

yielding air, or the gliding of a keel through the returning waves, that leaves no trace behind—like anything most evanescent—such, in the sight of God, is the life of man.

But, though life be short, it is of infinite importance. Though time be fleeting, on it most momentous issues hang. It is the seed time of eternity. It is the probation for an endless future. We may sow the good seed from which shall spring a harvest of everlasting joy, or the balful seeds of sin from which shall grow a bitter crop of unending remorse and shame.

O 'tis solemn living,  
When we know each hour is giving  
Radiance bright, or darkness, to the  
soul's eternal years.

How important, therefore, is the right use of time! How earnestly should we pray, "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!" What rigid economy of time should we practice! How should we endeavour to redeem the time, to make the best use of it as it passes! The wise rule of John Wesley, if faithfully followed, will be of great value to us all: "Never be unemployed; never be triflingly employed." And grandly did he illustrate his own rule. What a record of well-spent time is the story of his active life! What a monument—more lasting than marble—of consecrated zeal is the work that he accomplished for the glory of God and the welfare of man.

The wise employment of the spare moments of even the busiest life, will achieve great results, and often make all the difference between glorious success and disastrous failure. Dr. Barnes' voluminous commentary was all written in the precious moments which many waste in the morning before breakfast. So frugal was Macaulay of his time, that he kept a book before him while partaking of his solitary meals. The men who have accomplished the grandest work in literature, science, art, or religious achievement, have not been the men of ample leisure, but men who had learned to redeem

the spare moments of a busy life. And some of the most important works that shall bless the world for ages, were written amid the pressure and hurry of manifold engagements, in odds and ends of time that most people would think not worth saving.

But it will be of no advantage to be constantly employed, unless we are wisely employed. So varied are the relations and duties of life, that no rules for general application, in this respect, can be given; but no one that realizes the importance of time, and his responsibility to God for its wise improvement, need be long without suggestions. While there are such stores of knowledge within our reach, while such fascinating studies invite our application, while there is such grand work to be done in God's world, while there is so much suffering to be relieved, and sorrow to be assuaged, one need never be without the means of redeeming the time.

It may seem to the idle pleasure-seeker a hard saying, but the wise economist of time will appreciate it: Never let *mere amusement* occupy your hours—that is, if you have outgrown the days of childhood, and at all profess to have put away childish things. We do not say that one should eschew recreation. Far from it. It is often absolutely necessary, but it may always be combined with some pleasant and profitable employment. A mere change of work is often the best rest. And we may find one of the purest and richest pleasures of life—a never-failing source of enjoyment in getting or in doing good—in the culture either of the head, or heart, or body—in the improvement of the intellectual, moral, or physical being. The mere pursuit of pleasure, for its own sake, is one of the dreariest, most melancholy things in the world. And the pleasure thus sought, like a phantom, eludes the grasp; or, like a bubble, bursts in the hand; or, like a fragile flower, is crushed and withered in the heated palm; or, like the apples of Sodom, turns to ashes in the mouth. So true is it that she who liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth, and knows no real, deep,