

The Family.

STRENGTH FOR TO-DAY.

STRENGTH for to-day is all that we need, As there never will be a to-morrow; For to-morrow will prove but another to-day, With its measure of joy and sorrow.

Then why forecast the trials of life With much sad and grave persistence, And wait and watch for a crowd of ills That as yet have no existence?

Strength for to-day, what a precious boon For earnest souls who labour, For the willing hands that minister To the needy friend or neighbour.

Strength for to-day, that the weary hearts In the battle for right may quit not, And the eyes bedimmed by bitter tears In their search for light may fail not.

Strength for to-day, on the down-hill track For the travellers near the valley, That up, far up on the other side, Ere long they may safely rally.

Strength for to-day, that our precious youth May happily shun temptation, And build from the stone to the set of the sun, On a strong and sure foundation.

Strength for to-day, in house and home To practice forbearance sweetly; To scatter kind words and loving deeds, Still trusting in God completely.

Strength for to-day is all that we need, As there never will be a to-morrow; For to-morrow will prove but another to-day, With its measure of joy and sorrow.

-Dotten Transcript.

THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THINGS.

"If we only had a few less curtains and a few more comforts," was the half-jocose, half-earnest complaint of a young husband who had entrusted to a young wife the modest sum he had laid aside for furnishing a house, and which she had expended for that purpose. She had a taste for charming things, and their home was indeed beautiful to look upon, but the working experience of everyday life had soon shown many essentials of comfort to be sadly lacking. There was a dearth of conveniences for the kitchen; a dearth of good, sensible everyday towelling and bed linen and blankets. There were one or two very fine table cloths with napkins to match, intended to be used only on special occasions, while there were not enough of the plainer kinds to keep the every day table fresh and attractive. There were lace curtains all over the house, but not enough bed comforters to furnish the beds for winter. There was a beautiful set of decorated china for company use, but a marked deficiency in the number and quality of dishes suitable and intended for every-day use. The young wife, at that stage of her experience, had not learned the relative importance of things.

"Why not use the decorated china and the fine table cloths every day?" queries some prospective young housekeeper who has a high and beautiful ideal of what the home table should be, and who has not yet learned by experience what it costs in vitality and energy to maintain this ideal. This also is merely a question of the relative importance of things. If the housekeeper be so situated that she can command time to take care of her china herself, or such competent service as will secure its being well taken care of by others so that her mind and temper will not be in a constant strain and vexation about it, the decorated china for every-day use is all right and very enjoyable. But in the large majority of homes, especially after little children come, the every-day care of fine china is a temptation and a snare. It is pitiable to think of the amount of real mental suffering endured by many a young mother and housekeeper over the aprilation of her beautiful table furniture by the careless, unskilled handling of ordinary household help. There is, however, so much real suffering to be endured in life that cannot possibly be avoided that it is surely the part of wisdom to abate, as far as lies in one's power, every abatable cause of pain and annoyance. Peace of mind, relief from petty care, freedom from irritating circumstances, are of far more importance to the young wife and mother than all the decorated china in the world. Put it away, weary housekeeper and mother—what is left of it—in the china closet get a good substantial set of white stone ware that will only need to be kept well washed to make your table inviting and which it will not break your heart to have broken. You will be surprised and delighted to find what a relief you will experience, and with what equanimity you can henceforth bear the ominous clatterings and crashes from the kitchen sink. Do this while your children are small. When your baby girls grow up to be young women let them get out and use and take care of the decorated china if they choose. You can enjoy it then without the present drawbacks. You need your time, strength, patience and vitality for other things just now.

To reduce the amount of care and the friction of the machinery of home life is the one constant problem of the housekeeper and homekeeper. It is the sphinx riddle propounded to every young mother. The sphinx destroyed all who could not solve her riddles. So, too, the young mother who cannot solve the riddle of the relative importance of the innumerable demands pressed upon her time and attention is in danger of being destroyed mentally and physically. Everything cannot be done; everything cannot be cared for. It requires discretion and common sense of such a higher order that it may well be called wisdom, to rightly proportion one's time and care among the unending, perplexing demands of home life. One thing, however, is certain: the higher should never be sacrificed to the lower. Is it a question between an elaborate meal, with a wearied, overtaxed, nervous woman presiding over it, or a simple meal, with a fresh, unworn, cheerful mistress behind the tea-tray—who would hesitate as to the answer? Is it a question between a few elaborate dresses and embroidered petticoats for the new baby or a great abundance of little slips and pinning blankets, simple, cheap and easily laundered—what sensible young mother ought to hesitate? Is it a question between taking excellent and constant care of two or three little ones and the proper care of a great widow full of house-plants—by all means let the house-plants go, or save only one or two, whose care will not materially increase the aggregate amount of care.

A constant and wise discretion must be exercised by the house-mother in deciding as to the

relative importance of the different kinds of work to be done in the home. The great danger of American young mothers is nerves, and physicians tell us that disordered nerves are the result of overwork and anxiety, or of too great mental tension in one direction. It is not well for a mother to have the too-unceasing care of her children; change and relaxation are needed even from this labour of love. The mothers who suffer most from weariness in the care of children are those who board, and who are therefore constantly confined with their children. Mother and children act and react upon one another, physically and mentally, till both are nervous and impatient simply for lack of change of surroundings and an occasional new atmosphere. Any observer of children knows that the least troublesome children are those where the mother, dividing her care for them with other household cares, often leaves them to themselves to seek their own amusement. But while doing this the mother must not overtax her strength in other work. She must remember that it is of the first importance that she keep herself in good physical condition. No temptation to "overdo" in the direction of entertaining company, giving elaborate teas or dinners, or even canning and preserving fruit or getting the spring or fall sewing done, should be allowed to overcome her judgment as to the relative importance of such work. Her first duty is, as far as possible, to be a cheerful, healthy, happy, patient and loving mother, and all work that tends to prevent her from fulfilling this duty is comparatively unimportant and had better be left undone.—Mrs H. E. Starratt, in The Interior.

TROUBLESOME PEOPLE.

THE world owes an immeasurable debt of gratitude to troublesome people. They are the true authors of all progress. Those amiable creatures who give no trouble to anybody are simply good for nothing. They let things go on as they are; and even if they see there is something amiss, they make up their minds to bear it for the sake of peace and quietness. Such a spirit of contentment is an enormous evil. While it prevails, no mischief can be remedied and no improvement will be made. There may be a grumble now and then, but that is all. Things will keep at the old jog trot, or, as is much more likely, will go from bad to worse, when one has to do with such sweet and simple souls. What a blessing it is that nature produces some men of quite a different stamp. It is of not the slightest use to tell them to be quiet. Quiet they cannot be. It is not in them. They must be making a stir about everything they see going wrong; and as to silencing them, the way to do it has not yet been found out. Geniuses of this kind are the dread and horror of all the easygoing crew, who do not like to be disturbed. Their lazy enjoyment is utterly ruined when such reformers come across their path. In vain they plead to be let alone. Their tormentors have no mercy, and compel them to arise and set things in better order. None hate more cordially the whole race of such zealots than those who do not care to have their doings looked too closely into. Men who profit by injustice, all who thrive by means of jobbery, every smooth and smug dissembler who shows a very respectable face to the world, but does things on the sly which he does not want to be known, the whole generation of Pharisees, Tartuffes, and Pecksniffs, cannot find words strong enough to express their contempt and abhorrence for those meddlesome busybodies who will not let things rest, who are always giving trouble and turning the world upside down.

There are many ways in which people feel the grievance. It is related of a Professor of Chemistry in Scotland that he went on delivering his old lectures long after Sir Humphry Davy's discoveries had revolutionized the science. His colleagues were compelled at last to remonstrate with him, as the matter was becoming a public scandal. The old fellow, however, contented himself with saying, at the close of his musty expositions, that these views had been lately controverted by one Davy, "a very troublesome person in chemistry." Sturdy old John Knox was a most exceedingly troublesome person to the priests and lordings that hung about Holyrood. A certain prince in Germany checked his tongue on seeing a gardener at work, and remarked in a low voice to his companions, "I cannot swear with any comfort whenever that man is about." Ahab looked on Elijah as the troubler of Israel, and Paul was so regarded at Philippi. We need not enumerate any more examples, as every one of our readers will be able to recall a good many for himself. Perhaps a few who read these lines will pluck up courage enough to play a like part. We suffer loss from an overabundance of contentment, from too great a love of peace, from a disposition to look only at the bright side of things, from an amiable tendency to flatter all our friends, and especially ourselves. Some people see a church crowded to the door and up to the ceiling if there be a few dozen scattered here and there through the pews. Some speakers congratulate congregations on having done most admirably when the balance is yet on the wrong side of the account by the treasurer's showing. Perhaps these things cannot be helped; but yet, on the other hand, they may be acquiesced in too easily. The troublesome men we want are the men who will spare no trouble to put things right; not talkers, but doers; not grumblers, but reformers; not sour in spirit, but zealous in spirit; men who do not hang back but who push on; men of stout heart and ready hand, as well as quick eye. Such men often get hard blows, but they do not mind them. They do not always get much thanks even from those whose interests they are advancing; but this does not discourage them. They are men with a mission, and they busy themselves with it in right good earnest. We could name one or two who are by no means strangers among ourselves, but we forbear. If their number were largely multiplied, it would be a good thing for us. We should be followers of John Wesley's shrewd advice: "At it—all at it—always at it." While there is work to be done, suffering to be soothed, sin to be reached, darkness to be dispelled, this life of ours ought not to cease to be one in which we, as it were, set ourselves to "trouble the waters," that thereafter the hour may come of healing.—Presbyterian Messenger.

THE LIQUOR-SELLER IN POLITICS.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT contributes an article to the November Century on "Machine Politics in New York City," from which we quote the following: "The strength of our political organizations arises from their development as social bodies; many of the hardest workers in their ranks are neither officeholders nor yet paid henchmen, but merely members who have gradually learned to identify their fortunes with the party, whose hall they have come to regard as the headquarters in

which to spend the most agreeable of their leisure moments. Under the American system it is impossible for a man to accomplish anything by himself; he must associate himself with others, and they must throw their weight together. This is just what the social functions of the political clubs enable their members to do. The great and rich society clubs are composed of men who are not apt to take much interest in politics anyhow, and who never act as a body. The immense effect produced by a social organization for political purposes is shown by the career of the Union League Club; and equally striking proof can be seen by every man who attends a ward meeting. There is thus, however much to be regretted it may be, a constant tendency towards the concentration of political power in the hands of those men who by taste and education are fitted to enjoy the social side of the various political organizations.

It is this that gives the liquor-sellers their enormous influence in politics. Preparatory to the general election of 1884 there were held in the various districts of New York ten hundred and seven primaries and political conventions of all parties, and of these no less than six hundred and thirty-three took place in liquor-saloons,—a showing that leaves small ground for wonder at the low average grade of the nominees. The reason for such a condition of things is perfectly evident; it is because the liquor-saloons are places of social resort for the same men who turn the local political organizations into social clubs. Bar-enders form perhaps the nearest approach to a leisure class that we have at present on this side of the water. They naturally are on semi-intimate terms with all who frequent their houses. There is no place where more gossip is talked than in bar-rooms, and much of this gossip is about politics,—that is, the politics of the ward, not of the nation. The tariff and the silver question may be alluded to, but the real interest comes in discussing the doings of the men with whom they are personally acquainted: why Billy so-and-so, the Alderman, has quarreled with his former chief supporter; whether 'old man N' has really managed to fix the delegates to a given convention; the reason why one faction bolted at the last primary; and if it is true that a great down-town boss who has an intimate friend of opposite political faith running in an up-town district has forced the managers of his own party to put up a man of straw against him. The bar-keeper is a man of much local power, and is, of course, half-fellow-well-met with his visitors, as he and they can be of mutual assistance to one another. Even if of different politics, their feelings towards each other are influenced by personal considerations purely; and, indeed, this is true of most of the smaller bosses as regards their dealings among themselves, for, as one of them once remarked to me with enigmatical truthfulness, 'there's no politics in politics' of the lower sort—which, being interpreted, means that a professional politician is much less apt to be swayed by the fact of a man's being a Democrat or a Republican than he is by his being a personal friend or foe. The liquor-saloons thus become the social headquarters of the little knots or cliques of men who take most interest in local political affairs; and by an easy transition they become the political headquarters when the time for preparing for the elections arrives; and, of course, the goodwill of the owners of the places is thereby propitiated,—an important point with men striving to control every vote possible."

HIDING IN THE ROCK.

"CRAIGIE, have you seen little Jean to-day?" asked DAVY. Craigie was an old sailor, and a funny looking man.

"Have you seen little Jean?" Davy repeated.

"Yes," said Craigie.

"Please where?"

"I had just run my boat into the cove there where I saw little Jean coming along the sands. I thought it was rather risky, knowing the tide would soon turn; but I thought of the 'stairs' yonder, and concluded it would be all right."

"The stairs?" involuntarily exclaimed Davy.

The "stairs" were constructed in the side of the cliff, partly of wood, but in places the ascent was helped by the outline of the rock. It was at the worst part of the beach, though, that one took the "stairs," into which the waves came foaming and rushing like wild animals all let loose at once. Davy ran with all his might for the "stairs," and looked down. Did he see her?

Where was little Jean this rough October day? Little Jean had been in the red school-house at the corner of the roads that afternoon.

"And shall I tie the strings of my little Jean's hat?" said the school-mistress; "and shall I pin your shawl, dearie? It is time now to go."

"If you please, teacher."

"And which way will you go home to-night—over the pasture or across the sands?"

"Across the sands. It is much the shorter way."

"But won't the tide turn?"

"O, I think not. I can run quick to the 'stairs.' Mother is sick, and needs me to help Davy."

"You help Davy? You are a smart girl. Let me give you a kiss, dear."

Little Jean followed the path winding through a ravine down to the sea and trotted along the sand.

"How high the rocks are!" she said, watching the sea-birds flying about the cliffs. "And the sea—how ugly it is!"

But what makes the little figure in the red shawl hurry faster along the narrow sands between the sea and the cliffs?

"I believe the tide has turned? She looked anxiously out to sea.

She saw the water frothing about Wreckers' Ledge, and well understood what the sign meant. The tide had turned and was angrily foaming about the first obstacle.

"Now, little one hurry! hurry! hurry! The tide is coming!"

"Where are the 'stairs'?"

Little Jean looked, and saw their well worn lines mounting the cliff. If she could only reach them?

The water rolled within six feet of her—four feet, three feet. Quick, quick little one!

It seemed as if the waters knew that a little girl was on the sands, and strove hard to overtake her.

Two feet! One foot! And now as she stood on the lowest step of the "stairs," one bold wave washed the fringes of her red shawl. She mounted the second, the third also; but the waves were pressing hard after her. A huge billow came wrathful and rushing. It almost touched her. There was a broad shelf of rock above her, and there the cliff receded, making a sheltering hollow. Could she reach it? She would try. Up, up, she climbed and gained the place of safety. No wave would reach her there. She threw herself down on the large step, and crept into the hollow; safe, safe at last. She would rest awhile, she said.

And in the ears of the tired child the noise of the sea became a monotonous music, hushing her to drowsiness, then to sleep.

She fancied that an angel came to her.

Then the angel seemed to change and on to his locks went a sailor's cap. He seemed to lose his wings, and put on a fisherman's rough jacket. Then he spoke with Davy's voice, and called to her, "Little Jean! Little Jean! Darling, what are you doing here?"

"O, Davy, is this you? Only hiding; only hiding in the rock."

Then this good human angel took her in his arms, and carried her up the stairs, across the pasture, and so home.

"My little girl had a narrow escape I wouldn't go across the sands again," said the mother, stroking Jean's soft hair.

"But I wanted to help you the sooner. I won't go again. I am sorry to worry you, mother."

"And Davy said that you were hiding in the rock, dear. The Saviour is the rock, dear. The Saviour is the precious refuge to His children—a Rock of Safety. Don't forget It. Always trust Him. Always be found hiding in the Rock."

Little Jean did not forget It. Through life and when death's dark wave came rolling towards her, she was found hiding, hiding in the Rock.—Selected.

THE REWARD OF HONESTY.

GERHARDT was a German shepherd boy, and very poor.

One day while he was watching his flock, which was feeding in a valley on the borders of the forest, a hunter came out of the woods and asked: "How far is it to the nearest village?"

"Six miles, sir," replied the boy, "but the road is only a sheep track and very easy missed."

The hunter looked at the crooked track and said: "My lad, I am hungry, tired and thirsty. I have lost my companions and missed the way. Leave your sheep and show me the road; I will pay you well for it."

"I can't leave my sheep, sir," replied Gerhardt. "They would stray into the forest and be eaten by the wolves or stolen by robbers."

"Well, what of that?" asked the hunter. "They are not your sheep. The loss of one or more wouldn't be much to your master, and I'll give you more than you can earn in a whole year."

"I cannot go, sir," said Gerhardt, very firmly. "My master pays me for my time, and he trusts me with his sheep. If I were to sell my time, which does not belong to me, and the sheep would get lost, it would be the same as if I stole them."

"Well, said the hunter, "will you trust your sheep with me while you go to the village and get some food and drink, and a guide? I will take care of them for you."

The boy shook his head. "The sheep," said he, do not know your voice, and—" Gerhardt stopped speaking.

"And what? Can't you trust me? Do I look like a dishonest man?" asked the hunter angrily.

"Sir," said the boy, "you tried to make me false to my trust, and wanted me to break my word to the master. How do I know you will keep your word to me?"

The hunter laughed, and said: "I see, my lad, that you are a good, faithful boy; I will not forget you. Show me the road, and I will try to find the village myself."

Gerhardt now offered the contents of his grip to the hungry man, who, coarse as the food was, ate it gladly. Presently his attendant came up, and then Gerhardt, to his surprise, found that the hunter was the Grand Duke, who owned all the country round.

The Duke was so pleased with the boy's honesty, that he sent for him shortly after and had him educated. In after years, Gerhardt became a very rich and influential man, but he remained honest and true to his dying hour.—Ex.

JUST ONE.

JUST one man breaking the soil with his pickaxe. As he struck he followed a rope that had been stretched up the street. Apparently his blows were very insignificant, only scoring the earth. As we looked though along the little grooves he had been cutting, we saw far in his rear a force of workmen who were busily digging down into the earth. This one man was the very important pioneer of a force who were excavating for the new water-works.

Just one! He lives in a new western settlement. He is a lone man for Jesus Christ. He begins some little service of prayer and praise. It seems a very feeble work, but along the line of his efforts, some later day, the church of God will raise its walls.

Just one! In a neglected neighbourhood a woman gathers a few boys or girls into a Sunday School class. It is the mission church that will be evolved from this modest work like a beautiful flower opening out of an inconspicuous bud.

Just one! This time it is a young man, a clerk in a store where his associates are ungodly, and he asserts his Christian principles in a quiet, steadfast way. He is marking every man though with some impression for good, and it will have its useful and honoured place in the history of some spiritual life.

Just one! A teacher in a Sunday School class may look upon her work only as a scratch on the surface soon to be effaced. She is tracing the outline though of some noble structure of Christian character. To-day's pioneer is as valuable as to-morrow's banker. The lone man with the pick-axe is, as deserving as his brethren who follow him with tilling blows on the hard soil.—Ex.

WORKING CHRISTIANS.

LEARN to be working Christians. "Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." It is very striking to see the usefulness of Christians. Are there none of you who know what it is to be selfish in your Christianity? You have seen a selfish child go into a secret place to enjoy some delicious morsel undisturbed by his companions. So it is with some Christians. They feed upon Christ and forgiveness; but do it alone, and all for themselves. Are there not some of you who can enjoy being a Christian, while your dearest friend is not and yet you will not speak to him? See here, you have got work to do. When Christ found you, he said, "Go to work in my vineyard." What were you hired for, if it was not to spread salvation? What blessed for? O my Christian friends! how little you live as though you were the servants of Christ! How much idle talk you have! This is not like a good servant. How many things you have to do for yourself! How few for Christ, and his people! This is not like a servant.—McChesny.