

Heaven.

Is that fair city, will there be
A home for me?
A blessed home, the Lord will see
Prepared for thee.

And shall I heavy burdens bear
When I go there?
No burdens there, no grief nor care
Found anywhere.

And will there be no partings more
On that blest shore?
All grief and partings will be o'er
Forevermore,
And more than all! Eternal life for thee
Throughout the ages of eternity.
—Selected.

TALKS TO YOUNG MEN.

The Blank Young Man.

(Continued.)

There are three classes of young men: (1) those who are active in all that is good, and earnest to do the best they can; (2) those who are active in evil, and give themselves up to a life of sinful pleasure; and (3) those who are afraid to be known as Christians, and ashamed to be openly wicked.

I hold in my hand a sheet of clean white paper. There are no bad words upon it and no good words. It may become a letter of usefulness and comfort, or a messenger of evil and cursing; but now it is blank. Thus a blank young man is one of mere possibilities, with talents more or less, and opportunities more or less, but with no activities.

Sometimes he is a rich man's son. He has had the advantage of money, education and travel; has passed through schools and been surrounded with opportunities. He drives a horse, wears clothes, and eats suppers paid for by his father's money. He engages in no honest labor, has no interest in education, helps no reform, professes no religion, adds nothing to the financial, mechanical, mental, moral, or religious worth of society. He is only his mother's baby and his father's mortification—a blank.

Perhaps he comes from the common walks of life. His parents are hard-working, honest people. They have denied themselves in order to educate him. They have let him be out in the night and sleep in the morning. They did not want their boy to have so hard a time as they did, and he has come into manhood with no trade, qualified for no particular work, is looking round and deciding what great thing he will engage in, is waiting for something to turn up—something that has "money in it," is too lazy to study and too proud to work—a blank!

Perhaps he is a poor, industrious young man, with a trade but without ambition. He earns his one dollar a day and has no desire for more, pays his board, gets clothes, and buys cigars; and that's all he tries for. As long as he can do that he is satisfied. He takes no interest in anything but to live. Now and then he reads a newspaper, but the most he does is to work, eat, sleep, and tell stories. That is his idea of life. He lives a mere machine, grinding out what others give him to do, satisfied simply to get a living. He is a cipher. How much he is worth depends upon which side of some other person he is. A blank!

There are blanks in the financial world—men of money and able to make money. They draw in all the time. All that success amounts to for them is what they can get out of it. They live simply to get money—take no interest in culture, in benevolence, or in religion. Instead of using their wealth to advance the world, they use it to gain more wealth. To gain all they can and give as little as possible, is their motto. Thus, so far as the world's progress is concerned, they are blanks.

There are blanks mentally—not fools, but men of education and culture, and who love culture, but they use it as a hungry, selfish boy does an orange, for their own pleasure. They do not seek by it to help the true and the good, but they simply suck it, as an opium-eater does his pipe, and dream over it. They are blanks. There are blanks in the church—men against whom no particular harm can be said, but who engage in no Christian work. They have a shadowy belief that sometime in the past they found the Saviour, but as for taking responsibility or doing their part, that they never attempt. They are not even honorary members, for their names are no help to the cause; they are merely dead heads. They are like sandy soil. The more the church has of them the poorer it is. They are trees without even leaves, only dry sticks. Like bank notes unfilled, they are blanks. They never wake up to the Christian's privilege. I was sent for once to attend the funeral of one whom I did not know, had never seen or heard of. When near the place where the services were to be held I overtook a man who was going to

the funeral. I made inquiries concerning the dead man, and the most I could learn was that he never did any particular harm, never engaged in any good work, took no interest in public matters, was "a clever sort of a man." And that was all that could be said about him. A blank! The world had been no better for his living in it. Ah, when such a soul wakes up in eternity, he will exclaim: "Of all sad words of tongue or pen, The saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"

Oh, young man, never be a blank. Be somebody. Claim your part in life's great battle, and when you die compel some hearts to say: "He did his share; we shall miss him." Don't be a blank!

(To be continued.)

The Social Scourge.

The higher life of the household has nothing more dangerous or destructive to contend with in its progressive movements toward perfection than the evil genius of vain babbling, the repeating of scandal, the practice of evil-speaking too often found in households otherwise nearly or quite perfect. The stiletto of the assassin is not more to be feared than is the tongue of "the busybody in other men's matters." Many a home has been blighted and destroyed, many a heart crushed beyond recovery, many a life embittered, not to say shortened in days or hours, from the poison thrown upon the world by the tongue of the slanderer in simple, everyday household tittle-tattle.

"Gossip," says George Eliot, "is a sort of smoke that comes from the dirty tobacco-pipe of those who diffuse it; it proves nothing but the bad taste of the smoker," and a more solid "chunk of frozen truth" was never quarried than that which these terse words of the celebrated author represent. Good cooking, fine furniture, clean kitchens, tidy living rooms, and healthful dormitories may be ever so splendid, yet the blessings which all these naturally bring in the ordinary course of events may be easily neutralized or defaced beyond recognition by the flow of slime which follows in the wake of the gossip-monger.

Nothing more disturbs or debases the best interests of human life than does the venom which is often found hidden away among the small talk of many households, that "comes as doth the raven toward the infectious house, boding to all." Dean Swift says of the gossip:

"She sits tormenting every guest,
Nor gives her tongue one moment's rest,
In phrases battered, state, and trite,
Which modern ladies call polite."

If gossip must be tolerated, it should have its headquarters on the street, or, at least, in public places, and be kept closely in those quarters. To give it a place in our homes is to admit there an element of unrest, discomfort and happiness which knows no limit of evil consequence. A household that cannot be maintained in good and regular standing without the aid of street gossip, is a household not founded on the rock of permanence or real usefulness, but is rather the one built on sandy foundations, and when the rains of misfortune, the floods of disappointment and loss, and the winds of sorrow come, it falls, and great is the fall of it. There is no love, sympathy, or good-will in any of the constituent parts of its foundation stones.

Habit has much to do with this matter of household gossip, and a bad habit it is indeed. Many and many a home circle becomes narrowed in extent, dwarfed in influence, paralyzed in effect, from the evil practice of unduly gossiping about its neighbors' affairs, and this, too, very likely, more from thoughtlessness than from any other cause, and without fully realizing to how great an extent it makes itself simply an arena for pulling somebody down or something to pieces, and for magnifying the foibles and follies of others into heinous sins and grievous offences, where trifling errors only exist; instead of being, as it should be, a well-appointed place for the cultivation of the better qualities of the human heart, and for rearing altars sacred to the development of affection, regard, and kind consideration "for all the world and the rest of mankind."

"I wonder whether I shall reach the sidewalk before I shall be pulled to pieces, as everyone else has been," said a lady on leaving a cosy and comfortable New England home, where she had, with a friend, been making a social call, and where, during that call, the minutes had been crammed full of gossip, small talk, and rehearsals of the shortcomings of this, that, and the other one, without one word of sensible, edifying, and useful conversation having once been sandwiched in between the oft-repeated layers of worse than idle words.

The remark was overheard by the lady of the house in closing the door, which last act could not have

been done more forcibly than it was had a thunderbolt fallen at the instant. It was like the flash of a mirror before her eyes. She saw herself as she never did before, and she was appalled when she came to take an account of stock of the words she had uttered during the previous half-hour. She was, in the main, a sensible woman, a devoted wife, a loving mother, a kind neighbor, and everything else that is ordinarily said of people (after they die), but she had allowed the besetting sin of "talking about folks" to get such possession of her faculties of speech, which had grown by what it fed upon, until she was met upon her own threshold by a face-to-face view of the sin which had there found her out.

To her credit be it said, she has never again been guilty of the offence, which was as much of an offence to herself as it was to others, when her eyes were fully opened to its extent and enormity, and she was enabled to "see ourselves as others see us." The lady who went down the doorsteps on the occasion never passed up them again, but were she to do so to-day she would find, as she did before, a pleasant home, where neatness, order, good taste, and abundance had place; and she would find, in addition, that a bit had been put between the teeth and a bridle on the tongue of every member of that household.

Influences and effects, such as germinate and grow up from hotbeds of senseless gossip, have pertinent illustration in the fabled Bohunpaz tree, which is popularly supposed to exhale a breath of poison from its buds and foliage that is death to everything in its vicinity. In this case the breath of heaven seems too clean to be contaminated by an impurity of such a destructive nature, and in the case of the household gossip the surrounding misfortunes and dangers are equally to be deplored and condemned.

We believe in lively, pleasant, chatty homes; but we believe also in having that life and pleasure made improving, instructive, and valuable, rather than dwarfing, debasing, and damaging to the welfare and happiness of "the life that now is and that which is to come." In other words, we do not believe in turning so sacred a place as home into a gossip shop.

The tone and temper of these remarks would seem to indicate that they are pointed at the feminine portion of the household; and so they are, quite naturally, as the "women folks" are the recognized rulers of the household; but the "men folks" are not all guiltless, and so far as they may fairly come under condemnation in this connection, the words we write are for them. And, furthermore, it is simple truth to say that a man gossip is the most miserable of all men, despicable, detestable, and a being to be shunned by well-meaning humanity. From gossips of all sexes, kinds, and qualities, deliver us.—Good Housekeeping.

How to be Happy.

First, be healthy. There are some people who sustained either by religion, philosophy or temperament, seem to be able to bear sickness with serenity, cheerfulness and even mirth; but most of us are rendered miserable indeed by any inharmonious action of our physical organizations. At such times work seems a curse, earth a desert, and life an intolerable burden.

Under such circumstances it seems a sin to be sick, and in most cases this is doubtless true. Many of our common ailments might easily be avoided by more carefully conforming our habits to the inexorable laws of nature. But we are either too indifferent, lazy or fashionable to keep ourselves as well as we might, and herein lies the sin of being sick, consequently unhappy.

Second, we have an object in life. We were made reasonable beings, and it was never intended that we should live an aimless, butterfly existence and still be satisfied and happy. If you have no work, find some. There is plenty of it waiting to be done, and you cheat the world as yourself by neglecting your share.

Third, forget yourself. Much of our unhappiness comes from thinking too much about our precious selves and our troubles, both real and possible. We magnify our importance and grow morbid over trifles when we ought to be so interested in other people, so healthful and sympathetic, that we shall have no time to brood over self and her misfortunes.

Fourth, broaden your mind by as much intellectual culture as is possible to you. Narrow, petty habits of thinking and doing generate discontent, bigotry, gossip and slander.

Lastly, but by no means least, live the life of a conscientious Christian. We were never intended to be happy while disregarding our first duties and neglecting our highest needs. Let us daily seek to conform our lives physically, mentally,

morally and spiritually to the standards God has given us." Then shall our conscience be at peace, and our sleep both sweet and comfortable," and happiness an abiding guest.—Household.

Flag That Next Train.

There had been a sad railroad accident. The engineer was caught in the overturn of the locomotive, pinned to the earth, and could not possibly extricate himself. Others came to release his struggling, writhing form. His thoughts, however, were on the next train, the train behind. Could he not see the engine driving along the rails, bringing the train loaded with priceless lives? And then came, in thought, the awful crash of a collision. "Boys!" cried Engineer Kennar, giving the name of the expected and endangered train, "go back and flag the second Atlantic if you haven't done it!"

Noble, heroic soul, his first thought was for the train behind. They succeeded at last in liberating his body, but his only liberator from suffering was death itself, which came in a very few minutes.

Flag that next train! Do we always bear it in mind, the train that is coming? As those interested in Sunday school activities, especially when the fall work opens, may our thoughts rest appreciatively upon the next generation gathered about us in our classes, and that we are trying to teach. That next train is coming fast. The boys and girls of to-day will be men and women to-morrow. This next train is confronted by peculiar dangers. On the right track, we hope—heading for righteousness and temperance, honesty and integrity; but what perils may yet be before it!

Our scholars may be tempted to tamper with the evil of "light drinks." Flag the train! There is a beer-barrel on the track! Our scholars may be solicited to look upon licentious paints. Flag the train! There is a bad book on the track! Our scholars may be urged to put off the day of salvation. Flag the train! The boulder of procrastination has fallen across the rails. And here is evil company, beckoning the boys and girls to wrong-doing. Flag the train! Wreckers are at work on the rails, threatening the lives that are coming forward. Whatever be the danger, be alert! Watch! Hasten! Speak! Flag the train! Sunday School Journal.

A Thought For Every Day.

It is with piety as with our temporal goods; there is more danger from little expenses than from larger disbursements, and he who understands how to take care of what is insignificant will soon accumulate a large fortune. Every thing great owes its greatness to the small elements of which it is composed; he that loses nothing will soon be rich.

"Men judge our deeds by their outward appearance; with God that which is most dazzling in the eyes of man is of no account. What he desires is a pure intention, a will ready for any thing and pliable in His hands, and an honest abandonment of self; and all this can be much more frequently manifested on small than on extraordinary occasions; there will also be much less danger from pride, and the trial will be far more searching.

"If we are in the habit of neglecting little things, we shall be constantly offending our families, our domestics, and the public.

"No one can well believe that our piety is sincere when our behavior is loose and irregular in its little details.

"What grounds have we for believing that we are ready to make the greatest sacrifices, when we are daily offering the least?"

A constant habit of reference to God; the taking our little trials and annoyances to Him; the confident going to Him, as one goes to a friend, for sympathy, for guidance, or as a loving child seeks a tender parent—pursuing this course, as Fenelon says, "into the smallest details, it finds itself in a large place, and enjoys a perfect peace with God." And what is this, after all, but the Pauline direction, "In every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make your requests known unto God?"—Christian Union.

Self Denial.

The principle, "If meat make my brother to offend," etc., is no less important now than in the apostolic age. But let us never forget that all genuine self denial for the sake of others must have its root in righteousness—in the supreme law of love. When this is the case, the Christian will be able to determine readily what is demanded of him, and what is not, for his brother's sake. Genuine self denial is not bondage—rather it is blessed freedom.

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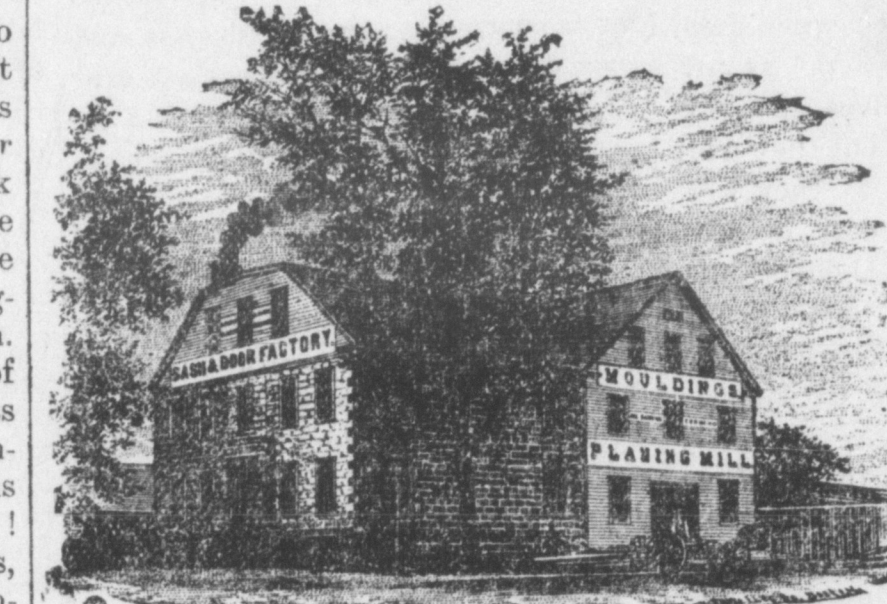
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