

Thoughts for Reflection.

Life is a burden—bear it;
Life is a duty—do it;
Life is a thorn—wear it.
Though it break your heart in twain,
Though the burden crush you down,
Ose your lips and hide your pain;
First the cross and then the crown.

We live together years and years,
And leave unsounded still
Each other's springs of hopes and fears,
Each other's depths of will—
We live together day by day,
And some chance look or tone
Lights up with instantaneous ray
An inner world unknown.

A Ministering Angel.

BY A PASTOR'S WIFE.

I'm afraid I said "Oh, dear!" with considerable emphasis when the door-bell rang for the thirteenth time that morning, nor did I feel much reassured when I viewed my caller—a little girl about seven years old, with a bit of ragged shawl over her head, a thin, dark face, dirty and hungry-looking; as shabby, forlorn a little specimen of humanity as ever you saw.

"Won't you come over to our house?" she said. "Mother's sick, and—and—something's the matter with Janey. Won't you come?" she repeated eagerly, noticing the look of perplexity that must have appeared on my face, as I made a rapid mental count of the several places I ought to be in at one and the same moment in my own home. But the anxious look of the face of the questioner was irresistible, and I said, "Yes, I will go with you."

She led me a couple of blocks down the avenue, and turned into a narrow street bordered with dark, unwholesome-looking houses. Then she darted down a narrow passage between two of these, and there in the rear stood a large wooden building, with outside stairways leading to the upper stories. Up one flight of these she halted for a moment to make sure I was following, and then opened the door.

An indescribable scene of poverty, dirt, and confusion met my eyes. I remember the washbasins seemed to take more than their due share of space in the little room. A cold stove littered with ashes and a bare table filled most of the remaining space. The child led me straight through into the next room and then stopped, looking at me blankly, as if to say: "I have done what I can; now I put the case into your hands."

There were children—I do not know how many—and a clamor of voices that hushed a moment as I entered. I saw nothing distinctly but the bed, on which lay a woman moaning faintly, and picking at the clothes with a restless movement of her emaciated hands. The room was filled with a sickly, fetid odour. I bent over the woman, and then became aware that another form lay on the bed beside her—a child's form, with a terrible stillness about it. One look, and I turned away with a sickening sensation that made me wonder what would happen if I should faint. I had always associated the thought of death with snowy shroudings and flowers and a great quiet. To see it here in the midst of filth and noise and confusion seemed unspeakably ghastly.

I looked at the children, but their dull, uncomprehending faces checked the words I would have spoken. I placed my hand on the woman's forehead. It was hot and her lips were parched and blackened with the fever. Unaccustomed as I was to severe sickness I knew that something must be done quickly or she would be as still as the form beside her.

"Where is your father?" I asked of the children. They looked at one another, and the one who brought me there answered, "He's at Trisbee's room, I s'pose; he ain't been home since yesterday."

I think I never felt so utterly helpless as I did at that moment, when it seemed as if the duties of physician, nurse, undertaker, house-keeper, and mother were needed at once. But a sudden thought came to me.

I said, "I am going to get some one to come here and see to your mother and Janey. I will be back in an hour."

I hurried home for my hat and cloak, told Mary and the children they must get along as well as they could until I returned, and took the first car for the Deaconess House.

"If any one can do anything for them a deaconess can," thought I. I told my story to the superintendent. She called a nurse, and said, "Can you go with Mrs. C— at once?"

There was not a moment of hesitation. "I'll be ready in five minutes," was all she said. And so it was scarcely an hour before I re-entered the wretched home with my ministering angel. If you could see what that woman accomplished there within the next two hours you would say "ministering angel" was none too strong a term.

She went straight to the sick woman, felt her pulse, noted the symptoms with a practiced eye,

looked around the room, and somehow I just felt the burden of responsibility slip from my shoulders; for I realized she was mistress of the situation, and I simply waited to assist her in whatever way she directed.

The first thing she did was to take the four children into the other room. I heard her talking with them.

"Your mother is very, very sick, and if we are not careful she will die," she said. "I am going to take care of her, and if you are perfectly quiet it will help her to get well; but if you are noisy, or make the slightest disturbance, it will make her worse, and then you will not have any mother! Do you understand?" The effect was marvellous, and as long as the deaconess stayed the children were quiet and obedient.

The next step was to care for the sick woman. A small bedroom opening from the room where she lay contained an unmade bed. The deaconess looked about the rooms and found an old trunk containing clean sheets and pillowcases. It took but a few minutes to make up this bed, and then she lifted the woman in her strong arms from the bed where she lay into the clean one. A warm bath and clean clothing had already added much to her comfort.

Next the lifeless form on the bed was made ready for burial. I was sent to make the outside arrangements for this service. When I returned, the interior of the house had undergone such a transformation I could scarcely believe it the same place. The rooms had been put in order, the children washed and combed, and the little form of the dead child laid out with something of the grace and dignity due to death, however poor the surroundings.

I can't tell the history of those two weeks—I believe it is written in heaven—but for days the sick woman's life hung by a thread, and the nurse fought her battle with death inch by inch to save a mother for her little ones. And she lived—lived to be a better mother and happier wife than ever before. For the work of the deaconess did not stop with her care for the body. Every morning she gathered the children together, read with them from the Bible, and prayed with them. The father listened and considered. A religion that would do this meant something. He would break away from the saloon, anyway, and think about it.

At first the deaconess came to the parsonage for her meals. But one day she said, "I am going to get my meals where I work, after this."

"But" I said in dismay, "you can never stand it with such food. You are perfectly welcome to the best I can give you."

"It isn't that," was the reply, "but I know I shall have more influence with my family over there if they find that I am not above eating with them. And surely I can endure for a little while what they have endured all their lives."

I confess I expected she would make herself sick, and she did. But she never left her post till the mother was well. Then she gave out herself and was sick for a few days; but she soon recovered, and I suppose is doing the same thing over again now.

The husband and father was soundly converted, and is now one of the most faithful and respected members in our church. The children are in the Sunday school, and the mother feels that she owes, not only her life, but all that they are, to the work of that woman in her home. Do you wonder that I believe in the deaconess work? I'm getting our people at work to send them a box this next Thanksgiving.

—The Message.

Persevering Prayer.

It is related that Mr. Spurgeon, preaching one day in his church, recommended to each of his hearers to pray for a particular person until converted. This exhortation made a strong impression on a porter who was found in the assembly. Returning home, he spoke about it to his wife, and they agreed to pray for a most incorrigible drunkard. After some time, the idea occurred to the old porter to tell this poor drunkard what they were doing for him. The first time that he saw him pass, he called him, and said to him:

"Samuel, do you know what my old woman and me have agreed to do?"

"Certainly not," replied the drunkard, quite astonished.

"Ah, well, we pray every day that God would convert you."

"Really! But this is quite useless for me," said the poor man, "I advise you to pray for some one else."

"What for?" said the porter. "The pastor has told us to pray for some one, and we have decided that it shall be for you. The sooner you are converted the better it will be."

In the meantime the poor drunkard grew worse. At last his wife abandoned him, after being one day

more maltreated than usual, and his landlord turned him out because he did not pay his rent. In this state of thing he came to find the porter and said to him:

"Listen, my dear sir, pray no more for me, that does me no good; on the contrary, I become worse every day. I cannot get the idea out of my head that some one asks God to convert me; this idea follows me night and day, and in order to free myself from it, I drink the more."

"That makes no difference," replied the imperturbable porter. "The pastor has told us to pray for some one, and we pray! You will be in hell or heaven before we shall stop recommending you to the grace of God."

When the old man had related to his companion what he had said to the unfortunate man, the worthy woman replied:

"Ah, well; I will tell you what we must do. I will prepare him a place to sleep; we will also give him something to eat, until he may be able to gain his living—and all this on the condition that he promises us not to drink any more."

Thus the drunkard was sheltered and cared for and soon his good friends had the joy of seeing the fruit of their prayers: the poor sinner rejected by all, become by the power of grace divine a sober and true Christian. Let us persevere, then, in prayer; let us pray without ceasing and we shall see great things, for great promises are made to prayer by him who is faithful.—Fellowship.

Ten Thousand Per Cent.

Mr. Stuart dropped into the office of his friend, Mr. Morris, in a mood decidedly depressed, occasioned by a failure. It was a little after business hours, but Mr. Morris was still in his office and alone. He laid down his pen and greeted his friend with a cheerful nod and a cheerful "How are you, Stuart?"

"Sober as an east wind," was the response, as he looked at the beaming countenance of his friend whose counsel he had sought many a time, and scarcely ever been disappointed. There appeared to be a little more of the usual brightness in Mr. Morris' face as he wheeled his chair round and bade his friend be seated in another. Mr. Stuart noticed it and said:

"What are you up to, Morris? Had some good news, eh?"

"O, no, Stuart," he replied, "nothing unusual or new in particular. I was only thinking of a little investment I am just about making."

"I thought so," said Stuart, and a good one, I'll be bound."

"I think so," was the reply. What would you say to ten thousand per cent?"

"Ten thousand per cent! You are raving."

"Not a bit of it," said Mr. Morris. "And the very best security—a regular royal pledge."

"Now I know you are crazy. Who ever heard of such a thing?"

"Crazy! Not a bit of it," said Mr. Morris. "This, wheeling round his chair and laying his hand upon a paper on his desk, 'is a check which I have just signed and intend for a poor missionary whom I know. I have just heard he is sick and in much need. The Scripture says that he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord, but I was never awakened to the fact of what interest he pays until yesterday, when our clergyman startled me by saying that he had promised ten thousand per cent. I pricked up my ears at the statement, and waited curiously to hear the proof; and there it was, sure enough, in St. Matthew 19: 9, everyone that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold and inherit eternal life. I was struck at the sound of ten thousand per cent, but I figured it out and found it correct. The preacher was very much in earnest as he declared the Lord's dividend. He was as enthusiastic as a stock-broker, only in an infinitely more noble cause. I was very much impressed at the time with the thought, and, in fact, have been ever since. It was in my mind when you came in. Not that I can lay claim for a moment to the spirit of self sacrifice which the text quoted indicates; but my gift to the poor is a loan to the Lord, and I am not afraid that I shall reap a good dividend.—F. Baptist.

Punishment.

Some time ago, as I was coming up the street, I met a young married friend, holding her little boy by the hand. The child had evidently had a fall, for the pretty suit he wore was covered with splashes of mud.

"Just look at Willie's new coat," she said in aggrieved voice. "It is perfectly ruined; and I have had such trouble to get it made. Is it not too bad?"

While I was expressing my sympathy, the little fellow looked up into my face with a woeful expres-

sion on his own. "And mamma is going to whip me just as soon as we get home," he cried.

"I certainly am," she said in the same indignant tone. "I have told him fifty times to take hold of my hand and he will never do it, and this is the consequence."

"It seems to me," I answered somewhat dryly, "that if you have condoned the sin of disobedience for forty-nine times, it is for the sin of falling down that the child is to be punished; for if the accident had not happened, I imagine that the fiftieth act of disobedience would also have passed without comment."

Her cheek flushed for a moment, then her honest hazel eyes met mine steadily. "Your reproof is a just one," she said, "and I shall not forget it."

I would like other young mothers also, to carefully consider this question of punishment, for it is a most important one. While grave moral faults are often passed over carelessly, a child is frequently very severely dealt with for the tearing of a dress, or the breaking of an ornament, or any other fault that involves trouble or expense, even though the mischief may have been unintentionally done.

Shocking as the statement may sound, it is not true, that when the angry mother relieves her annoyance by punishing the object of it, she is really revenging herself upon it for the trouble it has occasioned.

Certainly it is very provoking to have beautiful things broken, and work that has been the result of much patient labor destroyed through heedlessness and carelessness, yet some time ago, when I heard a child who had torn a handsome dress, answer sagely to another who had told her that "her mother would whip her for tearing it," "No; my mother never whips for clothes," I felt sure that she was in wise as well as loving hands.

A GOOD EXAMPLE.—A good many years ago a little girl was passing the old brick prison in Chicago, on her way to school, when she saw a hand beckoning to her from a cell window, and heard a weary voice asking for something to read.

For many weeks after she went to the prison every Sunday, carrying the poor prisoner each time a book from her father's library. At last, one day, she was called to his death-bed.

"Little girl," said he, "you have saved my soul. Promise me that you will do all your life for the poor people in prison what you have done for me."

The little girl promised and she has kept her promise. Linda Gilbert has been all her life the steadfast friend of the prisoner. She has established good libraries in many prisons, visited and helped hundreds of prisoners, and from the great number whom she has helped, six hundred are now, to her knowledge, leading honest lives. Prisoners from all parts of the country know and love her name, and surely the God of prisoners must look upon her merciful work with interest.

And all this because a little girl heard and heeded the call to help a suffering soul.

Preachers, unless they are deeply in earnest, and have hearts that truly ache for the salvation of souls and the upbuilding of the church, will have but indifferent success in the ministry, no matter how thorough their collegiate and theological education. And in our zeal to magnify and impress the importance of the latter we must not lose sight of the indispensable necessity of the former. That required soul earnestness and heartache for success in soul-winning comes to men only as a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

If the care of the hair were made a part of a lady's education, we should not see so many gray heads, and the use of Hall's Hair Renewer would be unnecessary.

Righteous men and women are men and women who are consciously right with God, with their neighbors and right with themselves. Self-righteous people are only right with themselves and consciously wrong with God and their neighbors. In public they are pretentious and boastful as were the Pharisees, but in their secret meditations their own hearts condemn them and their own guilty conscience loathes them.

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