

down to me?" wondered the humble pupil. "Have not I been sitting on the ragged edge of endeavor all my life until this morning? I believe I have."

"Now pedal," continued the instructor. "Sit right up to get the good of it and pedal for all you are worth, but slowly to begin with. Pedal right on! Just remember that you must keep the pedals going as long as you're riding. Beginners forget that. They see a stone, or a rise of ground, or a rut, or some one coming, and they stop pedaling to think what to do, but you must keep on and pick out your safest course as you go."

It seemed to the pupil that this was one of the most profound utterances she had ever heard and that all the mistakes of her life had come from an instinct to stop pedaling at sight of a stone in the road. But the greatest lesson was yet to come.

"Now, guide yourself. You'll have to do it sooner or later, and you'd better begin at once. Steering is nice work. The great points are to know where you want to go and to keep your hands easy on the handle bars—unless you're going up hill. Then pull hard."

The contrariness of human nature seems to impell all novices to put their greatest effort where it is least needed. The bicycle learner will grasp the handle bars for dear life and forget the pedal.

"Never saw a beginner yet who didn't try to hold herself on by the handles, as if the machine had no seat and she fancied that she was a professional acrobat. The handles are only to guide the wheel, not necessary even for that when you learn how to do without them. Yet there you are, ma'am, clutching your handles like grim death, straining the muscles of your arms, all doubled over, too, and twitching the machine every which way. Take hold hard and you can't help from running into a barn, but keep sitting up, maintaining your balance, steering with easy hands, and you can often find and follow a hair line of smoothness through a rough road."

"Young man, you are my Socrates," commented the pupil to herself. "What good intentions gone wrong have I to lament from doubling over the handle bars with a death-like grip. How often have good plans miscarried because the hands which should have guided lightly closed heavily and twitched things every which way, wasting the strength on the steering that should have been used in pedaling. How many!"

"When you've got your seat, your pedaling, your poise and a light hand on the handles, there's just one thing more before you're ready to learn to ride."

"Only to learn!"

"Yes, ma'am, just ready really to begin to do whatever you want to on the machine. That one thing is where to look. Even scorchers have to keep their heads up enough to look ahead. But lady and gentlemen riders always want to sit up straight and easily and look about them. You must not keep your eyes on the ground immediately in front. As sure as you do, just so sure you'll go over, unless you're an expert. Then you can do 'most anything, for the fun of it."

"But one must see where one is going."

"You see all the better if you don't look too hard. It's one of the beauties of bicycling that you must have your head up, seeing your road while you are looking forward, seeing the country, taking everything in—including the fresh air. You can turn this way and that, from side to side, but you can't afford to look back when you're beginning, and never much any way. You can't afford to be afraid, either. You can shoot ahead, and can slip through a small space, and you can always get off and stand still in a tight place, but you've got to take in the situation and keep cool. You see, ma'am, first it's all a matter of learning how in a few details, keeping your balance, guiding yourself quickly and easily, and pedaling right along, fast or slowly, till you want to get off. That's a detail again, but you'll break your neck if you don't know just how and do it lightly."

The teacher dismounted the pupil. The face he showed as she thanked him made her wonder if, after all, the philosophy were not his, and he merely happened to be applying it in a "bicycle academy" at the time for practical purposes.—*Congregationalist*.

THE SOUL'S REST.

BY GEORGE MATHESON, M.A., D.D.

"Ye shall find rest unto your soule."—Matt. xi. 28.

The rest of a soul is a very peculiar thing; it is what we would call movement. The rest of a body is sleep, because its work becomes a weariness. The rest of a rolling ball is stillness, because it loses its energy as it goes. But the rest of a soul is motion, because repose is foreign to it. One of our poets has said "the soul is dead that slumbers," and it is true. The weariest moment of a soul is its torpor. When it has nothing to think of, nothing to dream of, nothing to speak of; when all its wells are dry, and all its flowers are withered, and all its ambitions are silent; when it feels that life is beneath striving for, when it says "the game is not worth the candle,"—that is an awful time. It is the spectacle of a restless soul, because it is the sight of a soul reposing. It is the broken wing of a bird, the lame feet of a stag, the snapped string of a violin, the lost voice of a singer. The soul imprisoned within itself finds the yoke not easy.

My soul, how shalt thou find rest? On the wings of love. It is not less but more movement that thou cravest. Not a couch more downy, but a pinion more drastic is wanted to give thee rest. If thou would'st not be weary, thou must mount up with wings as eagles. Only when thou art flying art thou unfettered. Put on the new wings, O my soul!—put on thy wings of love and soar. Soar to the joy of thy heart—the man Christ Jesus. Soar to the light of thy waking, the object of thy dreams. Soar, though thou come not up with him to-day, nor to-morrow, nor, perhaps, for many morrows. Soar, though the wind be high, though the mist be thick upon the hills. If thou shalt only rise far enough, the mist shall vanish, and the winds shall cease, and in all thine onward way there shall be no more resistance to thy flight. Thou shalt reach thy perfect rest when thou hast attained thine unimpeded flying.

THE CONFESSION OF MEMORY.

BY GEORGE MATHESON, M.A., D.D.

"I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." (Psalm xxvii. 25.)

Who is the "I" that speaks with such confidence? Nobody knows. It is some one unseen by history—below the level of fame. Perhaps it was a poor seamstress in a garret; perhaps it was an invalid upon the couch of pain; perhaps it was a breaker of stones by the roadside. Whoever it was, he has become immortal. Doubtless, when he wrote he had not thought of being heard beyond the next street—it reads very like a letter of condolence to a distressed neighbour. But the angels caught it up, and therefore the press caught it up. It became a song of all nights. No wonder. It has a note of quite special music. Many have uttered songs of faith, but this is not a song of faith, it is a song of retrospect; it is the retrospect of an obscure man, a nobody, and that is its value. It claims no authority but experience; it appeals to no testimony but fact, not even God's testimony. It quotes neither Moses nor the prophets; it just gives an autobiography without a date and without a name.

My brothers, why have we so few autobiographies of the common plain? We have societies for collecting strange testimonies. We gather the record of the apparitions. We invite the narration of fulfilled dreams. We solicit the disclosure of foretold events. Why do we not ask common men to give their experience of everyday life? We have our confessions of faith: why have we not our confessions of memory? You ask me to sign my belief in a plan of salvation. Perhaps I may demur to do so; the universe may be too big for me to see it round and round. But I shall not refuse to sign the confession of my own memory; I shall not refuse to say, "I have always found God good to me." There are few of us, even the most forlorn, who would not rather live than die. That itself is a confession of memory—the confession that God is good. Be this our bond of creed, my brothers; we shall leave the rest to hope, but we shall put our sign to memory. Hope may flicker, for an hour it may even expire; but memory is stereotyped. No progress can wash away that record of the past, "I have not seen the righteous forsaken."