

Old Maids.

"As for unmarried women," says the Bishop of Rochester, "what a dreary wilderness this world would be without them. In thousands of homes the maiden sister or aunt is the very angel of the family, the children's idol, the secret wonder and delight even of those who too unscrupulously use her; by sick beds and deathbeds, a divine consolator; the depository of tender secrets of blushing hearts; the unwearied friend of the old, and the poor, and the lowly. Old maids, indeed! With certain obvious exceptions, they are the very salt of the earth; the calm and clear light of the household that is blessed as to own them; their distinction to be wanted by everybody; their reward to be useful to everybody; their home the snuggest, warmest place in the hearts that can love."

One At A Time.

I compare the troubles which we have to undergo in the course of the year to a great bundle of fagots, far too large for us to lift. But God does not require us to carry the whole at once. He mercifully unties the bundle, and gives first one stick which we are to carry to-day, and then another which we are to carry to-morrow, and so on. This we might easily manage if we would only take the burden appointed for us each day; but we choose to increase our troubles by carrying yesterday's stick over again to-day, and adding to-morrow's burden to our load before we are required to bear it. —John Newton.

Why Not an Infidel.

I once met a thoughtful scholar who told me had read every book he could which assailed the religion of Jesus Christ, and he said he should have become an infidel but for three things: "First, I am a man. I am going somewhere. To-night I am a day nearer the grave than I was last night. I have read all such books can tell me. They shed not one solitary ray of hope or light upon the darkness. They shall not take away the guide and leave me stone blind. Second, I had a mother. I saw her go down into the dark valley where I am going, and she leaned on an unseen arm as calmly as a child goes to sleep on its mother's breast. I knew that was not a dream. Third, I have three motherless daughters. They have no protection but myself. I would rather kill them than leave them in this sinful world if you blot out from it all the teachings of the gospel." —Bishop Whipple.

Good For Fits.

For a fit of passion, walk out in the open air; you may speak your mind to the winds without hurting any one or proclaiming yourself a simpleton.

For a fit of idleness, count the ticking of a clock; do this for one hour, and you will be glad to pull off your coat the next and work like a beaver.

For a fit of extravagance and folly, go to the workhouse, or speak to the inmates of a goal, and you will be convinced.

For a fit of ambition, go to the church-yard and read the grave-stones; they will tell you the end of ambition. The grave will soon be your bed-chamber, and the earth your pillow; corruption your father, and the worm your mother and sister.

For a fit of despondency, look on the good things God has given you in this world, and to those he has promised to his followers in the next. He who goes in the garden to look for cobwebs and spiders will no doubt find them, while he who looks for a flower may return into his house with one blooming in his bosom.

For all fits of doubt, perplexity and fear, whether they respect the body or the mind, whether they are a load to the shoulders, the head or the heart, the following cure may be relied on, for I had it from the Great Physician:

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."

Beautiful Instance of Motherly Care.

A robin's nest was filled with young ones in sight of a friend's window. The mother bird was away, when a violent thunderstorm came up. As the heavy drops began to pour down she returned, and the little ones greeted her with open mouth, expecting the usual food. She pressed them down with her foot and sat on them with extended wings to shed the hard rain, and remained there till the storm was over.

Was there not a process of reason here? She saw the heavy downpour of rain, and thinking of her exposed children, believed they would be hurt or drowned without her care; so she hurried back. This is called instinct; but instinct is concentrated reason without the process being made known.

The little birds were sadly disappointed in not getting their food, but it carries a lesson to children not to grieve because their wishes are not gratified—it is for their good; it may be the saving of their lives.—Anon.

The Fall of the Christians: An Historical Romance of Japan in the 17th Century.

By Prof. W. C. Kitchin, Ph. D.

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