

If We Only Understood.

Could we but draw back the curtains
That surround each other's lives,
See the naked heart and its irrit,
Know what spur the action gives,
Often we should find it better,
Purer than we judge we should;
We should love each other better,
If we only understood.

If we knew the care and trials,
Knew the efforts all in vain;
And the bitter disappointment,
Understood the loss and gain,
Would the grim external roughness
Seem, I wonder, just the same?
Should we help where now we hinder?
Should we pity where we blame?

O, we judge each other harshly,
Knowing not life's hidden power,
Knowing not the fount of action
Is less turbid at its source,
Seeing not amid the evils
All the golden grains of good,
O, we'd love each other better
If we only understood.

Do It Now.

"How do you accomplish so much, and in so short a time?" asked a man of Sir Walter Raleigh. "When I have anything to do I go and do it," was the reply. The man who always acts promptly, even if he makes occasional mistakes, will succeed when a procrastinator would fail, even if the latter have the better judgment.

When asked how he managed to accomplish so much work, and at the same time attend to his social duties, a French statesman replied, "I do it simply by never postponing till tomorrow what should be done today." It was said of an unsuccessful public man that he used to reverse this process, his favorite maxim being "never to do today what might be postponed till tomorrow." How many men have dawdled away their success, and allowed companions and relatives to steal it away five minutes at a time! Amos Lawrence's motto was, "Business before friends."

"Tomorrow, didst thou say?" asked Cotton. "Go to, I will not hear of it. Tomorrow! 'tis a sharper who stakes his penny against thy plenty—who takes thy ready cash and pays thee naught but wishes, hopes, and promises, the currency of idiots. To-morrow! it is a period nowhere to be found in all the hoary registers of time, unless perchance in the fool's calendar. Wisdom disclaims the word, nor holds society with those that own it. 'Tis fancy's child, and folly is its father; wrought of such stuffs as dreams are, and base as the fantastic visions of the evening." O, how many a wreck on road to success could say, "I have spent all my life in pursuit of tomorrow, being assured that tomorrow has some vast benefit or other in store for me!"

The energy wasted in postponing until tomorrow a duty of today would often do the work. How much harder and more disagreeable, too, it is to do work which has been put off. What would have been done at the time with pleasure or even enthusiasm becomes drudgery after it has been delayed for days and weeks. Letters can usually be answered most easily when first received. Many large firms make it a rule never to allow a letter to lie unanswered overnight. Promptness takes the drudgery out of an occupation. Putting off usually means leaving off, and going to do means undone. Doing a deed is like sowing a seed; if not done at just the right time, it will be forever out of season. The summer of eternity will not be long enough to bring to maturity the fruit of a delayed action. If a star or planet were delayed one second, it might throw the whole universe out of harmony.

Cæsar's delay to read a message cost him his life when he reached the Senate house. "Delays have dangerous ends." Colonel Rahl, the Hessian commander at Trenton, was playing cards when a messenger brought a letter stating that Washington was crossing the Delaware. He put the letter in his pocket without reading it until the game was finished, when he rallied his men only to die just before his troops were taken prisoners. It was only a few minutes' delay, but he lost honor, liberty, life!

"A singular mischance has happened to some of our friends," said Hamilton. "At the instant when he ushered them into existence God gave them a work to do, and He also gave them a competency of time; so much that if they began at the right moment, and wrought with sufficient vigor, their time and their work would end together. But a good many years ago a strange misfortune befell them. A fragment of their allotted time was lost. They cannot tell what because of it, but, sure enough, it has dropped out of existence; for just like two measuring lines laid alongside, the one an inch shorter than the other, their work and their time run parallel, but the work is always ten minutes in advance of the time. They are not irregular. They are never too soon. Their letters are posted the very minute after the

mail is closed. They arrive at the wharf just in time to see the steamboat off; they come in sight of the terminus precisely as the station gates are closing. They do not break any engagement nor neglect any duty; but they systematically go about it too late, and usually too late by about the same fatal interval."

Punctuality is the soul of business, as brevity of wit.

Every business man knows that there are moments on which hang the destiny of years. If you arrive a few minutes late at the bank, your paper may be protested and your credit ruined. During the first seven years of his mercantile career Amos Lawrence did not permit a bill to remain unsettled over Sunday. Punctuality is said to be the politeness of kings. Some men are always running to catch up with their business; they are always in a hurry, and give you the impression that they are late for a train. They lack method, and seldom accomplish much.

Some one has said that "promptness is a contagious inspiration." Whether it be an inspiration or an acquirement, it is one of the practical virtues of civilization.

There is one thing that is almost as sacred as the marriage relation—that is, an appointment. A man who fails to meet his appointments, unless he has a good reason, is practically a liar, and the world treats him as such.

"I give it as my deliberate and solemn conviction," said Dr. Fitch, "that the individual who is tardy in meeting an appointment will never be respected or successful in life." "If a man has no regard for the time of other men," said Horace Greely, "why should he have for their money? What is the difference between taking a man's hour and taking his five dollars? There are many men to whom each hour of the business day is worth more than five dollars."

"It is not necessary for me to live," said Pompey, "but it is necessary that I be at a certain point at a certain hour."

When President Washington dined at four, new members of Congress invited to dine at the White House would sometimes arrive late, and be mortified to find the President existing. "My cook," Washington would say, "never asks if the visitors have arrived, but if the hour has arrived."

When his secretary excused the lateness of his attendance by saying that his watch was too slow, Washington replied, "Then you must get a new watch, or I another secretary."

Franklin said to a servant who was always late, but always ready with an excuse, "I have generally found that the man who is good at an excuse is good for nothing else."

On the eve of Nelson's departure on a famous cruise his coachman said that the carriage would be at the door punctually at six o'clock. "A quarter before," said the admiral; "I have always been a quarter of an hour before my time, and it has made a man of me."

Napoleon once invited his marshal to dine with him, but, as they did not arrive at the moment appointed, he began to eat without them. They came in just as he was rising from the table. "Gentlemen," said he, "it is now past dinner, and we will immediately proceed to business."

Many a wasted life dates its ruin from a lost five minutes. "Too late" can be read between the lines on the tombstone of many a man who has failed. A few minutes often makes all the difference between victory and defeat, success and failure.

A conductor's watch is behind time, and a freight railway collision occurs. A leading firm with enormous assets becomes bankrupt, because an agent is tardy in transmitting available funds as ordered. An innocent man is hanged because the messenger bearing a reprieve stops five minutes to hear a trivial story and misses a train or steamer by one minute.

"Haste, posthaste! Haste for thy life!" was frequently written upon messages in the days of Henry VIII of England, with a picture of a courier swinging from a gibbet. Post offices were unknown, and letters were carried by government messengers subject to hanging if they delayed upon the road.

Even in the old, slow days of stage-coaches, when it took a month of dangerous traveling to accomplish the distance we can now span in a few hours, unnecessary delay was a crime. One of the greatest gains civilization has made is in measuring and utilizing time. We can do as much in an hour to day as they could in twenty hours a hundred years ago; and if it was a hanging affair then to lose a few minutes, what should the penalty be now for a like offense?

"Better late than never" is not half so good a maxim as "Better never late."—Success.

Only what we have wrought into character during life can we take away with us.—Humboldt.

The Sin of Gossip.

It is an outrageous thing to despoil a man's character, yet that evil grows from century to century, and it is all done by whisperers. A suspicion is started. The next whisperer who gets hold of it states the suspicion as a proven fact, and many a good woman, as honorable as your wife or your mother, has been whispered out of all kindly associations, and whispered into the grave. Some people say there is no hell; but if there be no hell for such a despoiler of womanly character, it is high time that some philanthropist built one! But there is such a place established, and what a time they will have when all the whisperers get down there together rehearsing things! Everlasting carnival of mud.

Now, how are we to war against this iniquity which curses every community on earth? First, by refusing to listen to or believe a whisper. Every court of the land has for a law, and all decent communities have for a law, that you must hold people innocent until they are proved guilty. There is only one person worse than the whisperer, and that is the man or woman who listens without protest. The trouble is, you hold the sack while they fill it. The receiver of stolen goods is just as bad as the thief. An ancient writer declares that a slanderer and a man who receives the slanderer ought both to be hanged—the one by the tongue and the other by the ear. And I agree with him.

When you hear something bad about your neighbors, do not go all over and ask about it, whether it is true, and scatter it and spread it. You might as well go to a small-pox hospital and take a patient and carry him all through the community asking people if they really thought it is a case of small-pox. That would be very bad for the patient and for all the neighbors. Do not retail slanderers and whisperers. Do not make yourself the inspector of warts and the supervisor of carbuncles, and the commissioner for street gutters, and the holder of stakes for a dog fight. Can it be that you, an immortal man, that you, an immortal woman, can find no better business than to become a gutter inspector?

Beside that, at your family table allow no detraction. Teach your children to speak well of others. Show them the difference between a bee and a wasp—the one gathering honey, the other thrusting a sting. I read of a family where they kept what they called "A Slander Book," and when any slanderous words were uttered in the house about anybody, or detraction uttered, it was all put down in this book. The book was kept carefully. For the first few weeks there was a great many entries, but after awhile there were no entries at all. Detraction stopped in that household. It would be a good thing to have a slander book in all households.

Are any of you given to this habit of whispering about others? Let me persuade you to desist, Mount Taurus was a great place for eagles, and cranes would fly along that way, and they would cackle so loud that the eagles would know of their coming and they would pounce upon them and destroy them. It is said that the old cranes found this out, and before they started on their flight they would always have a stone in their mouth so they could not cackle, and then they would fly in perfect safety. O my friends, be as wise as the old cranes and let us avoid the folly of the young cranes. Do not cackle.

If there are people here who are whispered about, if there are people here who are slandered, if there are people here who are abused in any circle of life, let me say for your encouragement that these whisperers soon run out. They may do a little damage for awhile, but after awhile their detraction becomes a eulogy and people understand them just as well as if some chalked all over their overcoat or their shawl, "Here comes a whisperer. Room for the leper. Room!" You go ahead and do your duty and God will take care of your reputation.

How dare you distrust him? You have committed to him your souls. Can you not trust him with your reputation? Get down on your knees before God and settle the matter there. That man whom God takes care of is well sheltered.—Dr. T. Image.

How to be Happy.

God made man to be happy. The desire for happiness is universal, and happiness is the chief pursuit of men, yet few there be that find it. Most men are unhappy, and many are absolutely miserable. Some who seek happiness most diligently are most wretched. What is the secret of a happy life?

A clear idea of what it really is will aid us in our search. Happiness is not the pleasure which arises from physical gratification. Physical desires

and appetites are not to be ignored or condemned. They have a divine origin and a noble purpose. When indulged in moderation under the control of reason they contribute to the enlargement of mind and the strength of life. But when the pleasure which they afford is made the chief end of life, when they are indulged without restraint or limit, they become a curse instead of a blessing. Instead of a source of happiness they are transformed into a fountain of misery. The pleasure is too narrow, too shallow, and too transient to be the chief end of life, and is not worthy to be called happiness.

The pleasure which money gives is not happiness. Money is a good thing when wisely used. It may contribute to educate the intellect, to beautify and adorn the home, and to elevate and improve life, but when it becomes the chief object of pursuit it ceases to be a blessing. When the desire for it crowds out holier desires, when the possession of it hinders the pursuit of higher good, it brings misery rather than happiness. The cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the good seed of the kingdom. Many have been made miserable by money.

Intellectual pleasure is not happiness. The thrill of joy which rushes through the soul upon the acquisition of new knowledge is not to be despised. Riches of the mind are far more valuable than treasures of silver and gold. But these are not the highest treasures. The study of science may crowd out of the mind higher studies. Intellectual achievements and attainments may be made a substitute for higher achievements and attainments. The soul has a capacity for something higher and better than mere knowledge.

The apostle says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." And one of our poets says truly:

"The world can never give
This bliss for which we sigh."

Neither music, nor painting, nor sculpture, nor science, nor wealth, nor friendship, nor human love, can fill every capacity of the soul. God has provided some higher thing for us.

Happiness is the joy which arises from a good character. It is not what we can see, or hear, or know, or possess, that can make us happy, but what we are. It is the inner life and not the outer circumstances. Happiness is a plant which is rooted in the deepest soil of our being, and it shall flourish and grow and bring forth fruit in every clime.

To be happy all sin must be forsaken. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." "Blessed is he who transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." No matter how profitable a sin may be, no matter how much pleasure it may promise, it must be abandoned. The sin which is dear as a right eye, the easily besetting sin, the sin which brings in the largest revenues, all must go. There can be no happiness without complete separation from sin.

Selfishness must be abandoned. Selfishness is the root of all sin. Self is the chief obstacle which stands between the soul and happiness. Selfishness is a fatal fault in human character. In the pursuit of happiness the temptation to make self the center and make everything bend to the service of self is powerful. But this is a fatal error. Self is not the center. God is the center of the great social system of the universe, and all we are members of another. As the planets are bound to the sun and to each other by a subtle force which we call gravity, so we are all bound to our Creator and to each other by a subtle law which we can love. Ignore that law, and happiness is lost. Obey it, and happiness is sure.—Chris. Advocate.

Best Way of Using Light.

We do not always get the good of a thing by fixing our attention upon it. A candle is a useful thing to him who uses it to see his work, but of little use to him who looks only at the candle. So the lights God has given us are not always of most use to those who occupy their minds with studying them. There have been careful students of the Bible, champions of its authority, whose lives showed little influence of its precepts. The Bible is a light to men's feet, and is most honored as well as best used when men walk by it. It is something to be obeyed more than talked about. It offers us indeed the lesser delight which comes with the bare knowledge of the truth, when we see its harmony and its beauty. But it always calls us to

go on to the greater joy in the truth which comes with obeying and living it. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

CRITICISM.—D. L. Moody in a recent address, said:—"Supposing that on the day of Pentecost the apostles had been criticizing Peter, do you think the Holy Spirit would have worked so miraculously? Imagine John whispering to James, 'I don't seem to me that Peter is quite up to himself this morning,' and James replying, 'I am disappointed myself. This is a representative audience, and he lacks polish and finish.' Suppose Andrew had turned to Matthew and said, 'Really, this is too bad for Peter to be so harsh on the Pharisees and rulers. There are so many other things upon which we can agree, I do wish he would avoid all controverted subjects.' Do you think that, if that had been the attitude of the Apostles, there would have been any conversions? I believe that, had we been present at the notable meeting, we would have heard the prayers of many of the disciples on behalf of Peter at that moment, and, although the words were plain and simple, they were borne home to the conviction of thousands, because the Holy Spirit could work freely. What the minister needs, my friends, is your prayers, your sympathy, your confidence, and not your criticism."

THE PROMISES.—God's promises are ever on the ascending scale. One leads up to another, fuller and more blessed than itself. In Mesopotamia, God said, "I will show thee the land." At Bethel, "This is the land." In Canaan, "I will give thee all the land, and children innumerable as the grains of sand." It is thus that God allures us to saintliness. Not giving us anything till we have dared to act—that He may test us. Not giving everything at first—that he may not overwhelm us. And always keeping in hand an infinite reserve of blessing. Oh, the unexplored remainders of God! Who ever saw His last star!—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

That house is no home which has a grumbling father, a scolding mother, a dissipated son, a lazy daughter, or a bad tempered child. It may be of marble, surrounded by garden, parks and fountain; carpets of extravagant costliness may spread its floors; pictures of rarest merit may adorn its walls; its tables may abound with dainties the most luxurious; its every ordering may be complete; but it won't be a home.

It is said that when Caesar once gave a man a great reward, the man exclaimed: "This is too great a gift for me to receive." "But," rejoined Caesar, "it is not too great a gift for me to give. The promises of God are far beyond what we are worthy to receive, but they are in keeping with the nature and glory of God."

When God's children pass under the shadow of the cross of Calvary they know that through that shadow lies their passage to the great white throne. For them Gethsemane is as paradise. God fills it with sacred presences; its solemn silence is broken by the music of tender promises; its awful darkness softened and brightened by the sunlight of heavenly faces and the music of angel wings.—Farrar.

There never was any heart truly great and generous that was not also tender and compassionate; it is this noble quality that makes all men to be of one kind; for every man would be a distinct species to himself were there no sympathy among individuals.—South.

Inflammatory Rheumatism.—Mr. S. Ackerman, commercial traveler, Belleville, writes: "Some years ago I used Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil for Inflammatory rheumatism, and three bottles effected a complete cure. I was the whole of one summer unable to move without crutches, and every movement caused excruciating pain. I am now out on the road and exposed to all kinds of weather, but have never been troubled with rheumatism since. I, however, keep a bottle of Dr. Thomas' Oil on hand, and I always recommend it to others, as it did so much for me."



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