

I'll Think of Thee.

I look to Thee in every need,
And never look in vain;
I feel Thy strong and tender love,
And all is well again.
The thought of Thee is mightier far
Than sin and pain and sorrow are.

Discouraged in the work of life,
Disheartened by its load,
Shamed by its failures or its fears,
I sink beside the road;
But let me only think of Thee,
And then new heart springs up in me.

—Hymns of the Spirit.

Our Discontents.

These discontents of ours—what should we do with them? Forget them? Our petulant grumbling, sullen discontents; our discontents which get voice in murmurs. Nothing so hinders a strong, pushing, achieving, exultant life as murmuring—the mutterings of discontent. Think of those Israelites. What murmurers they were. They came to the fountain, the water is bitter, and they murmur. Then there is no flesh with their bread, and they murmur. Moses takes too much upon himself and they murmur. They are at the edge of the promised land and refuse even to attempt its conquest, but do not refuse to murmur. They are sullen with discontent, and so they are growing with murmuring.

Such murmurous discontent takes the brightness out of all their present blessings. The Israelites had passed dry shod through the cloven sea, but they had no bread, and what did that matter? They were free men instead of slaves! but they wanted flesh, and what did their freedom matter? They were going on toward the land of promise, but Moses tarried in the mount, and what did the land of promise matter?

Their murmurous discontent defeated those old Israelites. There was in them no grand reaching towards the things which were before. There in the wilderness they died; and that was all they did.

A fretful petulant, murmuring discontent stands achievement. You cannot do well, or be well out of a shadowed heart. Think of the reasons for discontent to the exclusion of the radiant reasons for a hopeful and aspiring content, and you have smitten yourself with a moral paralysis. Forget your discontents. Ah! Yes, you say, I should like to; but I cannot. I resolve, but resolution does no good. Still drop the dark curtains of my discontent around me; still does their chill cut the vitals of my thankfulness; still I am somehow held more in plaint than praise.

And I agree with you when you say that by a sheer resolution you cannot forget your discontents. And at the same time I re-affirm that you must forget them. How, you ask? I was reading some time since Mr. Robert Southey's life of Cowper. Poor Cowper, living under the constant shadow of insanity, and with the black cloud dropping down upon him every now and then. After his first seizure, when he had tried to kill himself, and after his recovery at St. Albans, he found a home in the little town of Olney. Everything considered, it was the best place for Cowper to live in. But it was by no means an inviting place. It was a little, homely, unhealthy, flat, marshy, musty, wool-weaving village. There was no scenery to stir a poet. And the house in which he lived was very uninviting too. Here there was material enough for discontent. He might have murmuringly looked out of his window on the flat, marshy foggy prospect, with never a hill to gladden him, nor a decent walk that he did not have to go miles after, and said, "A pretty place for a poet this; I can do nothing, I can be nothing, I can write nothing." That is the way a great many people would have done; conjured up their discontents, petted them and nursed them, until they became tyrants beneath whose rigorous reign nothing dare dwell but a constant whining and unmanly croaking. But though Cowper did now and then get crazy, he was nevertheless most sturdily sane and wise. He forgot his discontents. How, you ask? Not by sheer and simple New Year resolutions. Though now and then he was insane, he never was insane enough to imagine he could do it thus. How then? By resolutely turning himself toward the possible brightness of his condition; and by thought and care and thankfulness for these crowding out the reasons and tendencies towards discontent.

Olney was flat, unhealthy, uninteresting, and the house he lived in was not pleasant. But, in the back yard he could have a garden, and he could plant flowers in it, and he could watch and tend their growth, and he could make pets of hares and feed them and look after them, and he could change the green-house into a warm study in the winter, and into a pleasant arbor in the summer, and he could write in

it. And if he could not get poetry out of the flat landscape, he could get it out of his hares and flowers, and summer-house and friends. And he did, and he has embalmed them all in that poetry which was the beginning of a better and nobler school, and which wrought a change in literature, and which through all the days since has blessed and brightened many by its pleasant, steady, religious light. Thus Cowper forgot his discontents. His is the only way for you and me—the forgetting of the darker, through the persistence of memory of the brighter. How much better than if he had remembered his discontents. How much better for us all, if through thought about, and thankfulness for the bright things God does give us, we might get the grace to say with Paul, concerning our petty, mean, miserable, baffling, hindering discontents, "Forgetting the things which are behind."—Gospel Age.

Maxims for Parents.

"When the ground is soft and gentle, it is time to sow the seed; when the branch is tender, we can train it easiest; when the stream is small, we can best turn its course."

1. Begin to train your children from the cradle. From their earliest infancy inculcate the necessity of obedience. Obedience is very soon understood even by an infant (read Prov. 22:6; Col. 3:20; Eph. 6:1-3).

2. Unite firmness with gentleness. Let your children understand that you mean exactly what you say (Gen. 18:19; 1 Sam. 3:13; 1 Tim. 3:4).

3. Never give them anything because they cry for it.

4. Seldom threaten; and be always careful to keep your word (Prov. 19:18; 28:13, 14; Lev. 19:3).

5. Never promise them anything unless you are quite sure you can give them what you promise.

6. Always punish your children for willfully disobeying you, but never punish in a passion. Be calm as a clock, yet decisive (Prov. 14:29; 16:32).

7. Do not always be correcting your children, and never use violent or terrifying punishments. Take the rod (so Solomon says), let it tingle, and pray God to bless it. A little boy had been guilty of lying and stealing. His father talked with him on the greatness of his sin, told him he must punish him, represented to him the consequences of sin as far worse than his present punishment, and then chastised him. These means were made a blessing to the child, and from that time he shunned both falsehood and dishonesty. A few angry words and violent blows would have produced no such effect (Prov. 13:24; 22:15; 29:15; Eph. 6:4).

8. On no account allow them to do at one time what you have forbidden under the same circumstances at another (Exod. 20:12; Prov. 6:20-22).

9. Teach them early to speak the truth on all occasions. If you allow them to shuffle and deceive in small matters, they will soon do it in greater, till all reverence for truth is lost (Prov. 12:19-22).

10. Be very careful what company your children keep. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:20).

11. Make your children useful as soon as they are able, and find employment for them as far as possible. (Prov. 10:4; 18:9; 15; 2 Thess. 3:10).

12. Teach your children not to waste anything; to be clean and tidy; to sit down quietly and in good order to their meals; to take care of and mend their clothes; to have "a place for everything, and everything in its place" (1 Cor. 14:40; John 6:12).

13. Never suffer yourself to be amused by an immodest action; nor by a smile encourage those seeds of evil which, unless destroyed, will bring forth the fruits of vice and misery (Eph. 5:11, 12).

14. Encourage your children to do well; show them you are pleased when they do well (Prov. 1:8, 9).

15. Teach your children to pray by praying with them and for them yourself. Maintain the worship of God in your family if you desire his blessing to descend on you and yours (Josh. 24:15; Psal. 101:2).

16. Impress upon their minds that eternity is before them, and that those only are truly wise who secure eternal blessings. Say, "My child, what concerns you most, what I am most anxious about, is not what you ought to be or to possess here, for a little while, but what you are to be, and to have forever" (Deut. 6:7; 2 Tim. 3:17; Matt. 19:14).

17. Above all, let parents be themselves what they would wish their children to be; for it is only by the power of the gospel of Christ in our own hearts that we shall be enabled to bring up our children to God.

Disappointments.

Let us not look at disappointments as accidents that chance to fall upon life. They are part and parcel of those processes that toughen the texture of character and determine the quality of its fiber. Unfortunate would be the creature who might be permitted to trip through his days heedlessly, never arrested and turned to sober thought by the failure of his plans. It were wisdom rather to count it all joy and thank God when He considers us worth disappointing.

Nevertheless, it does not follow that disappointments are light and pleasurable even to God's children who are taught by the Spirit. It is hard to be disappointed, just in proportion to the store set by the thing cherished but now lost, the expectation fondly sustained but now blasted. The pain is keen and the sense of deprivation is acute, whether there is a sudden withering as of a Jonah's gourd, or whether there is a gradual fading away perceptible not so much in its operations as in its effects. Who likes to see the plans he brought to perfection with so much labored thought proving inapplicable and having of necessity to be cast aside like a clumsily-made ill-fitting suit of clothes? Who would choose, if he might have his own way, to find his own limited and circumscribed abilities and powers, or the impassable wall of circumstances that seems to have arisen in a night, rendering it impossible for him to carry to completion a project he set his soul upon?

Nevertheless the Christian, even when cut to the quick by disappointment, does not succumb to it. He dare not, moody melancholy and dismal broodings have no place in his soul. He would be doing injustice to his calling and his privileges if he harbored them.

For these things do not turn out by chance. They are all arranged and directed by a Father omnipotent, whose purpose is one of love. They form part of, and have their place among, the "things" that "work together for good." Good must come out of them in some way, if there be but patience to wait. Many a bitter root belongs to a plant with a glorious blossom and a sweet fruit.

In fact, things are not what they seem, even now. Many a grief is an actual present good, so that a poet can sing of the "sweet uses" of "adversity." In the school of adversity, disappointment is often a most valuable class-room. How it makes the Christian look away from himself upon his heavenly Father! What a lesson is taught there! Does it not often directly bring about a mending of one's ways? Within its poorly lit precincts many a one has learned to say: "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I hearkened to thy word."

And even at the worst, disappointment is not a thing that can last forever. Though May be cloudy and damp and cold, the blossoms must push out, and sunshine in plenty will come in June or later. Fruitage and harvest cannot utterly fail. The keen east wind will not blow forever. Fair southern breezes and bracing currents from the west must set in some time.

Yes, the Christian is king over disappointments. It may get at the outside of him, but it cannot get at his real self; for in the sight of eternity, what thing is long? When the worst comes to the worst, with a grim sort of satisfaction, as superior to ancient stoicism as life is to the mere shadow of life, he can say "Disappointment do thine utmost. By the grace of God thou canst not master my soul, nor vex it utterly. In the end there will be surprises of eternal joy to overbalance the disappointments of the now as the glowing sun in the heavens outweighs a mote in one of its rays."

Therefore, "why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."

God grant us grace, so to take our disappointments, that they may be the lines in the spectrum of life demonstrating for us the presence of realities of joy in the celestial worlds beyond the reach of sin or sorrow to annoy!—The Moravian.

A Consecrated Hand.

Of a large and fashionable church of which I was once a member, two persons stand out from among its vast numbers with great distinctness. One was a very nicely-dressed, gentlemanly-looking young man, an usher and teacher in the Sunday School. The other character was a short, square, substantial-built man of middle years, a deacon, and also a teacher.

"Nothing very striking, so far," do I hear you say? No, that is true. Indeed, there were many in the church not essentially different from these two in the respect mentioned. But in all that vast company of believers I do not

know of but these two who seemed to have consecrated their hands as well as their other powers and talents wholly to the Lord. Be the church ever so crowded, I don't think a stranger often got beyond its portals without a cordial hand-grasp, with a kind-courteous word, from one or both of these persons, that made them feel "welcome." The hand of the humble and poorly dressed received as warm a clasp, aye, warmer, than that of the well-to-do. And I sometimes used to think these simple, but sincere acts, carried more weight to the heart of the stranger in our midst, than the fine sermon or the enrapturing music. They could feel the warm pressure of that hand long after these were forgotten.

In the prayer-room, too, this good deacon and often the young brother, sought the door at the close of the service, and shook hands with a smile, a good word, an inquiry or remark, as the case might suggest, with nearly every one present, and usually there were about three hundred. Their grasp did not grow mechanical or relax either. It was ever sincere and earnest, the hand being propelled or worked by an over-flowing Christian heart.

In Sabbath School, too, they never failed to shake hands with each member of their classes.

Perhaps you do not know what a power to cheer and comfort there is in a Christian hand-shake. You may never have been in a strange city or town, all alone, perhaps with some sorrow or trouble oppressing your soul, with no one to whom you can breathe a word. Ah! then such a warm, heartfelt grasp, even of a stranger's hand, makes you feel akin. How it touches and lifts up your heart. And though we may not feel called upon to do all these two Christians did, let us at least always extend a warm hand to the stranger in our midst, the weak, the humble, the erring and the outcast. Are we teachers in Sunday School, let us give our scholars a cordial hand-grasp every Sabbath. Let us consecrate this right hand of ours to Christ and His service. Has it not been the talent folded in the napkin comparatively useless?

Insufficiency.

Mr. Spurgeon closed a recent sermon as follows:

"Brethren, I am conscious that I have not preached as I ought to have preached this morning. I have been mastered by my subject. I could sit down alone and picture my divine Master on the cross. I delight to do so. It is my comfort to meditate on Him. I see Him hanging on the tree, and carefully survey Him, from His head encircled with the thorns down to His blessed feet, made by the nails to be fountains of crimson blood. I have veiled behind the cross at the marks of the dread scourging which he bore; and then coming to the front, I have gazed upon His pierced hands, and lingered long before that opened side. Then I feel as if I could die of a pleasing grief and mournful joy. O, how I then love and adore! But here before this crowd I am a mere lipser of words—words which fall far below the height of this great argument."

"Ah me! ah me! Who among the sons of men could fitly tell you of His unknown agonies, His piercing anguish His distraction and heart-break? Who can fully interpret that awful cry of 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?'—My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Alone, I can hide my face and bow my head; but, here, what can I—O, Lord what can Thy servant do?"

"Words are but air, and tongues but clay."

"And thy compassions are divine," "I cannot tell of love's bleeding, love's agony, love's death! If the Holy Ghost will graciously come at this time and put me and my words altogether aside, and set my Lord before you, evidently crucified among you, then shall I be content, and you will go home thoughtful, tender, loving, and therefore more deeply happy, more serenely glad, than ever before. The Lord grant it for His name's sake! Amen."

Temperance in The Bible.

Who was the first drunkard? Genesis 9:20, 21.

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

Did anybody mentioned in the Bible ever take a pledge of his own accord? Daniel 1:8.

Was he any healthier and wiser in consequence? Daniel 1:15, 17.

Ought kings to drink wine? Proverbs 31:4.

Ought we to make companions of drunkards? 1 Corinthians 5:11.

Can any drunkard enter the kingdom of heaven? 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

Does God pronounce woe upon drunkards? Isaiah 5:11, 22.

Why has he promised this woe? Isaiah 28:7, 8.

Are drunkards likely to get rich? Proverbs 21:18.

What are the consequences of drinking? Proverbs 23:29, 30.

How may we avoid these consequences? Proverbs 33:31.

What will be the result if we disregard this? Proverbs 23:21.

Is it wise to tamper with strong drink? Proverbs 20:1.

Where was the first temperance society? Jeremiah 30:5, 6.

What blessing did God pronounce upon the first temperance society? Jeremiah 35:17, 18.

Is temperance a vice? Galatians 5:22.

When is temperance a virtue? Galatians 5:22.

Tobacco and opium were not known when the Bible was written, so they are not mentioned by name in the Bible; but is there anything in the Bible that governs all temperance habits? Romans 14:21.—Selected.

The Girl Who Could Not Learn The Multiplication Table.

Children who find the multiplication table very hard to remember will be interested in hearing of a girl who never was able to learn it, and yet was by no means a dunce. Caroline Herschel, the sister of the great astronomer, Sir William Herschel, always had to carry a copy of it with her to refer to when necessary, for she could not remember it. How inconvenient it must have been for her to have to look at a paper every time she wanted to know how much four times nine are or six times twelve, etc. I suppose she must have tried hard to learn it when she was a child in her home in Germany, and I am sure she must after she had grown to be a woman and understood better the need of knowing it. But, if she did not succeed in fixing the multiplication table in her memory, she did learn how to use it, and a great deal else too. She lived to be a very old woman, being ninety-eight at the time of her death and her long life was very useful. She spent fifty years of it in England with her brother William, and shared in his astronomical studies. When he became private astronomer to King George III., she was appointed his assistant. She discovered seven comets, and made some valuable additions to the world's knowledge of astronomy.

Pride.

There are people who are constantly making themselves miserable by thinking over their slights. Some one says something that is indignant upon them, or does something that is intended to humiliate, or fails to pay them as much attention as they believe they are entitled to, and they take it up, brood over it, magnify its importance, pour, sulk, scold, denounce and calumniate, without reason or measure. It is possible, of course, for them to injure some one by it, or to interrupt some good work. But usually they have no effect upon anybody but themselves, except to excite their spirit of meriment and ridicule. Cultivating such a habit produces another equally bad, which is that of looking out for slights, as if with the fixed intention of keeping up a supply of material for the chronic fretting and backbiting. There grows up in the minds of all such people a feeling that whatever any one says not in the line of their thinking is an attack upon them, and they therefore put on the injured air, the martyr countenance, which expresses their sense of calamity. Pride has many ways of sacrificing itself, or rather him that cherishes it, but none of them is more suicidal than this one.—United Presbyterian.

Giving to Christ, Not to Societies.

To the great mass of contributors the blessedness of giving is entirely lost. They are caused or permitted to feel that they contribute to maintain some struggling enterprise of Christian work. They do not give as to the Lord, and therefore regard the act as one of merit. In the benevolent operations of the church we seem largely to overlook the fact that God does not of necessity call upon individual Christians for pecuniary or any other sort of aid in the prosecution of his work upon the earth. He might employ angels to herald his gospel or trace his will upon the heavens in characters of unfading light. If he saw fit he might speak the word, and the unearthed treasures of California would be at his service. He might demand, and the wealth of the world would have to be laid at his feet.—Rev. S. Stail.

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