

"As Helpless as a Child who Clings."

As helpless as a child who clings
Fast to his father's arms,
And casts his weakness on the strength
That keeps him safe from harm:
So I, my Father, cling to Thee,
And thus I every hour
Would link my earthly helplessness
To Thine almighty power.

As trustful as a child who looks
Up in his mother's face,
And all his little griefs and fears
Forgets in her embrace;
So I to Thee, my Saviour, look,
And in Thy face divine
Can read the love that will sustain
To Thine almighty power.

As loving as a child who sits
Close by his parent's knee,
And knows no want while he can have
That sweet society:
So, sitting at Thy feet, my heart
Would all its love outpour,
And pray that Thou would teach me, Lord,
To love Thee more and more.

—The Quiver.

Greatness of Character.

Forty years ago, during the trying ordeal of the Scotch disruption, Dr. Duff was absorbed in heroic missionary labors in India. He was, in consequence of the agitations in Scotland, seriously embarrassed in his work; not a few of his former supporters severely censuring him, even withholding funds which had been subscribed by friends of the mission. His motives were in some cases impugned, and, because of this, it became necessary, while still in a foreign land, to take up his pen in self-defence. All this occasioned deepest sorrow on his part, since it was impossible to explain the grounds of these agitations among those for whom he laboured. His soul was grieved beyond what mere words were able to describe. He knew not what the result might be; the utter subversion of his plans for India did not seem impossible. And that which is most terrible of all in the thought of a true servant of Christ—this occasion for despising the religion of "good will" towards all men—well-nigh crushed him.

But under these weighty trials the greatness of his holy character was made conspicuous, not so much in the vigor with which he wrote in self-justification, as in his unaffected simplicity and conscious sense of personal frailty. The following, taken from a communication addressed to his opposers, illustrates his Christian principle:

"In many things, heretofore, I may have erred and come short. I may have erred in feeling; I may have erred in motive; I may have erred in judgment; I may have erred in over-zeal, not in regard to the great cause itself for which I plead—for who could be over-zealous in pleading for the temporal and eternal interests of a hundred and thirty million of perishing idolaters?—but I may have erred in over-zeal for particular modes and methods of promoting the cause, or for the independent provision of particular measures and instrumentalities toward its more effective and successful promotion. And if in these, or such like, or in any other respects, I may have erred, either through ignorance or otherwise, I again cast myself, without reserve or qualification, on the sovereign mercy of my God, on the atoning sacrifice and justifying righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the sanctifying influences of the Almighty Spirit of all grace; praying the Lord most fervently to forgive me freely these and all other sins and shortcomings whatsoever—yea, and in the plenitude of His unsearchable riches of grace, so to illumine the understanding, renew the heart, and strengthen every power and faculty of the regenerated soul, that I may so err no more."

What a lesson is here taught us! Every word indicates genuine humility—that humility which Christ exemplified so fully when upon earth; that grace which always represents true merit wherever it exists. It would have been foreign to a man of a carnal spirit to have admitted the possibility of erring in judgment, or to have confessed that he may have been unduly influenced by his own prejudices. Personal vanity never allows such concessions. Above all, an unrenowned nature in the conflict to maintain its ground is not willing to cast itself with conscious helplessness upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, and publicly acknowledge the same.

We live in an age of wonderful activities. To meet hostile forces successfully, there must be displayed indomitable perseverance, strength of purpose, and proper individuality. No man can become truly influential unless he have a clear view of the situation, feel the stirrings of a conscientious impulse, and engage in this moral strife as though he stood alone; being impressed that he is obliged to act under the guidance of his own God

given convictions. Made free, in this sense, from human bondage, he is capable of doing the most possible for God. Such a man was the heroic Dr. Duff. Such men are God's chosen instruments now, and always will be until the final conquest is achieved.

But just here is our danger. In this conflict it is very easy to lose the humility that tempers our spirit. We gird ourselves for the battle, over-confident as to our own judgment; unwilling to believe that other methods can succeed like our own, we cast away the sweetness of a holy temper, and become intolerant of others' opinions. Accustomed to argue from our own standpoint of observation, we too often glide insensibly to an attitude of unreasonable self-assertion, and finally end in a practical denial of our need of divine forgiveness and mercy on account of our numerous errors.

The heathen world is awaiting the approach of the militant Church. Wonderful possibilities are within our reach. Millions of redeemed souls call aloud to us, demanding to hear our message of salvation. Men and women of positive convictions are needed. Men and women destitute of a well-defined policy are not the hopeful instruments of the hour. A successful invasion of the territory of evil, whether at home or abroad, can only be conducted by undaunted heroes and heroines. But in all these efforts there must be exhibited the greatness of character, that Christian modesty which, in methods of operation, accords a freedom of judgment to others; that true humility which, when it becomes the permanent vesture of the soul, gives an added lustre to real heroism. Behold it in the words of the Scotch missionary! See how strongly he advocates his own view of mission work; but mark, also, how he pleads for gracious assistance, for Christ's merit to cover his transgressions, and for divine pity to counteract the weakness of an imperfect nature.

Moral reforms dignify the period in which we live. The Sabbath must be sacred; the giant evils that have been fostered in the very heart of our nation, to our infinite disgrace, must be dislodged. Positive natures are summoned. None but these can stand for the right. All others, by their vacillation of purpose and doubtful expedients, only obstruct the march of reform. Admit so much as this, we freely must. But equally emphatic must be our admission in respect to that virtue of the soul that compels us to pause on the battle-field of life and humbly own the poverty of our human wisdom. No man should toil a single hour without this spirit. It is this that will restrain unlawful heat, and enable before the eyes of all the very cause he has espoused. Whoever sits at the Master's feet and learns how His united firmness of purpose with sweetness of temper will find a valuable lesson. If an infallible One lived thus during His earthly career, how much more is there need that His erring disciples should follow His example! Such greatness carried into the work of life insures a perpetual force of magnetic influence. Duff, and Carey, and Henry Martyn, and a royal company of others possessing like spirit, will live forever in the widest sense, because of their godly "humility," without which it is impossible to be "exalted."—*Chris. Advocate.*

God's Last Call—A Fact.

In a certain Somersetshire town there lived, about four years ago, a young man—John—who was noted for his recklessness and daring impiety. He was always to the front in any mischief or downright wickedness, and this despite a good example at home and the repeated kindnesses of friends and well-wishers. In the year 1884 I was called to the town in which he lived to preach a "mission" for ten days, and the working committee did all in their power to secure a large attendance. Several ladies tried hard to induce John to attend the services, but he persistently refused until half the services had passed by. On the Thursday evening, just as I had taken my place at the organ, the chapel door was opened, and to the amazement of everybody, John came in. He wished to remain near the door, but finally he came forward and occupied the only vacant seat in the building, close by the platform. The man paid deep attention to the singing and to the sermon, and at the close he seemed as if riveted to the spot. A large number of people withdrew after the sermon, while an equally large number remained to an "instruction." Among the latter this John remained. When the service was finally concluded, a friend of mine entered into conversation with this man, and accompanied him home. I was afterwards informed that the two men were together until nearly midnight. John admitted the truth of the sermon, and said that he in-

tended to be better, but he could not do it "too suddenly"—he would wait awhile, and then serve God.

My friend would not be put off so easily, and very solemnly did he warn John of the danger of delay, and urge him to an immediate decision, but the only reply was, "Let it alone now. I will come and hear the preacher on Sunday next."

Relating the story to me on the following day, my friend said that the answer he made the man was almost prophetic—Well, John, we shall be glad to see you on Sunday; but remember you may be dead before then. Now is the accepted time. And so they parted.

When I went down to breakfast on the following morning, almost the first words I heard were, *John is dead!* I could scarcely believe it; but it was all too true. He had risen at six o'clock that morning to go to work as usual, and had left the house shortly before seven in a merry humor. In less than half an hour afterwards a workman found his dead body on the highway, but a few yards from his own door—he had dropped dead from heart disease. Poor John! His promise to be present on the following Sunday was never fulfilled.

There was an awful hush that night at the Mission service, and all felt as if the unseen world had been brought close to them.

As I drove to the railway station on the following Tuesday we met the funeral procession wending its way to the churchyard.

Young men and maidens, let this man's sad end urge you to become Christ's at once.—*F. C. Spurr in London Baptist.*

Work every one can do.

Don't talk louder than you live. Hypocrites are poor witnesses. The first person to help is yourself; the next one is the nearest and most needy.

Help the lost sinner first; the weak Christian will get into heaven; help him afterward.

Invite the lost ones to service; do it by a kind word or letter, or any good way. Pray for them in private; speak of the meetings, praise them.

Cut and send clippings out of the paper; use your pen; quote apt passages of Scripture.

Introduce the unsaved to some one who will better tell them the way of salvation. Go with the inquirer to the altar or inquiry room. Ask them to your homes; talk and pray with them.

Help make every meeting you attend a good one. If you cannot sing, move your lips in harmony with the singing. In public service be brief, both in prayer and remarks.

Live for Christ in your homes. This is the great need of to-day. Wash dishes, broil steak, make beds, sell calicos or silks like a Christian. Keep sweet, happy and hopeful. Be a walking sermon. Don't growl with your face. If you are sick, show what grace can do. If you are tired, bear as only a heaven-helped man can. If you are in trouble, let the world see in you the peace of God.

Let love to God flow out from all your actions. Lead the children to Christ. Keep away from doubtful things, and thus help a weak brother.

Ask God to direct you to work, and He will do it inside of forty-eight hours.

Don't quit work until the breath quits the body; then begin service on the other side, in heaven.—*Rev. C. H. Yatman.*

The Daily Renewing.

As believers we need the daily renewing and supply of the Holy Spirit. "And when they had prayed... they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 4: 31). We need this renewing for our spiritual growth in grace; for our downward growth in the truth; for our upward growth into Christ, and for our outward growth in usefulness. We need this renewing for daily walk, every detail in every-day life, and for victory over self, for "if we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5: 16). We need this renewing for our work, abounding by the power of the Spirit. Yesterday's success will not answer for the present. Yesterday's filling and power for service will not avail now.

How are we to get this renewing? First, by waiting upon God in prayer. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles" (Isaiah 40: 31). "They shall run and not be weary" (in the Lord's commands, and through the world), "and they shall walk and not faint" (as we live in the Spirit). Secondly, by searching the Word. As illustrating this, read the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm, where in it, nearly every verse, we have a reference to the Word of God, and notice its practical results. Thirdly, by faith. How often we hear Chris-

tians say, "I cannot do this, and I do not realize that." Is it not because of unbelief? The Master is saying, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" Faith responds, "Yes, Lord." As you do the trusting He will do the keeping; as you do the yielding He will do the filling; as you do the obeying, He will do the empowering; as you do the submitting, He will give you the victories; and this He will accomplish by the indwelling, inflowing and outflowing of the Holy Spirit.—*F. E. Marsh, in Words and Weapons.*

Greed.

It is one of the marked characteristics of greed, that there is no satisfying it or allaying its cravings. You may gorge a greedy man until he is ready to burst, until not another morsel of food can be forced into his craw, and he will still be in distress because he can hold no more. And so of the man whose only thought is to increase his wealth; the more he gets the more he wants, and the less scrupulous he becomes as to the means by which his ends are to be accomplished. At the outset a man who is eager to get rich will have some respect for the rights of others, and will hesitate about grinding money out of his fellow-men in dishonest ways, but with increase of wealth he grows less and less scrupulous as to how his gains are to be secured, until at last he will allow no man's rights to stand in his way, and will unhesitatingly compromise honor, decency, and every principle of justice that can be checked in his ambition to become more and more wealthy. When greed is allowed its own way it will continue to gain a firmer and firmer hold upon a man until it drives from his breast every feeling of sympathy, love and compassion for his brother man; it will sap him of his strength to resist the assaults of avarice, and will shrivel up his soul until none of those many virtues which raise man above the brute can find lodgement in his heart.—*Rev. E. R. Donohoe.*

A Costly Estate.

What is the value of this estate? said a gentleman to another with whom he was riding, as they passed a fine mansion surrounded by fair and fertile fields.

I don't know what it is valued at; I know what it cost its late possessor.

How much?

His soul.

A solemn pause followed this brief answer; for the inquirer had not sought first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

The person referred to was the son of a pious laboring man. Early in life he professed faith in Christ, and he soon obtained a subordinate position in a mercantile establishment in this city. He continued to maintain a reputable religious profession till he became a partner in the firm. Labor then increased. He gave less attention to religion, and more and more to his business, and the cares of the world choked the Word. Ere he became old he was exceedingly rich in money, but so poor and miserly in soul that none who knew him would have suspected that he had ever born the sacred name of Him who said: It is more blessed to give than to receive. At length he purchased the landed estate referred to, built him a costly mansion, sickened and died. Just before he died he remarked: My prosperity has been my ruin. What a price for which to barter away immortal joy and everlasting life; yet how many do it!—*Selected.*

Morbus Sabbaticus.

Morbus Sabbaticus, or Sunday sickness, is a disease peculiar to church members. The attack comes on suddenly every Sunday. No symptoms are felt on Saturday night; the patient sleeps well and awakes feeling well; eats a hearty breakfast, but about church time the attack comes on and continues until the services are over for the morning. Then the patient feels easy and eats a hearty dinner. In the afternoon he feels much better, and is able to take a walk, talk about politics, and read the Sunday papers; he eats a hearty supper, but about church time he has another attack and stays at home. He retires early, sleeps well and wakes up Monday morning refreshed and able to go to work, and does not have any symptoms of the disease until the following Sunday. The peculiar features are as follows.

1. It always attacks members of the church.
2. It never makes its appearance except on the Sabbath.
3. The symptoms vary, but it never interferes with the sleep or appetite.
4. It never lasts more than twenty-four hours.
5. It generally attacks the head of the family.
6. No physician is ever called.
7. It always proves fatal in the end—to the soul.

8. No remedy is known for it except prayer.

9. Religion is the only antidote.

10. It is becoming fearfully prevalent, and is sweeping thousands every year prematurely to destruction.—*Selected.*

Frankness and Harshness.

How often a bitter speech, which has caused keen pain to the hearer, has been followed by such words as these, as if in justification of the unkindness shown:

"I'm a plain, blunt person, and I have to speak out just what I think. People must take me as the Lord made me."

Any thing meaner than such an attempt to throw the responsibility for one's ugliness of temper off upon the Lord it would be hard to imagine. Frankness of speech is one thing, but harshness is a very different thing. The Lord never endowed any man with such a disposition, or put him in such circumstances that he was obliged to make stinging, cruel remarks. Some people have more difficulty than others in being sweet-tempered and kindly spoken, but when one fails it is his own fault.—*The Work at Home.*

Character Better than Numbers.

The church can better afford to lose members than to lose character. The toleration of bad men in the church may increase the revenues of the church for a while, and may contribute to a show of numbers; but this policy will damage the character of the church, and may eventually diminish both its numbers and its revenues. There may, however, be a show of prosperity without the possession or exhibition of piety, but such prosperity is only blot. It is a bad sign of the times when an increase in numbers and popularity is attributable to a decrease in purity and spiritual power. Like attracts like, and those who join a church are like those who already belong to it. As riches gained by fraud are rotten to the core, so church success that depends on affiliation with and resemblance to the world is vicious in character and effect, and tends only to individual deterioration and public disaster.—*The Fire-brand.*

HARD WORK.—Is better than easy work in almost any line of effort; yet many a man shrinks from the task assigned to him in his special sphere of duty because he finds its doing to be hard instead of easy. "How do you like your new place?" asked an elder man of a younger one. Oh! It's a pretty good place, only it's all up-hill work there," was the reply. "Well, most good work is up-hill work in this world," rejoined the elder. "Down-hill work doesn't amount to much in the long run. It seldom is work that is worth one's doing." Down-hill work is easy, and up-hill work is hard. In fact, it is because a man can go down hill with his work without any need of his working, that make down-hill work so attractive to the average man as he is.—*Sunday School Times.*

RANDOM READINGS.

Patient waiting is often the highest way of doing God's will.

It is more honorable to fail, than to cease pushing for fear you will fail.

How can a man act upon the judgment of another without using his own?

We must be as courteous to a man as we are to a picture, which we are willing to give the advantage of a good light.—*Emerson.*

A Christian is the best commentary on the New Testament. But there are not enough such commentaries to send out. The edition is small.

This sorrow which has cut down to the root—try to think of it, not as a spoiling of your life, but as a preparation for it.—*George Eliot*

The one thing to be remembered of God's speaking to men (the Ten Commandments) is the supreme fact of authority on his part, and loving unquestioning obedience on ours.

This is an imperfect world, and nothing except God's government of it can be perfect. The men, therefore, who complain and fight on the ground that injustice is done them by the fact that some other men, in certain circumstances, are happier than they, are vainly contending against the inevitable.

How grateful ought we to be that God sends along, here and there, a natural heart-singer—a man whose nature is large and luminous, and who, by his very carriage and spontaneous actions, calms, cheers, and helps his fellows! God bless the good-natured, for they bless everybody else!

If you want to get the dyspepsia, follow down every mouthful, to know what it is doing. You will very speedily find out. The man that has lived for himself has the privilege of being his own mourner.

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