

TOO BUSY

Mrs. H. C. Morrison

This is a busy age—I suppose the most rushing the human race has ever seen. We are too busy to eat almost, too busy to pray, too busy to be kind, too busy to give attention to our loved ones around the home circle, too busy to read God's Word, too busy to do a thousand and one things that would make life more worth while to others and bring a blessing and satisfaction to our own lives of which we little dream.

Sunday morning comes, but you are too busy doing "nothing" so that you decide you have no time to attend Sunday school and church, either morning or evening, consequently there is a vacant pew which speaks, more loudly than you imagine, of your indifference and lack of reverence for God's house. Prayer meeting night comes and you are too busy looking after this, that and the other to even consider that you have an obligation to meet in attending the house of prayer.

Yes, there is a sick neighbor lying upon a bed of suffering, with little of this world's goods to make her comfortable, but you are too busy to go to see her, to speak a word of encouragement, and perhaps take along some little delicacy that would mean much to her famished body and empty stomach.

Yes, I know my neighbor has lost a dear one out of her home, but I am too busy to go over and speak a word of comfort, and to mingle my tears of sympathy with the bereaved ones. Some one else will go, but I must attend to my affairs, regardless of how much others may need me.

We are even too busy to give the loving attention to our dear ones; our little ones play around our feet, but we do not let them know we see them, or that they mean anything to the place we call "Home." How often would the tiny arms love to entwine about our necks, and press the kisses of tender affection upon our cheeks, but they fear to bother us, as we always seem too busy to notice them.

How Much We Miss

by being too busy! In after years when the patter of little feet are heard no longer on the floor; the chirping of baby voices no longer greets us as we meet them at the door; the toys will be laid away, and then how we shall "long for the touch of a vanished hand, the sound of a voice that is still!"

Just here I want to give a real story for the benefit of mothers and fathers who are too busy to listen to the prattle of baby voices, or bend the cheek for proffered kisses. It was written by a Rotarian, and was printed in the Pacific Methodist. Here is the touching story:

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"One year ago today I sat at my desk with the month's bills and accounts, when a bright-faced, starry-eyed lad of twelve rushed in and impetuously announced: 'Say, dad, this is your birthday; you are fifty-five years old and I am going to give you fifty-five kisses, one for each year.' He began to make good his word when I exclaimed: 'Oh, Andrew, don't do it now; I am too busy.'"

"His silence attracted my attention, and looking up I saw his big blue eyes filled with tears, and apologetically I said: 'You can finish tomorrow.' He made no reply, but was unable to conceal his disappointment, his face wearing a grieved expression as he quietly walked away.

"That same evening I said: 'Come and fin-

ish the kisses now, Andrew.' But he did not respond to the invitation.

"Two months later, in consequence of an accident, the waves of the river closed over his body and we carried him away to sleep near the village where he loved to spend his vacation.

"The robin's note was never sweeter than his voice, and the turtle doves that coo to their nestlings where he sleeps were never so gentle as my little boy, who left unfinished his love-imposed task.

"If I could build a ladder to the skies and find him there; if I could only tell how much I regret those thoughtless words spoken, and could be assured that he understands and knows how my heart is aching because of my unkind request, there would be no man in all this wide world so inexpressibly happy as the one who sits today and thinks how he prevented an act that love inspired and grieved a little heart as tender as the mercy of God."

FRIENDS THAT HELP

It is a common experience that we are not ourselves in the company of some people. One man stimulates our thought, quickens our faculties, sharpens our intellect, opens the floodgates of language and sentiment, while another dampens our enthusiasm and degrades all our faculties.

Some people act like a tonic or an invigorating and refreshing breeze. They make us feel like new beings. Under the inspiration of their presence we can say and do things which it would be impossible for us to say and do under different conditions.

From others emanates an atmosphere which paralyzes thought, dwarfs expression and destroys naturalness.

To grow, we must cultivate the society of those who stimulate us along the line of higher endeavor, who open up visions to our inner eyes, who make us long to be more, to know more and to do more; who make us conscious of greater powers, make us believe more firmly in ourselves, and arouse in us a determination to do the very best of which we are capable.

Those who appreciate the good in you and help to build you up instead of destroying your self-confidence, double your power of accomplishment. Your best friends never embarrass you with your inferiority or accentuate your weaknesses.

We can never forget those who help us to unfold our possibilities. The discouraged pupil never forgets the teacher who sees in him that which his parents and other friends failed to see; and nothing else so spurs him on to make the most of himself as his desire not to disappoint the teacher who has confidence in his ability to do something when no one else believed in him.

Beecher said he was never the same man again after he had read Ruskin. Fortunate is the man all through life who in the formative period of his youth had one broad-minded, whole-souled, optimistic friend. His soul-vision will be clear, and the things of his life will be things worth while. Storms may blow his ship out of its course, but his compass stands true and the rudder steady, and the ship will ride safe home. More fortunate still is he who remembers that the formative period of life never ends, and always selects friends who direct his thoughts and ideas upward, never downward.

And what our friends can do for us in this respect we can do for them.—Selected.

"THAT PRAYER"

R. H. was an active business man in the city of W. He had been a professed Christian; but since his removal to the city, and constant association with a worldly class of persons, he had gradually turned further and further into the broad pathway, and in the busy scenes of life had forgotten the vows once earnestly breathed.

In a time of unusual awakening in the churches he was aroused to a sense of exceeding sinfulness, and once more found peace and joy in believing. Among the resolves and promises fervently made, he determined to erect a family altar, and, though conscious of a great weakness, thus to show before his large family circle his reliance on an all-helping hand.

As the time for family worship drew near, he felt more and more uneasiness as to the result. "It was such a cross to take up!" But the thought would come again and again, "I have promised and I must fulfill."

At last the moment came when he must show his willingness thus to own his need of daily help; but just as he took his Bible in his trembling hand the doorbell announced a visitor; a friend from a distance, dearly beloved, but well known for his infidel unbelief in holy things, was ushered in. Now the struggle at Mr. H.'s heart was at a climax, and fear well-nigh gained the mastery; but "I have promised God" was triumphant, and he read from the sacred page, and then knelt in prayer. "O Lord!" fell from his trembling lips, and then came a pause. Again the words like a sigh from an overburdened heart, "O Lord!" and then a second silence. The third time the same words fell into the stillness—and that was all his prayer.

The next morning his cross seemed more like a heap of praise, and he found no difficulty in expressing the emotions that filled his soul.

From that time the hour sacred to family worship was a blessed one indeed, and he often reverted to and regretted the failure of that first prayer, fearing for the influence it might have had on the mind of his unbelieving friend.

In a few weeks this fear was merged into a great rejoicing. "That prayer," so his friend wrote, "has haunted me. The earnestness of those two words, 'O Lord,' deeply affected me. All I could do, I could not get them out of my mind. I think you might have prayed fluently, with abundance of words at your command, and I might have gone away unmoved; but it seemed such a reality to you—your heart seemed so full that common expressions came not quickly, and your simple, but yet powerful, 'O Lord,' said more to me than ordinary volumes could have done.

"Blessed be His holy name. I, too, can say, 'O Lord,' and feel that He is my Lord—the prayer-hearing, prayer-answering, and sin-forgiving God—the one Lord over all, ever-blessed, ever merciful, and full of all gracious compassion."

Mr. H. found in this letter renewed encouragement for a faithful fulfilment of duty, and more firmly than ever did he believe in the constant help God gives to those who, amid weakness and fear, strive to obey and honor Him.—*A Message From God.*

"We breathe in the atmosphere of heaven by prayer and we breathe it out again by praise; prayer and praise make up the essentials of the Christian life."—*Spurgeon.*

"Let not the stress of your life be a murmuring stream."—*Aughey.*