

Speak Thou the Truth.

Speak thou the truth. Let others fence
And trim their words for piety;
In pleasant sunshine of pretense
Let others bask their day.

Guard thou the fact; though clouds of
night
Down on thy watch tower stoop;
Though thou shouldst see thy heart's de-
light
Borne from thee by their swoop.

Face thou the wind, though safer seem
In shelter to abide;
We were not made to sit and dream;
The safe must first be tried.

Dean Alford.

Pray for Others.

We, with many others, were on our way to a large meeting held semi-annually. We went the four or five miles in the trolley and our seat happened to be next to that of the president of the great organization. We spoke to the good woman and found her ready to converse and also found her most interesting.

In our little talk we told her that both she and the meeting over which she from time to time presided were subjects of prayer with us. She in turn related little bits about herself to which we eagerly listened.

The meeting was held and then we were hindered from attending like services for a year. But the time came when we were again a part of the congregation over which Miss — presided. We only saw the esteemed president as she sat upon the platform, but to see that she was alive and able to attend to the duties of her office was an occasion for thankfulness and we lifted up our heart to the Lord in praise that He had spared so good a person to fill the responsible place of president over so great an organization.

We were just about to leave the church when it occurred to us that it would be pleasant to speak a word to Miss —, the president. We didn't feel that we had any personal acquaintance with her, did not expect her to remember us, but it would be an appropriate thing to greet her and grasp her hand.

Filled with these thoughts we went to the platform where she still sat. Holding out a hand we began to speak her, when she cried out, affectionately, "Oh, my dear, I thought I should see you to-day! I have been going to write to you. Only think," she said to a friend who was with her, "she—(meaning myself)—said she prayed for me, and I valued it so much!"

We assured her that we still prayed for her and came away deeply impressed with the incident. Here was a woman in a high and important office, with many friends and probably living in affluence, and yet she so valued the assurance that she was prayed for by one who personally was to her a stranger that she treasured it up in her heart as something precious! It was not this spur to use intercessory prayer frequently? We thought so and have tried to be more faithful to that duty.

Over and over again we have been surprised at the gratitude manifested by friends when they were informed that we prayed for them. One dear lady who lived miles away from us came to see us one day, saying at once, "At Uncle G—'s funeral you said you prayed for me and I came here to talk it over, I was so grateful."

Another said, "I've no doubt that I owe it to your prayers and those of your household that I have been furthered in certain plans."

Still another cried, "You dear, good —, did you pray for me?"

We find that in general people take it as a great favor done them that you pray for them, and perhaps it is the greatest we can do them. Oh, let us more frequently than ever bring our friends to the throne of grace. Let us bring churches, societies, missionary work, meetings, and bands, and especially missionaries. Let us bring countries, rulers and all in authority. We listened while a dear young lady missionary from India spoke in a large gathering. "Oh, dear friends," she cried, "do earnestly pray for the help of the Holy Spirit in our work. I have stood before a heathen gathering of people and have thought, 'Oh, what can I do unless the Holy Spirit aids me?' I felt that He must be the teacher. Do pray for His help in our work."

If we have a guest it is a time to bring that individual close to the Lord. If we are going out to visit or to shop it is well to go first into our closet to pray for those we expect to meet. If we have a sick or otherwise afflicted neighbor they should be very especially brought to God. If we are called to have an interview with a stranger bring that stranger to the Lord. Intercessory prayer is taught us by example the highest, and it is taught us by command.—Chris] Intelligencer.

Religious Barrenness.

BY AMOS R. WELLS.

A New Zealand girl, taken to England to be educated, there became a Christian. Soon after, she set out to return home. "Why not remain in England?" asked her friends. "You love this land: why tempt the unknown perils of those far-away islands?" "What!" cried the Christ-found girl, indignantly; "Do you think, after I have found the Christian's joy, I could keep it from my dear father and mother? I would go if I had to swim there!"

Why did Christ, in this parable of the fig-tree, and later in his more severe miracle of the fig-tree, condemn religious barrenness so unsparingly? Because if a man is a Christian, he must of necessity bring forth much fruit. A Christian that is not making other Christians is as much a contradiction in terms as a fire that is not warming or a flame that is not lighting.

Sternly does Rudyard Kipling sing:
One instant's toil to Thee denied
Stands all eternity's offence.

There is no more deadly peril for a Christian than to be content with merely not doing wrong. Do not dare to live on the negative side of the Ten Commandments. "Six days shalt thou labor." Glasgow is supplied with water by hidden pipes running far up among the hills to a lovely lake. There is the health, the fulness; down below, the need. Is it a light matter if a Christian allows the conduit of Christ's health, namely, his own life, to get clogged up?

The fruit may be very modest, hidden beneath humble leaves. It is fruit that Christ wants, and not parade of fruit. George MacDonald, in a noble sonnet, pictures a vast cathedral, with ministering priests busy at the altar in a gorgeous ceremonial. In a far corner a woman is sweeping. It is to her, and not to the great heads of the temple, that a quiet figure comes, saying softly, "Daughter, thou sweepest well my floor!"

The lowest duties oft are found
Lying on the lowest ground.

Christ bears with us, for a time, as the vine-dresser bore with the fig-tree. He throws around us all fruitful influences. If ever a man is to bring forth fruit to God's glory, it will be in this earth where God has made it so easy.

There will come a day when it will be too late. There will come a time when in anguish of soul we shall pray the "Last Prayer" of Helen Hunt Jackson:

Father, I scarcely dare to pray,
So clear I see, now it is done,
That I have wasted half my day,
And left my work but just begun!

In outskirts of Thy kingdom vast,
Father, the humblest spot give me;
Set me the lowliest task: Then hasten,
Let me, repentant, work for Thee!

God grant that, when that sure time arrives, we may have lived a life (as Mrs. Jackson had indeed) full of Christlike ministries, brave battles for the right, endurance of hardness, confidence in Jehovah.—Sabbath Reading.

Join a Church and Help to Support It.

Doubtless many of our readers, especially the young men, will be surprised at being told that the above is the advice of that successful business man and multi-millionaire, Russell Sage, of New York. But it is so, and in proof of it we give his words, from the Saturday Evening Post, as follows: "At the very outset a young man ought to join a church. He ought to bear the burden of the church support to the full extent of his ability. What this ability is he must judge for himself. As in charity, he should give a dime if he can give no more; and this dime, if it represents the full measure of what he can spare, is just as important as the dollar or the thousand dollars of the rich man. Communion with the church helps tremendously in building up a solid character. There will be met-clean, wholesome men and women. Acquaintances will be formed that are helpful in every way. It is natural that the people of a church should take more interest in the success of one of their young communicants than they do in the success of an outsider. That is human nature, and human nature prevails in a church just as much as it does outside. The only difference is, that in the church human nature is cleaner."

Certainly that is wholesome advice, even if looked at only from a purely selfish, material standpoint. But Mr. Sage does not stop there. He takes into consideration the motive by which the young man is actuated in taking that important step. On that truly vital point he is thoroughly orthodox, or he says: "But unless a young man joins a church through conviction it is far better for him to remain away. If he utilitarian advantages are upper-

most in his mind, if he has no true religion, church communion, instead of helping, will harm him. He may find success more easily, but not happiness. The man who joins a church simply because he can make something out of the connection is a hypocrite of the meanest stripe, and a hypocrite is not only a very unhappy man, but he must also be the most contemptible being in the sight of the Lord. I can conceive of no more miserable existence than that which is led by a pretender. And the more carefully a boy realizes the hollowness of sham, religious and otherwise, the more placidly he will sleep of nights. The man who joins a church because it offers an easy short-cut to a competence will probably find some pretty unpleasant experiences in his way. There are sincere young men who may be deterred from joining a church from this very reason. They have not a sufficient religious conviction, or perhaps no religion at all. In such cases (always providing that he is honest and sincere), it will nevertheless benefit a young man to attend a church. With most of us religion has come as a matter of education. It is never too late to begin this education, and, as a purely ethical problem, it is a fine thing for a thinking young man to spend part of his Sunday in a place where he can hear good, instructive discourse on religious topics."

The above are words of wisdom. They are from the brain and pen of a man whose career as a business man has been both honorable and successful, and should have great weight with the young men of to-day.—The Telescope.

"The Lord Shut Him In."

Noah did not close the door. There are words that God keeps for himself. The burden of them is too heavy for the work of man. To shut that door on a world about to perish would have been to great a responsibility for a son of Adam—the stress of it would have borne too heavily on a human heart. Another moment, and another, and another, might have been granted by the patriarch, and the door might never have been shut at all. And would he have done the work conclusively, even if he had, in the first instance, closed the door? Who knows but that, when the waters rose and he heard the wailing around, and friends whom he loved held towards him their little ones, and shrieked to be taken in, he might have relented, and opened, and a rush might have been made, and the ship that carried the life of the world might have been swamped? He dared not open a door which God had shut; perhaps he could not open it. We never hear that he opened the door, even when the earth was drying. God told him when to go out.

And so it is in the ark of salvation. It is not the church, it is not the minister, that shuts or opens the door. These do God's bidding; they preach righteousness, they offer salvation, they gather in; it is God that shuts and that opens the door. And what a sound was that when, in the listening ominous hush of earth's last evening, God shut the door! There have been sounds as well as sighs to make the boldest heart quail and the flintiest heart melt; the cry has gone up from cities given over to fire and sword, the shuddering throes of earthquakes which hurried myriads to death, but except the cry on Calvary, which corresponded to it, no more melancholy sound has been heard by human ears than that which passed into the evening stillness when the broad, green earth was left to be the grave of mankind, and God shut the door of the ark.

Once again God will shut the door. Man will not do it. Angels will not do it. But, oh, what a sigh and shudder will pass through the listening universe when God will shut the door of the heavenly ark up on the lost!—Rev. Alexander Stewart.

Praise God.

Praise God for a home. Tens of thousands of boys and girls will go to sleep tonight without a mother to tuck them into bed and without any of the pleasures of home about them.

Praise God for food and clothes. Millions of persons are hungry today, and many of them are suffering for want of clothing.

Praise God that you do not lift blind eyes to a sky you have never seen. Be grateful for your sight, through which so many of your pleasures come. Praise the kind Father in heaven, too, for your hearing and speech.

Are not the sun, the moon, the stars, the air, the water, the rain, the snow, the trees, the flowers, worth a word of praise? Yet how seldom do we thank God for these common blessings!

Praise God for books, and for the pleasure and power which come from reading and education.

Praise God for the wonderful inventions and progressive spirit which make today the best time in all the world's history to be alive. The comforts, the conveniences, the pleasures, and the blessings that are possible to all of us in these modern days are surely worth a "thank you" to the great Giver of them all.

Praise God for the country's prosperity. He has smiled upon our harvests and upon our factories.

Praise God, most of all, for the blessed Bible, the holy Church, and a wonderful Saviour. Jesus is the theme of the praises that are sung in heaven; shall He not be our chiefest cause for praise here?

How shall we do all this praising? With our lips. In our hearts. By our lives. Just to be glad and grateful is praise that pleases God. Then, to give another person reason to be glad and grateful is still a better way of praising God.—William T. Ellis.

Right and Wrong Use of the Tongue.

The sins of the tongue all point to the necessity and profit of self-mastery. So evident and so important did this appear to James that it occurs again and again in his epistle. "In many things we all stumble," he writes, "If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also."

If this confession of failure and magnifying of the office of the tongue seem exaggerated, let anyone sit down quietly and think of the sins and cruelties of human speech. The careless words which no repentance can call back again, the rash promises which it has cost us so much to fulfill, the expression of the lower nature which has shamed the higher, the confessions of evil and yieldings to falsehood, the hot and angry words which sober thought condemned—these are some of the perils of the tongue. On the other hand, like most of the uses of the world which turn so easily to evil, the tongue may be the instrument of great and lasting good. "Therewith bless we the Lord and Father." If we can, by God's grace, hold it to blessing, there is no better testimony to the indwelling of God's Spirit in a human soul than righteous, considerate, modest, truthful speech. The faithful Christians' manner of words as well as of life already has the mark of heaven's purity and truth upon it. Speaking the truth in love, men trust him. Seeking not his own, men come to speak unselfishly in his presence. Considering others, they in turn become considerate. Cherishing no resentments, he awakens no angry feelings. Such a Christian self-control is not easily attained, but it is worth striving for, and by God's help it is not out of reach.—The Congregationalist.

Control Your Thoughts.

Until you have learned to control your thoughts you will never be able to live a godly and righteous life. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he, and it is because the thoughts that we entertain in the hostelry of the soul are such worthless and vain ones that our words and acts often bring so heavy a disgrace on the name we love.

Well might the wise man say: "Keep thy heart above all keeping, for out of it are the issues of life."

When the heart is right the ear and the eye and the mouth and the foot will necessarily obey its promptings; but when the heart is wrong, filled with tides of ink, like the cuttle-fish, it will envelop itself in the impurity to which it gives vent. . . . If you habitually permit evil things to have their right of way through you, or lodging within you, remember that, in God's sight you are held equally guilty with those that indulge in evil acts, because you are withheld, not by your fear of him, but by your desire to maintain your position among men.—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

To Conquer Worrying.

Consider what must be involved in the truth that God is infinite, and that you are a part of his plan.

Memorize some of the Scripture promises, and recall them when the temptation to worry returns.

Cultivate a spirit of gratitude for daily mercies.

Realize worrying as an enemy which destroys your happiness.

Realize that it can be cured by persistent effort.

Attack it definitely, as something to be overcome.

Realize that it has never done, and never can do, the least good. It wastes vitality, and impairs the mental faculties.

Help and comfort your neighbor.

Forgive your enemies, and conquer your aversions.

The world is what we make it. Forward, then! Forward in the power of faith; forward in the power of truth; forward in the power of friendship; forward in the power of freedom; forward in the power of hope; forward in the power of God!—Bishop J. H. Vincent.

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE.—James Russell Lowell, who admitted that he was a liberal thinker upon religious subjects, made this very true observation: "I fear that when we indulge ourselves in the amusement of going without a religion, we are not, perhaps, aware how much we are sustained at present by an enormous mass, all about us, of religious feeling, and religious conviction." An upright, admirable man, who treats religion with indifference is not a product of indifference in religion, but owes his estimable qualities to the religious environment of himself and his ancestors for generations back, whereby a "certain moral direction has been given to his character." If men would seek for a genuine product of religious indifference they must find it in the midst of such environment for generations back. The center of Africa would be a better place to look for it than Christian America.

Peace for the past, grace for the present, and glory for the future. Yes, there is a glory for the future; nothing before the true believer that isn't glory. I think it would take the wrinkles out of your brow if you would just look into the future instead of into the past.—D. L. Moody.

That is a happy day that is brimful of good deeds. Try to crowd a day with good, sweet deeds of love, and see if we are not right.

If anybody knows herself to be in a false position let her step out of it. If anybody has been unkind or inconsiderate or self-absorbed or morbid or ungenerous, let her quietly kneel down and tell the Lord that she is penitent and ask his forgiveness, and then turn over her new leaf. But all this should be done quietly—not with a flourish of trumpets—Margaret E. Sangster, in the Ladies' Home Journal.

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