

KEEPING IN TUNE.

Why do we often sit down to our class on Sundays, so utterly spiritless to teach? Why do we look around so coldly on immortal souls going the broad way that leads to death? Why, when we speak to them of a Saviour's love is there often no thrill of gratitude, no joyful emotion in our souls, or in our voices? Or when school is over and we meet one another in friendly intercourse, why the lack of love and warmth which should kindle through every Christian recognition. Why do we pass on to our homes, no better for having met, without one word of sympathy or counsel, perhaps without the look, the smile, which may speak so plainly, to carry back the glad remembrance? Ah! here lies the secret, we are *not in tune*. Perhaps, too, we were not in tune for prayer before we left our homes, when we knelt and could not feel the presence of God, or the holy peace of those who 'hold communion with the skies.' Then we arose, with our urn still unfiled with the pure water we tried to seek, and we mingled with minor things over again, weak and thirsty as before.—Might not the explanation be that we had striven to meet the Lord with a heart untuned?—a thing, as impossible and unreasonable to expect, as to draw forth sweet airs and harmony from a harp neglected and unprepared. Let us go farther back still, and ask in honest scrutiny were we ready for the sabbath? How far did its dawn find us in a state of mind suiting its hallowed employments?—like the man who could say 'My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord.' We cannot answer these things, but we sadly admit the explanation of what has sometimes appeared strange and unacceptable. We have not lived within sight of the city we are going to, we have been walking in parts remote from the kingdom to which we are bound, as Pilgrim felt when he was fanned by the pleasant air of the land of Zoulah, and caught glimpses of the light of the Celestial City. Would that heart and life were more in that land which is the border ground of heaven.

One who was well acquainted with the sainted Hewitson, remarked, 'One thing about him made a forcible impression upon

me. He seemed to have no gaps,—no intervals in his communion with God.' His was the holy aptitude for service which can only result from much and ceaseless traffic between our souls and heaven.—This has been the life of all those who have been the most distinguished in holy zeal and the richest in good works. They have realized the necessity of keeping in tune. 'It is harder,' says Gurnall, 'to get the great bell up, than to ring it when it is raised; and so it is with our hearts; harder work we shall find it to prepare them for duty than to perform it when they get into some order.'

'But alas!' says one, 'I am incapable of such a close walk with God; those of whom you write were the strong ones, and alas! I am a 'weak' one, and compassed with infirmities. I cannot thus keep up a constant walk with him, a perpetual readiness to serve him. Which of us Christians does not feel ready to say the same? Which of *them* did not? Well we feel it is so; well if such a consciousness sends us to the 'Strong for strength,' and makes us even glory in weakness, and 'glory in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us—if it drive us with more fervent longing to that blessed Spirit, who helpeth our infirmities, and who alone can reveal to us the exceeding riches of grace and strength that are treasured up for us in Jesus.

Oh! seek his aid then, that your heart may be as an instrument ready tuned at all times, and though you may be often sad for its untunefulness, and troubled that you send forth such feeble music; while you seek each day to raise a holier, sweeter strain, take comfort in the enlivening hope that ere long you shall praise him better, love him more; that God is only *trying* your strings, as it were, below, sounding one here and there to see how far his work has progressed, fashioning you for future use and sinless service, when not one missing string, or one discordant note will grieve him again. 'The glory that shall be revealed in us, eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard.'

Sunday-school teachers, let us see to it that, till that day comes, we lose not precious opportunities and precious souls through being *out of tune*. May God