

from the earliest years with secular learning, while his knowledge of the Bible is so meagre and vague that at times of preparation for confirmation the instructor is often filled with amazement at the ignorance of the Bible and the elementary dogmas of our faith in educated boys and girls?

I have received letters from heads of colleges and high schools which give a deplorable account of this neglect. The same disquieting revelations have come from public schools and the universities, and our hearts are stirred within us.

Even from a literary point of view the study of the Bible is of unspeakable and essential importance.

#### Improving Opportunity.

How many persons have to mourn all their lives because the time of youth allotted to every one to prepare for usefulness is frittered away, and no solid, useful learning is obtained! Hard study in later years may partially atone for youthful neglect, but it can never fully do it. The aged always affirm that they remember their earliest impressions best; others fade, but the knowledge gained in youth is retained as long as life remains.

If one has an earnest desire for education, in some way it will be obtained. While schools and colleges are useful, and should be patronized if possible, a studious mind may gain much information outside of them, but not outside of study. All observation and seeking to know the causes and reason of things is study. The thoughtful, studious observer never ceases to study; he is always adding to his stock of information. There are persons who are graduated from school and go through college, and then never know anything aside from the books which they studied. Remove them from the groove in which they have travelled, and they are lost at once. They are like an engine flanged to the track, rather than like a bird which goes where he pleases. We should always aim to use our knowledge instead of allowing it to use us. This will make ready persons, who will never be at a loss to know what to do in every circumstance in life.

What they have learned furnishes the storehouse of the mind, of which they hold the key, and help themselves to what they need.

#### Happiness.

There is nothing which we waste more than happiness. Even those who are thrifty and prudent in other directions are prodigal here. They stint and plan to save a halfpenny, but they are often indifferent about the loss of days of happiness. We do not enjoy our friends until they die or we lose them in some other way. The early spring and summer days pass without our realizing their beauty. We rush through a holiday trip and miss half the scenery, because we are in a hurry, or cross or anxious about worthless trifles. Nearly every old or even middle-aged man who looks back honestly on his life will admit that, however wretched he may be now, opportunities of happiness were given to him. A French writer recorded what most of us know from experience to be true, when he said that many people could be made happy with the happiness which is lost in the world. We lose happiness because we often scorn calm, quiet pleasures, and seek only for those that excite. Or we make the mistake of thinking that happiness lies only in big, sensational events, instead of in the small, trifling incidents of daily life. Or we seek for it in the future rather than in the present, which is like a man looking for his hat when it is all the time upon his head.

#### A Contrast.

On Sunday, April 26th, 1896, at the house of our Cheyenne Indian deacon, Rev. David Pendleton (Indian name Okerhater), near Darlington, Oklahoma, the seven Indians recently confirmed by Bishop Brooke received their first communion. Two others were baptized the same day.

Twenty-one years ago he, who is now an ordained clergyman in the Church, was then a prisoner of war, one of those who had been engaged in an outbreak in the Indian Territory and

who were sent to Florida for confinement. Now, in his own house, among his own people, the gospel of Christ is preached and the Sacraments of the Church administered.

Twenty-one years ago, both he and his people were all strangers to the gospel of Christ. They looked upon white men as their enemies. Now, he and others have learned a Saviour's love; they have accepted Christianity at the hands of the white man. The gospel of Christ has led these once enemies of each other to be friends.

#### Grimstey Park.

This favourite Canadian summer resort opens for the season of 1896, under the most favourable auspices. It is beautifully located by the waters of Lake Ontario, with a magnificent beach for bathing and boating. It possesses ample and delightful pleasure grounds, with fine surroundings. Among the special advantages are:—The service of song under the management of Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Blight, assisted by the members of the Victoria University Glee Club. There will be prominent speakers from abroad, as well as a splendid array of Canadian talent.

#### Nativity of St. John, Baptist.

St. Augustine observes that the Church usually celebrates the festivals of Saints on the day of their death, but that the feast of St. John the Baptist is an exception to the rule; because this saint was sanctified in his mother's womb, and the herald of the Incarnation. The day which we set apart to his honor is supposed to be connected with his words, "He must increase, but I must decrease." St. John was born June 24th, and from this day the days decrease. Christ was born at the time when the days began to increase. This day is also the proximate day of his birth, since he was six months older than our Blessed Lord.

The miraculous birth of St. John the Baptist, and all we know of his subsequent history, is told us in the first few chapters of the four Gospels. By comparing our Lord's words—and those of St. John himself, in announcing his mission, with preceding prophecies, we see that the prophets have spoken of him more than seven hundred years before he was born; what is said of him in Holy Scripture illustrates the words of our Lord: "Among them that are born of woman there is none greater than John the Baptist."

The symbol of St. John, Baptist, is a missionary staff with banner, on which is inscribed the Lamb and, "*Ecce Agnus Dei.*"

#### How Sorrow Uplifts.

In every life that is opened up to the divine purpose God sows the seeds of infinite joy and fruitfulness. If care and sorrow make deep furrows, the seed falls into richer soil and the harvest is the more abundant. God's gifts come under strange disguises, but that is because they are sent to the very highest that is in us, and we must grow into their use before they reveal themselves. That which seems to hold us back from peace and joy is the very thing that makes it possible to attain these precious possessions. The bird would find his wings useless were there no resisting atmosphere to bear him in his heavenward flight, and the soul that had never known the throb of sorrow, the agony of conflict, the weariness of disappointment, would find its aspirations powerless to lift it upward. It is not strength of wing alone, but strength of wing and resistance of air, that makes possible the skyward flight.

#### God or Chance.

Let us look at this subject for the supposed government of life by chance from far wider points of view than these. For instance, it very closely affects our human history. The ancient nations believed in chance. They call it "chance" or "fortune" if one man got a crown as the prize of his wickedness, and the other got a gibbet; they call it "chance" if a battle is lost which raised one ruler from a dungeon to a throne, cut down another from the throne to a dungeon. In this way they, as the prophet says, raised a table

to fortune. What is history to you? Is it a mere ghastly phantasmagoria of human passions struggling together, or is it the unfolding of a great divine drama to a merciful issue? When King Nebuchadnezzar departed from Jerusalem we are told by the prophet Ezekiel that he used the divination which is called *belomancy* or *divining by arrows*—he stood at the parting of the ways with a sheaf of arrows in his hand and let them fall, and in whichever direction most of the arrows fell, in that direction he marched. That was to leave the destiny of himself and of the country to what they were pleased to call chance. But the Christian believes that chance is nothing but God's unseen Providence, which is so misnamed by men. In the words of the great poet, "Chance is nothing else but God incognito."

How do men and women, painfully stricken, sometimes curse the day of their life, and are almost ready to blaspheme God! But what a difference when they have the grace to recognize that this may be in their own life but bitter aloes from the gentle hand of God! How should that thought come home to them like a sunbeam, glorifying the dull and misty earth! How does the resignation which comes from trust in God transmute all their sorrows into gold, ripen all that is best within them, get rid of all that is cursed, make their lives like the sweet flowers that are most fragrant when they are most bruised and crushed!—*Dean Farrar.*

#### A Troubled Day.

There are moments in to-day,  
God knows where,  
When they who have a blessing,  
And can spare,  
May confer as angels do,  
Help to bring another through  
A troubled day.

There are moments in to-day,  
Seek to find,  
For they hold an open way  
To be kind  
Unto such as seldom hear  
Mercy's footsteps drawing near  
Unto their door.

There are moments in to-day,  
Find them all,  
For our Father up in heaven  
Lets them fall,  
And He wills that they shall be  
Messengers with good from thee  
To such as need.

#### Always the Same.

Every one likes a spice of variety, even in character and conduct, but an even temper is a boon to its possessor and a blessing to others.

"It is true that the friend you refer to is not brilliant," said one, replying to the remark of another, "but there is one delightful thing about him. He is always the same. You know where to find him and how he will meet you. He is not on fire one day and freezing the next, so that you have to take his temperature before you venture to proceed."

This is a compliment worth winning, and a trait worth cultivating. The fickle, changeable spirit which is never the same, is a constant puzzle and perplexity to friends, and a source of unhappiness to the owner. He is likely to accuse others of his own failing, for in their uncertainty about his attitude, they cannot be "the same" themselves.

Is it possible to cultivate an even temper, a cordial address and an equable spirit? Yes, by grace divine, it is. One should not spend his time grumbling at the jolts received over the rough road before his door, but should make sturdy effort to even the way. It may be a hard and unpleasant task, but that does not prove it to be impossible, by any means, and as to the idea that because a thing is difficult, it is not a duty, away with it! What one ought to do, one can do, and one must.

—All the doors that lead inward to the secret places of the Most High are doors outward—out of self, out of smallness, out of wrong.