

MAKE THE BEST OF YOUR
OPPORTUNITIES.

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BY JOHN LUMLEY.
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"O! I am so sorry we did not go up last week when it was fine," was the expression of a pale-faced, but thoughtful lady, in my presence, a few months ago, because she did not go up to the Bald Mountain in C——, to behold the glory of nature. "Probably," she continued, "I shall never get the same chance again. In June next, we have to leave here too early to go up, and I will feel so bad because I did not go while I was here." And she looked so disappointed, because she had lost her only opportunity.

So it came to pass. The week she referred to was a sunny week in September. The sky was clear, and nature robed in all its Autumn beauty. After that the weather changed suddenly, and the winter closed in. And so the lady lost her opportunity; and most likely she never will have the same chance again.

Dear reader, does not the above resemble what we often see and hear at dying beds? Is not this the language of thousands who have lost their opportunities of doing good, and, it may be, the chance of saving their souls? "O! I am so sorry, because I did not make the best use of my time when I was well. O! how many times I passed the door of the house of God and did not go in, but went to the whiskey shop, or some other wicked place? And how many times have I listened to Christ's invitation, through His servants, to come to Him for the salvation of my soul? But I did not hearken to His voice. I put every thing off to some better time, to suit myself. But, now, here I am, my health is gone, and that promised time has never come. The sunny week has passed away." In agony of mind he turns his face towards the wall, saying:—"The clear sky is changed. It is cloudy and cold. The winter of my life is closing in, and all my bright hopes are dying with it. O! I am sorry. I fear this is my last day. I lost my opportunities. Most likely, when I shall leave this bed, instead of returning to the outward world, I shall be carried to my grave." Lifting up his hands in remorse, he cries,—*"O! what shall I do! I shall be lost for ever, unless Christ now have mercy upon my soul!"*

My dear, healthy young reader, now is your sunny week; you are enjoying the beauty of your life's summer. Make the best of your

opportunity, and come to God. In the spring of the year 1870, I was working with a man from Canada,—a fine, kind-hearted man,—but he was ungodly, and in the habit of using very profane language. One day I said to him, "B——, it would be better for you to quit that kind of language and prepare to meet God." "O," he said, in a cold and thoughtless way, "five minutes before death will be time enough to do that." "Yes, I said, "but have you security to have those five minutes?" In the same spring, he went with three others in a boat, to another part of the country, to seek after gold. The boat upset, and he sank to the depths like a stone, and his soul went to eternity without the five minutes! My dear friend, don't throw away your time and opportunity, but come to God now. He calls upon you to come; He wants you to come. His church on earth, and all the angels in heaven will be glad to see you coming. Come! your soul needs to be saved! "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

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ACCESS TO GOD.
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HOWEVER early in the morning you seek the gate of access, says the Rev. Dr. Hamilton, of London, you find it already open; and however deep the midnight moment when you find yourself in the sudden arms of death, the winged prayer can bring an instant Saviour; and this wherever you are. It needs not that you ascend some special Pisgah or Moriah. It needs not that you should enter some awful shrine, or pull off your shoes on some holy ground. Could a memento be reared on every spot from which an acceptable prayer has passed away, and on which a prompt answer has come down, we should find Jehovah-shammah, "the Lord has been here," inscribed on many a cottage hearth, and many a dungeon floor. We should find it not only in Jerusalem's proud temple and David's cedar galleries, but in the fisherman's cottage by the brink of the Gennesaret, and in the upper chamber where the pentecost began. And whether it may be the field where Isaac went down to mediate, or the rocky knoll where Israel wrestled, or the den where Daniel gazed on the hungry lions, and the lions gazed on him, or the hillside where the Man of Sorrows prayed all night, we should still discern the ladder's feet let down from heaven—the landing-place of mercies, because the starting-place of prayer.