

Is Life Worth Living?

(Charlotte Murray, in 'Bombay Guardian.')
 'Is life worth living?' you are sadly asking.
 In moody, bitter, disappointed tone;
 A tone which says, 'Till now I have but
 found it
 A thing of weariness and grief alone!
 'A faithless friend who disappoints its lovers,
 A catalogue of ills too dark to name;
 A hope existing but to be extinguished.
 A dismal passage to a gloomy shame.'
 'Is life worth living, then?' again you ques-
 tion,
 With downcast eyes, and accents stern and
 cold;
 Look up, my friend, and listen; Faith is wait-
 ing
 To answer now that query worn and old,
 Is life worth living? NO, if you are merely
 Intent that it shall minister to you;
 Intent that it shall be to you a something,
 Subservient to all you plan and do.
 Is life worth living? YES, a thousand times,
 If self is lost in One who claims your all;
 If His grand will absorbs your puny wishes,
 If His great heart enwraps your being
 small.
 If other lives for His dear sake you brighten,
 If other woes you strive for Him to heal;
 If mysteries too deep you leave with meek-
 ness
 Until the Master shall their depths reveal.
 Then life will prove a 'friend,' to crown you
 richly,
 A 'catalogue' of blessings in disguise;
 A 'hope' within a hope, expanding daily,
 A sunlight 'passage' to a glorious prize!

Is Silence Golden?

Much is said in approval of the maxim, 'Silence is golden,' but we must confess that we are heartily tired of the reticent person. That silence is golden truly that keeps us from angry or otherwise wrong words; from slander, impure utterances, or from murmuring or grumbling. That speech is as truly golden that gives counsel, warning, comfort, sunshine, just as these are needed. My talkative neighbor comes in unceremoniously, tells us a bit of neighborhood or church news, gives us a glimpse of her yesterday's experience when she became worried over her work; confesses that she was not very patient, and does hope she will do better; asks our advice about her bit of embroidery, tells us how much she enjoyed the last Sabbath's services, how much she loves the dear pastor, and adds other remarks, going from one subject to another with most entertaining rapidity, yet giving each one enough time to let us see her meaning. It is quite surprising how much sunshine she lets into the house. If we were dull when she came in, we are lightsome when she departs, for has she not bidden us feel that she is in sympathy with us and with matters that deeply interest us? Is it not a comfort to know that some one else worried over their work, felt impatient, and had trials like our own? How would we have known that Mrs. — had experiences like ours if she had not told us so? And in telling us she had helped us to bear better, to be less complaining, more cheerful; and, too, she had diverted our mind with her harmless bits of news. It adds force to this helpful little episode to know that our dear neighbor is kind-hearted—as generous with her goods as she is with her words.
 Now for our reticent neighbor. She calls on us at, perhaps, regular intervals. After the usual formal greeting we ask, 'And how are you all?'
 'Well, as usual.'
 'Did you go out to church last Sabbath?'
 'Yes.'
 'I could not go. Did you have a good sermon?'
 'Yes.'
 'I do think our pastor preaches better and better,' we say, enthusiastically.
 'Do you think so?' asks Miss Reticence, showing slight surprise, but in no other way expressing her opinion. In fact, she seldom gives her opinion on any subject. She tells no item of neighborhood interest, reveals no

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particular sympathy with any of our remarks, tells none of her experiences, none of her feelings, and goes away leaving us with a feeling of weariness and dissatisfaction with her and ourselves, too. Selfishness often makes reticence; the person does not care to be entertaining; it pleases them better to shut up in their own mind what in some way might do good. Indolence, also, lends a hand to reticence; it requires, perhaps, an effort to be talkative, and so silence is maintained. Speech is a power given us to do good with, and the well-disposed person who has in their tongue the law of love and kindness will do more good than the silent kind of people. The reticent are very apt to grow morose. Conversation lightens, brightens, sweetens, cheers. There are sweet, quiet creatures who do much good, but these, in general, are not uncommunicative. It is their nature to be quiet and not very talkative, but they ever show a willingness to speak where they can do good.
 We would in all kindness say to the reticent, try to be social, try to talk, help entertain the family of which you are a member. Speak of your feelings at times—unlock them. Show that you care for others. Give your confidence enough to near friends to let them feel that they know something about you more than they do about the passing stranger. In doing these duties a blessing will come upon you; you will be lighter of heart, more cheerful in tone, and will find the good that comes from touch with others.

At the suggestion of my oracle I add: The reticent, like others, does not stand still; his habits will grow, and he will gradually take away his powers of conversation; gradually become so shut up in himself that he cannot communicate his feelings even when he would do so. This is a most important side of the matter.
 We have often, by the reticent, uncommunicative person, been reminded of a turtle who, as you approach him, shuts up his shell, and the more you try to open it the closer it closes. 'A word fitly spoken, how good it is.' Let us use speech to help others. Let us use it by principle and not by caprice. Let us try to overcome reticence that is wrong, the same as speech that is wrong.—Intelligencer.'

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