

HOPE FOR THE BEST.

LET us hope for the best—it is better  
To struggle than to yield to despair;  
Hope breaketh each link of the fetter.  
And scoffs at the bondage of care;  
It lightens the hand of affliction,  
It smileth at shadows and fears,  
And with the warm rays of conviction  
It drieth the valley of tears!  
Then throw off the sorrowful bond,  
Dispel the dark yoke from your breast;  
Oh, who would submit and despond?  
Better struggle and hope for the best!

Let us hope for the best—never fear.  
Though lost in adversity's track;  
To sigh or to let fall a tear,  
Will do little in guiding us back.  
Meet misfortune as you would a stranger;  
Be cautious and quicken your pace.  
And shrink not in trial and danger,  
But meet the foe full in the face!  
Oh, who would turn off from the strife  
When the shafts of adversity pressed?  
Who would flee the great battle of Life?  
Better struggle and—Hope for the  
Best!

KINDNESS WINS.

CHILDREN ought always to be kind to  
everybody, and help anybody they can;  
kind to animals too. I once heard of a  
little boy in one of the parks in London,  
who found a poor sheep lying on the  
grass one very hot day, quite ill for want  
of water; and though there was some  
water not far off, yet there was a bank  
too high for the poor sheep to reach it.  
So this little boy—he was only a poor  
boy—took off his cap, knelt down, filled  
his cap with water, and then ran with  
it to the poor sheep, and gave it the  
water.

That boy did a very kind thing. If  
spared to be a man, we may be almost  
certain that he would grow up kind to  
all around him.

THE INFIDEL BLACKSMITH.

A CERTAIN infidel, who was a black-  
smith, was in the habit when a Chris-  
tian man came to his shop, of asking  
some one of the workmen if they had  
ever heard about Brother So-and-so, and  
what they had done? Then he would  
begin and tell what some Christian  
brother or clergyman had done, and then  
laugh and say: "That is one of their  
fine Christians we hear so much about."  
An old gentleman one day went into the  
shop, and the infidel soon began about  
what some Christians had done, and  
seemed to have a good time over it.  
The gentleman stood a few minutes and  
listened, and then quietly asked the in-  
fidel if he had read the story in the  
Bible about the rich man and Lazarus?  
"Yes, many a time, and what of it?"  
"Well, do you remember about the dogs  
—how they came and licked the sores  
of Lazarus?" Yes, and what of that?  
"Well," said the gentleman, do you  
know you just remind me of those dogs,  
content merely to lick the Christians'  
sores." The blacksmith suddenly grew  
ensive, and hasn't had much to say  
about failing Christians since!

DO SOME ONE THING WELL.

LET me say to the young forming  
habits, one fact or truth looked at in all  
its phases, traced in all its relations,  
thoroughly mastered, is worth more to  
head, heart, and life, than a thousand  
superficially grasped and partially com-  
prehended. Take a subject, think thro'  
it, round it, over it, under it, turn it  
over, look at it in all possible phases and  
relations; master it, make it your own,  
one book—read it, question it, doubt it,  
discuss it, and analyze it; master it, and  
it will be worth a dozen read in a cur-  
sory or superficial manner. One text  
of Scripture—fathom it, measure its  
length and breadth; try to detach it and  
find the ligaments by which it is held;  
think down into it until you come ac-

ording to its own path to Christ—for  
be sure as he is the truth, and every  
truth leads to Him in His own way—get  
into its very heart and look at it, for  
the peculiar glory of spiritual truths,  
like some temples, can be seen only from  
within. Climb to its summit. As liter-  
ally, so spiritually, the best, widest,  
grandest prospects is from the top of its  
heights. It is the beaten oil that gives  
the brilliant flame. It is thoroughly  
digested food that gives us strength and  
health. I would not say, read the Bible  
less, but meditate upon what you read  
more. He is not the best Bible student  
that remembers the greatest number of  
verses, or that is the most skilful exe-  
gete of its difficult passages or that has  
at his command the greatest number of  
its facts and truths; but rather that  
man who best understands its great  
fundamental principles that lie at the  
foundation and manifest themselves  
through every verse, and is the most  
thoroughly imbued with its spirit, that  
has the key of interpretation to the deep-  
est meaning of the whole.

UNSELFISH LOVE.

DON'T tell me, Clare! the girl is sim-  
ply frightful, and there is no use trying  
to get a round it.

"But, Alma, is it right to treat her  
so because she is, as you say, simply  
frightful? Is it kind to repel her ad-  
vances of friendship, and slight her so  
cruelly, because her face is homely and  
unattractive, her ways rough and awk-  
ward?"

"Kind or not, I can't help it. I de-  
clare she is so ugly it makes my eyes  
fairly ache to look at her, and my flesh  
creep whenever she touches me. And  
once she kissed me—you remember the  
time—so unexpectedly, I thought I could  
never wipe the spot off my cheek."

"Cruel!" And Ernestine Hayes'  
handsome, shapely lips closed tightly  
for a moment, with an expression half  
of contempt, half of pity.

These three, Alma Dearing, Clare  
Winston, and Ernestine Hayes, sat on  
the broad stone steps leading to the  
wide, cool piazza of the college building,  
watching the beautiful June sunset.

Alma Dearing's face made a glorious  
picture as she leaned against the gleam-  
ing colonnade, with the rich, graceful  
festoons of scarlet-tinted vines drooping  
all about her. Dark of hair and eyes,  
handsomely perfect as to every feature,  
she had all the gloss, and glow, and  
sparkle of some fabled Eastern goddess;  
and how well she, of all others, was  
conscious of her rich, rare beauty.

Pale and slender as a lily, with eyes  
like blue for-get-me-nots, and a tender,  
sensitive face, Clare Winston formed a  
striking contrast.

Unlike either of the two were Er-  
nestine Hayes' strong, clear-cut Saxon fea-  
tures, her handsome, shapely mouth,  
firm yet tender lips, her clear, cool,  
gray eyes, searching, yet sympathetic.

"What did you say, Ernestine?"  
Alma Dearing asked, as she bent her  
handsome head to catch the words.

"Cruel!" came again, with cutting  
emphasis, from Miss Hayes' shapely lips.  
"You are chillingly cruel, I could not  
talk in this way about my worst enemy,  
were he or she as hideous as the Hy-  
dra."

"But I do not lay claim to any of  
Miss Hayes' saintly qualities," replied  
the other, somewhat sharply; "I should  
like to know what you have to do with  
this little affair between Barbara Thorne  
and myself?"

"Oh! nothing, of course," in the cool-  
est and most careless tones possible;  
"only I think of all virtues pertaining  
to the human heart, gratitude is certain-  
ly one of the most commendable."

"Gratitude!" ejaculated Miss Dear-  
ing, quickly; "what do you mean,  
Ernestine?"

"Barbara Thorne may be ugly and  
awkward, and all that, yet she is never  
too frightful to be used as a cat's paw  
when Miss Dearing wishes to clear her-

self from any little scrape with the Pro-  
fessor. Barbara's form may be awkward  
and ungainly, her hands coarse and  
clumsy, yet they are never too unat-  
tractive to hand Miss Dearing a glass of  
water, or brush away the flies, when  
she, Miss Dearing, is suffering from one  
of her nervous attacks," with just a  
touch of irony here, "and the rest of  
her schoolmates are only too glad to keep  
out of her presence."

The cold scorn in Ernestine Hayes'  
clear, contralto voice made Alma Dear-  
ing's peach-bloom cheeks flush pain-  
fully.

"Yes, Alma," Clare Winston said in  
her low, mellow tones, "you should  
never forget Barbara Thorne's devotion  
to you. It is the remark of the whole  
school. Such unselfish affection certainly  
deserves its share of gratitude, if  
nothing else."

But I have no room for gratitude; I  
am not capable of appreciating Barbara  
Thorne's unselfish devotion, as you so  
romantically term it. Her display of  
affection is nothing to me. She is real-  
ly silly to waste so much love on one who  
cares so little for it as I do. If I could  
shut my eyes for a moment, and forget  
what a fright she is, it might be differ-  
ent; but it fairly makes me shiver, just  
the mere thought of her having her  
arms around my neck, her lips against  
my cheek."

A quick, choking cry, half a sob,  
half a moan, caused each to turn in-  
stantly and glance behind them just in  
time to see a homely brown face, grown  
suddenly white with utter wretched-  
ness, an awkward ungainly figure,  
moving hastily away.

"Barbara! by all that is unlucky!"  
Alma Dearing exclaimed, growing sud-  
denly confused, and with just the least  
shade of regret and pity showing for a  
moment in the depths of her hand-  
some, haughty eyes. "Do you think  
she could have heard what I have said?"

"Not the least doubt of it in the  
world, unless she has suddenly grown  
as deaf as a lamp-post in the last half  
hour, which is not at all probable. And  
Ernestine Hayes told then as if she could  
have brought her strong, white fingers  
with a stinging blow straight across  
Miss Dearing's handsome pomegranate-  
bloom cheek with the greatest relish in  
the world."

"Well! I am sorry. Though I can't  
bring myself to return her affection,  
yet I do not wish to hurt her feelings  
publicly, for, of course, she has feelings  
as well as any of us."

"Oh! of course," very sarcastically,  
"though perhaps they are not so sensi-  
tive and refined as Miss Dearing's own."

"It strikes me, Ernestine, that you  
are exceedingly ironical to-night."

Whatever reply Miss Hayes' might  
have intended to make, was, from a  
sudden impulse, suppressed, as, twining  
her arm with a caressing movement  
around Clare's slender waist, she drew  
her away for a walk in the garden, and  
left Alma to her own thoughts.

A pair of eyes, usually of a bluish  
gray, but now with what little colour  
they held washed out by the great flood  
of tears that rooled up from them and  
dropped to the homely brown cheek be-  
neath, watched with an intense, longing  
gaze the two going arm-in-arm down  
the broad, white walk, and unconsciously  
to them two tender grateful caresses  
were wafted from the tips of rough,  
brown fingers.

The eyes were dry at last, but there  
were great circles about them, which  
made them more homely than ever.  
But suddenly, as the great clumsy fin-  
gers turned the leaves of a little volume  
lying on the window-sill, a tender, thril-  
ling light sprang to their depths, which  
made them, for a moment, absolutely  
beautiful. What could it be? What  
was it Barbara saw shining there clear  
and sweet from out of the depths of  
your inspired pages, O beautiful book!

"Behold! I show you a mystery; we  
shall not all sleep, but we shall all be  
changed; for this corruptible must put  
on incorruption, and this mortal must  
put on immortality. As we have borne

the image of the earthly, we shall also  
bear the image of the heavenly."

Oh, homely brown face, grown sud-  
denly beautiful with the rapturous light  
that fell across it! Oh, great rough  
hands beautiful now, folded one with-  
in the other; Oh, dull gray eyes,  
absolutely glorious, with the heart-fires  
glowing in their depths! Oh! pale, mis-  
shapen lips, beautiful with the thrilling,  
ardent words welling over them from  
the depths of a touched and submissive  
heart!

"Dear Christ, I shall be satisfied  
when I wake up with thy likeness!"

"Do you think I'll do, Clare? and  
will I win the coveted title of 'Queen of  
Hearts'? How thoughtful of that prosy  
old Professor to think of giving us a pic-  
nic—a picnic in June, too! Oh! isn't  
it grand?" And Alma Dearing, resplen-  
dent in scarlet and white, with fuchsias  
and geranium leaves in her hair and at  
her throat, turned slowly round and  
round before the great mantel mirror in  
the college parlours, to admire the beau-  
tiful picture she made.

The room was filled with a crowd of  
noisy, chattering girls, each pushing and  
jostling the other for a peep into the  
flattering depths of the mantel mirror.  
It was a large old-fashioned glass, with  
a heavy oaken frame, secured to its  
place on the mantel by strong, slender  
cords.

One by one the girls had stopped to  
admire themselves, and then gone out  
on the broad, cool piazza, to await the  
coming of the Professor and his lady.  
Alma still lingered before the glass.

Suddenly Clare, who stood leaning  
on the piano, watching Alma, heard a  
sharp, snapping sound, and glancing up  
saw with horrified eyes that the fasten-  
ings of the mirror had given way, and it  
was now trembling on the verge of the  
mantel, ready for its downward plunge.

She tried to cry out, to warn Alma of  
her danger, but her tongue refused to ut-  
ter a word.

But some one else had heard the cords  
snap, had seen the glass tremble, and  
ere Alma knew what had happened, an  
awkward, ungainly figure sprang with a  
sudden bound forward, a rough hand  
was placed unceremoniously against her  
shoulder, and she was quickly hurled to  
one side of the room.

Not a moment too soon! The huge  
glass came crashing down from its sup-  
port on the mantel, and fell with a dull,  
heavy shiver on the oaken floor be-  
neath.

With a shudder, Clare closed her eyes  
for just a moment; but when she open-  
ed them again, she saw that which  
made the blood grow chill in her veins!  
A mangled, bleeding form lay under-  
neath the debris of splintered glass; not  
Alma's slender one, she knew that well  
enough; but another, and that other—O  
pitying, Father!—the awkward, ungainly  
one that had rushed forward to save  
the beautiful flower-like face of its cruel  
friend from such a dreadful fate. "Great-  
er love hath no man than this, that a  
man lay down his life for his friends."

"Will she die, Doctor?" Alma Dear-  
ing asked with white and quivering lips  
of the gray-haired disciple of Escula-  
pius, who bent with such grave look  
over the crushed and bleeding form.

He shook his head slowly, and put  
his finger on his lips. He did not wish  
to give expression to his worst fears so  
quickly.

But as the hours wore away, and  
there was still but little sign of returning  
life, each one of them knew what the  
Doctor had known all along,—Barbara  
would die!

The gray eyes opened at last with a  
gleam of consciousness in their depths;  
the lips made a painful effort to articu-  
late the words in answer to the Doctor's  
question:—

"Oh, no! I am not afraid to die. It  
is sweeter to go than to stay. Would  
you mind kissing me now, Alma?"

Not a moment did Alma Dearing hesi-  
tate. If she had been "as cruel as the  
grave," as senseless as a stone, she could  
not have resisted the touching pathos  
of Barbara's dying appeal. Warm, red