

GOD'S APPOINTMENTS.

This thing on which thy heart was set, this thing that cannot be,
This weary, disappointing day that dawns, my friend, for thee—
Be comforted; God knoweth best, the God whose name is Love,
Whose tender care is evermore our passing lives above.
He sends thee disappointments! Well, then, take this from his hand!
Shall God's appointments seem less good than what thyself had planned?
'Twas in thy mind to go abroad. He bids thee stay at home!
O happy home! thrice happy if to it thy guest he come,
'Twas in thy mind thy friend to see. The Lord says: "Nay, not yet."
Be confident; the meeting-time thy Lord will not forget.
'Twas in thy mind to work for Him. His will is, "Child, sit still;"
And surely 'tis thy blessedness to mind thy Master's will.
Accept thy disappointment, friend, thy gift from God's own hand.
Shall God's appointments seem less good than what thyself had planned?
So, day by day, and step by step, sustain thy failing strength;
Indeed, go on, from strength to strength, through all thy journey's length.
God bids thee tarry now and then—bear the weak complaint;
God's leisure brings the weary rest, and cordial gives the faint.
God bids thee labor, and the place is thick with thorn and brier;
But he will share the hardest task, until he calls thee higher.
So take each disappointment, friend, 'tis at thy Lord's command!
Shall God's appointments seem less good than what thyself had planned?

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

BEGINNING A NOBLE CAREER.

BY REV. FRANK H. KASSON.

"Will Hamilton, this is a number one bottle of wine, but it's giving out."
"That's a fact, Will. I shay, o' boy, we must have 'nuther bottle to finish off on."
"All right, gentlemen, order just what you wish."
"Hear that, now gen'l'men! I shay, fellers, Mr. Hamilton's a gen'l'man."
"Aye, aye, fellers, that's so!" But Dick Baker, you're half seas over now."
"Beg yer pardon, Mr. Bateman; but, I shay, fellers, I—I'm good for 'nuther bottle—self. Yes, I shay, I am."
"All right, Dick; you're a good feller. See! Will's a-going for it now."
"Rah for Will! He's a gen'l'man. Yes, he's a gen'l'man!"
A tall, erect youth had risen from the convivial table, about which half a dozen young men sat in a state bordering on intoxication, and was going quietly into the next room to get another bottle of wine. The young men were sons of the best families in a thriving New England city by the sea. The hour was midnight. Each had taken turns in providing a wine supper for the company. To-night was Will Hamilton's turn. But what makes him look so different from the rest? His face is a study. It is white and set. He looks as if he had not been drinking at all. And such is the fact. Not a drop of the wine which he has provided in ample measure for his friends has gone down his own throat. A moment more and he returns from the next room bearing a fresh bottle, which he places without a word before Jack Bateman.
The wine sparkles in unsteady glasses and more unsteady voices try to compliment their host, but he gives them no chance. Standing in their midst, with the fire of a high resolve burning in his face, he politely asks each one if he would like anything more. The tense tones attract the attention of all. Each answers in the negative. A dozen glassy eyes are fixed on him.
"I shay, Mr. Hamilton, what's (hic) matter?" asks an intoxicated youth. Their host turns slowly to answer him.
"Tom Wilson, I'll tell you. I've had an experience to-day." The half-drunken company are held by the stern look on his face, the fire flashing in his eye, and the low, incisive tones of his usually rollicksome voice.

"I shall not tell you what it is, but it has led me to a decision. Not a drop of wine has passed my lips to-night. Not another drop ever shall in the future. I am done with this manner of life. When I walk out of here to-night it shall be never to enter such a place again. Good-night and good-bye."

It was as if a lightning-stroke had paralyzed them. He had taken his hat and walked out into the night. His guests sat silent, stricken dumb. Not one of them stirred or uttered a word for a full minute. Slowly they found speech. All were sobered. Words were few. No one could blame Will Hamilton. There was a sheepish, scared look on each dissolute young face. In a few minutes all had vanished into the night.

A few moments more and Will Hamilton strode rapidly up a pleasant garden walk in the outskirts of the city and knocked at the cottage door. A light gleamed through the window, and well he knew that his widowed mother was waiting to let him in. She looked tenderly at her loved boy, noted the clearness of his eye and welcomed him with a kiss.

"Willie, I've been praying for you. Do leave your wild associates and become a good man."

"Mother, your prayers have been answered. I heard you when you little thought I did this forenoon—though it's really yesterday forenoon now—and I made a resolve then, as I went back to my work, that not another drop of wine should go down my throat. It was my turn to treat the fellows to-night, and I did so; but not a taste of it went into my mouth, and when they'd all got through I told them my decision and said good-bye to them forever. I tell you, mother, I've been a bad fellow, and everything but the helpful son I ought to have been, but if my life is spared you'll see that I've turned over a new leaf. Forgive me, dear mother, for all the pain and sorrow I've caused you. I don't deserve such a good mother as you've been to me."

But his mother just flung her arms about his neck and cried. Her prayers had been answered, though only a few moments ago she had been doubting God. Her heart sang a song of triumph.

"My son," said she, very joyfully but reverently,—*"let us thank God."*

They knelt there, side by side, the ruddy young man and the gray-haired mother, and poured out their hearts to God. For after the mother had offered her humble, thankful petition, she turned to her son and said: "Willie, can't you thank God for this decision?" And the boy, with his heart all surcharged with feeling, found only these words in which to express himself: "O, God, forgive my sins and help me to be a good man!" That was all, but to his mother it meant far more than the few words expressed. Sobs prevented his further speech, but when they rose from their knees and embraced, the light of a new life shone in his eyes. The mother's heart was full. Her prayers had been answered.

Forty-five years later, a great audience of the cultured people of Boston crowded one of the spacious halls of our modern Athens, and waited the appearance of a painter famous on both sides of the water. At length a silver-haired man bent with the weight of many years of exhausting labors, stopped briskly to the desk and told, as only an eye-witness and painter could, of wonderful sights and scenes in the far-distant Arctic regions. As they hung breathless upon his narration, one and another began to recall some of the wonderful incidents in his remarkable career. Remarks like these might be heard:—

"What a will he must have to go through all he has, and make a name honored on two continents! They say two of his paintings hang in the Queen's library at Windsor, and one finds his work in many of the homes of the nobility."

"Yes, I'm told that he sailed away seven times into the northern seas. How I'd like to see all that his eyes have looked on. And do you not remember what Whittier says, in one of his best poems, which he dedicated to him?"

"No, what?"

"Why, he says he will try—

"To find a simple legend to the sounds of winds in the woods, and waves on pebbled bounds—"

A song for ours to chime with, such as might be sung by tired sea-painters, who at night look from their hemlock camps, by quiet cove of beach, moon-lighted, on the waves they love, (So hast thou looked, when lovel sunset lay on the calm bosom of some eastern bay, And all the spray-moist rocks and waves that rolled

Up the white sand-slopes flashed with ruddy gold.)

Something it has—a flavor of the sea, And the sea's freedom—which reminds of thee."

"Beautiful! And these words were written of him?"

"Yes, so I'm told by one who ought to know."

"How tremendously he must have worked to pay off the whole of that thirty-thousand-dollar debt with which he found himself loaded, when he came back from the North and learned that his benevolent patron (who was to have met the expenses of his great undertaking) had failed, leaving this heavy debt upon the poor painter's shoulders."

"He was the man who first secured a British publisher for Henry M. Stanley?"

"He was?"

"Yes, indeed. Stanley isn't likely to forget the good turn he did him about seventeen years ago."

"How bashful he seems!"

"Yes, he is very modest and diffident, but he can be as brave as a lion upon occasion. Do Long know his worth. Why, when that heroic young commander bade his wife farewell, he left her in the painter's care, while from the deck of the "Jeanette" he waved farewells to her till his vessel passed down out of sight of the Golden Horn, and he himself out of sight of his fair young wife forever. But he could not have left her in better hands."

"They say that the people of the Pacific Slope are as proud of his Yosemite pictures as we are of his marvellously fine paintings of Arctic scenes."

"Really, this is a brilliant address and these views are the finest Boston has ever seen of those northern regions."

And so the kindly words of praise and hearty recognition passed from lip to lip. The great painter was reaping his reward for his indomitable perseverance, unflagging labors and self-sacrificing spirit.

Forty-five years make great changes. It is hard to recognize in this man with thin, silvery locks and kindly face—covered with the honors of a long and unusually honorable career—any signs of the youth who stood by his companions and said, "Good-bye forever"—yet it is he. Great are the changes of time. But greater are the changes of character. His has been growing purer and stronger ever since that epochal night. His life is a beautiful whole. Multitudes have been led into nobler, better ways of living by his kindly services. He is a minister of righteousness. His life points the better way and his earnest words are full of wisdom and philanthropy. Many a young man is better for his counsel.

But suppose that on that eventful night, as he stood at the door of life and at the parting of the roads, he had decided the other way. Would he have achieved any such success as he has since won? Would multitudes rise up and call him blessed? Would he have the friendship of many of the foremost men of this country and of Europe? Would the announcement of a course of lectures by him, with views of his own paintings, attract the elite of Boston? Most certainly not.

This is no fancy sketch. The name is changed, but the facts are substantially as stated. On some winter day you may see the man of whom I write leaving his studio and walking, with bowed head and elastic step, down Broadway. Or, on a summer morning, at an early hour, when many young folks are still sleeping, you may find him on the New England shore studying, or transferring to canvas, the beauties of earth and sea and sky.

Where are his early companions? Have they run honorable careers and won names of distinction? I asked him about them. A look of sadness swept over his face, as he paused and looked at me and answered slowly:

"I have looked up, somewhat recently, the history of each of those young men. They are all dead now. Not one of them filled an honorable place among men or lived to do others good. Without exception they fill drunkard's graves. And I would also, but for my dear mother's prayers and my decision that night." The

good old painter was silent and the tears stood in his eyes.

May the noble example and lofty character of him whom I have called William Hamilton help us to make our own lives nobler and more full of kindly service to our fellow-men.—*Standard.*

HOW THEY DO IT.

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