

## The Quiet Hour.

### Short Ladder From Her House To Heaven.

Over in New York a certain great house hired a new boy. In the multitude of clerks he was lost, unrecognised by his chief. In the middle of the afternoon it was his duty to stand beside the head of the house and place checks and important documents for rapid signature. He did this work with such rapid skill and such exquisite manners that suddenly his employer looked up and recognised a new face. "How long have you been here?" "Two weeks, sir." "How old are you?" "Fourteen, Mr.—" "How much are you receiving?" "Three dollars." "Do you live at home?" "No Mr.—" "Is your mother living?" "No Mr.—, she died when I was three years old." "Does your father do nothing for you?" "No sir." "With whom do you live?" "My teacher." "Do you mean your public school teacher?" "I do, sir." "Three dollars a week will not support you. Have you any extra expenses this week besides car fares?" "I had a dentist's bill last week." "How much was it?" "Fifteen dollars. I am paying it off a dollar a week."

Just a few colors and strokes of the brush, and lo! the artist paints the angel and the seraph. Very few of the strokes—we see a little child left an orphan at three; we see another woman coming into the home and counting the stepchild a burden; we see a man making himself a burden; casting a little child out into a great world. Then we see a school teacher interested in this boy, who must drop her classes, and then, opening her slender store, she makes a home for this child, puts his feet on the first round of the golden ladder, teaches him by night. Somewhere in this city there is a heroine. I know not her name. She abides in our midst, and lends glory to this city. Ten men like Abraham could have saved Sodom, and ten women like this could civilize—Brooklyn and New York. Oh, these old-maid school teachers! This world would fall to pieces but for them. I sometimes think that they are the bolts that keep the machinery of society together. There is a lofty hilltop somewhere in this city, and on the summit thereof is a little house, where this teacher lives with this orphan boy. It will take a very short ladder to reach from her house to God's heaven. Some day this boy will climb to greatness and position, if only health is vouchsafed him. But the honors will be hers.—*Dr. N. D. Hillis, in Plymouth Pulpit.*

### Don't Stop.

BY WAYLAND HOLT, D. D.

There is a meaning in which none of us can stop. Mrs. Browning sings, "My day go on." How swiftly they do go on, and with what accumulating swiftness as life advances. Sid, strong, gruff, tender Thomas Carlyle, seeing the blue light on the hills, and leaning on the parapet of the stone bridge spanning the little stream flowing through his birth town, Ecclefechan, and noticing how quick water runs on and on, never to return, breaks thus into poetry about the wavelets of the days going so hurriedly:

So here hath been dawning  
Another blue day;  
Think, wilt thou let it  
Slip useless away.

Out of eternity  
This new day is born;  
In to eternity  
At night will return.

Behold it aforeside  
No eye ever did;  
Soon it forever  
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning  
Another blue day;  
Think, wilt thou let it  
Slip useless away.

But whether we let the new day slip useless away or not, it will slip away; and though we chase after it to all eternity we can never catch it. In this meaning, that we are every one of us urged on by rapid and relentless days, no one of us can stop, possibly.

Yet there is a sort of stopping which may be prevented, but to which we, too, often yield—a kind of stopping of noble purpose and endeavor. Who has not felt temptation to it? Who has not, perhaps, sore, wearied, or smitten with some sudden disappointment, or vainly looking for some harvest from long effort, or baffled by some mist of uncertainty, found himself losing the nerve of his resolve get untense, found himself willing to allow himself in a relaxed listlessness as the new days greet him? Such sort of stopping is death and doom for all high living. If it be allowed to fasten into habit bright is certain. And in the presence of such temptation one cannot too quickly regard his determination of instant alertness toward the duty next him.

We may not stop in the brave use of even the slenderest opportunity. One day when Mr. Lincoln, a young man utterly unknown and poor, was keeping a grocery and variety store in the pioneering and shanty village of New Salem, a man who was migrating still further west drove up to the door and asked Mr. Lincoln if he would not buy an old barrel containing nothing of special value, the man said, and for which he had no room in his wagon. Always ready to oblige, Mr. Lincoln bought the barrel and contents for fifty cents; and putting it away in the back part of the store, for a good while forgot about his purchase. Overhauling things, however, afterwards, Mr. Lincoln came upon his barrel and emptied its contents on the floor to see what they might be. Amid rubbish he found an edition of "Blackstone's Commentaries." Says Mr. Lincoln, "I began to read those famous works; the more I read, the more intensely interested I became. Never in my whole life was my mind so thoroughly absorbed. I read until I devoured them. That chance copy of Blackstone made Mr. Lincoln a lawyer; that knowledge, so seized and won, enabled him for that great debate with Senator Douglas; that debate compelled National attention. It is not too much to say—that chance copy of "Blackstone's Commentaries" with that scanty store for study, was the first swinging ajar of the doors of opportunity into Mr. Lincoln's immortal service as President, victor, emancipator. There are some lofty lines concerning opportunity by Mr. Edward Rowland Sell, worth everybody's heeding:

This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream:  
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;  
And underneath a cloud, or in it, raged  
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords  
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince's  
banner

Wavered, then straggled backward hemmed by  
foes.

A craven hung along the battle's edge  
And thought, "Had I a sword of keener steel—  
That blue blade that the kings son bears—  
but  
this

Blunt thing—I!" he snapped and flung it from  
his hand,  
And cowering, crept away, and left the field.  
Then came the king's son, wounded, sore be-  
stead,

And weaponless, and saw the broken sword  
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,  
And ran and snatched it, and with battle shout  
Lifted afresh, he hewed the enemy down,  
And saved a great cause that heroic day.

We may not call even a poor opportunity a blunt thing, and stop endeavor. We must bravely seize the broken sword if we can get no better, and struggle on. To stop is defeat. To bravely struggle on is, anyway the path toward victory.

We may not stop in service for others. Sometimes we are tempted to because our service seems so ill-requited and unrecognised. But our main thought may not be upon the wage for service, but upon the service our Lord would have us do. I never felt the emphasis on that "done" till lately. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." But it is service *done* our Lord commands—not service dreamed about or ceased from. Rest and reward are yonder. This life is the place for an unstoping diligence.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

### Prayer.

Lord, I would live thy life! The life of thinking and doing and getting and having cannot satisfy me. My heart aches in loneliness and hunger. Nothing of wealth or power cheers me. I came to Thee as the only Reason, the only power, the only Guide. Take me as I am and make me what Thou wouldst have me be. Forgive me for my ignorance and folly, and lead me into wisdom and character. And let me know that nothing is worth while without Thee. Amen.

### Transforming Power.

Wealth and eminent position witness powerfully the transforming influence of exalted characters. "My lords," said Salisbury, "The reforms of this century have been chiefly due to the presence here of one man—Lord Shaftesbury. The genius of his life was expressed when last he addressed you. He said: 'When I feel age creeping upon me I am deeply grieved, for I cannot bear to go away and leave the world with so much misery in it.' So long as Shaftesbury lived England beheld a standing rebuke of all wrong and injustice. How many iniquities shrank in his presence! This man, representing the noblest ancestry, wealth and culture, wrought numberless reforms. He became voice for the poor and weak. He gave his life to reform acts and corn laws; he emancipated the enslaved boys and girls toiling in mines and factories; he exposed and made impossible the horrors of that inferno in which chimney-sweeps live; he founded two-score industrial, ragged and trade schools; he established shelters for the homeless poor; when parliament closed its sessions at midnight Lord Shaftesbury went forth to search out poor prodigals sleeping under Waterloo or Blackfriars bridge, and often in a single night brought a score to his shelter—Selected.