

One Thing at a Time.

"Early in the morning," relates a gentleman who has spent many decades in the service of God and his fellow men, "I learned from a very simple incident a wholesome lesson and one which has been of incalculable benefit to me.

"When I was between twelve and fourteen years old my father broke up a field on his farm and planted it with potatoes, and when the plants were two or three inches high he sent me to hoe it. The ground of that piece was very hard to till; it was matted with grass roots and sprinkled with stones. I hoed the first row and stopped to look at the general task before me. Grass as high as the potatoes was everywhere, and looking at the whole from any point it seemed to be a solid mass. I had the work to do all alone, and as I stood staring at the broad reach of weedy soil, I felt a good mind not to try to do anything further than with it.

"Just at that minute I happened to look down at the hill nearest my feet. The grass didn't seem just quite as thick there, and I said to myself: 'I can hoe this one well enough.'

"When it was done, another thought came to help me: 'I shan't have to hoe but one hill at a time, at any rate.'

"And so I went to the next, and next. But here I stopped again and looked over the field. That gave me another thought, too: 'I could hoe every hill as I came to it; it was only looking away off to all the hills that made the whole seem impossible.

"I won't look at it!' I said; and I pulled my hat over my eyes, so I could see nothing but the spot where my hoe had to dig.

"In course of time I had gone over the whole field, looking only at the hill in hand, and my work was done.

"I learned a lesson tugging away at those grass roots which I never forgot.

"It was to look right down at the one thing to be done now, and not hinder and discourage myself by looking off at the things I hadn't come to. I've been working ever since that summer at the hill nearest my feet, and I've always found it the easiest way to get a hard task accomplished, as it is the true way to prepare a field for the harvest."

We Have Seen.

A young man sell a good farm, turn merchant, break and die insolvent.

A farmer spend so much time in town that there is nothing at home worth looking after.

A rich man's son begin where his father left off, and end where his father began—penniless.

A worthy farmer's son idle his life in dissipation, and end his career in poverty.

A farmer too self-conceited to mend his way and too obstinate to mend his footsteps.

A poor boy grow rich by industry and good management, and a rich boy grow poor by idleness and dissipation.

A man spend more money in folly than would support his family in comfort and independence.

A farmer build a dwelling house so large and fine that the sheriff was the first to occupy it.

A farmer deliver a fine oration at the agricultural fair with his fences all down, fields overgrown with weeds, stock foraging on a neighbor's field and his taxes unpaid.—The American Breeder.

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Trust Him Through.

Sometimes we have an experience in life that seems like walking through a long, dark tunnel. The chilling air and the thick darkness make it hard walking, and the constant wonder is why we are compelled to tread so gloomy a path while others are in the open day of health and happiness. We can only fix our eyes on the bright light at the end of the tunnel, and we comfort ourselves with the thought that every step we take brings us nearer to the joy and the rest that lie at the end of the way. Extinguish the light of heaven that gleams in the distance, and this tunnel of trial would become a horrible tomb. Every week a pastor has to confront these mysteries in the dealings of a God of Love. To the torturing question, "Why does God lead me into this valley of the shadow of darkness?" we can only reply: "Even so Father, for so it seems good in Thy sight." We are brought into the tunnel, however we may shrink back. There is no retreat; we have nothing left to us but to grasp the very hand that brought us there and push forward.

When we reach heaven, we may discover that the richest and deepest and most profitable experience we had in this life were those which were gained in the very roads from which we shrank back with dread. The real victory of faith is to trust God in the dark and through the dark. Let us be assured of this, that as the lesson and rod are of His appointing, and that as His all-wise love has engineered the deep tunnels of trial on the heavenward road, He will never desert us during the discipline. The vital thing for us is not to deny and Desert Him.—Dr. T. L. Cuyler.

The Fiji Islands have been Christianized within the memory of many now living, and the number of Christian worshippers on these islands to-day is given as 90,000.

There are two texts in Revelation that used to seem to me incongruous, unharmonious. One: "There shall be no more sea." The other: "I beheld a sea clear as crystal." Now environed with mystery, covered with fog, seeing but a little, not knowing how life began, not knowing what may lie beyond its seeming end, not able to comprehend it, nor the divine purpose and end in it all, to us life is a great mystery, and "the judgment of God a great deep." But by and by when we stand on the other shore there will be no more storm, no more fog, no more mystery; all will be clear because we shall see life from the beginning to the end, and standing by God's own throne, and invested with God's own vision, shall know as we are known. His judgments will no longer be a great deep. "There shall be no more sea." Or, "The sea shall be as clear as crystal." I remember once sailing over the crystal waters of Lake Superior. We had come out of the muddy waters of Lake Huron during the night, and early in the morning I came on deck, and, looking over the prow, started back in instinctive terror, for, looking down into the clear waters of that lake, it seemed to me as though our keel was just going to strike on the sharp pointed rocks below; but I was looking through fifty or sixty feet of clear water at the great rock bed of the lake over which we were sailing. Now we endeavor in vain to fathom God's judgments. As by a great deep they are hidden from us. But by and by the sea will grow clear as crystal, and we shall understand; we shall know not only the life that was in the ocean, but shall trace the footprints of Him that walked thereon.—Lyman Abbott.

Gems of Thought.

Noble thoughts can come only from a noble soul.—William Mathews

Goodness is a simple thing, like a work of genius; the genius takes a straight, determined course, and so does the good man.—Standard.

St. Paul had three wishes, and they were all about Christ—that he might be found in Christ, that he might be with Christ, and that he might magnify Christ.—Luther.

Oh what a glory this world puts on For Him who with fervent heart goes forth

Under the bright and glorious sky, and looks On duties well performed and days well spent.—Longfellow.

Prayer has an effect marvelous and certain; it is that of elevating the soul; also in those Christians who have the habit of prayer one finds a nobleness of heart, a dignity of character, and a general nobility in all they do, which one does not see in children of the world.—Joubert.

Art thou in darkness? Wait for the light; Or in the valley? Look toward the height.

If in the tempest, trust for the calm; Utter not dirges, breathe forth a psalm. After storm-broasting Cometh calm resting.—Selected.

It is a painful thing that this pruning work, this cutting off of the over-luxuriant shoots, in order to call back the wandering juices into the healthier and more living parts. In religion it is described thus: "Every branch in me that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The keen edge of God's pruning-knife cuts sheer through. No weak tenderness stops him whose love seeks goodness, not comfort, for his servants.—F. W. Robertson.

Zion's Herald says: "The older a preacher grows, the less faith does he place in sprad eagle oratory. More and more will he feel disposed to endorse the opinion of a great living divine, that finely-polished rhetorical passages in a sermon are as 'carefully prepared as fire-works, and do about as much good.' People, the same authority adds, listen with delighted amazement to such outbursts, and then go home to take an afternoon nap instead of taking a Sunday-school class. The best sermon is not the one which pleases its hearers most, but the one which impels them to do more for God and for humanity."

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