

A Lesson for Laggards.

You think of taking a journey some day;
You have talked it over for years and years;
Yet somehow or other you make delay,
Until farther and farther away appears
The beautiful goal; and I tell you now
To bind yourself by a solemn vow
To cross the Rubicon. Pluck up heart!
For you'll never get there unless you start.

There looms before you from day to day
A task that you dread to undertake;
So it hangs like a cloud upon your way
Through which the sunshine can never break.
And I tell you now that the better plan
Is to do the work as quick as you can;
Over the fears a victory win,
For you'll never get through if you don't begin.

With the bravest and busiest keep abreast,
Nor through love of indolence lose your place,
For in each endeavor to do your best
You raise the hopes of the human race.
Be not content to grovel below,
But rise to your duties with face aglow!
Let your aims be high, and strive to excel;
For he who does better must first do well!

The heart that gives way to its doubts and fears,
That idly dreams when there's work to do,
Will find itself, before many years,
Begged and bankrupt through and through.
There are journeys to take and tasks to be done
From early morn till set of sun,
And triumph to win, as none can deny;
And you'll never succeed unless you try!

How Will Backslid.

Will was sixteen. His besetting sins were anger and profanity. His companions shuddered at times, so thickly besprinkled was his conversation with oaths. His younger brothers, and sometimes even his widowed mother, felt the force of his anger.

Union revival services were being held in the village churches. On the mountain-side that overlooked the town, one afternoon, Will thought: "I ought to be a better boy, a better playmate, a better brother, a better son." He had thought this often before, but nothing came of it. Now he thought on, and said to himself: "I will go to meeting to-night, and when the invitation is given I will rise for prayers."

Will's mother was a Christian; many mornings he had been awakened by her voice pleading with God for his conversion. He went to meeting, rose for prayers, went forward, was prayed with, was sweetly converted, and became a better boy. Anger was controlled; profanity ceased instantly.

The meetings continued. Will went every night, and all day Sunday—two preaching services, Sunday school, special prayer meetings, and regular Sunday evening union services.

His sister gave him a Bible, but he did not read it much. It was to him a large book; he did not know where to commence in it; no one volunteered to tell him; he asked no one. He lived on the meetings. The hearty singing, the many testimonies, the fervent prayers, night after night, fed him, stimulated him. School and work by day gave him little time for Bible study or secret prayer. He prayed at night on retiring, and in the mornings when he arose.

Suddenly the special union meetings ceased; the churches went back to their separate places of worship; the meetings lost the enthusiasm of numbers and revival fire. Will had been using crutches, and did not know it. He was attached to the meetings; they were his life; he had not personally attached himself to "The Vine" as a branch, and learned to take his life directly from "The Vine." He fed on God through the meetings alone.

He joined the class, but did not attend regularly. He went to work in the mill; this, with home duties, made him excuse himself from the week evening meetings. His Bible continued to be an unknown, unopened book. No one told him the importance of a daily study of this word of God. His associates in the mill were profane boys. He still prayed, but it was more from habit and a sense of duty than from delight in communion with God. His work during the week gave occasion for an excuse to stay at home Sunday to rest. Then, as he of necessity arose early and dearly loved sleep, he allowed sleep to encroach upon the time for morning prayer. Soon he prayed while he dressed, then while running down stairs, finally not at all. The old anger began to appear as the meetings and prayer were neglected. Will's townsmen and associates knew he had commenced to be a Christian, and this fact for a time stimulated him to an outward maintenance of Christian deportment and helped to deceive even himself. He was drifting into the old path, and did not know it. One day something provoked him, and an oath slipped from his lips, and Will awoke to find himself a backslider.

Finding his life in the special meetings, and not in a personal Christ, was Will's first mistake. How many make it! Neglecting a daily prayerful study of God's word and frequent communion with God in secret prayer led him to neglect the public means of grace and to return after a little to the world.

A few years later, after much exceedingly bitter experience and many struggles, Will returned to his Father's house to abide.—*Advocate.*

Husband and Wife.

Some of the saddest tragedies of life are never reported to the public. They are not in the sudden agony of a great calamity breaking in upon an equable life; they are in the prolonged sorrow of a great heart hunger, ending in the starvation of the soul. The horror of death by an electric bolt falling out of a clear sky is not comparable to that of death in the desert, each day bringing with it a new hope of a spring to be discovered, each night bringing a new disappointment.

Some letters come to us occasionally from such love-famished souls, hinting at an untellable story of a heart not broken by a sudden blow, but drained of its life-blood drop by drop. They come oftenest from wives; sometimes from mothers; rarely from husbands or fathers. Is this because men are less subject to such heart sorrows, because love and love's losses both mean less to them? Or is it because of a public sentiment that man may live without love and find his heart hunger alleviated, if not satisfied, by his ambition, while an unloved woman is as much an object of pity as a loveless woman is of horror? And so an unloved woman receives sympathy, but an unloved man only ridicule? However this may be, we are inclined to believe that, if men were as able to understand their own poverty and as able to interpret it, the pathetic cry of a great love hunger would be heard as often from the one sex as from the other.

We may point out what is one of the commonest causes of that gradual separation of husband and wife which either leaves each immured in a kind of solitary cell or sends them both to seek elsewhere that companionship which the ruptured home fails to afford. Such separation is often due to the failure of one or both to comprehend that in the best and happiest married life each supplements—does not duplicate—the other, and the resultant failure to learn how to agree in disagreement. The husband is sanguine, and is irritated by his wife's less hopeful temperament perpetually casting a shadow across his sunny path; the wife is enterprising and energetic, and is vexed by her husband's slower and more cautious spirit. He is fond of society and she of home, and either one takes up a cross, or both take it up alternately, or they separate and he goes to seek in a club the society which she neither wants herself nor can see need of for her husband. She is country-bred, and the buzz and bustle of the city are wearisome to her; she loves the babble of the brook and the whisper of the trees, and likes to be awakened by the grove songs of the birds: to him, town-bred, the country is all one dull monotone; nature is meaningless and humanity full of meaning, and the one endures the city through ten months and the other the country for two, each unable to comprehend the other's taste and therefore impatient of it.

But these divergencies of temperament, rightly taken, may bind husband and wife together in a deeper and more unifying love than if they were of one mind. Some of the happiest comparisons we have ever known have grown out of interlocking of just such contrasted natures. Whether such divergencies shall tend to perpetual friction or to perpetual peace depends almost wholly upon the question whether each attempts to adapt himself to his companion, or each endeavors to adapt his companion to himself. Let the sanguine husband recognize the fact that hopes are often illusive, and that in a perfect character the great hopefulness is matched and sobered by a great restraining caution, and since this balance is not in him, thankfully accepts it in his wife; and her perpetual fears will add to her value and her charm and enhance his love and his respect. Let the energetic and enterprising wife reflect that "more speed, less haste" is often a true motto; that patience wins many a race which mere enterprise loses; and her husband's conservatism will win her respect, as her enterprise will command his admiration, and dash and deliberation combined will do more for their common life than either could do without the other. Let the country girl be sure that there is a charm in humanity which she has yet to discern, and let her learn from her husband what it is, and catch from him the power of enjoying it so that she shall no

longer endure the town for his sake but enjoy it with him; then, when midsummer comes, she will find, perhaps, that he will be more ready to respect the power in his wife, lacking in himself, of finding happiness in the simpler and quieter ministry of the country, and, respecting her power, will be glad to acquire it under her tuition. It always seems easier to make over one's companion than one's self; it always is easier to make over one's self than one's companion. The greater the difference between husband and wife, the better for both, and the happier their conjoint life, and the deeper the love that will bind them together, and the more absolute and enduring the unity, provided each has humility to recognize his own defects and respect for the compensating qualities in the other. Only he knows how truly to love who loves his opposite. He who loves in others only the reflection of himself exercises only a subtle self-love.

Try the experiment of cultivating an admiring respect for the qualities which heretofore you have done nothing but criticize, and see what is the effect.—*Christian Union.*

Small Dishonesties: To Young Men and Women.

Were it not for the fact that men and women of very high character are thoughtlessly guilty of small dishonesties, it might seem an affront to the maturity of character of college students to bring such a subject before them. Many very good people seem to think it nothing wrong to cheat a corporation. If a railroad conductor fails to take up a ticket, many a man will use it for another ride. He would be astonished to be called a thief; but that is his name. He wouldn't break into a ticket office and take a ticket, but he will keep one that he has no more right to use than he would have to use so stolen. A ticket represents a ride of a certain distance; when that has been had, the ticket is a cancelled obligation as much as a promissory note that has been paid. To ride on it again is just as bad as it would be to present such a note for another payment because a receipt had been accidentally lost, or on any other technicality. The conductor is not to play policeman to the traveler's convenience. It is only simple justice to recognize that the lapse of morality is due not to deliberate thieving, but to mere, though not blameless, thoughtlessness. True, in many cases, if one is scrupulous about such matters, he will be "laughed to scorn," by the railroad officials, who are not accustomed to such scrupulous honesty. But that makes no difference to the honest man. What other people do or think in these respects is not the measure of his honor.

A man of the most sterling honor and honesty told me lately that, coming back from Europe once, he had a very fine shawl that he was bringing as a present to a friend. As they neared New York, he was debating whether he should not ask some lady acquaintance to throw it over her shoulders, "just to keep her warm till she got to the hotel" (worn garments are not subject to custom duties). When he "came to himself" the next morning, he saw that there was only one possible course for an honest man—to pay the duty. The other course, which probably three-fourths of the people aboard would not have hesitated to take, would have been stealing from the United States Government the amount of the duty. The fact that they would not look upon the transaction in this way doubtless modifies the guiltiness; but the name for it would be stealing, and nothing else could be made out of it.

A business man told me this incident: His firm employed a certain young man at a good salary and "his traveling expenses." In one monthly report of work and expenses was a charge of fifty cents for a dinner on a certain day. The fact was that he was with a friend, and had paid nothing. He is now almost begging to work for the same firm at half his former salary. That item of fifty cents cost him his position. He might have argued that his friend's courtesy was extended to himself and not to his employers. There is a certain specious reasonableness in that. But it fails here: it was not such an identification of his interests with those of his employers as they wanted to see. Had he been a member of the firm, he would not have thought of making such a charge among his traveling expenses; neither should he when their agent.

How about little dishonesties of the class room, the little frauds practiced on class-mate or instructor, the pretence to faithfulness or knowledge that does not exist? Drag these things out into the light of day, and be you judges of them. I am willing to abide by your decision.

O, but these things, seemingly so small, do so awfully make or mar our eternal character. No, no, they are not small. There are no words to express how big they are in the

time when character is being moulded.

Take this matter into a higher sphere where is something for us all. There are many small intellectual dishonesties. Any tendency in scientific or philosophical studies to see or state things by a hair's breadth different from what they are, any disposition to think untruly, unless fought against and conquered, leads to intellectual predilection.

Greater yet is the danger in moral and spiritual life, of any shadow of dishonesty. What can God do with or for any soul that is not honest? Any pretence to experience that is not real, any expression of conviction that is not true clear through, is rotten stone built into the foundations of the fair temple of character. The earlier it comes out, the less of the temple needs to come down with it.—*The Golden Rule.*

Plenty of Money.

"I should be entirely happy if I had only plenty of money. It would make me good-tempered, too, and everything that is charming. But this everlasting struggle with poverty is wearing me out."

"How much money would you regard as enough to work these delightful changes in your life?" enquired a friend of the first speaker, who was a young wife, ironing her baby's petticoats in a hot kitchen, while she passed now and again from her table and her basket of folded garments to the cradle, where her pretty rosy boy laughed and cooed.

"A queen couldn't show a finer baby," said her friend. "What a superb little fellow he is!"

"Yes," said the mother, "but when he is older he will need shoes and stockings faster than we can buy them, and he must go to school, and there will be endless expenses, and we are so poor, Carrie, you don't know! Then Roger is not strong, and he may break down altogether. What would I consider plenty of money? Why, to be sure, enough to live on in comfort, without anxiety; enough to pay for necessities and a few luxuries, and to have a little margin left over for a rainy day. My ideas are moderate."

"Did it ever occur to you that ideas expand with the means to gratify them, and that if you had four, or ten, or twenty times as large an income as you have at present, you might still be hampered and not have enough?"

"I know what you mean, but it isn't my case," said the young wife, taking up the baby. "One does get so weary of cutting and contriving, of working and saving! And children consume so much of one's time and strength!"

"Yet you wouldn't part with the baby?"

"Part with him? Not for all the money in the wide world! Money couldn't buy this boy!"

After all, there are rich women who have not plenty of money.

THE TRUE LIFE is not thinking or dreaming, but doing. To wait for great opportunities, which may never come, is to miss the little within our reach. For as surely as the house is built brick upon brick and stone upon stone, so the little deeds, the daily trifles, the apparently ordinary actions, comprise in their aggregate human life and human achievement.

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1880	141,402.81	911,132.93	3,881,478.09
1882	254,841.73	1,073,577.94	5,849,889.1
1884	278,378.65	1,274,397.24	6,844,404.04
1885	319,987.05	1,411,004.38	7,030,878.77
1886	373,500.31	1,673,027.16	9,413,358.07
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