

Duty's Path.

Out from the harbor of youth's bay
The clear sea the path of pleasure;
With eager steps we walk that way
To bring joy's largest measure.
But when with morn's departing beam
Goes youth's last precious minute,
We sigh, "Twas but a fevered dream—
There's nothing in it!"

Then on our vision dawns afar
The goal of glory, gleaming
Like some great radiant solar star,
And sets us longing, dreaming,
Forgetting all things left behind,
We strain each nerve to win it
But when 'tis ours, alas! we find
There's nothing in it.

We turn our sad, reluctant gaze
Upon the path of duty:
Its barren, uninviting ways
And void of bloom and beauty.
Yet in that road, though dark and cold
It seems as we begin it,
As we press on to its behold
There's heaven in it.

—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

The Chief Church Member.

BY JAY BENSON HAMILTON, D. D.

Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.
The pastor had concluded a sermon from this text, in which he had tried to portray the greatness of the ministry which was possible to the weakest member of the church. Robert Lister, a humble, diffident member of the church, approached the pastor. It was evident from his manner that he wished to speak, but did not know how to begin. The pastor pleasantly said, as he took his hand:

Well, Robert, what is it?
I liked that sermon very much. I would like to become the Chief Church Member. I can't do much, but I'm willing to do anything you say. You know I can't speak or pray; if I were to sing it would break up the meeting; I give all the money, now, I can afford, and that isn't much; what can I do to serve the church?

Begin with the little things which no one else is willing to do, said the pastor.

A blank look of wonder, which was really comical, shone in Lister's large blue eyes. Then a bright smile instantly transfigured his homely face. He gripped the pastor's hand until he made him wince with the pain, and then turning away, softly said, I understand.

The ladies of the Missionary Society were discussing the distribution of the printed notices announcing that a returned missionary would speak in the church. One member of the committee said to another:

We cannot afford to pay to have it done; the boys who distributed the last notices threw them away in bunches, so that they were almost utterly useless. We might just as well have put the whole lot in the fire.

Robert Lister stepped up and said:

Ladies, I have a pair of big feet that cover a good deal of ground when I stand still. They can cover a good deal more if I keep moving. I am not fit to do much for the church but run errands; let me distribute your notices.

But, Robert, you have to work hard all day; when will you get time to do it?

After my day's work is over. We cannot pay you anything for it, said another lady, a little hesitatingly.

I do not expect you to give me anything. I will do the work for God, and let him pay me.

The work was done so thoroughly and faithfully that Lister was immediately chosen for the position of Bill Distributor for the church.

The Ladies' Aid Society were discussing the supper they were planning to give in the chapel, at a church reception. One said:

What shall we do about the tables and seats? There is so much lifting and carrying to do, and no one likes to do it.

Lister modestly said:

I am not fit for much but to run errands and carry burdens. Fortunately I have strong arms, and am glad to have the privilege of using them for God.

The night before the reception Robert worked for several hours, carrying and piling up the seats in a side-room and arranging the tables, which he had to bring from their dusty resting place in the cellar. The work was done with such neatness and dispatch that Lister was unanimously appointed chairman of the committee of one to have charge of tables and chairs.

It soon came to the notice of the church that one member was always willing and always ready to do the many little things which no one else cared to undertake. He was called hither and thither. He never refused. Nothing was so hard or menial or humble but he would perform it cheerfully and thoroughly. He made a place for himself in the first month which multiplied his friends ten-fold. In

three months he was the most conspicuous man in the congregation. He was sought after by everybody. No occasion was complete that did not enjoy his humble ministry. The universal exclamation was heard from all who were active in church work:

How could we get along without him?

At the close of a prayer meeting, the pastor announced that he wanted a volunteer for a very unpleasant duty. A man was very ill; he needed some one to watch with him that night. The sick man was very poor; his home was wretched in the extreme; the task was one of simple duty to a needy brother, and yet it would be an affliction to the Christian, who would undertake it. The announcement was followed by a silence deep and long. No one moved or spoke.

Robert Lister made his first speech in meeting. He slowly arose and awkwardly changing from on-foot to the other said in a low tone which was heard with difficulty across the room:

I will go.
The next morning the pastor called at the sick man's home very early. Robert had already gone to his work. The room was hardly recognizable. It had been thoroughly cleaned and put to rights. The bed was transformed by its new dress of coarse but spotless linen. The sick man was washed, shaved and robed in clean night garments. A little flower-pot with a blooming flower in it sat upon the window sill. The pastor looked about the room in amazement. The sick man spoke with deep emotion.

I have heard of church members who talked about being like Jesus; but the man you sent here last night was the first I ever met who made a business of it. He had done ten hours of hard work before he came here. He scrubbed the floor and cleaned up everything in the room. He brought these bed-clothes from his own spare chamber. He washed me and dressed me in his own clothes. When I cried a bit and tried to thank him, he stopped me and said:

I am glad to do this little thing for my Saviour. I wish you would let him be your Saviour, too.

If he has religion, and that's what makes him give up his rest to help a stranger who can never pay him back, then I'd like to have religion too.

Robert Lister was unanimously elected Church Nurse.

After awhile I learned that Robert had contracted the habit of humble helpfulness to others. He never neglected his own home, and was very happy in it, although it was very poor, and destitute of many of the comforts of life. He was busy every leisure moment in serving the sick and poor in some little way, of which very few ever heard. The pastor found him before him in many homes where there was sickness and distress. His name was always repeated with words of gratitude and blessing.

In one home the pastor learned of a new phase of Lister's character which was a great surprise. A widow had an only son, who in his early manhood had become the slave of strong drink. Robert had taken a strong liking to the young fellow, and tried to watch over him. Again and again he had carried him home and spent the night in nursing him through the result of a filthy debauch. The young man at last began to exhibit shame, and tried for Robert's sake to reform. He had remained sober for nearly a month. Robert was delighted and greatly encouraged.

The mother rushed into Robert's house one evening in a frenzy of grief and despair, sobbing that her boy had been coaxed into a saloon and his fortnight's wages would be squandered and she would be left in want. Robert hastened to the saloon and entered. The young man was in the centre of a circle of young fellows who were all drinking at his expense.

Come, Will, your mother needs you, said Robert, with a smile, as he took the young man by the hand.
Oh! don't go yet, Will, his companions shouted, let us make a night of it!

As Will hesitated a moment, one spoke to him with a sneer:

It seems to me you are old enough to take care of yourself, without having a guardian trotting at your heels all the time.

The saloon keeper, seeing that he was likely to lose the young man's money, came around from behind the bar with a heavy mallet in his hand. In a loud and threatening tone of voice he said:

You meddlesome Christian endeavor, or whatever you call yourself, mind your own business and get out of my saloon, or I will break your head for you.
Robert drew himself up to his full height, and said, quietly but rather sternly:

Before I became a Christian, I learned to give as well as take

pretty hard knocks. I do not care to try my hand on you, for I might hurt you, but you must not interfere with me in this matter.

The infuriated saloon keeper struck a savage blow at Robert's head with the mallet. It would have been fatal had it reached him. The descending arm was seized with a grip of iron and wrenched back with such terrific force that the mallet flew across the room and dashed the plate glass mirror behind the bar into a thousand fragments. Lister seized his assailant about the waist, and lifting him up over his head, tossed him over the bar, sweeping into one heap of ruins every bottle, glass and ornament, with their owner underneath them, upon the floor.

The crowd, aghast at the exhibition of such unexpected, marvellous strength, stood in silence, motionless.

Robert quietly said:
Do any more of you gentlemen wish to interfere?

But no one could reply, Lister seized the young man in his arms as if he were a child, and walked out of the room. This heroic treatment completed the reform of the young man, to the great joy of his poor, unhappy mother. The young man signed the pledge, and became a regular attendant at church.

A change in Robert's employment necessitated his removal to another community. When it was announced that he had gone, there was universal dismay. Upon every hand it was said:

What shall we do now? Who will take his place?

The pastor, who had not lost a valuable helper merely, but a beloved friend, announced to the congregation:

The most important place in our church is vacant. Our friend and brother, who has occupied it for a year, has gone to bless another church and community. He will be missed by every member in our church, but by no one more than by his pastor. Who is willing to earn his wages of love and appreciation by filling his place and doing his work? Who will become the Chief Member of the church by becoming the Church Servant?

At the close of the sermon, another man, just as poor and diffident, sat near the pulpit until the congregation had gone. He then said to the pastor:

I am not able to fill Robert Lister's place. If I was, I am not fit. But if you want me, I will try. I will do the best I can.—Advance.

Systematic Giving.

There is no Christian duty which is performed in a more slovenly manner by many good people than the duty of giving. Some give lazily to whatever and whoever begs the most lustily; they are quite as likely to encourage impostors as deserving objects, for they are too careless to inquire and discriminate. Some give money fitfully, under the spasmodic inspiration of an eloquent appeal; others give only when their digestive organs are all right, and they are in good humor. A third class give for ostentation, like the selfish curmudgeon who bestowed a hundred dollars on a town clock because he liked to give his money where he could hear it tick.

At a missionary meeting held among the negroes at Jamaica, these resolutions were agreed upon.

1. We will all give something.
2. We will all give as God has enabled us.

3. We will all give willingly.
So soon as the meeting was over, a leading negro took his seat at the table, with pen and ink, to put down what each came to give.

Many came forward and gave, some more and some less. Amongst those that came was a rich old negro, almost as rich as all the others put together, and threw down upon the table a small silver coin. Take that back again, said the negro that received the money. Dat not be according to de second resolution. The rich old man accordingly took it up, and hobbled back again to his seat in a rage.

One after another came forward, and almost all gave more than himself, he was fairly ashamed of himself, and again threw down a piece of money on the table, saying:

Dare, take dat! It was a valuable piece of gold, but it was given so ill-temperedly that the negro answered again: No! dat won't do yet. It may be according to de first and second resolution, but not according to de last; and he was obliged to take up his coin again.

Still angry at himself and all the rest, he sat a long time, till nearly all had gone, and then came up to the table, with a smile on his face, and very willingly gave a large sum to the treasury. Very well, said the negro, dat will do. Dat according to all der resolutions.

The time will come, says the venerable Dr. Alexander, and I cannot but hope that it is near at hand, when all the difficulty about the funds for the spread of the gospel

will be done away; when Christians will learn a lesson which hitherto they have been very slow to learn, that the richest enjoyment of wealth is to give its increase to the treasury of the Lord, and that the sweetest of incentives to labor is the hope of gaining something that may aid in furthering the cause of God. The excuses for our want of liberality are utterly futile; they are worse—they are often impious. If we are Christians, let us act like Christians, and not dishonor that sacred name by a base, selfish avaricious spirit, which keeps back from the Lord what is His due.—Free Baptist.

The South Side.

May I come in, dear? called the girl's bright voice.

Pull the bobbin and the latch will fly up, was the merry answer.

The girl pushed open the door and ran across the room to the bed. Nobody could have guessed the pain and the wearisome plaster cast from the cherry voice; still less could one have guessed that the need to earn made the weeks of pain still harder to bear. These things the woman lying there told to her God, never to her guests.

The girl held up a forlorn handful of late asters. The very last, she declared. I hunted and hunted! Are you sure? her friend asked, quickly. I've always found them later than this every year. Did you go over to the south side of the hill?

No, the girl confessed, laughingly. I believe that I looked on every side but that! I'll go straight back and hunt again.

Twenty minutes later she returned laden with autumn bloom.

You were right, she said. I had no idea that the south side made such a difference. The slope was half covered with the most beautiful blossoms, so big and deep colored! I'm going to put them in this pitcher beside you so that you can reach your hands down deep into the autumn and pretend you're picking them yourself.

Then, her friend returned, I should have to give up the memory of somebody who picked them for me.

The girl stopped her pretty work. Now I understand the difference! she said slowly. You will insist, willful woman that you are, in living on the south side of life, and getting every bit of sunshine there is, while most of us deliberately go and sit on the north side and gumble because it's cold! Never mind, I've caught your secret now, and I'm going to sit in the sun. Then maybe I'll blossom.

The white face in the bed smiled. And the best of it all is that there always is a south side, she answered—the sun's side, and God's—Well spring.

In this world be one with others in mutual love and service; then not only the angels and saints will be one with you, but even God himself, here, and still more there in the future world, when God shall be all in all. Strive, man, by every means to attain to such union, avoiding any spiritual separation through self love, pride, envy, covetousness, doubt, and little faith—that they 'all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.' Union is God; separation is the devil. The separation of the churches was the work of the devil; heresies, dissent, are the work of the devil.—Selected.

The life of man consists not in seeing visions and in dreaming dreams, but in active charity and willing service.—Longfellow.

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There are so many cough medicines in the market, that it is sometimes difficult to tell which to buy; but if we had a cough, a cold or any affliction of the throat or lungs, we would try Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup. Those who have used it think it is far ahead of all other preparations recommended for such complaints. The little folks like it as it is as pleasant as syrup.

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I had a very sore foot through having a nail run in it, and was unable to walk. I started applying Hagyard's Yellow Oil and in a short time the soreness was gone and I was soon able to walk again.

DAVID McLELLAN, Pelee Island North, Ont.

Eczema Tortured A Child.

About three years ago I had leave school with sore hands. My teacher said it was Salt Rheum or Eczema and told me to see a doctor.

Mother got some medicine, it did me no good.

After I had suffered with itching and burning about the months, mother thought I would try Burdock Blood Bitter.

I only took two bottles, but my hands got completely cured.—Emma Sheridan, Parry Sound, Ont.

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