

## THE WORDS WE SPEAK.

Our words are imperishable. Like winged messengers, they go forth, but never to be recalled—never to die. They have a mighty power for good or evil through all time; and before the great white throne they will be swift witnesses for or against us.

The words we speak have a mighty power; and there are words angels might covet to utter. There are words of comfort to the afflicted. There are sad hearts that need comfort everywhere, and there are words of blame and cold indifference, or feigned sympathy, that fall like lead upon the stricken spirit; and there are blessed heart-words of cheer, which bear up the soul and enable it to look out from the dark night of its troubles, and discern the silver lining of the gloomy cloud.

There are words of counsel to the young, to the tempted, the erring. Speak them earnestly, affectionately, and though the waves of circumstance may soon waft them away from your observation, yet such is God's husbandry, that if uttered in faith and prayer, He will take care that on an earthly or heavenly shore the reaper shall rejoice that he was a sower.

There are kind words; how little they cost, how priceless they are! Harsh words beget harshness; and fretful words, like a certain little insect, sting us to a feverish impatience. But who can resist the charm of kind, loving words? The heart expands beneath them as to the sunshine, and they make us happier and better.

Then there are cheerful words, and why should we dote them out with such miserly care? They ought to form the atmosphere of our homes, and to be habitual in all our intercourse. We have so many weaknesses, so many crosses, so much that is down-hill in life, that the habit of thinking and speaking cheerfully is invaluable.

But there are other words against which we should pray, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." There are words of falsehood and deceit. They lurk in our expressions of civility, or professions of friendship, our transactions of business. How early do children, even, begin to weave a web of deceit, and how carefully should those who train them watch against this sin, and, by example and precept, teach them always and everywhere to speak the truth.

There are slanderous words—how mischievous they are! There are words of

the tale-bearers, that breed suspicions and jealousies in neighborhoods, and between families. There are envious words and flattering words, and flattery words, which are no better. Then there is the long list of idle words, or by-words, as they are called.

But there is another class of words to which we would gladly refer—they are the words of eternal life. Cornelius sent for Peter that he might speak words to him. What blessed words those were! Will they not be remembered with joy by both speaker and hearer throughout all eternity? As we pass along the world, God will often let us speak a word for Him; and if we seek His aid, He will make it a word of power and comfort, a word in season, to him that is weary.

"Speak gently; 'tis a little thing  
Dropped in the heart's deep well.  
The good, the joy, which it may bring,  
Eternity shall tell." [Bullard.]

## THE LIGHT OF A CHEERFUL FACE.

There is no greater every-day virtue than cheerfulness. This quality in man among men, is like sunshine to the day, or gentle, renewing moisture to parched herbs. The light of a cheerful face diffusion itself, and communicates the happy spirit that inspires it. The sourest temper must sweeten in the atmosphere of continuous good humor. As well might fog, and cloud, and vapor, hope to cling to the sun-illuminated landscape, as the blues and moroseness to combat jovial speech and exhilarating laughter. Be cheerful always. There is no path easier traveled, no load but will be lighter, no shadow on heart or brain but will lift sooner in presence of a determined cheerfulness. It may at times seem difficult for the happiest tempered to keep the countenance of peace and content; but the difficulty will vanish when we truly consider that sullen gloom and passionate despair do nothing but multiply thorns and thicken sorrows. Ill comes to us as providentially as good—and is as good, if we rightly apply its lessons; why not, then, cheerfully accept the ill, and thus blunt its apparent sting? Cheerfulness ought to be the fruit of philosophy and of Christianity. What is gained by peevishness and fretfulness—by perverse sadness and sullenness? If we are ill, let us be cheered by the trust that we shall soon be in health; if misfortune befall us, let us be cheered by hopeful visions of fortune; if death rob us of the dear ones, let us be cheered by

the thought that they are only gone before to the blissful bowers where we shall meet, to part no more forever. Cultivate cheerfulness, if only for personal profit. You will do and bear every duty and burden better by being cheerful. It will be your consoler in solitude, your passport and commendation in society. You will be more sought after, more trusted and esteemed for your steady cheerfulness.—The bad, the vicious, may be boisterously gay and vulgarly humorous, but seldom or never truly cheerful. Genuine cheerfulness is an almost certain index of a happy mind and a pure, good heart.

## REMARKABLE LAKES IN PORTUGAL.

On the top of a ridge of mountains in Portugal, called Estralla, are two lakes of great extent and depth, especially one of them, which is said to be unfathomable. What is chiefly remarkable in them is, that they are calm when the sea is so, and rough when that is stormy. It is, therefore, probable that they have a subterranean communication with the ocean; and this seems to be confirmed by the pieces of ships they throw up, though almost forty miles from the sea. There is another extraordinary lake in that country, which, before a storm, is said to make a frightful rumbling noise, that may be heard at a distance of several miles. And we are also told of a pool or fountain, called Fervencies, about 24 miles from Comiba, that absorbs not only wood, but the lightest bodies thrown into it, such as cork, straw, feathers, &c., which sink to the bottom and are never seen more. To these we may add a remarkable spring near Estremes, which petrifies wood, or rather encrusts it with a case of stone; but the most remarkable circumstance is that in summer it throws up water enough to turn several mills, and in winter is perfectly dry.

SECRET RELIGION.—God is often lost in prayers and ordinances. "Enter into thy chamber," said he, "and shut thy door about thee." "Shut thy door about thee," means much; it means shut out not only frivolity, but business; not only the company abroad, but the company at home; it means,—let thy poor soul have a little rest and refreshment, and God have an opportunity to speak to thee in a still small voice, or he will speak in thunder. I am persuaded the Lord would often speak more softly if we would shut the door.—Cecil.