

THE FRAGRANCE OF A GENTLE LIFE.

Once in crossing a meadow I came to a spot that was filled with fragrance. Yet I wondered whence the fragrance came. At last I found, low down close to the ground, hidden by the tall grass, innumerable little flowers. It was from these that the fragrance came.

I enter some homes. There is a rich perfume of love that pervades all the place. It may be a home of wealth and luxury, or it may be plain and bare. No matter; it is not the house, nor the furniture, nor the adornment that makes this air of sweetness. I look closely. It is a gentle woman, mother or daughter, quiet, hiding self away, from whose life the fragrance flows. There is a wonderful charm in a gentle spirit. The gentle girl in a home may not be beautiful, may not be well educated, may not be musical or an artist, or "clever" in any way, but wherever she moves she leaves a benediction. Her sweet patience is never disturbed by the sharp words that fall about her. The children love her because she never tires of them. She helps them with their lessons, listens to frets and worries, mends their broken toys, makes dolls' dresses, straightens out tangles, and settles their little quarrels and finds time to play. Her face is always bright with the outshining of love. Her voice has music in it as it falls in cheerful tenderness on the sufferer's ear. Her hands are wondrously gentle as their soothing touch rests on the aching head, or as they minister in countless ways about the bed of pain.—J. R. Miller.

CARELESS QUOTATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

On this subject the Southern Presbyterian comments as follows:

"God has guarded the very words of Scripture to make them express his mind. Some men are careful in quoting to use the exact language of the Word; or if, for any reason, they adopt a paraphrase, to use such language only as equivalents it. We wish to emphasize this, and to press its importance.

"In some cases there has been reckless disregard of this matter. It was a famous London preacher who, on one occasion, desired to preach on the folly of some of the fashions, in dress or headgear, of the ladies of his day. He announced his text as 'Top-knot, come down.' Is the reader puzzled to find that text? Let him refer to Matthew 2:17, and he will read the words: 'Let him which is on the housetop not come down.'

"There is another form of this error arising not from intent to trifle, but from carelessness. The other day we read, in some paper, a quotation of this sort, 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the earth.' And we apprehend that the writer would have been amazed to learn that he had put into the mouth of our Lord what He never said. The English Version (both the Authorized and the Revision), reads 'unto the end of the world'; not the 'earth.'

"But do not 'earth' and 'world' mean the same thing? Not in this case. The Greek word is 'aion,' which strictly means, the age or the dispensation. 'Earth' never carries this meaning, but describes rather the land on which we live. The careless substitution of one word for the other changes the sense of the passage. There is no need to cite other instances. The one is enough to make us study the exact phraseology of the Bible and be careful about misrepresenting it."

Reverence and use aright the hours which, as they perish, are imparted to you. Regard each new day as a fresh continued gift from God, and say to it, "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me."—Farrar.

THE FIRESIDE CALL.

Many men have had calls to the ministry. They have been called to the foreign field. Some have been called to serve God in the professor's chair, and others as evangelists and teachers. But have any felt the call of God to stay at home and train those of their own household? Surely many have felt their duty by the fireside as a direct call of God to Christian service. Many have longed to go elsewhere to fulfill some mission which appealed to their hearts, but have remained at home where immediate duty demanded their attention. And this is a call of God as truly as the call of the missionary to fields beyond the seas. Good people cannot afford to desert the home. God's great work in this world is in the home. The Church cannot provide good ministers and missionaries unless it provides good fathers and mothers. The love of God established in the hearts of boys and girls, young men and young women, is the beginning of all world-wide evangelism. To neglect that little mission field that is bounded by the four walls of home is a grievous wrong. Here God has his purest and noblest Christian missionaries at work. Every true father and mother has a special call to active service. The home stands in the center of God's vineyard.—United Presbyterian.

Rest in the Lord, my soul;
Commit to Him thy way.
What to thy sight seems dark as night,
To Him is bright as day.
—Maltbie D. Babcock.

FOR WHOM DO WE WORK?

Choosing a master is more important business than choosing a servant. Yet most persons, whether the mistress of a house, or the head of a corporation, or the foreman of a department, think more about the less important choice. "For whom do I work?" is the gravest question in the universe. Many of us have never fairly considered the question, and would rather not. We know for whom we ought to be working, but do we dare face a cross-examination in the matter? Suppose we should make our own the prayer that an earnest Christian man has uttered: "That I may lose sight of pay, and of the approval both of others and of my own conscience, and simply represent Christ and be responsible to Him."—S. S. Times.

GETTING EVEN—WITH WHAT?

When one person has wronged another, the unjustly injured person is always, for the time being, on a higher plane than the one who has done the injury. The wronged one has not lost what the other has lost. The only way to make the loss equal is for the injured one to "get even." Then, in addition to his hurt feelings, he has the satisfaction of knowing that he is now no better than the other fellow. What an ingenious tempter Satan is, to persuade us to add injury to insult unto ourselves! For that is what "getting even" accomplishes; it is lowering ourselves and our standards to the level of the one who has wronged us. How much better to help the other to "get even" with the higher standards which Christ alone can enable us to hold to: love and forgiveness.—S. S. Times.

Conviction of the sinfulness of offenses is tremendously needed among Christian people. Many think themselves blameless if they have refrained from doing that which they ought not to do. Do we recognize that every kind word we might have spoken which we have not spoken is sin? That every kind deed we should have done and have not done is sin?—George H. C. Macgregor.

THINGS YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM NOBLE MEN AND NOBLE WOMEN OUTSIDE THE BIBLE.*

The Apostle, writing to the Christian Church at Thessalonica, begins with thanksgiving to God, who is the giver of all the good that comes to us, whether directly or indirectly. And if all good comes from God, so no good can be hoped for or expected but from God through Christ Jesus. So we should not only be thankful to God for the good which we ourselves receive directly from Him, but for all that good which comes to us from others through the promptings of his grace and goodness acting upon others. This is strong encouragement for us, not only to pray for ourselves, but for others also. A true faith will always be an active, energetic faith. It will not hide itself away in our hearts, but reach out and concern itself with others. It will be a working faith, working for God as well as for ourselves. It will work for others, and in turn will work for us, so that our own comfort is increased, and our own faith is strengthened through the faith we have helped put in the hearts of others, and the fruits of which we cannot mistake; for faith is known by works.

The All Importance of Faith.

Why is that faith is so important? Men often seek to substitute meekness or temperance or some other grace instead of faith, but without avail. Without faith it is impossible to please God, or to be accounted righteous in His sight. Faith of itself considered has nothing to boast. Without works it is dead, being alone. It cannot compare in beauty and grace with other elements that complete the Christian life any more than the rough root beneath the soil can compare in beauty with the flowers and fruits above. Faith is but the trust of a poor, helpless soul; the empty hand of a beggar reaching forth to grasp the things he greatly needs—but as this empty hand is that which touches the hem of Jesus' garment, or lays on Christ for comfort and salvation, so the faith that saves us has a value beyond any other thing. He that believeth not makes God a liar. He that believes sets to his seal that God is true.

The Lessons of Life.

We have all much to learn; and life has many lessons to teach us. Love is the great translating medium. It has enabled us to learn from noble men and women about us the great lessons of comfort and peace which have at times come to our own hearts, or we have been enabled to carry to others. You go to see a dear friend on whom some great sorrow has fallen. You sit beside him. You look into his eyes. You say a few broken and faltering words to him. And then you go away disheartened. How entirely have you failed to do for him what you started out to do, and would have given much to do. And how many times you have been afterward surprised to find that you really did help and comfort him in that almost silent visit. How many blessings have thus come to us from just such faithful souls! How many times may we have carried such blessings to others! Never keep back that sympathy for which all about us are suffering. Go and give it to others out of the fulness of your hearts. It may prove both a blessing and a lesson; and it may be some day, when deeply needed, it may come back to you. Let us give freely, for in such measure as we give shall we in turn receive.

*Christian Endeavor topic for Sunday, March 24, 1907, 1 Thess. 1:28.