

To every man life is the beginning of endless, shoreless, fathomless, inconceivable happiness or misery. To the wicked the end of life is the end of all sinful mirth and pleasure. To the righteous the end of their earthly existence is the end of all doubt and pain. These is no middle course. "The man who lives in vain, lives worse than in vain. He who lives to no purpose, lives to a bad purpose." Time misspent is not lived, but lost.

In former days public executioners carried an hour-glass to the place of death, and set it down before the unhappy criminal, telling him that when the sands were all run, he must close his eyes on earth. Sometimes his spiritual adviser said to him, "Your sands are almost run," and he saw it was so. But the sands that measure our days are hidden from our eyes. They have been running for some time. They are running now. They may all be run in another minute. But we may live some days, or months or years. This is our solemn condition. Yet how few are impressed by it.

Some indeed are wise. They live very much each day as they would if they knew it would be their last. They are waiting and watching. Should they at any time hear the cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh," they would respond, "Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly." These are wise. They are wise unto salvation. They shall shine as the firmament. They shall be forever with the Lord.

Because these things are so, I am resolved,

1. To esteem myself in fault, and to count that day lost, wherein nothing is done for the glory of God, nothing for the profit of my neighbour, nothing for the good of my own soul.

2. Always to do promptly what I can for increasing my knowledge, piety, and usefulness; and not to defer till the next hour what can be done this moment.

3. As "he lives long, who lives well," I will try to think most of the manner of spending my days, and but little of the length of my days.

4. As the number of my days is with the Lord, I may well mind my own business and let him say when, where, and how my earthly existence shall terminate.

5. I will try to set the Lord always before me, and keep in view the early and solemn close of my earthly life.

OLD EDITIONS OF THE BIBLE.

Queer titles have been given to some old editions of the Bible. The "Bug" Bible was printed in London, in 1551; and received its nickname from the fact that Psalm xci. 5, was translated, "Thou shalt not need to be afraid for any *Bugges* by night," instead of, as in our version, "Afraid for the *terror* by night."

The "Breeches" Bible was printed in Geneva, in 1560; and is so called from Gen. iii. 7, being translated, they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves *breeches*," instead of *aprons*, as in our version.

The "Treacle" Bible was printed in 1568; and in it Jeremiah viii. 22 reads, "Is there no *treacle* in Gilead," etc., instead of *balm*. In 1609, this word was changed to "Rosin," and so came the name of the "Rosin" Bible; and in 1611, this last word was changed for "balm," as now.

The "He" Bible, printed in 1611, takes its name from an error in Ruth iii. 15, he measured six measures of barley and laid it on her, and *he* went into the city," when the word should have been "*she* went into the city," etc.

The "Wicked" Bible was printed in 1631, and was so named from its omitting the word "not" from the seventh commandment, making it read "Thou *shalt* commit adultery; and this extraordinary omission occurred again in a German edition of 1732; so that there was a wicked Bible in each language.

The "Vinegar" Bible was printed in 1707, and is so called from the headline of Luke xx., which, in it, is made to read, "The parable of the *vinegar*," instead of "the parable of the *vineyard*." The printer of this edition was one John Basket, of Oxford, and from its many errors in spelling and punctuation, it was sometimes called, "A basket full of errors."

The "Eel-pot" Bible was the edition translated by

Elliot for the Indians. Describing, by the sign of crossing his fingers, what he thought would represent the "lattice work" through which the mother of Sisera cried (Judges v. 28), he asked the Indians for the proper word for it, and they gave him one, which he inserted in his translation, supposing, of course, it was right. But when he became more fully acquainted with their language, he found he had made the passage read, "The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the eel-pots," instead of "lattice."

THE OLD SCOTCHMAN'S PRAYER.

I was pleased the other day with a story which an aged Scotch minister told me about an old Scotchman, who, many years ago, was on his way to a meeting of the people of God, held in a tent, or some such temporary structure.

The old pilgrim was poor and ill clad, and partly deaf, but he trusted in the Lord whom he served, and rejoiced in His kind providence. On his way to the meeting he fell in with another Christian brother, a younger man bound on the same errand, and they travelled on together.

When they had nearly reached the place of meeting, it was proposed that they should turn aside behind the hedge, and have a little praying before they entered the meeting. They did so, and the old man, who had learned in every thing to let his requests be made known unto God, presented his case in language like the following:

"Lord, ye ken weel enough that I'm deaf, and I want a seat on the first bench if Ye can let me have it, so that I can hear Thy Word. And Ye see that my toes are sticking through my shoes, and I don't think it is much to your credit to have your children's toes sticking through their shoes, and therefore I want Ye to get me a pair of new ones. And Ye ken I have nae siller, and I want to stay there during the meeting, and therefore I want you to get me a place to stay."

When the old man had finished his quaint petition, and they had started on, his younger brother gently suggested to him that he thought his prayer was rather free in his forms of expression, and hardly as reverential as seemed proper to him in approaching the Supreme Being. But the old man did not accept the imputation of irreverence.

"He's my Father," said he, "and I'm well acquainted with Him, and He's well acquainted with me, and I take great liberties with Him." So they went on to the meeting together. The old man stood for a while in the rear of the congregation, making an ear trumpet of his hand to catch words, until some one near the pulpit noticed him, and beckoning him forward gave him a good seat upon the front bench. During the prayer the old man knelt down, and after he rose, a lady who had noticed his shoes, said to him, "Are those the best shoes you have?"

"Yes," said he, "but I expect my Father will get me a new pair very soon."

"Come with me after meeting," said the lady, "and I will get you a new pair."

The service closed, and he went with her to her house.

"Shall you stay during the meeting?" said the good woman as they went along.

"I would, but I am a stranger in the place, and have nae siller."

"Well," said she, "you will be perfectly welcome to make your home at our house during the meeting."

The old man thanked the Lord that He had given him all the three things he had asked for; and, while his younger brother's reverence for the Lord was right and proper, it is possible that he might have learned that there is a reverence that reaches higher than the forms and conventionalities of human taste, and which leads the believer to come boldly to the throne of grace to find all needed help in every trying hour.

DEFECTS IN CITY HOUSES.

"I was about to remark, that since the days of the old Romans building has not advanced one step. In fact retrogression is the law. If civilization were tri-

umphant every house would represent certain essential elements of comfort; dampness avoided, noise subdued, dust excluded and smoke also; building so thorough that the expense for repairs, painting and so on would be next to nothing, and water-pipes requiring no plumber, and the effects of waste-pipes no doctor.

"If they would only make the rooms what I call inhabitable," said the Bachelor taking up the word, "we would even dispense with one or two other essentials. But who considers the position of furniture? What space is there for free movement? Take this very room. It is a mere chance that it admits this generous lounge and your long table, and yet it is supposed to be the working-room of a man of letters, who wants books of reference piled about him, and space to start up suddenly and walk till some mental fermentation has resulted in a clear, settled thought, ready for use. Then take noise. Has anybody thought of filling in floors, or doubling doors, and making all work or play rooms at as remote a distance as possible from the central point where silence should have its sway? Not one. You sit here, and every note of the piano, every shout of the children, every sound from the kitchen, penetrates, and disarranges thought, consciously or unconsciously. You didn't build the house? Very true, but I wager anything you like that if you had you would have spent your money in part in a row of impossible brackets outside supporting nothing, and merely ornamental dust holes, instead of deadening your floors, or increasing the number of square feet in your rooms. I could talk all night and then but have begun. Job should never have said, 'Oh, that mine enemy would write a book!' but 'Oh that mine enemy would build a house.' In fact if Job had been in a modern house he would never have recovered senses or complexion. It was sitting in the ashes seven days and seven nights, with the wind blowing upon him and sun and moon working their will, that finally brought him to. Now in my own case, I would give half my year's salary if in all New York I could find a quiet room. I am in the office only part of the day. Really the best of my work could be better done at home than there, but I have moved till I am ashamed to move again. I did get some peace and fresh air in the sixth story of a Sixth Avenue flat, but the elevated road tore that from me. Now I'm in a tall house on Madison Avenue, third door back, to escape street noises, but at the mercy of the piano each side of me and of all the street cries and sounds from the back. Life is an everlasting concussion of the brain."—Mrs. Helen Campbell, in *Sunday Afternoon*.

BE CAREFUL IN A CRISIS.

All have heard of Mr. Lincoln's aphorism, "Don't swap horses while crossing the stream," and it has served to remind many a man of the prudence and caution necessary in critical moments. On another occasion Mr. Lincoln is said to have more solemnly enforced the same lesson. During the war some western gentlemen called at the White House and harangued him in an excited manner about the omissions and commissions of the Administration. He heard them with his usual patience, and finally said: "Gentlemen, suppose all the property you were worth was in gold, and you had put it in the hands of Blondin to carry across Niagara Falls on a tight-rope, would you shake the rope while he was passing over it, or keep shouting to him, 'Blondin, stoop a little more; Go a little faster?' No, I am sure you would not. You would hold your breath as well as your tongue, and keep your hands off until he was safely over. Now, the Government is in the same situation, and is carrying across a stormy ocean an immense weight; untold treasures are in its hands; it is doing the best it can; don't badger it; keep silence, and it will get you safely over."

THE "Osservatore Romano" publishes a Latin brief, wherein the Pope enjoins that, to the prayer, "Blessed be the Holy Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary," be added the words "Mother of God," and that to whoever devoutly recites these additional words will be conceded 300 days' indulgence.