

FOR WHAT DO WE LIVE?

In moments of reflection, when the fetters that bind the heart in homage to the gay world have been broken, and you snatch an hour's repose, have you not in that brief time summed up all the follies in which you have indulged, and then in imagination gone far out into the forbidden paths of the future—the months, perhaps years, through which you may journey in an earthly home ere this life shall be exchanged for one of unending wear or woe; and then has not the inquiry come, startling you with its stern, measured tones, for what are you living? In such a moment, pause, reflect. Do not say it is too hard, or of no consequence, and with this hasty notice pass on to lighter subjects which you may fathom or handle with ease—but *think*. This is of importance; and though it may be an unpleasant theme, and its hoarse whisperings may bring no sweet harmonious sounds, yet answer ere you cease to think.

You know that you were spoken into existence by the same invisible and divine power that brightened the world with sunbeams and lighted up the heavens with the resplendent brilliancy of distant worlds. Intellect is stamped upon your brow. You do not suppose that you were created to roam the broad extending fields of earth, to be silent recipients of daily blessings, to behold and enjoy in silence all that is beautiful—and to have no object in life? No! you have been gifted with the power of reasoning, and surely reason has taught no such lesson. This guide tells you in unmistakable terms, that you were created for some purpose. Then to what object are you devoting life? Are you idly dreaming away year after year, flattering yourself with the belief that you have no mission to perform? If this be so, no longer listen to the enchanter—this is but the hallucination of a dream that will not result in good. Go forth in the "dim and devious" paths around you, and seek employment here, there and everywhere; you will find work from early dawn till "twilight's soft and enchanting hour," or even until "midnight's holy hour," and there will still be more to do. Each morning brings with it new duties to perform, new fields for labor.

Are you enjoying the halcyon days of life's spring-time? Then turn to the history of your own country. Unclasp it and read its pages; you will find traced in legible characters, names that will not fade so long as time shall endure. You behold them now bright stars that shall shine on through ages, undimmed. Does not the thought that they have lived, rouse the latent energies of the soul, and bid you strive to shine thus brightly over ages yet to be registered? The paths of life are not strewn with flowers, but here and there are dangerous precipices and yawning chasms that look fearful indeed; but do not sit with folded arms; pause not on the brink to ask if you must plunge into the Rubicon—take the leap and brave the difficulties that may assail you, and let your motto be—though baffled never to despond. Bury not the talent that has been given you, but let each day add something to the store;

success will be your reward in the end. Live for some high and holy purpose; not only as the victor in dangerous exploits, but remember, there is a contest in which you must engage—a battle to be won—a foe to be conquered, more fearful than any you have encountered.

Grieve no heart by an unkind act, but let each passing breeze bear on its way some message of peace and gladness if you would one day wear the crown of eternal life. Have your efforts been filled with rich treasures? Then look around you for objects of charity—you will find them in your midst; by benevolence, relieve the burden of poverty. If this be not your fortune, give the tear of sympathy, or the cheering smile of kindness.

Are you leading an idle life—a life of idleness? Then rouse yourself; throw off the shackles that have fastened around you. Idleness is sinful, and "real glory springs from the silent conquest" of oneself. Have you arrived to years of maturity? Then seek to blot out past follies by devoting the future to noble pursuits. As year after year bears you farther down the stream of life, record upon the unwritten leaves of your journal some thought, some deed that shall win the approval of conscience, and above all, that of a higher Power. Are you aged, and have the years gone by carried away with them naught that was good? Then haste to consecrate the fitting ones that may be allotted you to the service of a merciful though just God, if you would gain a rich inheritance in the home of untold bliss.

Look around you and behold the work to be accomplished, and remember that you have a part to perform on the vast stage, and let the remembrance bring with it the resolution to discharge in faithfulness every duty assigned you. Live thus, and though sorrow may come with heavy steps and seek to crush you, yet each attempt will prove unsuccessful, and strength will be given you to triumph over all.

COLLOQUIAL TEACHING.

Every attentive observer will admit that more is accomplished in the way of learning in any given time, by a free conversation with a person who understands his subject, than can be learned in the same time in any other way. We are, therefore, in favour of teachers being on terms of intimacy with those whom they teach. The magisterial reserve and austerity, which many teachers think it necessary to put on for the purpose of supporting their dignity in the government of a large school, are very unfavourable to the progress of learning in the dependant and inquiring scholar. The *lips* of the wise teacher impart familiarly, wisdom and knowledge. Books, apparatus, maps, charts, and other illustrations in use, are always more or less necessary, but the free lecture and the colloquial explanation make the matter plain and doubly interesting. Some of the most successful and best teachers in every age, like Pestalozzi, have taught much by free conversation. How important, then, that every teacher should know how to talk, so as to be a good talker. There is really more of almost every person's time given to talk, than to any other one thing.—

Both the manner and the matter of conversation ought, therefore, to be formed and regulated from reference to the best models. A good style of conversation is useful for business, for amusement, for instruction, for merriment, for condolence, for charity, for friendship, and for all the multifarious uses of civil and social intercourse among men.—therefore, let every teacher and every scholar aim to become a good talker.

But what is it to be a good talker, and how is such accomplishment to be obtained? In order to be a good talker, your words must be well chosen and gracefully uttered. You must avoid unnatural tones and awkwardness of manner. Persons who are suffered to acquire a confirmed habit of using certain expressions, because they are thought to be elegant or quaint, or witty, will not become a good talker. One who depends upon proverbs, adages and quotations, as illustrations, will not become a good talker. One who aims at great precision, as well as one who is careless in manner, will not become a good talker. Unseemly, low or vulgar words, are worse often than they seem. They have influence in vitiating the taste and corrupting the heart. On the contrary, right words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

The words which are spoken give character to the speaker,—they have power and are irrefragable. While unuttered thoughts are superseded or forgotten, these affect only the thinker; while the uttered words may have made a lodgment in impressible minds that shall be enduring. How necessary, then, that we talk aright, that both the language and the sentiment we utter should be such as is approved by the scholar, the lady or gentleman, and the christian. Let wit, gentleness and knowledge, combine and be set off with grace and purity, and your conversation will teach and enlighten all that hear. Let every instructor aim, therefore, to make his conversation instructive; and this cannot be done without learning to talk well.—*Western (Cincinnati) School Journal*.

A HARD USED WORD.—Worcester's new dictionary gives the following passage in illustration of the amount of hard labor that is required of the convenient little word to *get*: I *got* on horse-back within ten minutes after I *got* your letter. When I *got* to Canterbury, I *got* a chaise for town; but I *got* wet through before I *got* to Canterbury, and I *got* such a cold that I shall not be able to *get* rid of it in a hurry. I *got* to the treasury about noon, but first of all I *got* shaved and dressed; I soon *got* into the secret of *getting* a memorial before the Board, but I could not *get* one the next morning. As soon as I *got* back to my inn, I *got* my supper, and *got* to bed. It was not long before I *got* to sleep. When I *got* up in the morning, I *got* my breakfast, and then I *got* myself dressed, that I might *get* out in time to *get* an answer to my memorial.—As soon as I *got* it, I *got* into the chaise, and *got* to Canterbury by three, and I *got* home. I have *got* nothing for you, and adieu.