

A Song in the Tempest.

I dreamed I was lost on a mountain,
In a tempest fierce and wild;
And I cried in my bitter anguish,
"Hath the Father forgotten his child?"
Oh! why am I left to wander
Alone in the pitiless storm,
While others bask in the sunshine
So beautiful, bright and warm?"

Then I heard sweet voices singing
Afar on the mountain's brow,
And the echo of that music
Is with me even now;
"Though some must walk in the shadow
While others dwell in the light,
Yet the Father leadeth his children,
And sunrise follows the night."

I looked toward the mountain summit,
Lo! the first faint gleam of dawn!
Still veiled in mist was the hillside,
But the blackness of night was gone.
The furious storm subsided,
The light on my pathway shone,
And I knew that a loving Father
Was guiding me to my home.

But the day seemed long in coming,
'Twas a perilous road and drear,
Then oft, when my courage faltered,
Rose the echo sweet and clear—
"Though some must walk in the shadow,
While others dwell in the light,
Yet the Father leadeth his children,
And sunrise follows the night."

And I scorned my dismal fancies
And steadily pressed along,
Cheering my weary footsteps
With the memory of that song.
Soon I reached my Father's threshold—
Lo! the radiance o'er me shone;
Kind hands stretched forth in welcome,
Here were light and joy—at home!

LILIAN MAY.

Training A Child To Self-Control.

An inevitable struggle between the individual and the several powers that go to make his individuality, begins in every child at his very birth, and continues so long as his life in the flesh continues. On the outcome of this struggle depends the ultimate character of him who struggles. It is, to him, bondage or misery, defeat or triumph, failure or success, as a result of the battling that cannot be evaded. And as a matter of fact, the issue of life-long battle is ordinarily settled in childhood.

A child who is trained to self-control—as a child may be—is already a true man in his fitness for manly self-mastery. A man who is not trained, in childhood to self-control, is hopelessly a child in his combat with himself; and he can never regain the vantage-ground which his childhood gave to him, in the battle which then opened before him, and in the thick of which he still finds himself. It is a child's earlier struggles with himself that help can easiest be given to him, and that it is of greatest value for his own developing of character. Yet at that time a child has no such sense of his need in this direction as is sure to be in his maturer years; hence it is that it rests with the parent to decide, while the child is still a child, whether the child shall be a slave to himself, or a master of himself; whether his life, so far, shall be worthy or unworthy of his high possibilities of manhood.

A child's first struggles with himself should be in the direction of controlling his impulse to give full play to his lungs and muscles at the prompting of his nerves. As soon as the nerves make themselves felt, they prompt a child to cry, to thrash his arms, to kick, and to twist his body on every side, at the slightest provocation—or at none. Unless this prompting be checked, the child will exhaust himself in aimless exertion, and will increase his own discomfort by the very means of his own exhibit. A control of himself at this point is possible to a child at an age which he is yet unable to speak, or to understand what is spoken to him. If a parent realizes that the child must be induced to control himself, and seeks in loving firmness to cause the child to realize that same truth, the child will feel the parent's convictions, and will yield to it, even though he cannot comprehend the meaning of his parents' words as words. To leave a child to himself, is to put him at a sad disadvantage in all the future combats of his life's warfare; while to give him wise help in these earliest struggles, is to give him help for all following struggles.

As soon as a child is able to understand what is said to him, he ought to be taught and trained to control his impulse to cry and writhe under the pressure of physical pain. When a child has fallen and hurt himself, or has cut his finger, or has burned his hand, or has been hit by an ill-directed missile, it is natural for him to shriek with pain and fright, and it is natural for his ten-

der-hearted mother to shrink from blaming him just then for indulging in this, mother has an unmistakable duty of helping her child to gain a measure of control over himself, so as to repress his cries and to moderate his exhibit of disturbed feeling. A child can exercise self-control under such circumstances. His mother can enable him to do so. It is better for both child and mother that he should have her help accordingly. Because of the lack of help just here many a child is a sufferer through life in his inability to control himself under physical pain. And because of this inability many a person has actually lost his life, at a time when calmness of mind was essential to that endurance of physical suffering which was the only hope of prolonged existence.

Coaxing and rewarding a child into quiet at such a time is not what is needed; but it is the encouraging a child into an intelligent control of himself that is to be aimed at by a wise parent. It is only a choice between evils that substitute a candy-paid silence for a noisy indulgence of feeling on the child's part. A good illustration of the unwise way of inducing children to seem to have control of themselves, is given in the familiar story of the little fellow throwing himself on the floor and kicking and yelling, and then crying out, "Grandma, grandma, I want to be pacified. Where are your sugar-plums?" Dr. Bushnell, protesting against this method of coaxing a child out of a state of irritation, in a fit of ill-nature, by "dainties that please the taste," says forcefully, "It must be a very dull child that will not cry and fret a great deal, when it is so pleasantly rewarded. Trained, in this manner to play ill-nature for sensation's sake, it will go on rapidly, in the course of double attainment, and in the double character of an ill-natured, morbid, sensualist, and a feigning cheat besides." By what methods, or means, can the great themes of God and religion of a soul that has learned governed only by rewards of sensation, paid to affections of grief and deliberate actings of ill nature?

That control of himself which is secured by a child in his intelligent repression of pain, is of advantage to the child in all his life-long struggle with himself; and he should be trained in the habit of making his self-control available to him in this struggle. "I buffet my body [or give it a black eye] and bring it into bondage; lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected," says the apostle Paul; as if in recognition that a man's battle with his body is a vital conflict, all his life through. Every child needs the help of his parents in keeping control of himself. The appetites and passions and impellings of the outer man are continually striving for the mastery over the inner man; and unless one is trained to master these instead of being mastered by them, he is sure to fail in his life struggle.

A parent ought to help his child to refrain from laughing when he ought not to laugh; from crying when he ought not to cry; from speaking when he ought not to speak; from eating that which he ought not to eat, even though the food be immediately before him; from running about when it is better for him to remain quiet; and to remain quiet; and to be ready to say and to do just that which it is best for him to say and do, at the time when it needs to be said and done. Self-control in all these things is possible to a child. Wise training on the parent's part can secure it. And by means of this self-control the child is made happier, and is fitted for his duties in active life, as otherwise he could not be. Many a man's life-course is saddened through his hopeless lack of that self-control to which he could easily have been helped in childhood if only his parents had understood his needs and been faithful accordingly.—*Sunday School Times*.

Benefits of Prayer.

There is a vast difference between praying morning and evening in a stereotyped form of words, or praying, as our needs suggest, "with all supplication in the Spirit," Eph. v. 18. When we actually fly to prayer as our only help in trouble, our only guide in perplexity, or are urged to the throne of grace by some peculiar or unexpected blessing, to pour out our hearts in thanksgiving—then we know what is true prayer, and feel the force of Cowper's words in speaking of the mercy-seat—

But who that knows the worth of prayer

But wishes to be often there?

And one who has had this experience will have probably noted many blessed effects from his frequent communion with the Highest and Holiest one. Let us recall a few that are most apparent.

We become more acquainted with our own state and needs by frequently bringing them to the throne of grace. If one going a journey puts

off preparation to the last hour, he is overwhelmed with his manifold necessities, and so will it be with us if we do not take time for meditation and prayer, the nearness of eternity will show us that we are poor and miserable, when we ought to be rich in faith and love.

Again as we pray for forgiveness of sin, we are reminded of the divine law, which we have either neglected or transgressed. How little studied is that law, as it runs through both the Old and New Testament! And can we pray sincerely for forgiveness without making effort to forsake sin? No, frequently going into the presence of a holy God inspires reverence and hatred of sin—for even the companionship of the good on earth has this effect to some extent. We will either leave their company or leave off what they hate. How much more will communion with a holy God through the quickening spirit affect us. One special injunction regarding prayer is mentioned in the Scriptures, to remember others, to pray for all mankind. Intercessory prayer has its peculiar benefits. It draws out our affections to others, it naturally leads us to efforts to do them good. Ways and means of benefiting others are wonderfully opened up when preceded and followed by prayer for them. It disposes us to be more lenient towards them, and as we pray for their infirmities we are reminded of our own, which we are too apt to forget or excuse. Then as to the promises, how precious they become, as we plead them in prayer. We then receive the full value of those "cheques on the bank of faith," as Spurgeon names them.

However frequent may be our occasional prayers, stated seasons of devotion should never be omitted. But we should use every means to make these true heart-worship, not formal services. To conclude, the benefits of prayer cannot be summed up more concisely or more beautifully than in the words of Trench.

What a change within, one short hour,
Spent in Thy presence, will avail to make;
What heavy burdens from our bosom take;
What parched grounds refreshed as with a shower.
We kneel and all around us seems to lower,
We rise, and all—the distant and the near,
Stand out, in sunny outline, brave and clear.
We kneel, how weak! we rise how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong?
Or others, that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak and heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage, all with Thee.
—*Illustrated Christian Weekly*.

Waste.

When Mary anointed the Lord with the precious ointment Judas and others also looked upon what she did as a waste. It might have been sold for a large sum, which given to the poor, would have accomplished great good. So thought the disciples; but Jesus Himself did not sympathize with this view. They would have other opportunities for showing kindness to the poor, but they would not have Jesus with them always. Mary, perhaps, wrought better than she knew. She meant to manifest her love to Jesus, but not only did that, but at the same time performed a needful service that would be spoken of to her honor throughout the whole world.

If Mary had expended the precious ointment on our Lord to attract attention to herself, or to gratify a feeling of pride, the Master would not have commended her. She made a costly sacrifice to honour her Lord. Love for Jesus moved her to the act. The manner in which she approaches Him at the time and all the circumstances show her humility and affection for her Lord.

It was the spirit with which her act was performed that lifted it to the highest plane of noble doing. Many a one has seemed to make a costly sacrifice in the interests of religion, but not acting from a right impulse, not having supreme regard to the honour of Jesus, what was done, though highly esteemed by men, was an abomination in the sight of our God.

Money may be now expended in ways which to some seem to be a waste, which are not waste, no more than was Mary's expenditure of the costly ointment on the person of Jesus. Money given to build churches, to send the Bibles over the world, to evangelize the ignorant masses, and lead souls to Christ, if laid upon the altar with Mary's spirit, will always be esteemed a good work by Him who never errs in judgment and never applauds a wrong act.

But while this is all true, is there not much money expended in building costly churches and cathedrals which may be regarded as waste?

We all love beautiful, comfortable churches, and we can have them too without an extravagant expenditure of money and can give it in the spirit of true Christian beneficence, to build a costly and beautiful house in which to worship the great God. But when we hear of a congregation or an individual erecting a church costing half a million or more, we cannot but feel that it would be far better, more pleasing and honouring to Christ himself, to expend the one fourth of that amount, or less, on a single church, which would be enough to erect a large and beautiful house of worship in any part of our country, leaving three or four thousand, which would build a hundred substantial and comfortable chapels and mission churches, in which to gather that vast multitude who never enter a church, because they will not go to one of those magnificent temples built by and for the rich, and where, if they did go, they would probably not find a welcome.

A sensible and conscientious farmer who has wealth, and is as liberal as he is wealthy, recently said to the writer that no farmer would house part of his flock in the most expensive manner possible, and leave the greater part unprovided for, and exposed to the winter's cold and storms. If it would be inexcusable folly to do so, what shall be said of the wisdom and piety of that people who build for themselves "ceiled houses" in which to worship, and do nothing to provide even a tent for the needy and destitute, whom we have always with us!—*United Presbyterian*.

Advice To Young Ministers.

1 Let me say to every young brother, If you expect to have an active church you must be a wide-awake, industrious man yourself. An idle pastor makes an idle church. 2 It is vitally important for you, in the next place, to develop the activity of your members and to direct them into fields of usefulness. There is a vast amount of latent power in most of our congregations; and in large churches there is a tendency to say: "Oh, you have enough to do the work without me." As small farms are usually the best tilled, so small churches are often the best worked.

3 Keep your eye on all the operations of the church, not to do the elder's work, or the Sunday-school superintendent's work, but to see that they do it. A meddling minister may be as mischievous as an idle one, yet over-sight and wise counsel are your prerogative. 4 Drive every wheel in your machinery to its utmost power, but don't have more wheels than power. Widen your activities as fast as you have men and money to propel them.

Finally, keep Christ in the foreground. Come to your flock every Sabbath with Jesus in your heart and Jesus on your tongue. The only permanent power that can propel any church is the power from on high, and that church which is mighty in prayer is the one that is always mighty in work.—*Dr. T. L. Cuyler*.

LOANING BOOKS.—Many persons would most gladly loan a choice book, rejoicing in the privilege of letting others share with them in the good thing it contains—if it were not for the suspicion, born of experience, that the book might never find its way home again. Still, we would be the last to discourage the generous habit. If that loaned book does not come back, wait for it. A friend out west writes that he has just had returned to him by mail, from seven hundred miles distant, a book which he had loaned twenty-four years ago. The borrower died many years ago, but among some old books left to his son it was at last found and returned.—*Advance*.

There is no writer that shall not perish; but what his hand hath written endureth ever. Write, therefore, nothing but what will please thee when thou shalt see it in the day of resurrection.—*Arab Sayings*.

Between heaven and earth hangs a great mirror, crystal-clear, upon which the unseen world casts its mighty images; but only the pure, child-like eye can behold them.—*Richter*.

In speaking of the Spirit, Christ uses the simile of the wind. You know the wind always blows towards vacuum. If we can make a vacuum in our hearts the Holy Spirit will fill them.—*Dr. A. J. Gordon*.

"The proper study of mankind is man." If true, the best place to study man is in your heart. You need have little hope of knowing what others are until you thoroughly understand yourself. When you know what and from whence come the motives that control your life, and discover the hidden springs of your conduct, then, if you have received power from God you will have power with men.

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