

Parish and Home.

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IN every great man's life it will be found that enormous difficulties lay in the way of success, which could only be conquered by steady determination. Our weakness will always suggest timid fears, and our distrust of ourselves will magnify them. It is by bravely trudging on in the sunlight or under the dark clouds that we at last reach the goal of success. Nine men out of every ten who start new ventures in business fail; and often the reason is that they were overcome by the first discouragements, and gave up before their plans had been fully tested. It is adversity that qualifies for success. Our firm hopefulness in times of apparent failure fits us to bear success modestly, and to use it well.

"Be strong, and of a good courage." The Christian serves the power that must triumph. Our duty is to cling. God's work is to teach and draw us on. A quaint poem composed by one of the Electors of Brandenburg in the stormy times of the Reformation has the ring of genuine sincerity in it. In English prose, it is: "The power of Jesus Christ and of the Father is over me. If any one thinks he is stronger than these, let him hurt me if he can." On rough journeys and bloody fields of battle, in all the perils of unscrupulous intrigue, the man who believed and lived upon this truth was safe. God's love is, if we may say so, tenderest when we brave and bear most for Him. "Be strong, and of a good courage."

WITHOUT the conviction that we are in the path in which God has placed us, our lives cannot be strong and fruitful. Many a man chooses his own calling in life and then expects God to bless him in it, in-

stead of asking for light and guidance in the choice of the calling itself. Human life furnishes varied occupations, and the Great Designer has given man a variety of endowments. One is suited for commerce, one for a profession, another for a trade. Let us all make sure that we are where God has put us, and not our own self-will. We have a sad memory of a gifted and good man who engaged in business and succeeded in amassing a considerable fortune. But he was never quite happy. His conscience told him that God had intended him for the Christian ministry, and that he resisted the promptings of God's Spirit when he chose a commercial life instead. All his prosperity could not remove from his life the shadow that his conviction of his mistake in the choice of his calling brought.

EACH time of life has its peculiar joys. If maturer life misses the glow, the bounding joy of youth, it has a calmer and a deeper peace. In youth the unknown years before us fill us with the tumult of their strife. All is untried. We know not our own powers, or the dangers of the way. The ripper experience of late life has passed this disquiet. The tumult is gone, and there is, if the experience is that of a tried Christian, a calm of spirit that fears nothing because of the knowledge that a hand has always been ready to help in the perilous days that are gone.

"Enough that blessings undeserved
Have marked my erring track;—
That wheresoe'er my feet have swerved,
His chastening turned me back.

And so the shadows fall apart,
And so the west-winds play;
And all the windows of my heart
I open to the day."

THERE is no good work to which we are absolutely necessary. God can always do without us, and our work is given to us as much for the good that we shall receive as for what we shall give. The successful clergyman thinks, "Oh, if I go, this work is lost." Not so; the outward form of it may change, the church that was full may be empty, but if the work was God's work it will have had the power of multiplying itself; and in the hearts of men and women who have been reached new life will ever be springing up.

"I will not dream in vain despair
The steps of progress wait for me:
The puny leverage of a hair
The planet's impulse well may spare,
A drop of dew the tided sea."

Let us work, then, in this spirit, that we toil for God. The Architect has planned

this great building. We may be privileged to put a stone in the wall. But if we fail, others will come at His call, and work out His plan. We are happy in having been honored by the call to the place we fill. We are not responsible for the plan of the work, nor even for the future of what we have ourselves done.

"ANY one who has watched a sunrise among mountains will know how the light opens out depths of beauty and life where but lately the eye rested on a cold monotony of gloom or mist. At one moment only the sharp, dark outline of the distant ranges stands out against the rosy sky, and at the next peak after peak catches the living fire, which then creeps slowly down their rocky slopes, and woods and streams and meadows and homesteads start out from the dull shadows, and the grass upon which we stand sparkles with a thousand dewdrops. Now all this represents in a figure what is the effect of the presence of Christ in the world, when the eye is open to see Him. Let the thought of Christ rest on anything about us, great or small, and it will forthwith reflect on the awakened soul some new image of His power and love.—Brooke Foss Westcott, D.D., in *Parish Visitor*.

A GOOD EXPERIENCE.

GOD knows me better than I know myself. He knows my weaknesses—what I can do, and cannot do. So I desire to be led; to follow Him, and I am quite sure that He will thus enable me to do a great deal more in ways which seem to me almost a waste in life, advancing His cause, than I could in any other way. I am sure of that. Intellectually, I am weak; in scholarship, nothing; in a thousand things a baby. He knows this, and so He has led me, and greatly blessed me, who am nobody, to be of some use to my church and fellow-men. How kind, how good, how compassionate art Thou, O God! O my Father, keep me humble! Help me to have respect towards my fellow-men, to recognize these several gifts as from Thee. Deliver me from the diabolical sins of malice, envy, or jealousy, and give me hearty joy in my brother's good, in his work, in his gifts and talents, and may I be truly glad in His superiority to myself, if God be glorified. Root out weak vanity, all devilish pride, all that is abhorrent to the mind of Christ. God hear my prayer. Grant me the wondrous joy of humiliation, which is seeing Thee as all in all.—Norman Macleod's *Diary*.