

Learn to Give.

Learn to give, and thou shalt bind
Countless treasures to thy breast;
Learn to love and thou shalt find
Only they who love are blest.

Learn to give and thou shalt know
They the poorest are who hoard;
Learn to love, thy love shall flow
Deeper for the wealth outpoured.

Learn to give, and learn to love;
Only thus thy life can be
Foretaste of the life above,
Tinged with immortality.

Give, for God to thee hath given;
Love, for He by love is known;
Child of God and heir of heaven,
Let thy parentage be shown.
—Lucy A. Bennett, in *The Christian*.

Empty Mansions.

I can count up, in San Francisco and vicinity, at least five of them. They are elegant and costly enough for royal palaces, and they are new as well as costly. But they are empty. Why? Those who built and own them could not be contented to stay in them. Some are in New York and some are in Europe; and these splendid homes, on which was lavished all that wealth could buy to make them attractive, are occupied by hired servants who live in the basement and only go upstairs to dust and to sweep. The aggregate cost of these mansions, with their carved furniture, their solid silver table service and their imported works of art, is not less than three millions of dollars. The annual interest on the investment is two hundred thousand dollars. This interest would pay the rent of a thousand homes for families in moderate circumstances, and yet the capital that it represents is in those shut-up houses, which are only a source of care and anxiety to their absentee owners.

One of these millionaires, now in Europe, first built for himself, wife and two children a palace of forty rooms in San Francisco. It was in the most aristocratic part of the city, and the views of the bay and the ocean from its windows were magnificent. But in a year or two the lord of this mansion thought that he ought to have a correspondingly country-seat. He bought a hundred acres two miles from a railroad station. He graded, he planted, he built, he adorned, until he had a second home that was like a royal palace, with its park of live-oaks and its wealth of rare exotics. Surely a man might be willing to divide his time between two such homes! But, no; he had not occupied the country-seat, in which he invested a million of dollars, for a year, until he determined to go to Europe. And there he is now, posing as a California millionaire, and fishing, it is said, for some pretty title, while a steward, cross as Cerberus, guards his California home, and no visitor is permitted even to enter its enchanted grounds.

What are the lessons of these empty mansions?

1. Money alone can not make a home. All the elegances and luxuries that it can buy fail to satisfy the carnal heart. If that family had remained in moderate circumstances, and had secured, by toil and economy, a house of their own with six rooms and yard enough for a little shrubbery, they might have been proud of it and happy in it. But when wealth increased, and they began to gratify their tastes, their vanity and their pride, they could find no stopping-place. The ideal mansion when completed was a prison, and they fled from it to wander homeless in a distant land.

2. How blinding is selfishness! How it mocks and cheats us! That man and his family thought to find happiness in spending their money on themselves. But they have learned that such spending is like gathering living waters into a stagnant pool to putrify and poison the air. Suppose, instead of one of these mansions, they had expended a million dollars in building a hospital, or an asylum, and that they could go there day after day and see hundreds of sufferers made comfortable by their liberality. This would have been happiness. Now they have only gilded misery.

3. We will not be happy even in the heavenly mansions, if we go there with unregenerated hearts. One of our selfish California millionaires, if put in possession of a celestial palace, surrounded by trees of life, would want to get on a comet and go out into the depths of space. He could not be contented, because selfishness is a hungry monster, and would if possible, devour a universe and then ask for more. We who are poor ought to thank God, that having food and raiment we may therewith be content. —*Journal and Messenger*.

The "Freethinker" not a Freethinker.

Certain men claim vauntingly that they exercise Free Thought. They claim to be "liberal," that is, free from bias and prepossessions. They claim to be independent of old

prejudices and exterior influences, this claim implying that the conclusions to which they have arrived are the truth. They sometimes call themselves Truth-seekers, as if they alone sought the truth, while all others attempted only to brace up old opinions whether right or wrong.

But it may be asserted that the Freethinkers, so called, are not free, but are under the bondage of prejudice, under the dominion of the strongest bias against Christianity. Their loudly claimed freedom is like that of the man who said he was open to conviction but he defied any ten men to convince him. Instead of entering on an investigation with an earnest and single desire to find out the truth, they set out with opinions already formed, and with the determination to disprove at all hazards the claims of Christianity. So far from being free they are blinded to everything which may be said in favor of religion and thus are tied up to their skeptical conclusions.

Many of these Freethinkers are men of corrupt character. Their conventions pass resolutions fiercely condemning the laws against the circulation of obscene literature. They are men of profligate habits, and thus are unable to judge fairly of a religion which demands a pure life. Others, whose private characters are respectable, are men of theory, opinionated crochety, and so are unable to give a candid consideration to the evidence of Christianity. The so-called Freethinkers are not liberal but prejudiced, not free to arrive at just conclusions but trammelled by prepossessions.

This is proved by the fact that not one of them can make a fair statement of the doctrines of Christianity and the arguments in its support. For a man to be truly liberal, that is free from prejudice, is to be able to put himself in the other man's place—to look at the matter as his opponent looks at it, to understand why it is that his neighbor takes this particular view? No man can claim to be liberal-minded unless he can state the view of his opponent in a form which the latter will accept as correct and can clearly state any arguments in support of that view. If he can do this and he still rejects the doctrine it is plain that he rejects it not because he is so prejudiced that he cannot see what the idea is nor what can be said in support of it, but because he sees weightier arguments on the other side. Now, among the writings of those who claim to be free thinkers, we look in vain for any fair statement of doctrines of Christianity, and of course there is no intelligent appreciation of the arguments in support of those doctrines. Therefore, it is not putting it too strongly to say that they are destitute of the broad-headed liberality of the candid disputant, that so far from being followers of Reason they never stop to weigh arguments, that instead of being free in thought, they are the slaves of preconceived judgments. —*Chris. Inquirer*.

Sulkers.

We have felt sometimes like adding a new clause to the Litany that should read, "From sulkers, good Lord, deliver us." We use the term "sulkers" in a general sense meaning those who relapse into sulks after an outburst of temper, and those likewise who indulge in them from some cause only vaguely suspected, or wholly unsuspected, by those around them.

Whether such moods possess one because he thinks that he has reason to feel offended, or whether they arise from some source, probably physically unknown to himself, indulgence in them is inexcusable. In the former case the offender, if the offence has been unintentional, would be glad to have it pointed out to him, so that he could apologize and try to atone for it. He would much rather usually, be told of his shortcomings, than bear the weight of silent wrath, and experience an uncomfortable sense of being in disgrace for days together. Moreover, he has a right to know when he has given offence, and should be informed, unless it has been so obviously marked and intentional that the one offended is sure that it was not unconsciously given. Even the explanation of the cause of his anger made by the latter in a Christian spirit is preferable to silent resentment, and is far more likely to smooth away the trouble. Let no good person for a moment imagine that it is more meritorious to bear offences in silence than to speak, if that silence is intended simply as a medium of showing anger or resentment. To bear insult or suffer injustice in the silence which is only silence in so far that the aggrieved one makes no reply in kind, and maintains a demeanor as cheerful and pleasant as though nothing had happened, is evidence of the possession of an amount of grace that makes him almost a saint. Would that all Christians more earnestly sought such grace! Prayer

and effort will surely obtain it in due season. In the meantime, if anger must have expression, let it find expression in words, not necessarily in angry speech, but in words of remonstrance and explanation, uttered in a kindly manner. Until they can be spoken kindly, it is desirable, of course, to restrain one's self, and keep silent.

If the mood arises simply from an unaccountable feeling of irritation that inclines one to sullen silence and a gloomy countenance the sooner the evil spell is broken, the better for the sufferer and those who suffer with him; for one person in such a mood is an incubus that weighs heavily on every one near him who is at all sensitive, perhaps drawing such persons finally into a similar condition, to the extent that they also find it a difficult matter to be agreeable, and to speak pleasantly.

A resolute attempt to look cheerful and speak a pleasant word, in our own experience, has proved so effectual a charm for breaking such evil moods, we would like to recommend it to all who are ever afflicted with them. It is alike efficacious from whatever source the spells may proceed; and whether they find expression in sullen silence, or in sullen fault-finding with everything and everybody, as they do with a certain class of people, whether this class or the one that keeps silence is the more disagreeable it would be difficult to say.

Christians cannot be too careful about giving and taking offence. Much injustice may be done if one is quick to become offended; and let him who is careless about giving offence remember the Saviour's words, "Woe unto the world because of offences. For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" —*Chris. at Work*.

God's Work Must be Done.

A distinguished General related this pathetic incident of his own experience in our civil war. The General's son was a lieutenant of a battery. An assault was being made. The father was leading his division in a charge. As he pressed on in the field, suddenly his eye was caught by the sight of a dead battery officer lying just before him. One glance showed him it was his own son. His fatherly impulse was to stop beside the dead body and give vent to his grief; but the duty of the moment demanded that he press on in the charge. So, quickly snatching one hot kiss from the dead lips, he went on leading his command in the assault.

So Aaron was summoned away from grief to duty, and could not pause for any mourning on the death of his two sons. Usually the pressure is not so intense, and we can pause longer to weep and do honor to the memory of our dead; yet the principle is the same. God does not want us to waste our life in tears. We are to put our grief into new energy of service, and it should make us more reverent, more earnest, more useful. God's work must not be allowed to suffer while we weep to mourn. The fires must still be kept burning on the altar, and the worship must still go on. The work in the household, in the store, in the field, must be taken up again—the sooner the better. This is a lesson we need to learn well, that when a shock of sorrow comes, we may not be paralyzed by it, but may rise again at once and press on in the path of duty and appointed service. —*Westminster Teacher*.

A Sermon by Father Taylor.

I once heard Father Taylor preach a sermon on the Atonement. It was all in a style that nobody but a sailor could understand, a style that every sailor could comprehend, although a treatise on this subject from an up-town pulpit would have been "Greek" to him. This was one of the passages: "You are dead in trespasses and sins, and buried too, down in the lower hold amongst the ballast, and you can't get out for there is a ton of sin on the main hatch. You shin up the stanchions and try to get it open, but you can't. Your rig purchase. You get your handspikes, capstan bars, and watch tackles, but they are no good. You can't start it. Then you begin to sing out for help. You hail all the saints you think are on deck, but they can't help you. At last you hail Jesus Christ. He comes straight along. All he wanted was to be asked. He just claps his shoulder to that ton of sin. It rolls off, and then he says, 'Shipmates, come out!' We'll, if you don't come out, it is all your own fault."

It was on the Sunday before a State election. Briggs was the candidate of the Whig party, but Father Taylor desired that he should be elected because he was a religious man. This was his prayer: "O Lord, give us good men to rule over us, just men, temperance men, Christian men, men who fear Thee, who obey Thy commandments, men who—But, O Lord, what's the use of veering and hauling and point-

ing all round the compass? Give us George N. Briggs for governor!" His prayer was answered on the next day. Father Taylor was eloquent, humorous, and pathetic by turns. Sometimes all these characteristics seemed to be merged in one. These and many others of his traits interested me, but I loved him because, first and last and all the time, he was the sailor's friend. —*John Codman, in the August Century*.

Transfigured Sorrow.

You may not know how it is supposed the pearl is formed. A grain of sand, or some foreign substance, getting entrance within the shell of an oyster, hurts its sensitive body, which, having no power to expel the cause of pain, covers it with a secretion, and, by degrees, rounds off all sharp angles, moulds it into a sphere, and finishes it with a polished surface. Thus it accepts the inevitable presence as a part of its life, and when it dies yields up, shaped and perfect gem, lovely with the tints of the skies, a jewel whose worth is far beyond the pain that gave it existence.

God often introduces into human lives some element of discomfort, unrest, or suffering—a thorn in the flesh, that cannot be plucked out, a burden that must be borne, a daily cross not to be laid down. Some souls thus dealt with chafe against the trial; they contend with it till their sensibilities are lacerated by its cruel edges, and their hearts become morbid and bitter. They make its presence one long perpetual pain and poison. Others, recognizing the trial as Heavensent, not to be escaped, accept it, not with joy, indeed, but with meekness; and though it press hard and sharply, they wear it with a sweet patience that day by day, enables them to carry it more easily. It even becomes a source of an inward development, the growth of a grace which at the last proves to be the crowning, adorning attribute of their character, the especial quality which, rounded-out to perfect symmetry, reflects the beauty of heaven. —*Illustrated Christian Weekly*.

It Looks Bad for a Minister, Etc.

Frequently in hearing church members and others referring to certain sins, we have this peroration: "Especially does it look bad for ministers" to do so and so. In commenting on the sinfulness of worldly amusements there is usually the above mentioned annex, "This would especially be bad for ministers to indulge in." Also in regard to habits, such as using tobacco drinking, betting or any thing else of like evils. These things we are informed, are especially bad for ministers.

Now, why these evils referred to should be especially bad for ministers some might fail to comprehend. It is to be feared that there is a great deal of hypocritical apology for sin in this idea of sinning being considered "especially bad for ministers." If a habit, sinful indulgence, or anything that's sinful, is especially bad for ministers, what is the reason, in the light of God's Word, that it is not especially bad for everybody to indulge in what is questionable or wrong? A positive assurance of ultimate victory and salvation is probably seen in the condition of this statement. "Be thou faithful unto death. And I will give thee a crown of life." It is not added that this is especially applicable to ministers—*Ex*.

The Power of a Track.

A young Hindu of some education fell into bad habits, and in his extremity stole \$3 from his aunt. Passing on his way he found in his path the "Heart Book," a small treatise translated and printed in his own language. On reading it his attention was arrested and his conscience aroused. He went home confessed his theft, and restored the money. For six months he read and re-read the graphic description of his own heart wrongs in the little book. His conscience, so seared and dead before, now gave him no rest. His aunt advised him to go to a friend in a near village, who had a large book, which they called "God's Word." He went, borrowed the friend's Bible, and read it as he had read the "Heart Book." He was converted, ceased all idolatrous worship and rites, and was baptized. His family persecuted him, cast him out, and performed his funeral rites, but he lives an earnest, happy Christian.

FRIENDSHIP.—Mr. Beecher said at one time: "The leaves of a tree do not fall faster from it after a hard autumn frost than do the friends of a man drop away from him after he has been touched by adversity." This may be true if he has proven himself, in his reverses, unworthy of confidence, or if he has used his friends only for what might be got out of them. But if the friendship is founded in Christian fellowship, adversity no more than prosperity will change the feelings or relations of those who are true friends.

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1880	141,402.81	911,132.93	3,881,478.00
1882	254,841.73	1,073,577.94	5,849,898.91
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