

### "Cumbered About Much Serving."

(Luke 10: 40-42.)

Christ never asks of us such heavy labor  
As leaves no time for resting at his feet;  
The waiting attitude of expectation  
He oftentimes counts a service most complete.

He sometimes wants our ear, our rapt attention,  
That he some sweetest secret may impart;  
'Tis always in the time of deepest stillness  
That heart finds deepest fellowship with heart.

We sometimes wonder why our Lord doth place us  
Within a sphere so narrow, so obscure  
That nothing we call work can find an entrance;  
There's only room to suffer, to endure!

Well, God loves patience! Souls that dwell in stillness,  
Doing the little things or resting quite,  
May just as perfectly fulfill their mission,  
Be just as useful in the Father's sight.

As they who grapple with some giant evil;  
Clearing a path that every eye may see,  
Our Saviour cares for cheerful acquiescence  
Rather than for a busy ministry.

And yet he does love service, where 'tis given  
By grateful love that clothes itself in deed;  
But work that's done beneath the scourge of duty,  
Be sure to such he gives but little heed.

Then seek to please him, whatever he bids thee,  
Whether to do, to suffer, or to lie still;  
'Twill matter little by which path he led us,  
If in it all we sought to do his will.

### The Great Choice.

BY ARCHDEACON FARRAR, D. D.

A charming American writer has told the story of his first conscious wrong-doing. It was a very small matter—only a petulant answer, to one who loved him, about something which had occurred that day at school, under circumstances which made the answer especially unworthy. He stole away, and the first battle of his life was lost. It caused him, he says, an agony of remorse, because it was then that he first consciously turned his back on duty, and took sin by the hand. "I no longer," he says, "consider that sin, or any other childish sin, infinite, but infinitely finite; yet how often have I had reason in after-life to exclaim, 'Oh, that I had but won that battle!' Well might he say so; well might every human soul repeat that cry, 'Oh, that I had but won that battle!' For it is the little deeds of first wrong-doing, it is the first steps which pass the boundary of prohibition towards the edge of the precipice, it is the first exhibitions of evil daring in defiance of the admonitions of the conscience, which determine the choice, which sway the bias of the life.

Just as there are natural water-sheds where a breath of air, or the flutter of a bird's wing, decides whether a particular raindrop shall find its way to the torrid Gulf of Mexico or to the frozen gulf of St. Lawrence, so life has its water-sheds which determine the flow and destiny of its river. The divergence of the two lines of an angle may seem to be infinitesimal, but continue those lines, and they become an infinite separation.

Two lads stand side by side at school, two youths sit at the same desk in an office, two men are running, under apparently identical circumstances, the same career; each on one day, and perhaps in the very same hour, has to confront a temptation. The one resists, the other yields. No immediate result seems to follow; perhaps for long years no ostensible difference is visible to the world, yet all the while the evil is working in the one mind. The one has left the reins of the chariot in the strong grasp of reason, and the chariot wheels of his life are rolling onwards in even motion with the will of Heaven. The other has flung the reins loose on the neck of appetite, and the wild steeds of passion are speeding down hillwards towards the abyss; and then, perhaps long years afterwards, the hour of temptation is succeeded by the one hour of defection, by the one hour of disgrace, by the one hour of utter disaster and overthrow, by the one hour when some deeper and deadlier sin shows the man what all along he has been—like Esau, who for one mess of pottage sold his birthright, and for the first time forty years afterwards learned the full meaning and misery of his sin. It is even so with many a sinner who, seeing the awful misery of his infatuation, with an exceeding great and bitter cry, too late as regards this world, sits down, a shamed and miserable man, in the total ruins of his life.

Only consider what it is that a man has done when, in spite of the warnings of conscience, and in spite of every

beneficent influence over his past life, he wilfully makes the evil choice. It is not only for that moment he leaves the guidance of his destiny to the unspiritual god Circumstance, but, breaking the law in one point, he practically breaks it in all, because in his own person he has despised and defied the majestic supremacy of eternal ordinances.

It is not only for that moment he has darkened his own conscience, and blunted the edge of his moral sense, but he has rudely thrust conscience from her throne, and elevated two usurpers—sense and impulse—into her place. It is not only that he has committed a single offence, but he has laid the foundation of an offending attitude, an offending character.

Our hero-king, Henry V., on his deathbed was heard again and again to exclaim, as though speaking to the evil spirit of his youth—"Get thee hence. I have no part in thee; my part is now in the Lord Jesus Christ!" He who sins makes it too possible to continue in sin, and he who continues in sin leaves Satan, as it were, in possession, with his own sign-manual of allegiance; and if the bond-slave of sin is shy of confessing to the bond, Satan is too deadly and too powerful an enemy not to find some way of forcing him to own to it, even before the world. Let the young man who is being drawn aside by his own lust, who is sinking by fine gradations into ever-deepening and more habitual forms of transgressions, who is proceeding step by step till he is on the verge of doing that which once his whole soul would have abhorred—let him remember that lust, when it has conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death; and when he is on the point of yielding to any temptation which will ultimately be his scourge and his destruction, let him remember the apple of Eve; and let him consider these two final things, ere he stretches forth his rash and guilty hand to the forbidden fruit. These two things are, that by so doing, first, he will alter, in some respect, his own nature; and secondly, he will thereby enter into the fellowship of all fallen spirits and all guilty souls.

First of all, by a conscious first act of transgression, a man will alter his own nature, he will make himself a participator in the nature and the principle of evil, he will introduce into his being a new and deadly element. You know when Dante had passed through the place of torment, had breathed its air merely to witness its horrors, when he reached the mountain of Purgatory, his guide steps down and gently places his hand in the grass amid the dews; and Dante, who understood his meaning, turns towards him his tear-stained cheeks; and Virgil washes his face from the grime of the abyss which concealed its natural colour. It is the allegory of restoring the innocence which vice has defaced; it means that "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." The Adam and the Eve who have tasted of the tree of knowledge of good and evil are not the same Adam and Eve who heard God and angels talking to them under the palms of Paradise, naked, yet unashamed; nay, after the first blind hectic fever flush of spurious liberty comes the terrible reaction, the ghastly opening of the eyes, the bitter sense that the old Eden can be theirs no more.

Up they rose as from unrest, and each the other viewing  
Soon found their eyes how opened, and their minds  
How darkened. Innocence, that as a veil  
Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone;  
Just confidence, and native righteousness,  
And honour, from about them, naked left  
To guilty shames.

And secondly, in thus participating wilfully in the nature of evil, which thus changes, as it were, the characteristics of the man's soul, the soul, even by one conscious act, has done another thing which it did not intend, of which it did not dream; it has initiated itself into the freemasonry of the wicked, it has made itself a very member incorporated in the mystical body of antichrist, which is the unblessed company of all guilty people. There is a communion of saints, there is a sense of belonging to God's great army, of being one of that virgin host which follow the Lamb in white robes whithersoever He goeth, of being ever gazed upon by sympathetic faces in the lucent cloud of witnesses. Every pure and lofty thought, every high and noble deed, assimilates us to these; but when we deliberately do wrong, when we have committed some violent crime against our own conscience, we enrol ourselves in the secret fellowship of felons and of criminals. The eating of the crimson seed of hell produces even a physical as

well as a mental, a moral, a spiritual change in our souls; it is the throbbing of a secret wound, it is the consciousness of an unhallowed secret, it is the agony of shame that may be repressed, but cannot be annihilated.

But, beyond all this, all evil men and women upon earth, as it were, stretch forth their hands and claim the one who has joined their multitude, when, by conscious misdoing, we have followed the example of evildoers, we have made ourselves one with their community; yea, the evil spirits, too, seem to stretch forth shadowy hands, and to know that our part, at present at any rate, is with them, and hope that it shall be with them for evermore.

My brothers, if only we can be brought to recognize all that this means, we shall repeat with a more awful weight of emphasis those solemn words of the wise, but fallen king, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

### The Cheering-up Business.

I want to recommend this business. Every Christian ought to engage in it. To begin with, the need for it is so great. Nearly every line of business is overdone. Competition has reduced profits and many failures are inevitable. But the cheering-up business thrives best when general depression prevails, and its profits are enormous when those otherwise engaged are content with a very small return. Indeed, it increases the profits of whatever other business man may undertake. Every body is glad to trade with a grocer or a merchant of any sort whose primary business is the cheering-up business. "What kind of a man is Mr. B.?" asked a wealthy lady of a village concerning a merchant who had opened a rival market. "O, he is a very pleasant gentleman," was the reply. "Well, I shall trade with him, for Mr. A. is so short and surly I cannot bear him." It would have been decidedly to Mr. A.'s advantage had he been engaged in the cheering-up business. Besides, it is a business which requires little effort when the heart is committed to it. Indeed, little children, if they are properly led by Christian parents, are eminently successful. I have heard of a little girl who exclaimed as she put her spoon on which the sunshine fell, into her mouth, "O, ma, I have swallowed a whole spoonful of sunshine." People big or little who take a plentiful diet of sunshine, literal and figurative, take easily to it. But the only sure source of capital and instruction for the highest success is in Him who originated and carried to its full the cheering-up business. Follow Him. A man sick of the palsy was laid at His feet one day, and He said, "Son, be of good cheer," and He so suited the action to the word that the poor, helpless fellow walked away rejoicing. A company of men were overtaken by a storm on the sea. They were terrified and ready to perish, when above the storm came the same words, "Be of good cheer," and by His power the tempest at once was still. To the same men He said, as He was about to leave the world and leave them to wage the terrible battle, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And woe the battle ever so fiercely those who have heard and believed these triumphant words of Jesus have been able to smile in the conflict and cheer others on. Christ who came into this weary, sinful world to establish on the only abiding foundation this blessed work of mercy and help, wants every Christian in league with Him for extending it and sharing its profits, until the darkness and the evil which have overshadowed what else might have continued an Eden shall yield to the brightness and hope which shall yet prevail through the good cheer of the Gospel.—*Advocate.*

### Delayed Blessings.

It is a familiar saying that "Blessings brighten as they take their flight." But is it not equally true that blessings brighten as they are delayed? Is not the expected good quite as sweet as the departing good? Would we not lose somewhat, even of this world's happiness, if our desires were granted as soon as conceived, and our prayers answered as soon as uttered?

It is what we may call the sunrise-effect of happiness that constitutes its sweetest charm. As the rays of light are retained and gradually diffused over the earth by its surrounding atmosphere, producing those beautiful effects of color which make the dawn so lovely and marvelous to the beholder's eye, so God sends happiness to His earthly children—not with a sudden, harsh directness, but gently withholding, a little now and a little then, as we can bear it and use it; first the gray light, then the purple, and the

pink, and the rose; never the full day at a single flash, but more and more of it, "till the shadows flee away."

Why should we complain because our prayers are not answered immediately and fully? Oh, the folly of impatience! When we think of it, is there a single blessing that is not better for God's wise delaying? If it is some needed good, it is all the sweeter that it comes to us gradually, graciously, after the waiting and praying. If it is something which we really do not need, and ought not to have, God's delaying makes His refusing precious to our souls. It is Melville who says of unanswered prayer: "The delay is often part, and the best part, of the answer." And it is because either we learn through the delay that we really do not need or want that for which we prayed, or else we find in the deferred granting of our request that chastened and purified desire which makes the final attainment of the gifts thrice blessed.

Many a heart aches for some blessing which God enriches by holding yet in store for it. Many a heart learns, with growing gratitude and trust, that God may be more loving when He withholds than when He bestows. Delayed blessings are profitable alike to those who receive and those who are denied—for really there is no denial. In place of the mistaken good always comes a greater, truer blessing, if the soul is ready to receive it. God never yet took the stone of mistaken desire away from one of His hungering children, without giving in its place the bread of a higher hope.—*Z. Herald.*

### Rules For Preaching.

In this day of the multiplication of books on preaching and the burdensome rules laid down, it is refreshing to get hold of something simple, natural and spiritual by way of direction, and we give as of great value what John Newton wrote to a friend who asked him for rules. "I have formerly fettered myself," he says, "by following other people's rules, and therefore ought not to shackle my friend by prescribing to him. You have the word of grace, the throne of grace, and Spirit of grace. Under this divine direction, what passes within you and around you will furnish you with better rules for your own management than you could possibly receive from the wisest man upon earth who was not exactly in your situation. Various have been the methods," continues Newton, "my wise and gracious Lord has taken to break down my spirit of self-dependence and to hide pride from me." If the Lord can but secure this end in us, he can make first-class preachers of any of us. It is not so much the lack of rules, the lack of method or of manner that hinders the best results in preaching, but the self that remains in us and subordinates our duties to its unhallowed uses. When the spirit of pride in all its unnumbered forms and the spirit of self-dependence in its endless diversity are destroyed in us by God's severe discipline, and the brightness of his glory fills us, we are ready to preach the Gospel than we are with all the diplomas of all the theological schools in our hands and all the rules of all the preaching books stereotyped within us. Mr. Newton closes with this most important statement; "Of all the maxims I have met with," he says, "about preaching, I most admire that of Luther, which is, 'To have prayed well is to have studied well.'" In closing his letter Mr. Newton says: "If my mind were in a right frame toward the Lord, I think I should not be greatly embarrassed if called to preach at five minutes' warning to the most respectable congregation." No man will ever gain true success as a preacher however well equipped otherwise, who does not put these spiritual qualifications first, and always keep them to the front.—*Nashville Advocate.*

### The Art Of Reproof.

Too many people, when they reprove others for their faults, do so in such a rough, unworkmanlike way, that they are positively cruel, and leave their subjects in a far worse condition than they found them. Such reprovers fancy that they are doing their duty in fine shape, and in a very thorough manner, when they proceed, with cudgel in hand, to strike telling blows on the luckless head of some one who has deviated from their own orthodox way of believing and doing. They are great sticklers for frankness, and think that they find a model of frankness in Nathan's reproof of David, when he said: "Thou art the man!" But they don't stop to notice the beautiful and blessed art which Nathan used in approaching the point of saying those frank words. The prophet told a little parabolic story to David, in which he displayed a splendid art, before he said, "Thou art the man."

And let us not suppose that Nathan put a trip-hammer emphasis upon that sentence when he uttered it, as though he would knock poor David flat on the ground by it. Yet there are those who, when quoting that sentence, put a grim vim in it, as they would, had they been in Nathan's place, and had felled David into insensibility. The serious difficulty with such ones is, they do not understand the divine art of reproof. It is said that the late Thomas Sherwin, formerly Master of Boston's English High School, had a very happy manner of administering reproof. On a certain day, when one of his pupils had told a falsehood, he called him to the platform and began a soliloquy on the beauty and nobility of truth. So impressively was it spoken that the boy became very red in the face, and then burst into tears. No harsh word was spoken, and the boy was permitted to take his seat; but he was never known to indulge in falsehood again. This is an apt example of the art of reproof.—*Interior.*

There is a mighty *go* in the Gospel, as well as *come*. It is *come, go, go*, preach and heal: *go, home to thy friends, go, into the highway*; *go* all the world. Many Christians do not obey, many churches have no blessing, because they have no *go*. There is scarcely a village or city where the majority are regular in their attendance at the house of God. "Go, speak to that young man." Many will go—to seek his ruin; the average age of our prisoners is twenty-four years! Go! the command of Jesus is to you; the power of Jesus is for you; the presence of Jesus will go with you; the blessing of Jesus will follow you. Do not say they may come if they will; He says, "Compel them to come," and "Go ye also into the vineyard." And it is, "As ye go, preach." The whole life should be a going forth to meet the bridegroom; and as we go, the whole life should be a preaching or testimony for Jesus.—*B. F. Jacobs.*

### Random Readings.

With God all things are possible.—Mark x. 27.  
We can evade responsibility, but not accountability.—*Dr. Parkhurst.*  
Every one of us shall give an account of himself to God.—Rom. xiv. 15.  
The virtue of the soul does not consist in flying high, but in walking orderly.—*Montaigne.*  
The bread of life is love, the salt of life is work, the sweetness of life is poetry, and the water of life is faith.  
Life is a reckoning we cannot make twice over. You cannot mend a wrong subtraction by doing your additional right.  
Tale-bearing emits a three-fold poison, it injures the teller, the hearer and the person concerning whom the tale is told.—*Spurgeon.*  
Gladness and goodness are largely synonymous terms, and there is a vast amount of gladness to be obtained quite outside the things that immediately affect us.

The harder our work, the more we need solitude and prayer, without which work becomes mechanical and insincere.—*McLaren.*

A thoughtful writer has remarked that if we take rest when we need it we shall not quite so soon need the rest of the grave.

The best consistency is to be consistent to one's self, by acting every day up to the light of that day.—*Norman McLeod.*

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Fast Express for Halifax ..... 14.00  
Fast Express for Quebec, Montreal and Chicago ..... 16.35  
Night Express for Halifax ..... 22.30

A parlor car runs each way on express trains leaving St. John at 7.00 o'clock, and Halifax at 6.45. Passengers from St. John for Quebec, Montreal and Chicago leave St. John at 16.35 o'clock, and take sleeping car at Moncton. Sleeping Cars are attached to through night express trains between St. John and Halifax.

TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN.  
Night Express from Halifax (Monday excepted) ..... 6.10  
Fast express from Quebec, Montreal and Chicago ..... 8.30  
Accommodation from Point du Chene ..... 12.55  
Day Express from Halifax ..... 18.30  
Fast Express from Halifax ..... 22.30

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10.40 A. M.—For Fredericton Junction, St. John and points east.  
4.20 P. M.—For Fredericton Junction, St. John, St. Stephen, Houlton and Woodstock. No connection with St. John on Monday by this train.

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From St. John 6.25, 8.30, a.m.; 4.30 p.m.; Fredericton Junction, 8.15 a.m., 12.10, 5.55 p.m.; McAdam Junction, 7.00, 10.50 a.m.; Vancorbo, 10.25 a.m.; St. Stephen, 5.45, 7.45 a.m.; St. Andrews, 7.20 a.m., except Mondays and Wednesdays, at 5.15 a.m.

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