

Him, he had without a single exception *made a signal failure* (p. 83). But his lifelong success proves so signal, that we need no further record of the fact that he learned to lean and lean hard on the everlasting arms.

Another lesson, learned early in life, was that supreme one of *waiting on God* (Ps. 130 : 6)—passive receptivity, the attitude of *repose*, which is the opposite of *action*, and necessary to the acquisition of strength for action. To get alone with God in the secret place and there wait for the vision of God, as watchers for the dawn ; waiting without speaking, in a sense without thinking, just spreading out the soul like Gideon's fleece to drink in the heavenly dew ; awed into silence yet blest with expectancy, oppressed with conscious emptiness and impotency, but confident of Divine fulness and sufficiency—this was his *second* great lesson in the school of holy living, and there is scarce a greater to be learned (p. 99) !

The third great step in this life was taken when, yet scarce twenty-four years old, God taught him the secret of a *restful activity*. These terms are not contradictory. He observed a tendency, both mental and physical, to *hurry*, with the usual accompaniments, flurry and worry, which rhyme in reason as well as in speech. He found an "impulsive, impetuous, hurrying, driving, reckless spirit manifesting itself in all intellectual enterprises"—"a restless anxiety to see the end of everything before the time"—"trying to do many things at once." And he marked the result—nothing ever half done, not stopping long enough to treasure up a good thought or deepen a holy impression, weakening the memory and the heart alike ; reluctance to do anything save under the pressure of hurry and excitement, and yet suffering from the inevitable reaction, with its depression of spirit. All this young Nevius learned to exchange for that co-labor with God that makes all work so blessed that even waiting on God renews strength. Some disciples have only got far enough to say, "I and God ;" others have got further, and say, "God and I ;" but blessed is he who has gone even further, and says, "God, and not I," as Paul did. To think of myself as only an instrument, and He the agent or actor—how restful this makes all labor for Him ! "Take My yoke upon you, and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (p. 103).

When John L. Nevius reached Ningpo, in 1854, he found a sphere for full application of his resolve to be diligent and thorough. To learn the Chinese tongue was no easy task. It has been said to require "a head of steel, lungs of brass, a heart of oak, the patience of Job, and the lifetime of Methuselah." He found that some who ventured too soon into public address did themselves more good than their hearers ; and that the thorough knowledge of the Chinese "character," the "book language" of the country, was more difficult than to get hold of any other language in the world. But there was another study which exhausted his whole forty years—the study of the contradictions and complexities of the Chinese *character* in another sense. This remained to the end a half-solved problem.