

pray for a change of circumstances and the Father may see that it is better to leave you as you are, but there is one prayer He always answers. There is no perchance about it.

"Let him ask in faith" (Jas. 1. 6). Of course no blessing comes of the man who doubts. God could not give in such a case because the man could not receive. If we are not willing to give God trust, how can we expect him to give us wisdom.

"Like a wave of the sea" (Jas. 1. 8). The doubting man is like a sea surface. He lies open to all disturbing influences, as the ocean does on its surface. There are few greater misfortunes than to be thus between two natures. Instability destroys the value of all that is good in a man.

"Unstable in all his ways" (Jas. 1. 8). His opinions are fluctuating, and so are his sentiments. Sometimes he is repenting of his sin, and sometimes he is repenting of his repentance. Sometimes the importance of the future overwhelms him, and sometimes he feels that nothing is worth thinking of but the present. Sometimes he is as serene as a May morning and sometimes as sweeping as a cyclone. Such instability is fatal to the growth of strong character.

#### QUOTATIONS.

Great imagination may make a great poet; great logical power, a great philosopher; great faculty for observation, a great scientist; but nothing makes a great man but great faith.—Dr. Deems.

Some think to-day that they are Christians because they have such joy-inspiring thoughts. To-morrow they have sorrowful thoughts, and they think they are not Christians. But having sorrowful thoughts is no reason why a man is not a Christian. When you experience joy God has one part of your character under training, and when you experience sorrow he has another part of your nature under training. Your growth requires the employment of all instruments.—Henry Ward Beecher.

Our faith ought to be like the solid shore no matter what winds of controversy sweep over it, or what waves of popular infidelity beat against it. Are not the truths we rest on parts of God's eternal continent of truth?—James M. Ladd.

A doubting, hesitating suppliant does not offer a steady hand or heart to receive the gift nor would he retain it if he got it. Nor does it please God to give to those who dishonor him with their doubts.—Dr. Ormiston.

Do not be moved by despondency. Satan does not mind which way you get off the rock, whether by jumping up or by jumping down. It is all the same to him so long as you leave the rock of your salvation. Many there be who go up in a balloon of conceit, while others are ready to roll down the steps of despondency or despair. Be not moved away from the hope of the gospel one way or the other. The least sin ought to make you humble. The greatest sin ought to make you despair.—Chas. H. Spurgeon.

All sorts of influences work on men to break down decision of character. There is a moral gravitation that draws men down earthward, makes them spiritually stoop-shouldered. Life is like a stream in which all things that are dead drift down and only those things work up that possess the power of decisive resistance. Men are caught in the current of weakness of will, the current of cowardice, the current of selfishness, and wanting the faculty of quick, sharp decisions, are swung away from their moorings and adrift, before the will is awake or the resistant forces can be summoned into action.—Robert E. Speer.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS.

You sometimes see rocky cliffs hanging over the water so far that you feel sure that they will fall, until you go behind and see them keyed into place by an immense overbalance of weight, in comparison with which the projection is nothing. The mountains of truth are as old as the Matterhorn, and we need have no fear on account of any seemingly portentous projection.

Spurgeon says: "As I was riding along in the south of France one day, I saw a pair of fine eagles overhead. There was a man with a gun below who was anxious to get a nearer acquaintance with the eagles, but they did not come down to oblige him. He pointed his rifle at them, but his shots did not go half way, for the royal birds kept above. The higher air is the fit dominion for eagles. Keep up, Christians! Keep in the higher element, resting in Jesus Christ, and do not come down to find a perch for yourself among the trees of philosophy."

An invincible determination will do anything that can be done in this world, and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities will make a two-legged creature a man without it. It was this that made Disraeli Prime Minister of Great Britain. His first speech in the House of Commons was greeted with jeers and laughter. He resumed his seat, saying: "I sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me."

How many men fail in business because they waver. Here is one who is thinking of going West, but never decides. Ask him why he does not improve his place, and he replies, "I cannot make up my mind, for very likely I shall go West." Tell him he had better, in this case, invest his money in Western property, and he says: "I don't want to do that, for I may starve." So he does neither one nor the other.

#### SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS.

The Christian should seek to turn every trouble to good account, as a clever general wrenches victory from defeat.

Before the blast the dead leaves are driven, or the waves on the surface of the ocean are tossed, but the tree has endurance and remains; the ocean has endurance and remains.

The exhortation of Paul to live a stable life never had more pertinency than now, for the whole community is filled with men who have strong religious desires, but who are yet unsettled, wandering, and fickle.

Jesus Christ is the supreme model and centre toward which every effort for self-improvement and development should be directed.

What is the anchor and cable are to a vessel in a storm, faith, which makes God's strength our own, is to the human soul in times of trial.

The weak, nerveless, aimless prayer of a man looking two ways for relief, at one moment to God, and the next to himself, constitutes that asking amiss which receives not. "Let him ask in faith."

All the life of an undecided man is like a legal deed that lacks the signature. Obstancy is the firmness of a frozen post. Decision the firmness of iron set in steel.

One of the best ways to train the mind to decision is to do hard and disagreeable things.

#### POINTERS.

Indecision is the paralysis of usefulness. Decision should begin with positive and fearless choice of sides in matters of importance.

The true man never, never drifts. He has chart, compass, course and helm.

The Bible constantly holds the irresponsible, undecided life up to contempt.

The man of decision will always do what he ought to do.

He knows that "impossible" is an impossible word in the line of duty.

If a thing is right, do it boldly; if it be wrong leave it alone.

Nothing so contributes to firmness of character as directness of aim.

#### QUESTION STUDIES.

What are the winds that drive us about? How may we guard against them?

What are we doing to cultivate decision?

What are the chief elements in a decisive character?

#### AUG. 25.—MISSIONARY MEETING.

Subject:—"Medical Missions."

Hymn 66.

Prayer—For the medical missionaries and their work.

Reading of the Scriptures—Luke 10. 25-37. Hymn 163.

Address—The beginning and growth of medical missions. References: "The Uplift of China," 50 cents; "Medical Missions," Wanless, 5 cents; "Medical Missions," Williamson, 35 cents.

Address—The value of medical missions as a pioneer agency in our mission fields.

Address—The medical missions and missionaries of the Methodist Church. References: The Missionary Report, The Missionary Bulletin.

Hymn 35.

Prayer.

WHY MEDICAL MISSIONARIES ARE NEEDED IN WEST CHINA.

We see many people, men, women and children, who are much to be pitied. They are to be pitied because of blindness which might have been prevented; because of lameness which might have been avoided if taken in time; and because of horrible deformities, causing misery and wretchedness, and shortened life, all of which might have been avoided or overcome by rational treatment if taken in time. Smallpox is never absent the whole year through. We meet it in the dispensary, and in the people's homes, in the street, and in the church, till we are apt to grow careless of the danger. Smallpox carries off large numbers of children every year, and blinds many of those who recover. Measles and scarlet fever prevail, and do their share of damage. The great white plague, tuberculosis, is much more evident than in the home, and we meet with its victim on every hand. There are these and many other diseases, dependent upon the sin or ignorance of these people. But we do not come solely to heal diseases. Our great message is one of life and healing for the whole man, through Jesus Christ our Lord, that they "May know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," and that they and we "—May be filled unto all fullness of God."—O. L. Kilborn.

The new hospital at present being built at Chentu will meet a great need in connection with our West China Mission. Medical work has been carried on under difficulties for some time, as the old hospital is quite inadequate to meet the demands for accommodation. In fact, there were times when the doctor went in to see which patient he could best turn out, to make room for a more urgent case. It is hoped that the new hospital which is being built under the direction of Dr. Ewen will meet all need for some time to come.

#### SOME TESTIMONIES TO MEDICAL MISSIONS.

The medical missionary is a missionary and a half.—Robert Moffat.

The history of medical missions is the