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The Common Talent.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—Among the many beautiful and instructive parables of the Bible, we find one wherein a certain nobleman is described as going into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom. It was his intention to return at some future time, but that time was uncertain. Meantime he distributed to his servants certain portions of his property, with directions to lay it out for his benefit during his absence, assuring them an account would be one day required.

The explanation of this parable is simple and has been often given. The nobleman about to go into a far country, was that same Jesus who, when on earth, said to his disciples, "A little while and ye shall not see me, because I go unto my father," and also sent by Mary this sweet message, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father."

The talents, too, distributed evidently mean the various gifts and abilities that are entrusted to those who are desired to expect and wait for the appearing of the Lord. In all ages the distribution has been unequal. To Moses, the deliverer and lawgiver of Israel, was given a great commission; to David, as a king, as the sweet psalmist, as the tried and highly favored servant of God, was committed a sacred

and important trust; to Peter, with all his fire and energy, his zeal and ardent love, were given the ten talents; to Paul, also, whose sound reasonings, whose glowing eloquence and powerful pleading won so many souls to Christ, were intrusted and faithfully occupied a large measure of the gifts of God; to Dorcas, chiefly remembered by her coats and garments for the poor; to Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night; to John Mark, whose faith, though true, was yet weak, gifts and graces in a less degree were bestowed, but they, faithful over a very little, shall not lose their reward, but shall equally enter into the joy of their Lord.

The same distinctions are found among ourselves. Look around on an assembly of young people; how many and how wide are the differences which characterize them? In circumstances, in abilities, in opportunities of improvement, few are exactly similarly situated; and yet there is one talent common to all, one gift in which all are equal partakers, one deposit entrusted, without distinction, to every one of the servants of our Lord, who will assuredly come and require at the hand of each an account of their trust.

It is your time! Has it ever occurred to you that time is a special gift, bestowed