

It Is Well.

Yes, it is well! The evening shadows lengthen;
Home's golden gate shines on our ravished sight;
And though the tender ties we try to strengthen
Break one by one—at evening time, its light.

'Tis well! The way was often dull and weary;
The spirit fainted oft beneath its load;
No sunshine came from skies all grey and dreary,
And yet our feet were bound to tread the road.

'Tis well that not again our hearts shall shiver
Beneath old sorrows once so hard to bear;
That not again beside death's darksome river
Shall we deplore the good, the loved, the fair.

No more, with tears wrought from deep inner anguish
Shall we bewail the dear hopes crushed and gone;
No more need we in doubt or fear to languish,
So far the day is past, the journey done.

As voyagers, by fierce winds beat and broken,
Come into port beneath the calmer sky,
So we still bearing on our brows the token
Of tempest past, draw to our haven nigh.

As sweeter air comes from the shores immortal,
Inviting homeward at the days decline,
Almost we see where from the open portal
Fair forms stand beckoning with their smiles divine.

'Tis well! The earth, with all her myriad voices,
Has lost the power our senses to enthral;
We hear, above the tumult and the noises,
Soft tones of music, like an angel's call.

'Tis well, O friends! We should not turn—
Retracing
The long, vain years, nor call our lost youth back;
Gladly, with spirits braced, the future facing,
We leave behind the dusty, footworn track.

The Art of Going Without.

A thoughtful man, to whom life had brought a heavy share of what we are accustomed, for want of a polite phrase, to call discipline, once said:

"When God sends a new trouble upon me, I set myself to work at once to bear it as well as I can, hoping that I may be able in this way to bring about the effect upon my character which He has in mind as an end in chastising me, and so—who knows?—possibly shorten the duration or diminish the severity of the experience."

This was said by one of the contemplative, solitary Christians whose close attention to the problems of the inner life gives something resembling a spiritual shrewdness to their methods of thought—a something, by the way, which really may deserve, at the least, as much respect as that worldly wisdom to which we so heartily defer in the experience of men of affairs.

Whether or not the individual conclusion of this wise saint can be converted into a general maxim, it is plainly true that the final cause of an affliction is already half gained when one has learned to bear it.

The monetary strain through which our nation has been passing will bring a vast amount of familiar misery upon thousands of people well used to being miserable in certain familiar ways; but it will bring upon other thousands of another sort a species of suffering as new as if they were expatriated to an undeveloped planet.

It is these who have the lesson of the times to learn. People who have gone cold and hungry and homeless, and hopeless before—they are the post-graduates in the great university of hardship; and while they may need immediate relief more than their hitherto more fortunate fellows, they need education less.

The men and women who have never gone without, or who have not gone without for so long that they have forgotten they ever knew how, are the most pitiable pupils of this hard school. They stand at the foot of the long class which present distress and anxiety for the future are training from end to end of our troubled land....

The practice of economy needs training as much as the practice of any other science; and the worst of a situation like the present is that so many of us are forced into the exercise of a skill for which we are without education of hand or brain or spirit.

"There always seems to be some conclusive reason why I have to buy the most expensive things," said, plaintively, a lady whom I once accompanied to make a trifling purchase. She paid two dollars for an article for which I had never paid more than fifty cents. She had lost property, and every dime counted to her slender purse.

But, blessed be the brave old law which puts man upon his mettle to conquer the unconquerable! There

is a great deal of satisfaction to be got out of pecuniary perplexities, if one goes to work intelligently to get it. The art of going without may be made as graceful and as winsome as it is difficult.

"The family had lost two fortunes," said a guest from a Southern home. "I was with them once when we had nothing to eat for three weeks but fried potatoes, three times a day. And I never was so happy in my life...."

Like everything else in this life, poverty, whether relative or absolute, can be made a cross or a crown. It is all in the way we take it. Who of us has not known homes where the sweet, bright spirit that ruled them has wrought romance out of sudden care and rude denial? In later life, when we look back upon the deprivations of our first youth, what is it that we most vividly remember—the things we had, or the things we did not have? A hundred to one, I venture to say, we recall the glory of possession rather than the gloom of denial. The little inventions and plots and plans by which a quick brain and a cherry heart contrive to bridge the black chasm between demand and supply "hold fast all that they gave us" of the sweetest things in character and the bravest thing in love....

The art of going without may be slowly, but it can be brightly, learned. It needs due patience, some pluck, and, doubtless, the proper share of Christian grace and resignation. But it needs something else if I may say so, just as important, and more apt to be overlooked. It needs the mere worldly qualities of good spirits, and good sense, and inventive ability. It is not enough distinctly to buy no new clothes, or go without furs, or substitute corn-beef for sirloin roast, or a corn-cob pipe for regalia. It is worth while to see "the fun" in it, since it has got to be done. It is not enough to cut down the open fires, and curtail the egg bills, and wear the overcoat shiny in the seams, or even to resign from the club and read the magazines at the public library. Rather make an interesting game of deprivation, and play for the stakes of sweet temper, and a merry courage, and the class of values which are to be had by going without another class.

One of the most exquisite courtship scenes in all literature is that where George Eliot's Dorothea naively cries to her poor and proud young lover: "I don't mind about poverty.... Oh, I want so little—no new clothes—and I will learn what everything costs!"

It is not easy to say, till one has studied the matter in the school of absolute experience, how few things there are in life that can be classified as the must-be, the essential.

When the horses' feet are gone, one's own are left. When the cook refuses reduction of wages, there is the cook-book, and brain and hands to use it. Must the parlor be repapered? But why? Must the boy have the dues for his secret society? Let him earn them as his father did before him. "I lived all summer at Cottage City," said the mistress of one of our most complex Boston mansions, "with one maid, and only four dishes to cook with."

Some of us can remember how the smoothly sliding scale of expenditure mounted years ago—when two pairs of kid gloves a year would do, where two dozen are needed now; when cream was not a necessity to coffee; when one was expected to be quite ill before the fire was lighted in one's bedroom in January. Was life, after all, so much harder then? Is it so much easier now?

In fine, how serious is the affliction of plain living and high thinking? It is not hazzarding much to say that it is the lightest to which fate has seen fit to expose our tossed and tired lives.

That was a wise philanthropist who dared to say: "Cold and hunger are not the worst things in the world." At all events, to think so is going far toward making ready to endure them should they indeed befall.—ELIZABETH STUART PHILIPS, in *The Outlook*.

Incongruities.

There are few of them in nature, but in life their name is legion. Six-button kids are all right. A calico dress is all right. But both worn by the same person at the same time are an incongruity. A silk hat and a shoddy coat below it, patent leather shoes and ragged trousers above them, a pretty face and an ugly frown, a man who is dressed faultlessly and acts faultily, all such things are incongruities.

They remind one of the incongruities that are sometimes seen in those who are supposed to be serving the Lord heartily. Here is Mr. Brown who goes from five to fifty squares to his place of business six days out of seven. He never thinks of remaining at home because it is too hot or too cold, too dry or too wet, too dusty or too muddy. He has rubbers, mackintoshes and umbrel-

las, gloves, overcoats and arctics; thin underwear and flannels, thin coats and thick ones. He is prepared for all emergencies from Monday morning until Saturday night. Now why is it that all these things lose their ability to meet an emergency on Sunday. Why will not an umbrella keep us as dry, an overcoat as warm, a thin coat as cool on Sundays as on Saturdays? Why are our comfort and our health so much more valuable to us the first day of the week than any other day? There is an incongruity here somewhere. Who can see it and explain it? Why will a man's conscience, along the line of religion, yield to such slight difficulties when, in respect to his business sagacity, or ambition, or cupidity, and in the presence of exactly the same difficulties, he will be as brave as a lion? Why, in short, will he act a man between Sundays and be a baby on Sundays? There is not a business house in any city that would not go to the wall in ninety days if it were run on such principles as govern a good many people in their church-going.

Go to Cash and Credit's big store some rainy day, or cold day, or some day when it looks as though it might be something or might do something that is not being or doing when you started from home. Here and there is a lonesome-looking clerk, yonder is the cashier, now and then a solitary cash-boy appears and vanishes. The proprietors and the larger number of the employees are at home by the fire or the fan, according to weather, and you, well, you don't go there again. A travelling man with good sense does not open his sample case in such a house, a wise creditor will force his collections and withhold future credit. The sheriff says to the firm as he warns them, "I'll get you if you don't watch out."

And yet—and yet, some people expect a minister to become general superintendent of a church with half its force (perhaps I ought to say its weakness) doing the church business in that way and make out of it a glorious success. Why, Gabriel himself could not do it, but this poor fellow must, or a committee will call on him to know why he does not "fill these pews." If he is a timid pastor with only a slight hold on his place and pulpit, he will blush and belittle himself by apologizing and promising to do better. Dear soul, he is now doing his very best, but he can't canvass his parish every Sunday on which the weather is not "as pleasant as a day in June," and drag out all the sleepy, lazy, worldly, indifferent, Sunday-sick, nobody-knows-what-the-matter-is-with-them-people, who belong to his church and congregation, and get them through the church doors and "fill those pews." He can't do it, and yet if he does not do it, or something else equally preposterous, his days are numbered; it is worth noticing too, that the people who take this census of his days are those who for reason aforesaid were seldom present to increase the census of his congregations.

We are also impressed with another incongruity. There are men who are as punctual and systematic as are death and taxes in their own business affairs. But put them into office as a church trustee, or clerk, or treasurer, or warden, or steward, and presto! change! Careless entries in the clerk's books, neglected repairs by the trustees, forgotten duties by the wardens, deacons, stewards. And yet these very men pride themselves on their business ability in their own business.

Thank God that in all our churches there are devout, consecrated men and women of whom none of these things are true. I am only writing about the "incongruities," and of course you, my reader are not one of those.—W. A. Stanton.

How His Child Led Him.

BY JULIA BILLINGS

Several years ago my brother was in Springfield one cheerless day, with about half an hour on his hands before train time. Strolling along near the depot, he noticed a tidy restaurant, and went in for lunch. A bright boy came to take his order, and as soon as he brought it sat down to his lessons. A respectable man, evidently the proprietor, was seated near the fire, with a disabled foot propped up in a chair. When my brother had finished his meal, he approached him saying:

"You have a bright boy to wait on your customers."

"Yes, indeed," said the man, with parental pride, "I couldn't hire so good a boy as that; he is my son, and was the means of my opening this place instead of keeping a saloon, which was the way I got my living for some years; and I'll tell you how it was. He came from school one day heavy-hearted, and when I asked him what was the matter he began to cry, but couldn't speak. After I had urged him, he

said that in recess some of the boys asked each other what their fathers did. One said his father was a plumber; another, that his was a carpenter; and when they came to my boy, who said his father kept a saloon, one of them said, 'That's the meanest kind of business.' 'And I could see they all felt the same way. That made me feel awfully ashamed; so, father, if you will only give up the saloon, I'll do anything I can to help you.' With that he threw his arms around my neck, and, sobbing, begged me to give it up. Well, the end of it was I sold out. I don't make as much money as I did selling liquors, but it goes farther, and we have a happy home; my wife can help along, because decent people come here for their meals, but before I did not like to have her around, there was so much low talk. My boy has been as good as his word. I couldn't ask for a better son."

My brother thanked the man for his confidence, and after giving his hearty approval went his way.—*The Little Christian*.

Baldness is often preceded or accompanied by grayness of the hair. To prevent both baldness and grayness, use Hall's Hair Renewer, an honest remedy.

A Sister's Influence.

Many a young girl is more influenced for good or evil by the conduct toward her of an older brother, than by any other force that ever comes to her in life. And many a young man's course in life is shaped by a sister's words and deeds.

On the piazza of a summer hotel a group of young men and maidens were waiting for the mail to arrive. A part of the conversation an exchange gives as follows:

"O dear," said the prettiest of the girls impatiently, "why don't I hurry? Are you expecting a letter, Mr. Allison?" and she turned to a tall youth standing near.

"I'll get one sure," he said, "it's my day. Just this particular letter always comes. Nell is awfully good; she's my sister, you know; and no fellow ever had a better one."

The pretty girl laughed saying as he received his letter, "Harry would think he was blessed if I wrote once a year." Gradually the other drifted away but Frank Allison kept his place scanning eagerly the closely written sheets, now and then laughing quietly. Finally he slipped the letter into his pocket, and, rising, saw an elderly friend.

"Good morning, Miss Williams," he said cordially; for he always had a pleasant word for the older people. "Good news?" he was asked.

"My sister's letters always bring good news," he answered. "She writes such jolly letters."

And, unfolding this one he read scraps of it—bright nothings, with here and there a little sentence full of sisterly tenderness and love. There was a steady light in his eyes, as, half-apologizing for "boring" his listener, he looked up and said quietly, "Miss Williams, if I ever make anything of a man, it will be sister Nell's doing."

Think of that, you girls who have brothers.

THE REV. DR. A. C. DIXON relates that a certain man had a weather-vane made for use on one of his buildings, in which were wrought the words, "God is love." Some one said to him: "You have placed an immutable truth on a very changeable thing." Well, sir, replied the man, I want you to understand that that means, God is love *what ever way the wind blows!* Truly there was a whole sermon in this.

The best of men who ever wore earth about him was a meek, patient humble, tranquil spirit, the first true gentleman that ever breathed.

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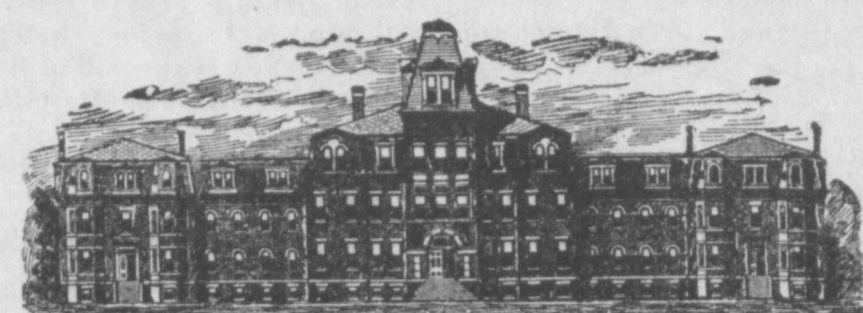
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