

'But, Henry, there may be other good people and causes for you to help, and it will be sufficient if you share with these your good things and stand ready to share with others who have like need at some future time. Suppose you give a dollar. Besides, it is all right for you to keep something toward that bank account, provided you do not let that prevent you from doing good to those whose needs as to-day brings you opportunity.'

'Well, papa, I would rather give it all, but if you think it best I will give the dollar.'

The struggle was over and Henry had resisted the great temptation—the temptation which has swept multitudes of Christians off their feet and left the cause of Christ to suffer while millions of wealth in the possession of Christ's servants is tied up to nothing better than mere indulgence or the satisfaction of a long nourished desire.—'Standard.'

### One in Three.

I can tell you three rules  
That will make the world bright,  
If you'll learn them all well,  
And will keep them all right.

When the bright morning comes  
And you work for a while,  
Do not worry and fret;  
Do your task with a smile.

When the noon is at hand,  
And you tire in the race,  
Just be pleasant to all,  
With a smile on your face.

When the darkness comes down  
And the night shadows fall,  
Do not frown at the clouds,  
Have a bright smile for all.

Three smiles for all the day;  
For morning, noon, and night;  
When you obey these rules,  
The world will be more bright.  
—S. S. Messenger.

### True Ballast.

For many years I lived with my parents in a little seaport town on the coast of Sussex. I was born there, and all my earliest associations are connected with that place and its people. One old friend I shall never forget, for from him I learned many a lesson, which has stood me in good stead whilst engaged afterwards in the stern battle of life. I took my customary stroll down to the little harbor one morning before breakfast, in order to have a chat with my friend, Tom Purvis, who, I must mention, was master of a small ketch, which was then in port. I noticed several bags being taken on board, and asked Tom what the contents were.

'Ballast, my boy,' was the reply. 'I find the old "Mary" wants a bit more than she's got, and I'm giving her some shingle in bags; she's hardly stiff enough without more.'

'What do you mean by being "stiff," Tom?' I asked.

'I mean being able to stand up well against a breeze o' wind without the risk of being capsized. Do you understand?'

'You mean that if the vessel has more weight at the bottom it will keep her more upright when the wind blows—is that it, Tom?'

'That's just it, my boy; she wants more weight, or ballast as we call it, stowed right at the bottom of her, or she'd run a great risk of coming to harm in a strong breeze. Only the other day,' went on my friend, 'I was reading of a vessel as was capsized through not having sufficient ballast aboard, and several men were drowned. It's a dangerous thing to go to sea without sufficient ballast, my boy!'

I noted the look on old Tom's face as he spoke, and knew there was something on his mind which he wanted to tell me—some lesson he wanted to illustrate—and patiently waited.

'Master Curtis,' resumed the dear old fellow at length, laying one of his rough horny hands affectionately on my shoulder, 'I'm an old man now, and have gone through a great deal, and my experience might be useful to

you if you would care to listen.' He looked inquiringly into my face as he spoke.

'Of course, I shall be only too pleased to do so, Tom,' I replied. 'You know I am always glad to listen to anything you have to say.'

He looked pleased, and went on.

'Your asking me about ballast has brought something to my mind—some lesson, I mean—and I'll tell you what it is. I'm no parson; I can't preach, but I can tell you what I've learned by experience. This talking about the "Mary" and ballast minds me of a lesson which is useful to all of us, whether we be rich gentlefolks or hard-working laborers.'

He paused, and looked steadily into my face. I made no reply, and he proceeded:

'Yes, whether we be rich or gentlefolk or poor, hard-working laborers, we all want ballast—and ballast of the right sort, too. I daren't go to sea in the "Mary" without ballast, for I shouldn't feel safe; and I daren't go through life without it neither.'

Tom again paused, as though to note the effect of his words upon me. I knew he was coming out with one of his apt illustrations, and waited patiently for him to continue.

'There is ballast, there is ballast,' went on the old fellow, looking closely into my face with his still keen, grey eyes. 'Some ballast is worse than useless, and will do more harm than good; ballast as is stowed very loosely, and will shift right over to the lee side when the wind strikes the vessel, and so put her on her beam ends. That kind of ballast, as I said before, is worse than useless, and will endanger the vessel and all on board. But the right sort of ballast is that which will not easily shift, and will enable the vessel to stand well up against the breeze. You may call these two sorts of ballast the "true ballast" and the "false ballast." False ballast, you understand, won't allow the vessel to bear up against the breeze, but the true ballast will do so.'

'Then, Tom, how do you apply this illustration to our lives?' I asked, feeling deeply interested. 'In the first place, what do you consider as "false ballast"?'

'What do I consider as false ballast, Master Curtis? Well, I'll tell you. When we're weighted down with pride, self-righteousness, trusting to our own selves, and thinking we have need of nothing, and feeling that so long as we do no harm to anyone, and live respectable and go to church once or twice a week, all will be right for us in the end. This is what I call "false ballast," my boy; and if we only carry this sort of ballast aboard of us, we shall never be able to bear up against the winds and storms of adversity, and must come to grief sooner or later.'

'I quite understand you, Tom,' I said. 'Now, tell me what you consider as being "true ballast"?'

Tom looked earnestly into my face before he replied:

'Ah, Master Curtis, true ballast is what you can't make for yourself or put aboard yourself, but it comes for the asking, if you want it, and feel you can't do without it. In short, "true ballast," my boy, is taking Christ aboard; and, when you've got Him aboard, leaving Him to look after you and putting the tiller into His hands; that's true ballast, my boy—that's true ballast.'—W. C. Metcalfe, in the 'Colleger and Artisan.'

### A Bad Temper.

When something tempts you to grow angry, do not yield to the temptation. It may for a minute or two be difficult to control yourself; but try it. Force yourself to do nothing, to say nothing, and the rising temper will be obliged to go down because it has nothing to hold it up.

The person who can and does control tongue, hand, heart in the face of great provocation is a hero. The world may not own him or her as such; but God does. The Bible says that he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city.

What is gained by yielding to temper? For a moment there is a feeling of relief; but soon comes a sense of sorrow and shame, with a wish that the temper had been controlled. Friends are separated by a bad temper, trouble is caused by it, and pain is given to others

as well as self. That pain too often lasts for days, even years—sometimes for life.

An outburst of temper is like the bursting of a steam boiler; it is impossible to tell beforehand what will be the result. The evil done may never be remedied. Your temper is not worth keeping alive. Let it die.—'Friendly Greetings.'

### A Retreat Stopped.

Disheartened by the extraordinary dangers of their position, a Roman army resolved upon retreat. Their general expostulated with them, but in vain. Much they trusted, much they admired, much they loved him, but they were not to be moved; and carried away, as by a panic, they faced round.

The way led up a mountain pass, where the road, between stupendous rocks on the one side and a foaming river on the other, was but a footpath, broad enough for the step of a single man. As a last resort the general laid himself down there, saying—

'If you will retreat, it is over this body you go, trampling me to death beneath your feet.'

The flight was stopped. The soldiers could not trample under foot one whom they so revered. They wheeled round and resumed their march.

But for us who have renounced sin to turn back to its pleasures, involves a greater crime, Jesus, as it were, lays Himself down on our path; nor can any become backsliders without trampling Him under their feet.—'Friendly Greetings.'

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