

Our Young People

A Lesson in Patience and Plodding.

Topic for May 7: "Patience Continuance in Well Doing." *Rome 2: 1-11.*

"In your patience possess ye your souls."

The Herb Patience.

By Pansy.

I have been interested in discovering how much the Bible has to say about patience. Starting from Peter's example in addition, "and to temperance, patience," I made the journey in search of the word, and the fruits thereof were rich. "Through patience—hope." "Patient waiting for Christ." "Bring forth fruit with patience." Patient in being "buffeted." Verily it is not hard to understand why the Master said, "In your patience possess ye your souls." Neither is one surprised to find our Father spoken of as "the God of patience."

But is there a quality of mind harder to cultivate? I betook myself to the dictionary to see how far the quality reached, and came away almost despairing. Listen: "Patience—the suffering of affliction, toil, provocation, or other evils with a positive spirit of resignation. Fortitude, long-suffering, meekness, submission. Endurance and perseverance in any work. Forbearance, painstaking." These are some of the definitions.

A young teacher wrote to one whose career as a teacher had been eminently successful, for a few hints to help her first efforts. His reply was so full that the beginner said sorrowfully, "He might have saved his time by simply writing, 'Be ye perfect.'" So I feel that when I have attained to the Bible idea of patience, I have reached a well-developed, symmetrical Christian life. If this be so, it is well worth our while to study carefully, and note wherein we most fail.

One great mistake is in forgetting that word, "continuance." Many people begin well. They undertake an important work and are full of enthusiasm and energy. But somebody criticises or laughs, or sneers, and straightway the work is dropped. Many a Junior society has come to grief through just such causes. Such workers are seeking for "glory and honor," it is true, but forgetting the all-potent closing words of the verse, "and immortality,—eternal life."

To be patient with the faults and failings of others, is a hard lesson to learn. If we could only take to heart

the hint given in that verse, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man," and realize that what we condemn so impatiently in others, often lurks, unseen of us, in our own hearts.

Yet what a power to overcome in others, as well as in ourselves, lies hidden in the word we are studying! Do you remember how Luther puts it? "If thou intendest to vanquish the greatest, the most abominable and wickedest enemy, who is able to do thee mischief both in body and soul, and against whom thou preparest all sorts of weapons, but cannot overcome, then know that there is a sweet and loving herb to serve thee, named *Patientia*."

"Having done all, to stand," is another of our Captain's orders, and, ah me, how hard it is! We are eager to plunge in and work with our might, but to wait, with folded hands, for the way to open—that seems beyond us. Yet everything in nature and in Providence seems trying to repeat the lesson. As the old Eastern proverb has it, "With time and patience the mulberry leaf becomes satin."

Years ago Mr. Beecher preached to his young people after this manner: "O impatient one, did the leaves say nothing to you as you came hither to-day? They were not created this spring, but months ago. At the bottom of every leaf-stem is a cradle, and in it is an infant germ; and the winds will rock it, and the birds will sing to it all summer long; and next season it will unfold. So God is working for you, and carrying forward to perfect development all the processes of your lives." And as if he had fitted it on to the thought, George Macdonald said, "God can afford to wait; why cannot we, since we have Him to fall back upon?"

Yet, do you remember that we can make even this virtue offensive?

"She is so impatient!" says one, "always wanting to push ahead. Now I am not that way; I am the very embodiment of patience."

Haven't you heard her talk? It reminds me of Mr. Beecher again, and I confess I think of his words very often when I listen to certain people. "There is," he says, "a patience that cackles. In truth, there are a great many virtues that are hen-like; they are virtues, to be sure, but everybody in the neighborhood has to know about them."

Hints and Helps on the Topic.

"Flash" lives, as well as flash-lights. Hide-and-seek Christians; now you see them, and now you don't. One thing to-day, and another to-morrow, and not much of anything the day after. In times of revival, burning with a brilliancy and a warmth which fairly puts to shame those of less flame power; but when the revival is past, dying out in darkness that lasts until the next time of quickening. Now the white of an almost ideal Christian character; and again the red light of anger, or the green light of envy, or the yellow light of jealousy. However useful and desirable a flash-light may be in the maritime world, it has no place in the kingdom of God. The lights of the world are to shine with a clear, steady, uninterrupted radiance through all the hours of the night. Fixed lights, not flash-lights, glorify God and help men.—Rev. J. K. Wilson.

Patience is one of the ingredients out of which habits of well-doing are built. A duty that seems hard to a young person becomes easy and delightful to one old enough to have thoroughly established the habit. But such helpful habits are not made out of the chaff of caprice, or the mud of passing impulses; but by the everlasting persistence of slow crystallization which makes the adamant if you give it ages.—J. F. C.

No man can learn patience except by going out into the hurly-burly world and taking life as it blows. Patience is but lying-to and riding out the gale.

O impatient ones, did the leaves say nothing to you as you came hither to-day? They were not created this spring, but months ago. At the bottom of every leaf-stem is a cradle, and in it is an infant germ; and the winds will rock it, and the birds will sing to it all summer long; and next season it will unfold. So God is working for you, and carrying forward to perfect development all the processes of your lives.

God can afford to wait; why cannot we, since we have Him to fall back upon?—Geo Macdonald.

If success were to come to you suddenly, it might find you wholly unprepared for it. The discipline gained, the habits required in amassing a fortune for instance, ought to fit him who has it both to value it properly and to use it rightly; while often experience has shown that the sudden acquisition of wealth utterly ruined its possessor. What is true of wealth is equally true of other things.—Prof. Forest.

'Tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under: the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency,
To be so moral when he shall endure
The like himself.

—Shakespeare.

Some one spoke slightly to his pastor of a newcomer in the church as an "every-day sort of Christian," meaning