

## Pastor and People.

### THE CONSECRATION OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIP.

It is a very wide law and a very beautiful one, that the best way to make a thing fit for the use for which it was first made, is to put it to that use. The best way to make a dusty trumpet clear is to blow music through it. The best way to make the sluggish mind capable of thinking is to think with it. And so the best way to make the natural relationships capable of carrying religious influences, is to give them religious influences to carry, so strong and ardent that they shall force and burn their own way through whatever artificial obstructions may have stopped up the channel through which they were meant to go. Again, I hear a Christian parent complaining that his religion has not told upon his children to make them Christians; but when I ask, I find that there never has been one direct effort to make it tell; never, in all the years they have lived together, one word or act which, definitely and spiritually, tried to send the father's religion through the open channel that was between them, from the father's life into the child's. Everything else, every other truth and interest and treasure, has been offered and urged over and over again; but not one word or act has ever urged, or even offered, religion.

I know what will be said at once, and I think I understand it. I know how often it is hardest to speak about the most sacred things to those who are the nearest and the dearest to us. I understand that shrinking which keeps the brother's lips closed from urging on his own brother the truth and the persuasion which he will urge freely enough on any other man. The glib and ready Sunday school teacher goes from his class to his home, and in the presence of his own children he is silent as a stone. In that phenomenon which is so familiar, and often so perplexing, I think we can see the mixture of two feelings, one of which is bad, the other good. The bad feeling is the sense of shame which comes when we think of pressing the love of God and the service of Christ upon the minds and consciences of those who are always living with us, and who know what poor, weak, wicked and unfaithful things our own lives are. The good reason for our silence is more subtle. It is, I think, the feeling which comes to us almost everywhere, but comes to us most strongly in the presence of those whose hearts lie nearest to our own, that for the conveyance of the most sacred influences words are the most clumsy and unsatisfactory of means; that life is the only testimony by which the power of Christ in one man's heart can thoroughly bear its witness to the heart of any other man. It is natural enough that this consciousness should be most clear and strong just where the possibility of heart bearing direct testimony to heart becomes most evident, in the home where hearts ought to be nearest and openest to one another. I know how these two reasons, and perhaps some others, make it very hard sometimes for the father to talk to his child, or for the brother to talk to his brother, about the most sacred things. And yet I know how often just one word is needed to break through the obstruction and reserve, and let all the wealth of God's grace, which has been gathering in one humbly consecrated heart, pour forth into another which is waiting empty and hungry all the time. At least, we are all bound to be sure that it is something nobler than mere pride or shame that is keeping us from saying to our brother what may be his word of life.—*Phillips Brooks.*

### LIFE'S TURNING POINT.

Adoniram Judson, the apostle of Burmah, graduated from Brown University an avowed infidel; his most intimate friend, a brilliant student, was also a sceptic. The two friends often talked over the question—momentous to one on the eve of graduation—"What shall we do to make for ourselves a career?" Both were fond of the drama and delighted in the presentation of plays, each wrote with ease and skill, and so, after many discussions, they almost determined to become dramatists.

Judson graduated in 1807 with the highest honours. A few weeks later he went to New York to study the "business" of the stage, so that he might be familiar with its requirements in case he should be-

come a play-writer. His dramatic project did not, however, retain him long in the city, and, prompted by a love of adventure, he started on horseback to make a tour of two or three of the New England States. One evening he put up at a country tavern, and was assigned a room adjoining one occupied by a young man sick unto death. The dying man's moans were distinctly heard by Judson, whose scepticism was not strong enough to keep him from musing on the question, "Is that young man prepared to die?"

During the night the groans ceased, and early next morning Judson arose sought the landlord, and asked:

"How is the young man?"

"He is dead."

"Who was he?"

"He had recently graduated from Brown, and his name was—." Judson was stunned, for the name was that of his sceptical friend. Abandoning his journey, he returned to his father's house, a dazed, stricken man. The shock unsettled his scepticism. He determined to make a thorough examination of the claims of Christianity upon his faith and conduct. He entered Andover Theological Seminary not as a student for the ministry, not even as a Christian, but simply as a truth-seeker. What he sought for he found in Him who is the truth. He found more—the life and the way. He submitted to the truth, received the life, and walked in the way with a martyr's spirit, and night often to the martyr's crown until he heard the call, "Come up higher!" Then he departed from his earthly apostolate. He wrote no drama, but his life was a sublime spectacle. No crowds laughed at his wit or were thrilled at his delineation of human passion, but hundreds of men blessed him as their father in God.—*Youth's Companion.*

### TRUST IN SHADOW TIME.

The darkness is around me, O my Father;  
But I press on; no light I need,  
For Thou dost lead

Through all the way by love decreed.

And if Thou show it not,

And so I know it not,

But all my life must walk a path unseen,  
I will keep nearer Thee and harder lean.

I feel Thy hand enclasp me, O my Father,  
And so I pass, with voice of song,  
My way along;

My theme Thy love so rich, so strong.

Since Thou art near to me,

There comes no fear to me;

Sweet peace have I, since God, my Father, knows

And will, to meet each need, His love disclose.

Full sweet it is to trust Thee thus, my Father,  
And know that through the seeming ill,  
Thou workest still,

To bring about Thy gracious will.

Here, Thou dost care for me;

Yonder, prepare for me

A mansion blest, in realms of fadeless light.

Where faith's reward shall be unending sight.

—Robert M. Offord, in *New York Observer.*

### WHY NOT?

There is nothing more inspiring than the story of a triumphant life, a life that overcomes great difficulties, works itself clear of sharp limitations and issues at last in a large, free activity. It is an old story, but it remains the one story of which men never tire, but which seems to assuage a thirst of the soul. For the end of life is freedom and power, and those of us who miss these supreme results of patience and toil and character feel that we have been defrauded of that which was our due. The old stories of magic carry a deep meaning under their wild extravagances; they betray the mighty passion of men for supremacy over things material and over inferior orders of life. The man with genius at his command could build palaces in a night, and rejoice in a marvellous mastery over the force against which so many of his fellows seemed to measure their strength in vain. The magical successes are only dreams of the real successes which men and women crave; which the noblest and most aspiring must conquer, or lose utterly the joy and sweetness of living. These successes are fortunately not eternal, though they are generally accompanied by visible trophies; they are achievements of character, and are independent of conditions—and largely of human recognition. The man whose life, outwardly all defeat, is steadily expanding in its interests and sympathies, steadily

growing in power to bear and suffer and be strong, has the blessed consciousness of coming into His kingdom. No outward disaster, no external obstacle or limitation can ever defeat a true life; it can escape all these things as the bird escapes the perils of the snare and the net by flying above them. This highest of all successes lies within the grasp of every earnest man and woman, and it is rarely without attestations of its presence and value, even in the eyes of those who take small account of spiritual things. There is a force which streams from a noble nature which is as irresistible and pervasive as the sunlight. The warmth and vitality of such natures, while they invigorate the strongest men and women about them, penetrate to the heart of clouded and obscure lives, and minister to their need. There is no success so satisfying as that which is embodied in one's character, and so cannot be taken from him, and the influence of which, embodied in the character of others, is also indestructible.—*Christian Union.*

### THE CHILDREN AT BEDTIME.

Every parent who has been in the habit of reading or talking to the little ones after they are safely tucked in bed, will bear witness to the value of this influence. With laying off the clothes, the angers, the worries and discontents of the day subside. With the brief season of prayer, they fly still further into the background. And when the little form rests in bed they seem to vanish out of sight. The body is at rest. The heart is plastic to the touch of a loving father or mother.

Now is the time to exert a moulding power. At this hour the little ones listen with hushed attention to what is read to them. Hymns, the Scriptures, Bible stories are heard with close attention, until the reader's voice is stilled, or the hearers sink into a state of rest. Conversation may take the place of reading. The will that was in a state of resistance an hour ago is now relaxed. The anger that blinded moral discernment has passed away. With open heart the child utters his confessions and gladly receives the forgiving kiss.

Plans for the morrow can be discussed, and duty can be made to put on an attractive form. Irritation can be looked at quietly, and admonitions to watchfulness may be dropped with soothing efficacy into the listening ear. And then how delightful the embrace with which the young arms clasp your neck, the intense "dear mother" with which the "good-night" is said. Parents, if you have not thus parted from your birdlings at the evening hour, you have something yet to learn of hopeful instruction, to experience of love's delights.—*Baptist Weekly.*

### THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

The following remarks are taken from a sermon by Rev. Dr. W. M. Taylor: There is further revealed here the eternity of the duration of the punishment. I cannot see now else the fixity of that gulf is to be understood. It is as true that no change of place is possible to those who are here described, as it is that, if Moses and the prophets be not heard, the mission of one from the dead will be in vain. For both of these announcements stand on the same plane. I know that it is said that this is Hades—the state of disembodied spirits—intervening between this life and the general resurrection and judgment. Be it so. I accept the representation. But that completely explodes the modern notion of Dorner and others, that probation continues through the state, and is only terminated at the resurrection and the final judgment. For how can there be probation with this impossibility of passing from one place to the other? There is here no possible probation in the intermediate state; and there is not a single word in all the Scriptures which indicates that there will be probation after the judgment—not one. That ought to be enough, and with that I leave the matter to stand before you in its own dread and awful solemnity.

By the death of Chief Justice Wallbridge, of Manitoba, a vacancy was created which has been promptly filled by the appointment of Justice Taylor. As might have been expected, the appointment has given general satisfaction. Members of the bar have been enthusiastic in their expression of approval at the elevation to the highest judicial position in the Prairie Province of one whose character and abilities eminently qualify him to adorn the office of chief justice, and to discharge the responsibilities it imposes.