

## Life's Lesson.

If things do not work to suit us  
In this strange world of men,  
What use in repining about it?  
It can't be done over again.

Make the best of life's troubles and failures;  
The shadows are tokens of light,  
And mistakes are lessons of wisdom  
If only we read them aright.

• The defeats that are seen by the roadside,  
As we look back into the past,  
May show us the way to conquer  
In the battle of life at last.

Out of each bitter trial  
To us there cometh good,  
If the heart will but heed the lessons  
That God has meant it should.

Then away with all vain repinings;  
What is done is done for aye;  
Who sighs o'er yesterday's failures  
May lose the chance of to-day.

Be brave, and be not disheartened,  
Though your hopes and plans may fail;  
He whose courage and faith are steadfast  
Will at last, please God, prevail.

—Exchange.

## HAVE YOU SAVED ANY ONE.

Many people are being saved these weeks, and being added unto the churches. These precious people have been saved, humanly speaking, through some earnest effort on the part of some earnest Christian worker. Now, friends, let us drop this question into our hearts. Have you saved any one? We mean, of course, as an agent of the Holy Spirit, who desires to use every child of God.

What a searching power there is in the question. An interrogation walks into a man's life as a lighted candle comes into a room. If it be empty, the moment the candle is within, its emptiness is revealed. If it be furnished, you see the beauty of the furnishing. Let this question be as a candle and a torch to your life. Let it come in and throw its light around. The question asked is: "Have you saved anybody?" Is there any living soul that looks upon you as its saviour? any wretched one; any one that was starving; any one that was on the verge of despair; any one that had fallen; any one that was rude; wicked, coarse; that looked upon you, that remembered your name, and says: "That man brought me to Jesus! That woman led me to Christ!"

Look within your bosom, and answer truly. Is there within your heart the saviour instinct? Have you the divine characteristic, the heavenly ambition and mood? Have you the joy of the heavenly ones when a sinner repents? Do you fairly represent the class to which you claim to belong?

The Scriptures say: "He that doeth the truth comes to the light." If a man feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, takes the stranger by the hand, and converts the sinner from the error of his ways, he will never lapse from the fervor of a religious life, nor fall into negations and semi-scepticisms.

In view of these things, therefore, suppose we apply this test of saving people in the measurement of our piety. The markings of this rule are deeply cut, plainly seen, and its decisions cannot be mistaken. If you have saved anybody, well and good. If you haven't saved anybody,—haven't saved anybody,—what then?

Amid all the fine pleasures of life there is one that is finer than all; and amid all the joys that bloom in the landscape of our days, there is one whose flower stands pre-eminent; whose beauty is seen afar, and whose fragrance fills the air. It is the pleasure of bringing back some one that has gone astray; the joy of knowing that you have led one sinner to repentance. There are pleasures that last but an hour. There are joys that fill but the circle of a moment. There are delights that rise with the sun and go down with the same, leaving darkness, and it may be a darkness that has not a star. But the pleasure of bringing a man back from his evil ways lasts with our lasting; and the joy of finding one who has wandered far off, been bitten by wolves, and lies dying—the joy of finding that wanderer, lifting him to your bosom, and bringing him back to the Father's fold, is a joy that neither rises nor sets with the sun, but stands fixed like an orb that moves not, and whose beams never fade in the firmament of life everlasting. For this is the joy of heaven, and those that are heavenly.—D. D. MacLaurin.

## WORNOUT HANDS.

We can see them every day. Poor, wornout hands, trembling, wrinkled and unsightly; yet to me how beautiful they are! They have done so much. Their loving work began in infancy. That was many, many years ago, when they, too, were dimpled and white. What tiny hands they were then! But we find it hard to believe that

grandma ever was a baby. We can hardly picture her in the dainty robes she must have worn. Still, she had her niche in the happy household, and filled it after her own perfect baby fashion. Father and Mother both felt the tender touch of her soft, caressing fingers. The former went forth to his daily toil with renewed strength and courage, and the latter's added duties only seemed to grow lighter as the days flew by.

Baby grew fast. A few years later, what busy little hands she had! They were thrust into everything, and if destruction followed, "helping mamma" was the sweet excuse which always shielded their pretty owner. But soon they were a help indeed; always willing and ready. Ah, what busy hands they were.

And they were destined to become still dearer. Only a few more years, and then an impatient lover had circled one slender finger with a golden engagement ring. They seemed the warmest hands he had ever clasped. Love was the only match-maker, and their marriage quickly followed. Charles would have his way. How they missed her—father, mother, brothers and sisters—when those dear hands had vanished to deftly make ready the new home nest! They beautified it until the proud young husband thought there could be no lovelier spot in all the wide, wide world.

Another year; they were mother-hands then, and their real life-work had just begun, and, if possible, they were more diligent than ever before. They even found time for other work outside the little home. The needy, sick and afflicted were helped in a thousand different ways. They were benevolent hands.

And years of peace, happiness and prosperity were given them in return. Twice had the cosy home been enlarged; the loved faces God had sent filled it to overflowing.

After a time one left it never to return. How the patient, pitying mother hands hovered round that dear one in the last sad hour! They tremulously close the sightless eyes, gathered sweet, fresh roses to lay on the downy pillow, tenderly raised the coffin-lid for one last look, and, finally, planted vines and flowers on the newly-made grave. After that the home-work went on as usual, only there was one less to do for. How strange it seemed!

One by one the others also left her side; the boys to make their way in the great Babylon called town, and the girls to exchange the old homes for new ones here and there. So mother's hands fondly prepared each outfit as it was needed; knitting stockings and making bridal robes were all the same to her.

Then, after thirty years of earnest, loving toil, her tired hands took a little needed rest. All the children had gone from her. There was only husband to care for now, and his wants were so few in comparison with what theirs had been! Her tender, wifely hands often lingered lovingly on his head. Poor Charles! His once thick, black hair was now thin and gray. He was growing old; but surely he was now doing better than ever. The children could live without her. As in the beginning, he was again her all.

But ten years later he was taken from her. Oh, the agony of that parting! His dying kiss fell on the dear, tear-wet hands that had always scattered flowers along his life-path. They fashioned his shroud. She would not suffer a strange hand to perform that last sad service. Soon he peacefully slept in the village church-yard, and she all alone in the old nest. How empty it was! Her hands are quite idle now. No work to do, no loved ones to wait upon. Only self left.

At her tearful request, one child, a daughter, returned, bringing with her five fatherless little ones. Then grandma gladly took up the broken threads of her life-work. There was still so much to be done. It seemed as though all her children were back again. She knew just what to do for them. Their many childish wants and necessities were to her an open book, which she read with delight. Little Charles was grandma's namesake. How she loved the bonny boy!

But at last the grandchildren left home, just as her own had done. Grandma's loving farewell followed them like a blessing. They can never forget her.

She is almost ninety now. There she sits in the roomy rocking-chair in which dear grandpa died thirty long years ago. Soon she will join him in heaven. Her work is all done; she is only waiting.

Poor, wornout hands! Age and disease have crippled them, but they are not unsightly. No, no! Some day they will be folded, cold and white, upon her breast and the sweet rest of the weary will be hers at last.—*Christian Union.*

## FACTS ABOUT DANCING.

From time to time our opinion has been asked on the question of dancing. We prefer to state some facts touching the practice, and leave every one to do his own thinking and reach his own conclusions:—

1. It is a fact that the dancing mentioned approvingly in the Bible was carried on by the sexes separately and generally, if not always, as a religious act.

2. It is a fact that modern dancing, however well done, adds no worth to the character.

3. It is a fact that a trained monkey can excel the best taught young lady or gentleman in the use of his heels.

4. It is a fact that it requires no intelligence and no virtue to dance well.

5. It is a fact there is no more honor in dancing well than there is in jumping, walking, running or wrestling well. Dancing matches are on a par with walking matches, etc.

6. It is a fact that mixed dancing becomes extremely fascinating.

7. It is a fact that much valuable time is lost by this species of revelling.

8. It is a fact that money is wasted on dancing.

9. It is a fact that people who cannot entertain themselves and each other in a rational way, and must employ their heels for this purpose, are to be pitied.

10. It is a fact that young ladies permit familiarities in the ball-room which public sentiment universally condemns as dangerous to purity.

11. It is a fact that many females have been ruined by attending dances.

12. It is a fact that the best young men, even of those who dance, do not wish their sisters to attend balls, and they do not wish to marry dancing girls.

13. It is a fact that the whole spirit and tendency of dancing is worldly.

14. It is a fact that no one was ever noted for piety and dancing.

15. It is a fact that when a professor of religion follows dancing, his influence for good is lost.

16. It is a fact that men of the world think dancing inconsistent with Christian profession.

17. It is a fact that the best people in the world never dance.

18. It is a fact that a dancing Church member is not worth anything much to the Church. As the love of dancing comes in, the love of God goes out.

19. It is a fact that the most pious and considerate people in all the denominations are opposed to dancing, and earnestly advise against it.

20. It is a fact that no young convert desires to dance, nor anyone else in whose heart the love of God burns.

All these facts can be proven, and are true beyond a doubt. In the light of these, it ought not to be difficult for any inquirer after the right way to come to a safe conclusion. Reader, if you are a Christian, and wish to decide the question, "Shall I dance?" with reference to your Christian growth, influence and happiness, you will never dance. It is a safe rule, says one, to engage in nothing upon which and into which we cannot ask the Divine blessing.

Apply this simple rule to the dancing question, and your feet will never be found in the slippery way of the ball-room.—*Baptist Record.*

## "OCCUPY TILL I COME."

This command is addressed to you, my reader. Whoever you may be—young or old, rich or poor, robust or infirm—you have a work to do for your Master.

Whether it be the silent testimony of sufferings meekly and patiently borne, because it is His will to send them; or the influence of a holy life in a limited home circle, or the more active service of ministry to His children; you have your own little mission, which no one but yourself can fulfill; and if you neglect it, it is left undone.

Look around you. Can you find nothing to do for Him who did so much for you? Not even a cup of cold water to give in His name to one of His children? Not a deed of Christian kindness to perform to a sick or needy "neighbor"? Not a word to speak of your Saviour's wondrous love to the perishing thousands around you? Is it indeed so?

When you are summoned to give an account of your stewardship, will conscience whisper of no duties neglected, no claims unfulfilled? Can you really love your Saviour and yet fold your hands idly, and leave the work He has given you to do undone? Oh! rouse thee from thy lethargy ere it be too late. Arise and labour in that corner of His vineyard in which he has seen best to place thee! It may be a lone, hidden nook, and the vines stunted and few; and as you look longingly at the sunny, bright hills far away, where the vines grow luxuriant and thick, with perchance few to tend them, you may say, Oh! that he had

placed me there! I will arise and leave this barren spot, and go where I can do so much more for Him.

At thy peril, No! Here thy Master has placed thee, here remain. Occupy thy own little corner; for that alone hast thou to give account. Here shall His blessing rest upon thee; here let Him find thee when He cometh; and though the fruit thou hast to offer Him be small, not so shall be His reward:—"Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

## Intellectual Loyalty to Christ.

When a person is converted he enters not only into a new way of living, but into a new way of thinking. His intellect, as well as his conscience and affections, begins to work after a Christian fashion. His mind is "born again," and "born of the Spirit." No new faculties are given him, and the dunce is not made a philosopher. But the new life makes itself felt in all the mental operations, and he who once "thought as a child," now thinks as a son of God.

This is due to the fact that Christ lives in the disciple and possesses his whole nature. The "new creature" is redeemed intellectually as well as ethically and spiritually. This does not ensure his infallibility, but it does ensure his inheritance of the promise, "ye shall know the truth."

The Christian should recognize the obligation which comes with the inheritance—the obligation of intellectual loyalty to Christ. For his co-operation is as necessary in using his mental faculties to the glory of God as in eating or drinking or whatsoever he does. He must work out his own intellectual salvation while God works in him. How shall he place and keep himself intellectually under the leadership of Christ? By thinking in a Christian spirit and by taking Christian authority.

There is a worldliness of the intellect, as there is of the practical, life. It is self-confident, self-sufficient, impatient of opposition, disputations. The Christian mind is docile, receptive, humble, patient, sincere. Truth is not something that we master; it is something that masters us. It is not the coat we put on and off; it is life. Its power to sanctify us depends upon the heartiness with which we surrender ourselves to its sway. The Christian will be hungry for truth. Some persons seem to be exceedingly fearful lest they shall believe too much. Not by reducing truth to its lowest terms shall we be sanctified. We must believe all we can. Dr. Bushnell said he would sign the creeds if they would bring him enough of them.

Take Christ as Lord of the intellect. He speaks "with authority." It is painful in the midst of discussions of great doctrines and great duties to observe how rare is the appeal to Christ as ultimate authority. If a biblical truth does not accord with somebody's "feeling," he dismisses it as unreasonable. That a duty is disagreeable is sufficient ground for refusing it. The true Christian lights his candle at the Sun. "One is your Master." Human guesses at truth are worth little. What saith the Lord? If the faithful disciple is troubled as to duty or doctrine, he will go for instruction to Christ's words. He will test every sermon by the teachings of Him who spoke as man never spoke. If his conscience or heart becomes restless under the pressure of solemn truths, he will renewedly submit his faculties to the sway of Christ.—*Golden Rule.*

## BE ON YOUR GUARD.

Fire takes long to die out. You can never tell from what heap of cold, gray ashes a flame may start up, to begin or to renew a conflagration. Many of the more destructive fires have taken their origin from inflammable material left too near some heap of seemingly dead ashes; and often when the wearied firemen have left the steaming ruins behind them, they are recalled because the flame has started anew from some rubbish heap where all was supposed to be extinguished. Yes, fire takes long to die out. You may think you are safe from this or that temptation, because the dead, gray ashes have shown no sign of life. But take care that you do not bring inflammable materials too near them. A gust of passion, a breeze of memory, a wind of ambition, may blow the dying ashes into a live coal, and the live coal may carry the fire to the things which are best and dearest. A little forgetfulness, a little heedlessness—and next you may hear the roar of a flame which your own unaided effort will not extinguish. What is the preventive? Only the most constant watchfulness, only the most earnest care. These half dead ashes are dangerous chiefly because you see no danger in them. Be on your guard

against them—carefully, prayerfully—and they will indeed have for you no peril.—*Sunday School Times.*

## "Bread Upon the Waters."

James Brainard Taylor was a graduate of Princeton, and only twenty-eight when he died, yet he did a work that any man might envy. He got hold of the idea that there was something in this doctrine of the endowment of the Spirit. Studying the subject, he became perfectly sure that the Holy Ghost might come upon him as upon the original disciples. So he prayed, and his prayers were answered. Whenever he went out he stirred all with whom he came in contact. Sinners used to fall before his preaching as grass before the scythe. It was spontaneous. He could not help speaking to men, and his words were mighty.

There was one very beautiful experience in his life. One day he was out driving, and he drew his horse up to a watering-trough. It so happened that another young man was doing the same thing. While the horses' heads met in the trough, he turned to the young man and said, "I hope you love the Lord. If you don't, I want to commend him to you as your best friend. Seek Him with all your heart."

That was all; they turned and went their ways. But what was the result? The young man thus spoken to was converted, was educated for the ministry, and went as a missionary to Africa.

Said this missionary afterward: "Over and over again I wished I knew who that man was who spoke to me at the watering-trough. But I never knew till some one sent me in Africa a box of books. I opened them, saw a little black-covered book, opened it, turned to the title-page, and there I saw a portrait—a beautiful face. Ah, said I that is the man. That is the man that preached the Gospel to me at the watering-trough. To him I owe my salvation."

And that of how many more on the Dark Continent! What we want today is to be filled with the Spirit. We are filled with so many other things—pride, selfishness, ambition, and vain-glory. May the Lord enable us to empty our hearts, and have them filled as by a mighty rushing wind.—*Rev. A. J. Gordon, D. D.*

## She Found His Fault.

Some persons' conceptions of Christian conduct are as absurd as that of a very penurious old woman who was invited to tea at the home of a family with whom a very worthy and dearly beloved clergyman was staying. He was a man of remarkable purity of character and gentleness of manner, and was universally loved and respected.

After tea he excused himself on account of a headache, and went to his own room. "Were you not greatly pleased with him?" asked the lady of the house of this old lady, after the minister had retired. "Oh, purty well," was the doubtful reply. "I knew you would be," said the lady, warmly; "he is one of the loveliest Christian characters I ever met." "But he ain't perfect," was the cold reply. "Oh, no, perhaps not; none of us is absolutely perfect, but I really think Mr. B— comes nearer perfection than any man I ever met in my life." "Well, that may be, yet he has his faults." "He has never revealed them here," said the lady, a little irritated, and I am sure he would try very hard to overcome them if they were pointed out." "Well," said the discoverer of faults, "everybody has their own way of thinkin', but when I see a man, as I saw that man tonight, put two heapin' teaspoons of sugar in one cup of tea, why, I've got my own idee 'bout his Christianity, now that's what I have." "That is not a great fault said the host. But the old lady shook her head solemnly.

## Out of Sorrow, Gladness.

New-made graves and old graves reopened cannot be forgotten, nor is it desirable that they should be. There have been sad partings through the year. To many, sickness has come in place of health, others have suffered severe loss of things material, and in other ways hearts have been made sore. May all such remember the goodness of God, for in all and through all He has been at work. Out of sorrow God can bring gladness. The voice of fear may cry out, "All these things are against me!" but faith exclaims, "All things work together for good to them that love God." With the sad partings let us mingle glad thoughts of happy meetings yet to come. The losses and the crosses of time have in them the elements of present blessing and rich eternal gain. For the Christian heart there is no hopeless sorrow. Tears and trials, griefs and gloom, are letters in the alphabet of Christian experience with which by God's guidance we may spell out most blessed truths. The day will dawn when among our mercies we shall number what now we set down as oppressions. In this faith and hope even the smitten heart may sing, and the substance of that song may well be, "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth." It is a good thing even for the sorrowing to give thanks unto the Lord.—*New York Observer.*

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