

Speak It Now.

How much would I care for it, could I know
That when I am under the grass or snow,
The raveled garment of life's brief day
Folded and quietly laid away,
The spirit let loose from mortal bars,
And somewhere away among the stars,
How much do you think it would matter
Then?

What praise was lavished upon me, when
Whatever might be its stint or store,
If neither could help nor harm me more?

If midst of my toll, they had but
To stretch a finger, I would have caught
Gladly such aid, to bear me through
Some bitter duty I had to do;
And when it was done, had I but heard
One breath of applause, one cheering
word—

One cry of "Courage!" amid the strife,
So weighted for me with death or life—
How would it have nerved my soul to
strain
Through the whirl of the coming surge
again!

What use for the rope, if it be not flung
Till the swimmer's grasp to the rock has
clung?

What help in a comrade's bugle-blast
When the peril of Alpine heights is past?
What need the spurring paeon roll
When the runner is safe beyond the goal?
What worth is eulogy's blandest breath
When whispered in ears that are hushed
in death?

No! no! If you have but a word of cheer,
Speak it while I am alive to hear.

Margaret Preston.

In Country Places.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

"Have you ever held meetings in the school-houses about town, in the various districts?" asked Parson French, who had left his large village church for a few days while he went out into the country to help his friend and classmate, John Webb, who was pastor of the little church there, and who was now taking his very welcome visitor for a drive over the rather rough but picturesque township.

"No, I made up my mind there would be little use in it," said the pastor. "If people wanted to attend religious services they would come to church. There is nothing to hinder them, and they very well know they are always welcome."

"Nothing to hinder them, only their minds have not been turned in that direction. Do the majority of the people living in these dwelling houses we are passing attend your church?"

"Oh, by no means."

"Then why not call at the houses and invite them to come up to the extra meeting we are to hold?"

"It would do no good. They would not stir a step. They are crusted over with a lazy indifference as to religious matters; in fact, they are rather inimical to our little church and its handful of worshippers."

"Very well, but here is a school-house. Let us call at the dwellings as we go along and tell the folks that a service of one hour will be held every afternoon in their school-house, and ask them to kindly encourage us with their presence."

"All right, but it will be seed sown in stony places indeed," with an expressive nod towards the masses of stones and boulders by the road side and in the adjoining fields. "Stony hearts, stony, hard-working land in this my poor little parish! I don't know but I should settle down myself into the same indifference were I in the place of some of these hard-working, discontented farmers."

"I appreciate the situation, I assure you, but rather let us call it sowing seed by the wayside, and we will have faith that some time it will take root in some heart."

"Brother French is determined to hold services every afternoon in the Brush Hill school house," confided pastor Webb to his wife, "and we shall have to start early and carry kindlings and make the fire ourselves, I have no doubt."

"I'm very glad, I will get a basket of kindlings ready, and I will go with you, if I can get Mrs. Oldershaw to stay with the children."

"Oh, you need not trouble to go, dear. The meeting won't amount to anything, any way," but the bright-faced, warm-hearted little woman thought differently, and as soon as the two ministerial brethren started off in the buggy she put on her ulster, ran across to her neighbor and told her the situation of affairs.

"To be sure, I will care for the children," said the pleasant old lady. "I am greatly interested in that school district. I was born there, and I have often wished the old-fashioned of holding school-house meetings in our town would come round again. I could give you quite a long list of names of boys and young men, farmers' sons, who received their first impressions for good in that old school-house, and who are now pillars in the large churches of our neighboring villages and cities. Yes, go right along. This is my appointed way, even in doing this trivial office, in helping on the precious cause. The walk in

this bracing air will do you good and on your way ask my niece, Martha Swan, to go with you."

This last suggestion was acted on, and the two women, fresh and rosy from their walk, astonished the few Brush Hill people who had gathered, as well as the two ministers, by walking in upon them just as the service began.

The two pastors and the two devoted sisters sang and prayed and talked, and after the formal meeting was over, chatted pleasantly with everybody and personally asked them to come to church and Sunday-school.

"I used to go to meeting and Sunday-school when I was a child," said a bright, handsome young woman, whom neither pastor Webb nor his wife had ever seen before, although they had been settled in town over a year, "but since my husband bought this farm I have never been out anywhere much. There is a good deal for me to attend to, and I am not much acquainted—and the fact is we don't seem to get started to go to church on Sundays. I know we ought to go for the sake of the children, if nothing more."

Every afternoon through the week the woman was present at the meeting and deeply interested, and at the last service, on the Saturday afternoon, she expressed, in a very modest, touching manner, her determination to enter upon a higher plane of life, in accordance with the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"What do you think our minister has been doing?" whispered one of the members of Pastor Webb's church to a friend while warming her feet at the register as the last bell was ringing on Sunday morning. "He has been holding meetings at Brush Hill!"

"The idea! What good will it do? He'd a great deal better stay at home and mind his immediate affairs. I thought he didn't believe in such kind of work."

"That minister friend of his put him up to it, that was out here from—stayed a week—Oh, who is that? What a pretty woman, and what nice-looking children! They must be visitors in town."

Presently Pastor Webb went over and spoke to them and immediately introduced them to the two sisters who had been holding the whispered converse.

"What, you live on the Carey farm? We didn't know there was a family there. It is a long, cold ride for you to come up here to church."

"Oh, we are not cold. We walked. We thought if the minister's wife could walk down there to the meetings, we could come to church just as well. It is no farther one way than the other," with a pleasant smile.

"In all probability she won't come again," said one of the two women to the other, as they separated to take their respective seats. But from that time on she, with her children, became regular attendants at church, both in fine weather and in foul weather. She united with the church and was most faithful in every line of duty. A good opportunity offering, the farm was rented and the family moved to a factory village in the township. The woman is at the head of the large, tidy boarding-house, the young people are all fond of her, and her influence on them is most wholesome. The congregations attending the religious services held in the hall on Sunday mornings, the groups of Sunday-school children in attendance in the afternoon, and the company who gather at the weekly prayer-meeting have been augmented not a little through her salutary example as a Christian worker and her cheerful, winsome ways in her large, well-ordered home.

Thus one of the good seeds sown by that country wayside has sprung up and continues its beneficent growth, bearing precious fruit. Is not this one way of solving the reiterated topic at our stated public religious gatherings, "What is to become of our weak country churches?"—devoted work on the part of those who are set over them, as well as faithful co-operation of members of the little flocks. Has the old-time country pastor, oftentimes the peer of his city contemporary in the pulpit and with the pen disappeared forever!—Chicago Standard.

Somebody's Husband.

Very many of the magazines and newspapers now-a-days are so clogged up with "advice to women" that expert readers learn to skip all such paragraphs with the same agility developed in skipping the advertisements of patent medicines. In taking note of the needs of humanity, however, I have discovered one little plot of ground hitherto uncultivated by the moral adviser. We hear enough about the training that ought to be given our girls so that they may be prepared for wifehood and motherhood. I would like to suggest to those having charge of children that they train up the boys in husbandhood and fatherhood.

I have heard parents without number talk over the future of their boys as doctors, lawyers and merchants, but I have heard very few devote much time or thought to the question of what kind of a husband or father their boy would be likely to make.

It is certainly strange that there are so many bad husbands when the mother is supposed to have the training of the children, at least during the early and most impressive years. It is strange that women, who know often by sad experience just how many and great trials come to every home circle, and know, also, how the patient forbearance and gentle loving sympathy of the head of the household would tide over the difficulty, should not teach their sons, as a very first lesson, the principles of good husbandship.

Some people seem to think that good husbands, like blackberries down South, grow wild and "thout any rasin," but I tell you it takes a good deal of "rasin" to bring up a husband in the way he should go, and too often the bloom and sweetness of married life is lost in the process.

Some people, again, consider that all that is necessary to the making of a good husband is that he shall be sober and industrious. But there are a good many little things beside which go to the making of a good husband, and the woman who gets hold of a bad one soon discovers this fact.

The greater part of domestic unhappiness hinges on the small things of life. This is not a new thought by any means, but it is more common to suppose that these little things are the small omissions and commissions of the wife. Women are advised not to scold, not to fret, not to sulk, not to forget to put on a clean collar in the morning, not to forget to bang their hair, not to forget the buttons, and to be sure that the coffee is not muddy; but how about the does and don'ts on the other side? Wouldn't it be just as well to say to the husband, "Don't go home with your brow twisted in a Gordian knot and your voice like a rasping saw; don't forget that a woman, even though she be your wife, does not want an unkempt sloven hanging around the house at odd hours; don't forget that a woman, even though she be a wife, does not like to have her ears polluted by language which the dictates of polite society forbid a man to use in public; don't forget that a woman, even though she be a wife, does not admire stinginess, gluttony or vulgarity in the man whom she has promised to honor and obey."

Too often men forget that the mere assumption of wifely duties does not destroy a single womanly trait. Wifehood and motherhood develop all that is sweet and womanly, they destroy nothing. How many white-souled women, do you suppose, hide in their hearts the dead ideals which they loved, while day by day the empty semblance of those ideals mocks their sight?

If a girl needs to be well trained that she may nobly fulfil her duty as somebody's wife some day, does not a boy need yet more to be trained and disciplined that he may worthily fulfil the responsible duties which some day devolve on him as somebody's husband.—Union Signal.

Bringing Up.

"No device has ever been invented that will take the place of being brought up."

So pithily said one of our prominent city divines in a recent sermon. And the saying is worthy to be framed and hung up where every day it may come under the eye of the mother. Bringing up is a matter of day by day, week by week, year by year. It is a matter of social and moral atmospheres; it is a matter of example far more than precept. Right habits must be formed, vicious tendencies checked, high principles implanted, noble impulses fostered, healthy appetites gratified and encouraged. Who is sufficient for these things?

We do not expect a fountain to rise higher than its source, and ought we expect children to surpass their parents in essential nobility and worth? They may in consequence of better advantages than their parents in some things, move farther on along the lines that reach upward and onward.

The parent who would bring up his child aright must begin with himself, must be, so far as it is in his power, what he wants his child to be, must so lay the tracks along which he wishes his child to move and adjust the grades he is to climb, so that the tender feet may easily advance along the chosen way, holding the parental voice, strengthened by the parental example and companionship.

Those parents who make companions of their children, who enter into their sports, their enthusiasms, their ambitions, their hopes, their enterprises, are most successful in giving their children a good bringing up.

May we not congratulate the

mothers who are compelled to bring up their own children instead of trusting them to the tender mercies of a hired nurse? A lady who spends a part of every fine day in Central Park says she can tell by the face of a child before she glances at its attendant whether the latter is its mother or not. The mothered child has a serene and happy look, wanting in the face of the nurse-attended child. In its tenderest and most plastic years it is molded and formed by the untried hand of maternal love and devotion.

"My mother has made life easy for me by the habits she formed in me in my childhood," said an old lady yesterday. "She taught me never to put anything out of my hand without putting it in place. She taught me that 'the right way is the best way and the easiest way.' She abhorred deceit, lying in every shape, company manners, dishonesty, debt, dirt, bad grammar, backbiting, idleness, extravagance, meddling. She loved knowledge, virtue, honor, integrity, honest toil, humanity, the church, the cause of Christ. Her ways were ways of peace."

A good bringing up is a better investment for a child than any amount of money in bank, and the best thing about it is that parents who can put no money in bank can give their children this priceless endowment, and send them out into the world to make their own way, with no capital beyond a good bringing up.

The Thrifty Housekeeper.

She takes note of the kitchen fire, and closes up the dampers when she is not using it, and makes one fire do all the work it will at once. She saves her nice "drippings," and makes them serve in cooking instead of butter. She saves all the odds and ends of bread and meat left over from meals, and works them up into appetizing and nutritious dishes, instead of throwing them away. Her clothing she keeps clean by the use of aprons; she has suits of clothes suitable for dirty work. She "turns" her sheets when they grow thin in the middle. Her worn table-cloths are cut up into napkins for everyday use. She keeps rugs spread over places in the carpet that are subjected to the hardest wear. She carefully dries her tinware so it will not rust out. She keeps her old brooms for rough use, and so prolongs the term of service of her best broom. She uses up her worn garments in making quilts and comforts, or in rugs and rag-carpets, and so in a thousand ways she saves what, if wasted, would be pure loss, and do nobody any good.

A millionaire was riding not long ago on a horse-car. A cart laden with bricks passing along dropped one in the street. The millionaire got off the car, ran and picked up the brick, and carried it in his hands to some houses he was building up town. "Every brick," said he to a friend who was with him, "costs me a cent and a half apiece." His millions he had accumulated by saving little, and more than one charitable institution has been endowed by his savings.

Of the thrifty housekeeper the saying is never true: "A woman can throw out with a spoon faster than a man can throw in with a shovel."

Be not anxious about to-morrow. Do to-day's only; fight to-day's temptation; and do not weaken and distract yourself by looking forward to things you cannot see, and could not understand if you saw them. Enough for you that God is just and merciful, and will reward every man according to his work.—Charles Kingsley.

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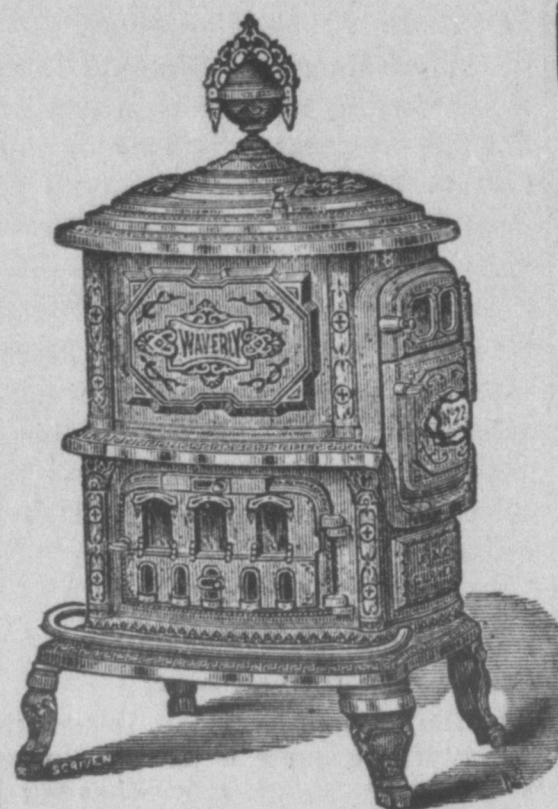
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