

Perseverance.

Finish what thou hast to do;
Prove thy right to wear a crown;
Bravely tread thy journey through
Ere the sun goes down.

Lay some stone each passing hour
In thy palace of renown;
Run the flag up on the tower
Ere the sun goes down.

Crowd thy back, though storm-assailed,
Over seas that seek to drown;
To the harbor mouth, full-sailed,
Ere the sun goes down.

Stand up bravely in the light,
Play the king and not the clown;
Clear the trenches, storm the height,
Ere the sun goes down.

Plow thy furrow in life's field,
Though the heavens may smile or frown;
Falter not, look back nor yield,
Till the sun goes down.

If thou canst not reap, then glean
Midst the stubble bare and brown;
Search the field and leave it clean
Ere the sun goes down.

Time enough to lay aside
Warrior's mail or priestly gown
In the dusk of eventide
When the sun goes down.

—Independent.

Overcoming.

What comes more quickly and naturally than discouragements? Sometimes we have to use all our resources to find encouragements; but discouragements come singly one after another or in groups, without being called. They spring up before us whatever path we take and annoy us like mosquitoes, or sting us like bees, or afflict us like lions. They seem to conspire to turn us back. We are not to go up-hill, we are to go down-hill; we are not to follow in the narrow way, but take the broad road. If we yield to difficulties we shall never scale the heights, never breathe the delicious mountain air, never regale ourselves with the magnificent outlooks from the towering peaks.

It was never meant that we should be overcome. No man is tempted beyond what he can bear. Strength is given us sufficient to surmount every obstacle. It is weakness to surrender at every challenge, "Who goes there?" Either man or a weakling. If a man, he asserts his will; if a weakling, he takes alarm and runs back. Manhood has glorious powers and likes to assert them. Those who always take counsel of their fears are like the conies, a feeble folk. What is a discouragement? It is an unsuccessful attempt. You try to do something and fail. If you are a man with the love of manly power you will try again. If you have made a habit of surrender, you will finally cease to try at all, and move in the direction which seems to offer least resistance.

It is a shame to a soldier to have arms and refuse, like a craven, to use them. It is a shame to a policeman to have authority, and refuse to protect the innocent and helpless. So it is a shame to a man to be formed for noble ends, with divine endowments and splendid powers, and show an unwillingness to use them. These powers are meant for use, of course, just as much as the muscles of the body or the cells of the brain. If one should refuse to walk because the feet or legs get tired, or to move the arms or hands because the muscles get sore, he would be little more than a cripple. He should not mind the little discomfort which comes in this way, but train himself for larger and easier effort. How it dwarfs a man, physically, mentally, morally, to give way to little discouragements! Inured to no hardship, capable of no effort, what is he in a world of action? No more than a wooden image. Life is activity. It is work or die, swim or sink, overcome or be overcome.

Discouragements are not impossibilities. They only call for a little more determination, a little more perseverance, a little more exertion, a little more willingness to bear fatigue. Christ commissioned his disciples to do great things; but it seemed at one time as tho they would all fail to do even a little thing for him. They slept when he wanted them to watch, they forsook him in the hour of his great trial, they denied him when he was in peril. But afterward they made full proof of their love for him, and accomplished greater works than they had ever dreamed of. They found, indeed, that all things are possible to them that believe.

Discouragements are generally little things,—things growing out of habit, or temper or inclination. They beset the Apostles; but they despised them, Paul especially. Paul gloried in his trials and afflictions and sufferings. He counted them as nothing. Not because they were all light and easy to bear, but because they were of no moment compared with the end in

view. These light afflictions, he said, which are but for a moment work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. He gives a catalog of them in the sixth chapter of Second Corinthians, shewing how apostles in those troublous times proved themselves as ministers of God in afflictions, necessities, distresses, stripes, imprisonment, tumults, labors, watchings, fastings; by long-suffering, kindness, honor and dishonor, evil report and good report; chastened they were, but not killed, sorrowful yet always rejoicing; they had nothing yet possessed all things. Who has in these days such discouragements as Paul and his co-laborers had in the days of the early Church?

What are our discouragements? We get weary in well-doing, we get tired of watching and working, we find continual self-denial hard, our shoulders ache from heavy burdens or burdens borne continually; we lack patience for the little tasks; results do not come quickly enough or seem large enough; we discover weaknesses where we imagined we were strong; God seems at times to desert us; duty, now and then, wears a most forbidding look. It is, finally, a long climb and a hard climb.

So it is. But it is good for us. It makes such beautiful characters; it shows forth so grandly man's magnificent powers; it makes our human nature so wondrously like the divine; it demonstrates man's ability to overcome; it reveals the vastness of the possibilities of future development; it manifests the power of God, brings the world nearer to him, and is some recompense to Christ for the sufferings of his atoning sacrifice.

It is hard to fight, but it is glorious to overcome.—The Independent.

"Thy Will Be Done."

"Thy will be done" is often thought of as a petition hard to utter. With it is coupled the thought that it implies a difficult and painful surrender of our own will. We think of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane as with "strong crying and tears" he deprecates the dreadful cup, saying, in deepest agony, but with beautiful self-surrender and submission to the Father, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done."

It is true, indeed, that oftentimes sincerely and submissively to say "Thy will be done" requires of us a great mental struggle, because it may mean the surrender of some object as dear as life itself, or the acceptance of some appointed trial or affliction that taxes our fortitude to the utmost. But instructed by the Lord's Prayer to offer this petition, and aided and encouraged by his example in the garden, we are helped to go forth bearing our cross after him. We feel that since he has taught us the duty and set us the example, the way is made easier and plainer for us. We also know he will not leave us comfortless, nor suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but with the temptation will make a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. Nor are we now alone, as he seems to have been in the garden and on the cross. He is with us always, is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows how to deliver us in the time of trouble, or so to sustain us and sanctify it to us that it shall work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

"He knows what sore temptations mean, For he hath felt the same."

If ever we are tempted to debate whether it is better to have our own way or to surrender and let God's will be done, the thought that ought at once to decide our minds and comfort our hearts is, that his will is always wisest and safest for us. How sad and perplexed we well might be if God should give us up to have our own way and follow our own counsels? Who that knows of the mysteries and uncertainties of the future, the swift and powerful forces by which he is surrounded, would dare to discard and decline the divine watch and care, and choose the path for his own feet? The greatest security and mercy of our life is that, for the mere asking, we may have the loving, constant, and infallible guidance of our heavenly Father. And especially ought such a privilege to seem dear to us when the way is dark and the clouds run low.

It does not follow that an answer to this prayer will always lead us through some garden of tears, but more often by some other way through a garden of delights. God's will for us is always the best, and it may be also the sweetest and brightest. He does not afflict the children of men willingly, and, when at all, it is for their good. He always does the best for us that infinite love can do, and what better than that can we want? Knowing this, it ought not be hard for us to say, "Thy will be done."

The doing of his will may not mean any passive endurance, but rather an active service. He has told us how he would have his will done,— "even as it is done in heaven;" and in heaven his servants are not called upon to suffer, but to perform his will. The holy angels and the spirits of the just made perfect "rest not day nor night," but they do God's will in sweet ministries and holy obedience. We may not know much of the employments of the celestial hosts, but we are sure that they do God's will, "hearkening to the voice of his word." Whatever their service, we know that they perform it cheerfully, faithfully, and constantly. Then in our prayer that his will may thus be done by us, do we ask for anything less than that we may be exalted to a fellowship of service with them, and share with them its honors, joys, and rewards?

This, indeed, ought not to be a hard petition to utter. Thus praying, we really ask that heaven be brought down to earth, for if God's will be done here as there, then heaven is begun below.

Only let sin and death, the last enemy, be destroyed, and universal love and concord reign supreme, then shall have come to pass the time prophesied and long prayed for, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign in peace and righteousness forever. No highest heaven can yield a joy so sweet as the spectacle of a fallen and ruined world redeemed and brought back in love and loyalty to serve and honor its Lord. Only let God's will be perfectly, perpetually, joyfully, and cheerfully done on earth as it is done in heaven, and we shall have the new heavens and the new earth, in which dwells righteousness, where we need want no brighter and no happier abode. "Even so, Lord, thy will be done."—S. S. Times.

Our Book of Remembrance.

"I think we had better keep a book of remembrance, daughter, said my father, as we sat beside our evening fire, rehearsing some unusual perplexities and sorrows. Life had gone very hard with us that year, and I had become a chronic complainer. Just now brother John lay helpless with a broken thigh, and she, who could "run smooth music from the roughest stone" with ceaseless love, had been taken from our sight.

"A book of remembrance, father? Why, I thought the Lord kept that."

"Yes, but why shall not wayward mortals keep one also, in which to note His gifts; to recount the blessings of the way; the 'red-letter' days of sunshine after storm and darkness, joy after sorrow, quiet and peace after confusion, unexpected good, deliverance from danger. It has become easier to speak of our misfortunes and trials than of our blessings. These are received in silence. I'm afraid we shall never become 'house-top saints' at this rate."

"Don't say 'we,' blessed old father!" I cried, penitently, noting with a pang the glory of swift-coming translation all over the noble head and face. Smiling at my eagerness, he softly repeated:—

"Every lifetime, Yes, the narrowest and most drear, Is a cup that still runs over With the gifts of God most dear!"

Suppose we take these pocket diaries and write in them "Gifts versus Losses!" blessings over against trials, joys more than griefs, and see what comes of it. I think it would prove no small aid to our happiness and spiritual health."

A very tender and penitent heart made its first entry that night in the little book. On the fly-leaf my father's familiar hand had written:—

"Here, then, inscribe them, each red-letter day! Forget not all the sunshine of the way By which the Lord hath led Thee; answered prayers, And joys unasked; strange blessings, lifted cares; Grand promise echoes! Thus each page shall be A record of God's love and faithfulness to thee!"

It was strange, after that, how my book of remembrance filled up. I soon had to have another. Sometimes I compared mine with father's, who said: "You see, daughter, we do not need to search for His gifts; they are legion to those who have open hearts."

Often we found we had mentioned the same gift or deliverance, but often the need of individuality or experience had recognized what the other had missed. Where I had noted gifts of bread and loving-kindness, my father had offered thanks for the gift of chastening and hidden manna. Underneath the former he had written: "Courage! ye who bear the sublime lot of sorrow. God wills it. It is the ordinance of infinite love, to procure for us an infinite glory and beatitude!"

and beneath the latter: "We have meat to eat that we know not of!" I noticed a spirituality in his remembrances that marked him, indeed, "a house-top saint." Not a day passed but I had occasion to take my little book many times from my pocket, and note a sweet surprise, a gracious gift, unexpected strength, or cheer, or light, a soft air, a radiant sunset, a perfect day, an hour of peace, an answered prayer, an hour of fellowship, a friend.

That coming year life took on new meanings. Joys unexpected and unasked came into my life, till the soul cried out, "Lord, it must be a mistake! This cannot be me." Then my little book began to shew new revelations of truth and God, some blessed inspirations, thanksgiving for a cross to bear, and some conception of "God's way with the soul." So that when we found one day our dear old father "fallen on sleep," with a smile of heavenly brightness on his face, I was able to write in my little book of remembrance, "Thank God for an abundant entrance into His rest."

"Thank God for all my loved That, out of storm and care, Have risen to peaceful heights above, And stay to meet me there"

The day before had been his birthday and we found this entry in Dr. McLeod's joyous words: "One man, O Lord, lifts up his voice and praises Thee that he has been born, because he knows Thee, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." Also this: "Now that I know what He meaneth with me, and what He would have me to do and to be, my heart says no more 'Thy will be done,' but 'Thy will let it be done, I entreat Thee!' " Dear tempest-tossed reader, try the remembrance book.

"He Restoreth my Soul."

Christ uses many restorative ministries. Sometimes it is the word of a friend or minister. Or it may be a hymn breathing the fragrance of a holy heart and speaking of a happier past. Or it may be a paragraph, a sentence, in some biography or religious treatise. Not unfrequently it happens on this wise: You are away in the country, walking solitarily and moodily, when there is a burst of sunbeams or of song notes from the brake; or, without any natural cause, you are suddenly aware of the gentle, thawing, all-pervasive influence of the grace of God, which touches the deepest springs of the heart and softens it and leads it to contrition and prayer. Is not this an experience something like that resulting from the look which Jesus cast at Peter, and which sent him out to weep bitterly, and was the first stage in his restoration?

Let those who want to understand the whole philosophy of restoration read the marvelous story of the way in which the Good Shepherd restored the soul of His erring apostle. We can only enumerate stages here. He prayed for him and warned him. From the midst of the rough crew that did their will on him, "He turned and looked upon Peter"—not angrily or harshly, but with the tenderest reproach. He gave a special message to the angels that they should bid the women to summon Peter amid the rest on the resurrection morning, showing how constantly he had been in the Saviour's heart all through His sorrows. He met him alone on the world's first Easter day, and permitted him to pour out the sorrow unrestrained by the presence of any "beside themselves." He gave him an opportunity of thrice attesting his love to wipe out the memory of the thrice denial. And this is not more than He will do for any one of us.

O, do not wait for days and weeks to elapse ere you apply to Him for His restoring grace; but just as you are, dare to trust Him, to do it now. While the throb of passion is still beating high, and the deed of shame is recent, look up to Him and claim forgiveness first, and in the same breath ask him to put you back immediately in the very place which you occupied before you fell. And then, though as yet no answering joy fills your heart, you will be able to exclaim in the fullness of faith, "He restoreth my soul."

Yes, and for those who dare to claim it there is another promise still more reassuring, which tells us that "He will restore the years that the canker worm hath eaten," giving back to us opportunities and privileges which we may seem to have forfeited forever.—The Rev. F. B. Meyer, in "The Shepherd Psalm."

The Perpetuating Power of Influence.

The pansy is the most human of flowers. The face of each seems to express a distinct thought. I well remember when I discovered that each blossom was furnished with the facility to perpetuate itself and scatter its

seeds in every direction. I had been an ardent admirer of a bed of beautiful pansies. I wished for some of the seed, and gathered a handful of seed-pods late one afternoon in autumn. I took them to my room and laid them on the mantelpiece. The next morning when I awoke I heard a movement on the shelf. It seemed that there was something alive there. I could not imagine what it was. Lying on my bed on the opposite side of the room, while listening to the movement I felt something strike me in the face. I looked to see what it was, and saw scattered all over the white coverlet little brown seeds. The mystery was solved. The seed-pods had dried somewhat during the night, and were bursting open. Each pod seemed to be furnished with a kind of spring, which when released scattered the seeds to every part of the room. It was God's plan for self-perpetuation.

Thus it is with the Christian's influence. Every thought, word, act, has in it the power of self-perpetuation. "They rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."—The Rev. A. Chapman.

Recorded Words.

Dr. Cuyler makes a practical application of the incident that when Bishop Latimer was arraigned on trial for heresy he heard the scratch of a pen behind the tapestry. In a moment he bethought himself that every word he spoke was taken down, and he says that he was very careful what words he uttered. Behind the veil that hides eternity is a record book in which our every syllable is taken down. Even the most trivial are not forgotten, for the Lord Jesus tells us "that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." He continues: "If our words have an eternity of existence, if good words have so potent an influence to save, if idle or profane or poisonous speech works such perennial mischief, how needful is the perpetual utterance of the prayer, 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips!'"—Young People's Weekly.

IDLE WISHING.—Mere wishing is poor business. To be utterly miserable, one has only to let his wishes run ahead of his hopes. Wishing for things we have little expectation of getting may be a pleasant recreation at first, like building aircastles; but when our wishes have left our hopes far behind the pleasure turns to pain, just as the fun of the small boy who is trying to keep up with his big brothers in a chase through the woods gives place to heartache the moment he realizes that he can neither catch up with them nor find his way back home. There is no happiness in any form of idleness, not even in idle wishing.—S. S. Times.

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