

sity of democratic government, but something like the Church estebism is needed to teach people the lesson of doing their duty in the station to which it has pleased God to call them, as well as that of getting on in the world."

"THE LESSON OF THE LOOM."

A midnight reverie, vision or dream? which name can one give to the mental pictures which as a phantasmagoria come and go before the eyes of those who lie wakeful upon their beds, whilst others sleep, and who scarce can tell when they have passed at last from the border land of dreamy wakefulness into the veritable sleep land which they have in vain been so eagerly trying to reach? So restlessly tossed I, an anxious hearted Martha, burdened with many cares, tortured with many needless fears—needless just because my faith had failed me; and so overpowered with a sense of my own utter weakness of body and mind that instead of the upward look which would have brought me healing, my heavy eyes refused to gaze anywhere but earthwards, and so, instead of hope, I had despondency, and instead of faith and happy trust, gloom and despair; and there came to me what I will call my vision. . . . The year was just dying out, and the sounds of the big church bells giving their glad welcome to the New Year on the Big World's threshold, mingled with the wind among the trees, and perhaps brought with them, those other sounds which so blended with those of my vision that they became as one. 'Clang! clang! jingle! jingle! ding! dong! What are they saying? Voices like a refrain seemed to sing, 'Come all ye faithful! Come! Watch! Work! Pray! and then in happy chorus followed:

"Every day is a fresh beginning,  
Every morn is the world made new;  
You, who are weary of sorrow and sinning  
Here is a beautiful hope for you;  
A hope for me and a hope for you.  
"All the past things are past and over,  
The tasks are done, and tears are shed;  
Yesterdays errors let yesterday cover.  
Yesterday's wounds which smarted and bled  
Are treated with the healing which night  
has shed.

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Listen my soul to the glad refrain,  
Take heart with the day and begin again."

were these comforting words the message of the joybells to me, or were they but the memory of Susan Coolidge's beautiful little poem, which had helped myself and others so often before? Helped us all to the blessed self-appropriation of those words, which have always healed so many broken but contrite hearts, "your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more."

Clang! clang! went the bells, and a murmur of voices, and what seemed like a whirring of machinery followed in their wake: my dream world was peopled for me, and I was amongst a throng of busy workers all eager to take up their allotted task, and to stand at their post at the binding of the Master. At least, all looked eager, but it was easy to pick out the loiterers from those others who either went readily to their work, or who sought to elude it altogether. "Listen! my people, and while ye look, learn once again the good old "Lesson of the Loom." Thus the Master spoke as for a space, upon our own especial section of that mighty Loom before us stood out in bold relief the fabric we had wrought. Above with Heaven's own beautiful light illuminated, appeared the pattern of what alas! it should have been but was not! but which we were again permitted to gaze upon that we "forgetting those things which are behind," might still "reach unto those things which are before," pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus." And what of our work? So

botched, and tangled, so ill performed and unsymmetrical, so wholly unlike the Pattern set us when what seemed so short a while ago, another year of grace had been given us? The many colored threads had then been handed to us, each with its given task to do, no one thread to stand out apart or independent of another, but all to be so interwoven and comingled, so influencing and influenced that the dropping of one here and one there, and their consequent careless knotting up together as they fell beneath the loom, their weakening by over-tension, or the fading of their colors by uncleanly handling would involve the whole in a confusion so inextricable that no hand but that of the Master Himself could restore its beauty. And what had been the result? As we gazed, eyes were bedimmed with tears of bitter remorse, or of tender sorrow, of hopeful expectancy, or of hopeless despondency, whilst here and there was a face testifying to a dogged resistance to all bidding and an obstinate determination to work its own will regardless of consequences. Here would stand one stricken as it were with a wilful blindness one who would not look up, would not see the pattern and recognize how the very thread committed to him had lost its place continuously, and would have been dropped out of its place altogether but that by the law of the Master, whilst the shuttle flew, no thread could get beyond its reach, and so for good or for evil, must become a part of the whole. Some as heaven's own radiance fell upon both the pattern above and its poor base imitation below, showed them how their own thread had begun so well, keeping side by side and in sweetest harmony with those lesser ones committed to their guardianship and then, oh! Why had it been so? allured and tempted, weak and self-indulgent not only had their own bright hued thread become faded and frayed but those which should have been sustained and strengthened by it had fallen with it, a long way from, but thank God! not wholly out of reach of the Master Weaver's restoring hand. Some seemed to have done the Master's will so promptly, so unremittingly and so obediently that they had not only grown brighter in hue, and stronger in consistency as the fabric had neared its completion, but they had, by their constant looking up, so reflected the Pattern which they had striven to imitate, that such threads which had intermingled with theirs, partook of their loveliness and had gained courage and strength from their contact and example, and yet withal upon their faces shone no self-satisfied look, as those who "thanked God that they were not as other men are" but only the gladness of those servants who wait for their Lord and who know that all things, even apparent failures, must "work together for good to those who love Him." And, what of the tiny threads which everywhere appeared amongst the fibres of more endearing strength, interwoven for awhile and then snapped in twain by some rougher contact or by some jarring of the machinery and what too of those strong tested cords, bright as silver and burnished as gold which had endured to the end, and then, their task done on earth, had as it were, "fallen asleep" and their place "knew them no more?" Why though not with us, they were of us—needed for the higher section of the Master's Loom—those so frail and tiny upon earth tenderly guided upward to lead with them, hearts linked to theirs, by a love which can never die, and those "long-tested" strands of gold and silver, they had only gone upward too, still working for the Master whilst waiting for us whose tasks below are still to finish and who may be watching us, and who may be helping us (for who can limit the tender mercies of our God?) even though we know it not? But we do know that they have left us, by the memory of their beautiful lives, by their undying trust in the efficacy of the "Blood shed" for the remission of all sins and able to save to the uttermost" such an example of patient

endurance and untiring zeal that we can at the beginning of our New Year take heart of courage to begin our work anew and drinking from the Fountain at which they drank when weary and athirst, we may indeed, "forgetting those things which are behind, press forward towards the work of the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus."

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Was this a vision or just an old story retold? Nay rather is it not "the story without an end?" Is not the Loom, upon which Creation's Mighty Scheme is ever growing into its wider and wider proportions ever at work? Can one single thread, snarl or twist, snap or drop out altogether without the knowledge of the Master Weaver Himself? and if it will keep adrift from the shuttle, and will make choice of its own part of the fabric, how often it has been tenderly gathered back into its place, and never wholly given up unto its own devices, it will never know perhaps, until that Great Day when the Books will be opened and every man judged according to his deeds whether they be good or whether they be evil. And, so for a while let us ponder upon the simple but endless "Lesson of the Loom. H. A. B. London, Ont.

THE POWER OF EXAMPLE.

It can be safely asserted that the chief hindrance to any good work undertaken in a parish is the inertia of those who ought to be foremost in it. Aside from the direct benefit to individuals, how much better it would be for any parish if all of the members of it rightly used their personal influences.

Why is it that strangers rarely kneel in Church and so many are content to sit upright during prayer? It is because that they see those who are supposed to submit themselves to the rubrics and discipline of the Church, do the same thing?

Why is it that so many able bodied young people who are able to dance half the night, play tennis half of the day, stand at a desk or counter for hours, but seem too weak to stand up during the Te Deum and to take part in the praise of the Church? It may be that they think the Canticles are sung for their entertainment, but it is more likely because they see others whom they have been taught to respect do the same thing.

Why is it when a class is to be confirmed that their Rector prays over them, confers with them separately and collectively, and does everything in his power to set before them in its fulness the way of the Church—why is it that they come once perhaps to an early Communion, and then fall into the more lax custom of the parish? Doubtless, the fact that at that first Communion they see so few of their elders, makes them feel as if they were trying to be righteous overmuch, as if they are reproaching their parents or neighbors. It is easy to think, "O well, that is only the Rector's wish, but if it were very important, Mr. A. and Mrs. B. and Miss C. would all be there. If I can be as good as they I shall be satisfied," and so it happens that half of the clergyman's work is overthrown by the very ones who should be—perhaps wish to be—his best helpers.

These are not imaginary cases merely, nor the only ones that might be produced, but they serve to illustrate the stumbling block of bad example, and the importance to others of our acts.

In any given parish, when the majority of the communicants of the parish determine to live in strict and sincere accord with the teachings of the Church, the success of that parish, both temporal and spiritual, is assured. It will do the work God has given it to do.—The Tidings.