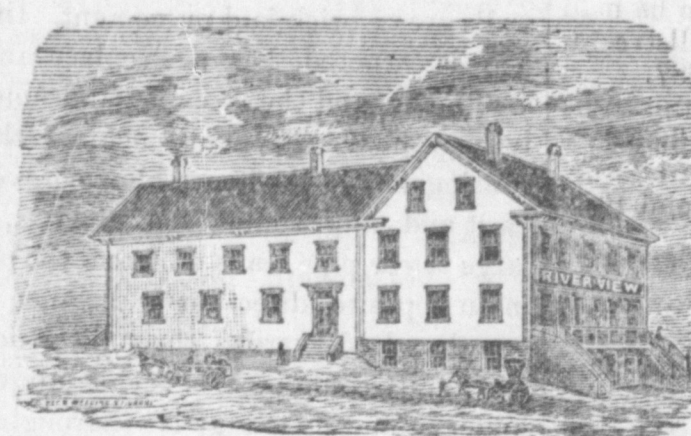
The lessons of the Spirit are commonly given in still ways. They come in still hours, in whispers, and even in hints only.—*Prof. Phelps.*

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2. The Premium Income of 1886 was nearly half a million, or a quarter more than in 1885.

3. The profits to Policy-holders for the 5 years—1881 to 1886—are more than double those of 1876 to 1881.

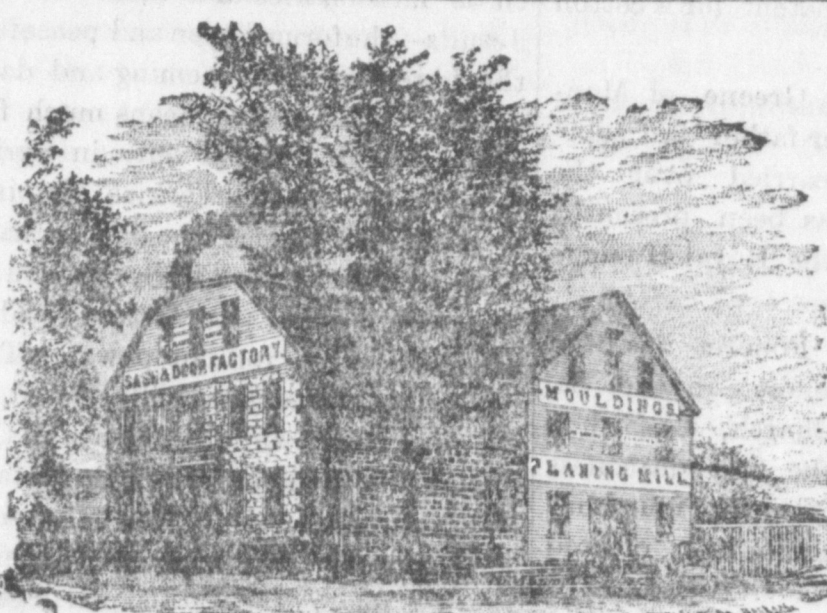
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1874	64,072.88	621,362.81	1,864,302.00
1876	102,822.14	715,944.04	2,214,093.00
1878	127,505.87	775,895.77	3,374,683.43
1880	141,402.81	911,132.93	3,881,478.14
1882	254,841.73	1,073,577.94	5,849,889.19
1884	278,378.65	1,274,397.24	6,844,404.04
1885	319,987.05	1,411,004.38	7,030,878.77
1886	373,500.31	1,573,027.10	9,413,358.07

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