

Our Young People

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THE C. E. TOPIC—Aug. 14.

OBEDIENCE WHEN OBEDIENCE IS HARD.—Gen. 22: 1-8.

BY AMOS R. WELLS.

An old sailor was talking with a young apprentice. Said he: "Aboard a man-o'-war, my lad, there's only two things—one's duty, t'other's mutiny."

No less strict and absolute are our relations with our Captain. The discipline of the Kingdom of Heaven is military. Christ says "Come," and we are to come; "Go," and we are to go.

The Duke of Wellington had issued a certain order to an officer, who tried to show the duke that it could not be carried out. "Sir," said Wellington, "I did not ask for your opinion. I gave you my orders." Christ is not so harsh, but He is equally authoritative; "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Obedience is the secret of the joy of Heaven. Once a Sunday school class were discussing the description of angels, "Ministers of His who do His pleasure," and the teacher asked how the angels obey God. "They do it directly," said one. "And well," said another. "And with all their hearts," said a third. But the fourth gave the best answer, for she added, "They do it without asking any questions."

And this same obedience, that is the secret of the joy of heaven, is the foundation of all the heavens on earth that have ever been established. A successful Christian worker, on his death-bed, was asked how it was that he had accomplished so much in his life. "The secret of my life," he answered, "is that I have said 'Yes' to Christ." Saying "Yes" to Christ will make any life happy and prosperous.

On the contrary, there are many who find this way of obedience too hard. It is always a narrow way, as Christ described it. Sometimes it is a terrible way, as when Abraham was ordered to sacrifice Isaac. This difficulty of the way is the cause of much of the disobedience of men. Perhaps the average life is justly set forth in a stern inscription on an old slab in the cathedral of Lubeck, Germany:

Thus speaketh Christ, our Lord to us;
Ye call Me Master, and obey Me not;
Ye call Me Light, and see Me not;
Ye call Me Way, and walk Me not;
Ye call Me Life, and desire Me not;

Ye call Me Wise, and follow Me not;
Ye call Me Fair, and love Me not;
Ye call Me Rich, and ask Me not;
Ye call Me Eternal, and seek Me not;
Ye call Me Gracious, and trust Me not;
Ye call Me Noble, and serve Me not;
Ye call Me Mighty, and honor Me not;
Ye call Me Just, and fear Me not;
If I condemn you, blame Me not.

Now, the difficulty of obedience, instead of disheartening the Christian, should be his glory and his spur. It is Christ's testimony to our possibilities. He does not try us above what we are able to bear. He knows that fine steel cannot be made without fire, nor fine characters outside the furnace of affliction. He isolates us, that we may get strength in ourselves. He impoverishes us, that we may seek the true riches. He withdraws the praise of men, that we may seek the honor of God. And as the chemist is careful not to allow the furnace a fraction of a degree hotter than is necessary for the steel, so God renders no human life the least degree more difficult than is necessary for our character.

He knows best. We can safely trust Him. That conviction will cause us to obey cheerfully even when obedience is hardest, and will in the end make even the hard way easy to our feet.



New Happiness By an Old Receipt.

"My dear Mrs. Brown, how well you are looking—and how happy."

The word slipped out before I knew it and I could have bitten off the tongue that said it for vexation at my own discourtesy, for Mrs. Brown had for years carried an unhappy, anxious look which made me wonder.

Now she laughed a whole-souled, happy laugh that was good to hear. "I'm glad you said it, dear! for it's true. I've never been so happy since I was a child."

"Won't you tell me the secret, please—if there is a secret," I exclaimed, for I was not happy myself as I could have wished under the stress of some unusual worries.

"O, there's no real mystery about it. It's only that I've found myself out and discovered that I'm not of nearly the importance to the universe or even to my own family that I imagined."

"But that makes some people very unhappy."

"I know! Isn't it silly! I felt that way once. I think I had the feeling that if I were to die the wheels of the world would stop. I suppose it's natural for a mother to worry about her children when they first go out into the world, but I not only did so, but made their father worry about them, too. Then Mother's Club piled all the mistakes of motherhood on my back and the Social Reform Club all the political corruption of the city. I began to try to elect the next President; and when the Japanese war broke out, every Japanese repulse made me feel as if I had lost a friend. At last I had to have in the doctor and he looked at me over his spectacles and said, 'Mrs. Brown, you are trying to do too much.'"

"Doing too much, I suppose you mean," I said, for I was cross and unhappy because I couldn't go to the Social Club that night and help scold over the way the streets are not cleaned.

The doctor laughed: "You mustn't ask me to tell you how much you accomplish," he said, "all I know is that you would do more if you didn't take the work so hard. Now I am only going to prescribe two things. One is idleness of body and the other is idleness of mind. The world won't stop, Mrs. Brown, if you let it run its own affairs for a month, and if you don't, you'll have trouble."

"But I can't stop!" I cried.

"That's the disease under which you suffer," he replied with one of his most positive tones and the politest of his bows. "The brakes are worn out, you must get new ones, or you will run to destruction."

Did you ever try to lie still and not think? I thought I couldn't, but between my husband and my doctor I got through two days of fighting worry and the next morning woke up with a new idea in my head—the idea that I, Elizabeth Brown, was probably not of nearly the importance to the world I had imagined. I found that the house went on well enough without me. I remembered that the responsibility for the dirty streets was with the city officials. I considered that the world would not come to an end if Japan were beaten. Mrs. Brown, responsible for the affairs of the universe without any way of enforcing her responsibility, was the unhappy person whom you knew. Mrs. Brown, an unimportant individual, with work enough, and a Father to whom all her worries can be brought and left, is happy in possession of a quiet mind.

"I see," I answered. "But don't you find the worries creeping back?"

"O yes! but then I remember the partnership. I don't have to run the world, because my Father is in charge. I do the best I can for my children, but my Father shares the responsibility. I try to help my neighbors—those I can reach—but I let my Father think about the others."

She laughed again that happy, restful laugh which it was good to hear. And I went on my way wondering whether I too might not be more efficient and infinitely happier if I really let God manage his own world in his own way.—*Congregationalist*.



CHRIST'S RELATION TO SINNERS.

Christ assumed no indefinite relation to sin or to sinner. The former he painted in its true colors, and he lost no opportunity to make it heinous in the sight of mankind; but not so with the sinner. "He came to seek and to save that which was lost." Look at special cases of this sort which came directly under his observation. That poor woman in the coats of Tyre and Sidon who cried after him on account of her poor child was treated with consideration. True, she was a heathen, but he heard her tale of distress, and went to her relief.

So with the unfortunate woman taken in sin. Those who brought her to him wanted that she should be stoned, but he commanded those who were guiltless to cast the first stone at her. They all slunk away with shamefulness of face. Then he spoke kindly to her, forgave her sins, and bade her go in peace and live righteously henceforth. At Jacob's well he brought another one of this sort to repentance, and sent her off full of joy and gratitude. So we might multiply such cases indefinitely.

Not that he had any patience with the sins of these people. Far from it. But he did pity and forgive the sins in these repentant sinners. He was sorry for them. They were weak, frail creatures of earth, struggling with the adverse conditions of life, and he extended to them the helping hand, lifted them upon their feet, and started them out right with God. For this purpose he came into the world.

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It is important, therefore, that we follow his example. We know that it is difficult always to discriminate between the sinner and the sinner's sin. Often we confound the two, and in our loathing of sin we are tempted to loathe the sinner as well. But Christ drew this distinction: He hated the one with all his nature, but he loved the other with all the power of his great heart. Separate the sin of a man from him and there is much in his nature and character to love.

In dealing with the sinner, we must keep this in view. However great and repulsive may be his sin, there is that in his bosom worthy of salvation. He has a soul, and sin has gotten control of it. It is the design of religion to rescue this immortal soul from the dominion of sin and restore it to God. Hence, we must hate the sin, but love the sinner, and strive to bring him to Christ for salvation. In this way the cross becomes effectual in saving men.—*Texas Advocate*.



A Noted Horseman's Experience.

Mr. Antoine Wendling, owner of Deveras, 211 1-4, and proprietor of the Clifton House, Brockville, says no liniment compares with Nerviline for general use around the stable. For strains, sprains, swellings, internal pains, and especially for affections of the whirl bone, Nerviline is unequalled. Mr. Wendling believes Nerviline is indispensable as a horse liniment; it has strength, penetrating power, and works thoroughly. Every horse and stock owner should use Nerviline. Sold in large 25c. bottles.

The Rev. F. B. Meyer says: "Some people are always telegraphing to heaven for God to send a cargo of blessing to them; but they are not at the wharfside to unload the vessel when it comes."

A Good Name is to be Prized.—There have been imitations of Dr. Thomas' Eclectic Oil which may have been injurious to its good name, but if so, the injury has only been temporary. Goodness must come to the front and throw into the shadow that which is worthless. So it has been with Eclectic Oil, no imitation can maintain itself against the genuine article.

Many build as cathedrals were built; the part nearest the ground finished, but that part which soars toward heaven, the turrets and spires, forever incomplete.