

## Beginning Aright.

Now that Queen Victoria is growing old, it is interesting, after so long a reign, to look back and see in what spirit she assumed the grave responsibilities of her realm. It also suggests to others, and especially to the young, the importance of entering upon all large responsibilities with humble dependence upon God. An exchange says: "William IV. expired about midnight at Windsor Castle. The Archbishop of Canterbury, with other peers and high functionaries of the kingdom, was in attendance. As soon as the 'scepter had departed with the last breath of the kieg, the archbishop quitted Windsor Castle, and made his way with all possible speed to Kensington Palace, the residence at that time of the Princess—already by the law of succession, Queen—Victoria. He arrived long before daylight, announced himself, and requested an immediate interview with the Princess. She hastily attired herself, and met the venerable prelate in her anteroom. He informed her of the death of William, and formally announced to her that she was, in law and right, successor to the deceased monarch.

"She was deeply agitated at the formidable words, so fraught with blessing or calamity; and the first words she was able to utter were these: 'I ask your prayers on my behalf.'

"They kneeled together, and Victoria inaugurated her reign, like the young king of Israel in the olden time, by asking from the Highest, who ruleth in the kingdom of men, 'an understanding heart to judge so great a people, who could not be numbered nor counted for multitude.'

"The sequel of her reign has been worthy of such a beginning. Every throne has tottered since that day. Most of them have been for a time overturned. That of England was never so firmly seated in the loyalty and love of the peoples at this hour. Queen Victoria enjoys personal influence, too—the heartfelt homage paid her as a Christian woman—incomparably wider and greater than that of any monarch now reigning.

## Our Lot The Best Lot.

God's choice for us is better than could be any choice by us for ourselves. It is not merely that God decides whether we are fitted to fill a small space or a large one, and that we must accept his decision accordingly, but it is that we are incapable of deciding what place is large or what place is small in God's sight. The place to which God assigns us in his plans for the universe may seem small to us, yet be a place that an archangel would be honored by having to fill. What would be thought of a soldier specifically selected by his commander for a special service, who would suggest that the service was not quite worthy of his abilities? God knows that the utmost reach of our best qualities and powers, and he wants them all in play in his service. Let us desire earnestly the best gifts, and therefore accept gratefully what God assigns to us.

In the last place, service is the test of all individual work, the test of the physician, the journalist, the teacher, the humorist who amuses us, and the pupil to lead us.

The divine wisdom has given us prayer not as a means whereby to obtain the good things of earth, but as a means whereby we learn to do without them; not as a means whereby we escape evil, but as a means whereby we become strong to meet it.—Robertson.

## Good, Better, Best.

BY REV. AEBERT B. ROBINSON.

Live up to the best that is in you," was Longfellow's advice to his pupils; and Benjamin Jowett, encouraging the young men under his charge to high endeavor, said, "Make the best of yourselves."

Best in character building must precede best in service. To make the best of one's self is the only way to make the best of others. Self-power should be coveted for the sake of usefulness. We make the most of ourselves that we may do most to enrich and enable other lives.

To do one's best is a condition of success. "I am a whole man to one thing at a time," said a lord chancellor of England, accounting for his successful career. Dickens's rule was, "Never to put one hand to anything on which I could throw my whole self." When he came to Boston to give public readings he felt that he had no time to attend social gatherings, because he could not do his best in reading without concentrating all his power on it until it was done. The terse saying of Webster's speeches, the pointed paragraphs so often quoted, were the result of long and careful study. He worked six months in preparing the Bunker Hill oration, and then did his best in its delivery. A plain farmer who heard it declared that "every word weighed a pound."

A lad at Rugby failed to do his best. He thought it not worth while to worry about so trivial a fault as his poor penmanship, since men of genius had written worse scrawls than he. But he became an officer in the British army, and one day during the Crimean War an order which he copied was so illegible that it was incorrectly given, and the result was the loss of many lives.

Mary of Bethany did her best. The fragrant spikenard was valued at three hundred pence—the year's wages of a laborer. But a woman received only one-third of what a man could earn. Since the anointing occurred just at the close of our Lord's ministry, about three years had passed since John at the Jordan directed his disciples to the Lamb of God. In her act of love Mary gave all she could possibly have earned by the most diligent labor from the time she first heard the Saviour's name. She did "what she could"—all she could—her best.

Dr. Banks in a recent sermon points out the divine method of rousing a man to do his best. Our Lord's last hours with His disciples were spent not in warning them against their particular weaknesses and besetting sins, but in cheering their hearts and making clear to them the sources of their power.

"Why do you speak angrily, sir? I am doing the best that I can," said a faithful, plodding pupil to Dr. Arnold, when the master, out of patience, had spoken sharply to the lad. Arnold never forgot the reproof, and he thereafter cultivated the rare power of drawing out the best that is in another.

The greater part of the world's work is done by the one-talent men and women. They have wrought mightily for God. But we develop power. The result of doing one's best to-day is the ability to do better

to-morrow. The one talent becomes two, five, ten.

Since talents are given to each according to his ability, nothing short of absolute fidelity is, in God's sight, doing one's best.

The only real failure possible, says Farrar, is not to be true to the best one knows.—Christian Endeavor World.

## Lowly Service.

For reading in the meeting.

Methought that in a solemn church I stood,  
Its marble acres worn with knees and feet,  
Lay spread from door to door, from street to street.

Midway the form hung high upon the roof  
Of Him who gave His life to be our good.  
Beyond, guests flitted, bowed and murmured

Among the candles, shining still and sweet;  
Men came and went, and worshipped as they could—

And still their dust a woman with her broom,  
Bowed to her work, kept sweeping to the door.  
Then saw I, slow through all the pillared gloom,  
Across the church a silent figure come:  
"Daughter," it said, "thou sweepest well my floor."

"It is the Lord!" I cried, and saw no more.

[George Macdonald.

## For Daily Reading.

Mon. Oct. 29.—The enemy of the good. Heb. 6:14.  
Tues. Oct. 30.—The race conditions. 1 Cor. 9:24.  
Wed. Oct. 31.—The true prize. 2 Tim. 4:1-8.  
Thurs. Nov. 1.—Helping ourselves. Phil. 2:12-13; Heb. 6:11-12.  
Fri. Nov. 2.—The influence of best efforts. Act 4:13, 31-33.  
Sat. Nov. 3.—Co-operation with God. Ps. 40:1-8.  
Sun. Nov. 4.—Topic. Are you doing your best? Matt. 25:14-30.

## Not for Self.

There are many whose sole idea and one motive and principle of life is not to serve their generation, but their generation must serve them. They have no design and no desire for anything but self. The object to which everything else must bend is their own gratification and advancement and enrichment. The world is none the better, but the worse, for their having lived in it, and is all the better off when the grave covers them. We are none of us free from the obligations of serving our own generation; the responsibility rests on us in all its weight, and selfish worldliness is a curse to any community, to any generation. A nation, a state, a community, a church, a family, an individual, soon tell its story whether it is serving its own generation according to the will of God or not.—William B. Smith.

## Suggestions for Today.

1. Begin the day in quietness. Get alone, if only for a little, with God. Give him the right of way in your life; breathe in of His gracious presence; keep very still before Him and let this be in the early part of the day.
2. When you pray this morning, plead God's promise. Be very definite about it. He had you in mind when he made it.
3. As you walk today, go in the consciousness that "no good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly."—Chapman.

Topic for November 4: "Are you doing your best?"—Matt. 25: 14-30.