

VALUE OF TIME.

among the rich—and we have great reason to thank God for them—that do the utmost in their power, “yea, and beyond their power,” who are never weary of well-doing, who are always ready with large hearts and liberal hands to engage in every good work. The Church owes them much, their country owes them much, the world at large owes them much. Oh, little do the careless multitude who live at random, frittering away their brief hours without any aim or end, like winged insects in the evening rays—we say, little do they think how much of their sunshine they owe to the labours and pains taken by these men! and without being charged with abusing Scripture language, we may say, that “except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.” But these are comparatively few in number, and we are not at all sure but the working classes give more in proportion to their means than the upper classes of society—we mean, of course, members of churches. But without making any inquiry as to who gives most—for we have all come short of our duty in this respect—there is one thing which will be admitted on all hands: that the duty of supplying the wants of those that are unable to provide for their own spiritual wants lieth on them that have the means, somewhat in the same way as it is their duty to provide for the temporal wants of those that are suffering from hunger; the laws of God and of man cry aloud to us to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and they are in harmony with the feelings of our nature. We could not eat very contentedly, nor sleep very soundly, if we were aware that a fellow-being was actually starving within our reach, or even within our borders; and although our moral and spiritual sensibilities are not so easily impressed, even though multitudes are perishing for “lack of knowledge” at our very doors, nevertheless, it is our duty, and also our privilege, to give the bread of life to those that cannot, or those that will not, provide for themselves.

In conclusion, there is one consideration we wish to press on the middle and higher classes of society—that their own interest is bound up with the moral and spiritual improvement of the working classes of this country; if they wish to maintain their present position—if they value the comforts, the social refinements, the luxuries, the splendour, which they now enjoy—if they wish to leave them as an inheritance to their children—if they would like their country to escape the terrors and alarms, the social and political disorders which other countries have experienced, or the grinding tyranny of some political adventurers, which the up-heavings of a popular fury might chance to throw upon the surface;—we say, if they deprecate such calamities, and value the blessings that they now so quietly and securely enjoy, let them see to it that the masses of the population be leavened with those holy and salutary lessons which the Bible alone teaches, which enable a man to rise above the trials and vexations of this life, by directing his hopes to a better state of being, having the infallible assurance that all things which happen to him on this side of time shall work together for his good, and that the trials and sufferings of the present shall only enhance the pleasures and never-ending joys which are held out to him in the Word of God.

“That Scripture is the only cure of woe.  
That field of promise. How it flings abroad  
Its odours o’er the Christian’s thorny road!  
The soul, reposing on a sure relief,  
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief;  
Forgets her labours as she toils along,  
Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.”

A grain weight of sincerity and practice is worth a talent of knowledge. It is better to practise as the weakest christian, than to know as the most excellent angel, if we do not practise what we know.

My next counsel is that you set a high value upon your time. Time is short; and its flight is rapid. The swiftness of the lapse of time is proverbial in all languages. In Scripture, the life man is compared to a multitude of things which quickly pass away, after making their appearance; as to a post, a weaver’s shuttle, a vapor a shadow, &c. All the works of man must be performed in time; and whatever acquisition is made of any good, it must be obtained in time. Time therefore, is not only short, but precious. Everything is suspended on its improvement, and it can only be improved when present; and it is no sooner present than it is gone; so that whatever we do must be done quickly. The precious gift is sparingly parcelled out, by moments, but the succession of these is rapid and uninterrupted.—Nothing can impede or retard the current of this stream. Whether we are awake or asleep, whether occupied or idle, whether we attend to the fact or not, we are borne along by a silent but irresistible force. Our progressive motion in time may be compared to the motion of the planet on which we dwell, of which we are entirely insensible; or to that of a swift sailing ship, which produces the illusion that all other objects are in motion, while we seem to be stationary. So in the journey of life, we pass from stage to stage, from infancy to childhood, from childhood to youth, from youth to mature age, and finally, ere we are aware of it, we find ourselves declining towards the last stage of earthly existence. The freshness and buoyancy of youth soon pass away, the autumn of life, with its “sere leaf,” soon arrives; and next, and last, if disease or accident do not cut short our days, old age, with its gray hairs, its wrinkles, its debility, and pains, comes on apace. This period is described by the wise man, as one in which men are commonly disposed to be querulous, and to acknowledge that the days draw nigh in which they have no pleasure.—“The keepers of the house tremble and the strong men bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows are darkened. When men rise up at the noise of the bird—when all the daughters of music are brought low, and there shall be fears. And the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper be a burden.”

Time wasted can never be recovered. No man ever possessed the same moment twice. We are indeed, exhorted to “redeem our time,” but this relates to a right improvement of that which is to come; for this is the only possible way by which we can redeem what is irrevocably past. The counsels which I would offer to the young on this subject, are: Think frequently and seriously on the inestimable value of time. Never forget that all that is dear and worthy of pursuit must be accomplished in the short span of time allotted to us here. Meditate also, profoundly, and often on the celerity of the flight of time. Now you are in the midst of youthful bloom, but soon this season will only exist in the dim shades of recollection, and unless it has been well improved, of bitter regret.

If you will make a wise improvement of your time, you must be prompt. Seize the fugitive moments as they fly; for, otherwise, they will pass away before you have commenced the work which is appropriated to them.

Diligence and constancy are essential to the right improvement of time. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” “Work while it is called to-day.” Walk while you have the light; for the dark night rapidly approaches, when no work can be done.

Let everything be done in its season. There is a time for all things; and let all things be done in order. The true order of things may be determined by their relative importance, and by the urgency of the case, or the loss which would probably be sustained by neglect.

If you would make the most of your time,

learn to do one thing at once, and endeavour so to perform every work, as to accomplish it in the best possible manner. As you receive but one moment at once, it is a vain thing to think of doing more than one thing at one time; and if any work deserves your attention at all, it deserves to be well done. Confusion, hurry, heedlessness, often so mar a business, that it would have been better to omit it altogether.

Beware of devolving the duty of to-day on to-morrow. This is called procrastination, which is said, justly, to be “the thief of time.” Remember that every day, and every hour, has its own appropriate work; but if that which should be done this day, is deferred until a future time, to say the least, there must be an inconvenient accumulation of duties in future. But as to-morrow is to every body uncertain, to suspend the acquisition of an important object on such a contingency, may be the occasion of losing forever the opportunity of receiving it. The rule of sound discretion is, never put off till to-morrow, what ought to be done to-day.—*Dr. Alexander.*

THE SABBATH IN ENGLAND.—A brisk discussion is going on in England, on the subject of the proposed opening of the new Crystal Palace to the pleasure-seeking multitude on the Sabbath. Some worldly-minded clergy of the establishment advocate it; but the religious press generally, and the secular papers, so far as we have seen them, condemn it in no measured terms.

THE LONELY COTTAGER.—A pious cottager residing in the centre of a long and dreary heath, being asked by a Christian visitor, “Are you not sometimes afraid in your lonely situation, especially in winter?” replied, “O no, sir, for faith shuts the door at night, and mercy opens it in the morning.” Reader, what are your feelings on retiring to rest? Do they afford similar confidence to this believer.

WIDOWS’ FUND SCHEME.

The deputation for visiting the congregations in the Kingston Presbytery, on behalf of the above scheme, met at Belleville, on Tuesday, the 21st September; at Huntingdon, Wednesday, 22nd; at Tyendinaga, on Thursday, 23rd; at Picton, on Friday, 24th; at Demorestville, on Saturday, 25th; and at Kingston, on Monday, 27th; in all which places, after addresses on the subject, arrangements were made for a thorough personal appeal to each member of the Presbyterian congregations.

The Rev. Messrs. Gregg, Rogers, W. Reid, R. Reid, R. F. Burns, A. Hudson, and Mr. Walker took part in the proceedings. A return from the local treasurers of each congregation may be expected by the 1st March, 1853.—*Com.*

MINISTERS’ WIDOWS’ AND ORPHANS’ FUND.

Rev. James Rogers, Demorestville, (rate,) 1851 and 1852.....	£4 0 0
Rev. R. F. Burns, Kingston, (rate)....	2 0 0
Rev. Robert Reid, do. ....	2 0 0
Rev. Angus McColl, Chatham, do. ...	2 0 0

RED RIVER CHURCH BUILDING FUND.

From J. A. M.....	£0 10 0
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SYNOD FUND.

P. McLellan, Sherbrooke.....	£0 5 0
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JEWISH AND FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Y. (an unknown friend) .....	£1 0 0
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