

Questionings.

What can I do for Thee, Master?
For the field is so very wide,
And calls to Thy service are sounding
From toilers on every side.

What can I do for Thee, Master?
The question I fain would repeat,
And reverently, prayerfully waiting
I lay my life down at Thy feet.

What may I do for Thee, Master?
Since Thou has done all things for me!
In love and humility bending
I wait to be guided by Thee.

Wherever Thou leadest, Master,
Whatever Thou sendest to me,
I know that my hands are doing
The work that is chosen by Thee.

Margaret E. Stewart

Honesty in Church Matters.

What a pity, that in this age of Christian teaching, we should find even a few seemingly well-informed people whose moral education is painfully deficient. They must have overlooked in their Bible study the injunction, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, think on these things"—Phil. iv. 8. It is most perplexing to find here and there one, who, when a promise has been made to support the cause of God in any form, and that promise to pay, due or overdue, ignore the obligation altogether. If it were a purely business transaction, the fear of the law (not moral) would spur them to observe their promise, but when it is (only) a promise to God's cause the moral law which should bind men much more strongly, has no hold upon their conscience. Subscriptions have been made to build churches or remove church debts, and in all good faith trustees have relied upon these being promptly paid; and while many have made no small sacrifice to meet their obligations, preserve their honor and serve the cause so dear to them, others perhaps in better circumstances as regards this world's goods have, because it was a church debt, felt no obligation, moral or legal, to meet their engagements. This same spirit of dishonesty—it cannot be called by any other name—evidenced by some in refusing to pay their promised offerings towards the support of the church they attend, if in their better moments, seeing the reasonableness of contributing regularly on the Sabbath day "as God has prospered" them, they promise to contribute a certain sum each week at their place of worship, this sum, little or much, the church depends upon until withdrawn, increased or lessened as the case may need, or the giver desire. Three months pass, six months or a year, it is found that through absence or other causes there is due and unpaid, say fifty cents more or less, what can be said in favor of coolly ignoring that amount, and the contributor saying practically to the church board "you can mark that off." "If you do I will continue to pay, (think of that for a moment) if you don't I will stop altogether."

How can we before God, relieve ourselves of an obligation in that way?
How long could a business man, tailor, butcher, baker, grocer, continue to do business honestly, with a few dozen customers like that? The downright dishonesty of professional friends of the church is to blame largely for the questionable ways and means used to raise the funds needed to carry on the work of God at home and abroad.
It is most damaging to the cause of God, when the young, are growing up in our churches, come to know that there are those who ignore their promises to pay in the churches and out of it, and yet talk about "enjoying the favor of God" and being on their "way to heaven." It is a sure sign of hypocrisy to be unrighteous and careless in civil dealings, no matter how conscientious we may seem to be in sacred duties. To appear religious towards God and be unrighteous towards men is to be a dissembling Christian. To make a conscience of one duty and not of another is to make true conscience of neither. One string out of tune in a piano makes all the music played thereon offensive, and out of harmony, unmusical. So a man may not get drunk, or swear, but being covetous overmuch mars greatly the influence of his life for good. Let us the rather be of the noble spirit of the great apostle and say, "In all things willing to live honestly." Let all our young people have a care lest the beauty of an otherwise noble character be destroyed by a defective moral training. Spirituality without morality is dead.—*Monthly Record.*

Being His Own Pilot.

A bright boy, who loved the sea, entered on a sailor's life when very young. He rose to quick promotion and, while quite a young man, was made the master of a ship. One day a passenger spoke to him upon the voyage, and asked if he should anchor off a certain headland, supposing he would anchor there, and

telegraph for a pilot to take the vessel into port.

"Anchor! no, not I. I mean to be in dock with the morning tide." "I thought perhaps you would signal for a pilot."

"I am my own pilot," was the curt reply.

Intent upon reaching port by morning he took a narrow channel to save distance. Old, bronzed, gray-headed seamen turned their swarthy faces to the sky which boded squally weather, and shook their heads. Cautious passengers went to the young captain and besought him to take the wider course; but he only laughed at their fears, and repeated his promise to be in dock at daybreak. He was ashore before daybreak.

We need not pause to dramatize a storm at sea; the alarm of breakers shouted hoarsely through the wind, and the wild orders to get the life boats manned. Enough to say that the captain was ashore earlier than he promised—tossed sportively upon some weedy beach, a dead thing that the waves were weary of—a toy that the tempest was tired of playing with—and his queenly ship and costly freight were scattered over the surly acres of an angry sea. How was this? The glory of that young man was strength; but he was his own pilot. His own pilot! There was his own blunder—fatal, suicidal blunder.

Oh! young men beware of being your own pilots. Take the true and able Pilot on board, who can stride upon those waves, who can speak, "Peace, be still," to that rough Boreas, so that "with Christ in the vessel, you may smile at the storm." To be emptied of self, that is your need. Send a message to heaven for help. Telegraph for a pilot. You won't ask in vain.

Filial Confidence.

A mother who was earnestly desirous of obtaining and retaining the confidence of her sons from boyhood to manhood was accustomed to use the following method: After they had retired to rest for the night she would go to their several beds, and, lying down beside one or other of them, talk over with them the happenings of the day, and then say: Now you make a little prayer, and then I will. When this was done the good-night kiss followed, and the lads were left to slumber.

From infancy they had been in the habit of saying the morning and evening prayers at her knees, and as they grew older it was not difficult to continue, somewhat differently, the same practice, especially with her sympathy, companionship, and guidance.

All their little secrets in this evening hour they were ready to confide to her, sure of her readiness to enter into all their experiences, and to help them in the solution of their difficulties; sure, also, that the confidence so ingenuously given would not be betrayed, but looked in her heart alone.

She knew all their love affairs, their friendships, their hopes, ambitions, and aspirations, and so when they left her to go out into the battle of life she was not afraid for them. Trusting in God and in their mother, they were not fighting single-handed; they were sustained by faith and love. The ties that bound mother and sons together were kept tenderly alive by long and frequent letters when distance separated them—letters in which the same confidential relations were kept up.

To the mother how delightful were these intimate associations with her sons, and to the sons of what inestimable value were they as a safeguard from temptations of all sorts. No friends or acquaintances could they cherish that she, too, could not accept. Thus were they lifted into a plane and held there above an infinite number of festering and petty seductions, and habituated to a moral atmosphere of purity and honesty with themselves.

A Good Book And Its Works.

If a good deed shines in this wicked world like a candle in the darkness, a good book shines as a lighthouse. When Dr. Lyman, Beecher published his "Six Sermons on intemperance," he thought they might do a little good work in Connecticut; but the "Sermons" have wrought great deeds among all English-speaking people. A copy of the "Sermons" found their way into the house of a drunken Scotch cobbler, James Stirling of Milngavie. One Saturday night, on returning home from the public house, where he had been carousing, he overheard his wife reading, as her custom was, a chapter of the New Testament to the children. The chapter was the twenty-fifth of Matthew, in which is the parable of our Lord concerning the separating of the sheep from the goats.

"Will father be a goat, mother?" asked the youngest boy, looking up into his mother's face. The poor woman was bewildered by the boy's question; but the drunken father,

who had overheard it, was struck with shame and remorse. He tossed upon his bed that night, and slept but little, for his heart was troubled. The next day being ashamed to go to church, he stayed at home. Seeking for some book to read, that he might get away from himself, he discovered the "Six Sermons on intemperance." He read them; they seem to have been written for him alone. Then and there he formed the resolution to drink neither beer nor spirits. He attended a temperance meeting a few nights later, and publicly signed the pledge. Off ran one of his sons, as fast as his legs could carry him, to his sick mother with the news.

"Mother he shouted, as he rushed to the bedside, 'father has just put down his name, and they're all putting down their names.'"

"Thank God!" exclaimed the mother; the tears stopped her doxology. If he has signed he'll keep it," she added. "Yes, he keeps it," and her face flushed with the dawn of better days. "I'll sign it too, and you must all sign it, for the set time to favor us has come."

It had come. From that time Stirling worked with diligence at his trade, with enthusiasm to promote the cause of temperance and religion.—*Youth's Companion.*

A Fireside Chat.

"Mary, the times are going to be pretty hard with us this winter, and I reckon we'd better give up this paper; I don't care much for it any how."

"Well, John, of course you know what you can afford to do, and we must be governed by that, but this is a good paper, and, in fact, I don't get time to read hardly anything else but it. It has the Sunday school lesson, and the children always read that, and also the Home Department, with much interest."

"But, wife, we have home papers that we must take, and, of course, I want the agricultural and farm journals and the political news of the day."

"Yes, father, that is true, but do we not need the religious paper too, as much as any? Our children are growing up, and they must have the right kind of reading, and while there is news and other such matter in the religious paper, it is all carefully culled out and cleaned up, so as to be pure and healthful for the family."

"Yes, wife, I have sometimes thought that a good deal that comes in some of these other papers is not fit for a respectable family to read. I'll admit there's lots of chaff."

"Then, John, think of the wholesome advice in our religious paper, and other hints dropped that are so helpful; the good seed sown in our hearts and in the children's. Why, my spiritual life is strengthened and refreshed every time I take that paper. It is like food for the soul."

"I didn't think before, my dear, that it was so helpful!"

"And, John, I like to see how the women are working in missions and otherwise. It seems to me that this is the age of active Christian women. You men are so busy that you can't find time to do it all, or half of it."

"Yes, you women will run off with the whole church, if we let you alone."

"Indeed we will, John. And then, think of the temperance stand of our paper. I want our boys to grow up strong in temperance principle, and the girls too, for they may marry. I don't want any of them to go to destruction through drink."

"God preserve us from that, my dear. God preserve us from that."

"Then, John, one thing more; you never can know what a help this paper has been to me in bringing up the children. It has given me more ideas, and more sympathy and strength than I can tell. The bulk of the work in training them falls upon me, and I can't do it without some religious help and backing like this. Why, John, every week I get sermons, and grace and comfort from reading that paper. It is just like a dear friend."

"Well, I guess we'll have to give up something else, if crops are short and times are hard!"

"That's just like you, father, to give up something. But, indeed, the children and I could hardly do without our paper. We'd miss it more than any thing else about the place. By the way, John, isn't it time to pay for the paper? Suppose you pay up and renew at the same time."—*Mid-Continent.*

Beauty in Woman's Face.

No cosmetics are so capable of enhancing beauty and a smile of good temper and a desire to please. Beauty of expression is, more than any other form of loveliness, capable of cultivation. A woman may not have perfectly regular features, but her face will be so lit up with the beauty of goodness that she cannot fail to please, if she strive to obey the spirit of some such rules as the following, which may be multiplied or diminished, according to particular cases:

1. Learn to govern yourselves, and be gentle and patient.

2. Guard your tempers, especially in seasons of ill health, irritation, and trouble, and soften them by prayers and a sense of your own shortcomings and errors.

3. Never speak or act in anger until you have prayed over your words or acts.

4. Remember that valuable as is the gift of speech, silence is often more valuable.

5. Do not expect too much from others, but forbear and forgive, as you desire forbearance and forgiveness yourself.

6. Never report a sharp or angry word. It is the second word that makes the quarrel.

7. Beware of the first disagreement.

8. Learn to speak in a gentle tone of voice.

9. Learn to say kind and pleasant things whenever opportunity offers.

10. Study the characters of each, and sympathize with all in their troubles; however small.

11. Do not neglect little things, if they can affect the comfort of others in the smallest degree.

12. Avoid moods and pets and fits of sulkiness.

13. Learn to deny yourself and prefer others.

14. Beware of meddlers and tale-bearers.

15. Never charge a bad motive, if a good one is conceivable.

16. Be gentle and firm with children.—*The Five Talents of Woman.*

Kindly Thought.

No gift is ever so welcome as is the remembrance of the loving kindness which suggest it. Any attention, indeed, should be the symbol of a cordial feeling, which is of more value than the act itself. The recipient of the kindness mentioned in the following story was, according to his own testimony, not more grateful for being made physically comfortable than for the evidence that he was regarded as a "man and a brother."

Said a brakeman, as he pointed at a fine-looking man who was walking up and down the platform at a railroad station:

"That's the president of the Railroad; an' I came over on his private car to day. I got up pretty late this morning, and had to run five or six blocks to catch my train, an' didn't even have time to get my breakfast. Well I was on the rear end of the 'special' when he and his party were eatin' dinner. Well, you can believe I was surprised when the colored steward, with a white apron, came out after they were through dinner, and said:

"Have you had your dinner yet, brakeman?"

"No," said I. "I didn't have time to get it before we started."

"Well," he said, 'dat gen'lman, de president, told me foh to ax you, an' if you hadn't, to ax you in.'"

"Good for you!" says I. "I'm as hungry as a bear."

"Jes' wait a minute," says he, 'and I'll done call you.'"

"An' if he didn't go in an' clear off that table, an' fix it up for me as nice as if I'd been Jay Gould himself! Now, it wasn't so much the dinner that takes me as the fact of his thinkin' of it, and carin' whether a poor hungry brakeman had anything to eat or not.—*Youth's Companion.*

Temperance in the Bible.

Who was the first drunkard? Gen. ix. 20, 21.

Who took the first temperance pledge? Judges xiii. 13, 15.

Did anybody mentioned in the Bible ever take a pledge of his own accord? Daniel i. 8.

Was he any healthier and wiser in consequence? Daniel i. 15, 17.

Ought kings to drink wine? Pro. xxxi. 4.

Ought we to make companions of drunkards? I. Corinthians v. 11.

Can any drunkard enter the kingdom of heaven? I. Corinthians vi. 9, 10.

Does God pronounce woe upon drunkards? Isa. v. 11, 22.

Why has He promised this woe? Isa. xxviii. 7, 8.

Are drunkards likely to get rich? Pro. xxi. 18.

What are the consequences of drinking? Pro. xxiii. 29, 30.

How may we avoid these consequences? Pro. xxxiii. 31.

What will be the result if we disregard this? Pro. xxiii. 21.

Is it wise to tamper with strong drink? Proverbs xx. 1.

Where was the first temperance society? Jeremiah xxx. 5, 6.

What blessing did God pronounce upon the first temperance society? Jeremiah xxxv. 17, 18.

Is temperance a vice? Gal. v. 21.

When is temperance a virtue? Gal. v. 23.

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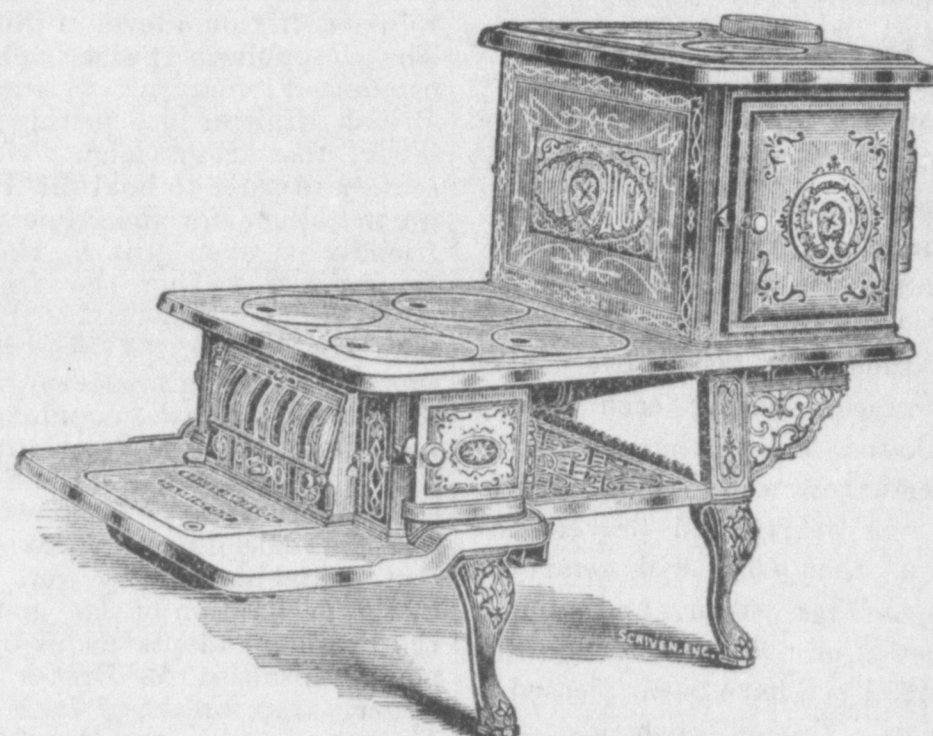
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