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"the coming of the day of God." 2 S. Pet. iii. 12). So spoke S. Paul in his sermon at Athens (Acts xviii. 31), and in his letters (Thess. iv. 16; 2 Thess. i. 7; Col. iii. 4; Titus ii. 13); S. James, (S. Jas. v. 8); S. Peter, (1 S. Pet. iv. 6; 2 S. Pet. iii. 10); S. Jude, (vv. 14-15), and S. John, (Rev. xx. 12-20).

II. Our Preparation.—What is the lesson to-day for us? You will find it in 2 S. Pet. iii. 11. It is the lesson that we have just been learning from the Collect for the Day, which strikes the key-note of preparation for the approaching Advent Season. We should, in the words of S. Peter, "earnestly desire the coming of the day of God;" should be able, like S. John, to say "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Yet we must not, (like some in the early Church and others in later days,) give up our stated employments to live in idleness, even though it be in a prayerful expectation of His coming. Our waiting for Christ must be a "patient waiting," (2 Thess. iii. 5) in which we should "study to be quiet and do our own business." (1 Thess. iv. 11). Let us "watch and pray, for we do not know when the time is;" (S. Mark xiii. 33-34), and let us meantime strive to the utmost to improve the "talent" which has been committed to our charge, so that when "after a long time the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them," (S. Matt. xxv. 19), He may say to each of us, as He said to the faithful one in the parable, (S. Matt. xxv. 23) "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

#### NOTES OF THE DAY.

##### FRAILTY'S SHIELD.

Look what arms the fenceless wild—  
Fraillest things have frailty's shield!  
Cockle-boat outrides the gale  
That has shred the frigate's sail;  
Curlew skims the breaker's crest;  
Swings the oriole in its nest;  
Flower a single summer bred  
Lightly lifts its jaunty head  
When is past the storms whose stroke  
Laid the pride of the centuried oak;  
Where with fire the soil was bathed  
The white trefoil springs unscathed.

Fraillest things have frailty's shield!  
Here a fly in amber sealed;  
There a bauble, tossed aside  
Under ancient lava-tide,  
Meets the musing delfer's gaze.  
Time the king's memorial lays,  
Touching it with sportive staff,  
But spare Erotion's epitaph.

Fraillest things have frailty's shield,  
Guarded by a charm concealed;  
So the gaunt and ravening wild  
Softens towards the weanling child,  
And along the giddy steep  
Safe one glideth, blind with sleep.

Art thou mighty?—Challenged fate  
Chooseth thee for wrestling mate!  
Art thou feeble?—Fate disarmed,  
Turning, leaveth thee unharmed.  
Thou that bendest shall not break:  
Smiling in the tempest's wake,  
Thou shalt rise, and see around  
How the strong ones strew the ground;  
Saving lightness thou didst wield—  
Fraillest things have frailty's shield!

—Edith M. Thomas in the Century.

##### DOGS' FRIENDSHIP.

The wife of an English gentleman in Wiltshire owns two delightful dogs—Jasper, a large collie, and Sandie, a rough Skye terrier. The pair are devoted friends, always going out together, if possible. A visitor at the house tells, in the London Spectator, an anecdote of this canine friendship:—

"One afternoon, I called them, as usual, to go for a walk, and making my way to the lake, I determined to row across and wander about in the deer-park. Without thinking of the two dogs, I got into the boat and pushed off.

"Jasper at once jumped into the water, and gaily followed the boat. Half ways across he and I were startled by despairing howls, and, stopping to look back, we saw poor little Sandie running up and down the bank, and bitterly bewailing the cruelty of his two so-called friends in leaving him behind.

"Hardening my heart, I sat still in silence, and simply watched. Jasper was clearly distressed. He swam around the boat, and, looking up into my face, said unmistakably with his wise brown eyes, "Why don't you go back for him?"

"Seeing, however that I made no signs of intelligence, he made up his mind to settle the difficulty himself, and swam back to forlorn little Sandie.

"There was a moment's pause, I suppose for explanation, and then, to my surprise and amusement, Jasper stood still, half-out and half-in the water, and Sandie scrambled onto his back, his front paws resting on Jasper's neck, who swam across the lake and landed him safely in the deer-park! I need not describe the evident pride of the one, or the gratitude of the other."

##### HELP IN TIME OF NEED.

A deaf old sailor at the siege of Acre was judged unfit for work on shore. He was, however, much roused by the stories brought to him of the fight, and on hearing that a French general had been killed by the Turks, and that his body was lying at the mercy of the dogs, he earnestly entreated his comrades to go and bury him, "for," said he "the French were very kind to me when I was taken prisoner by them years ago." All answer, however, that he received was, "Go and do it yourself, Ben."

"And one day he got leave to go on shore, dressed in his best clothes and carrying implements to dig a grave. Then his messmates tried to discourage him from the dangerous enterprise, telling him he would be under fire, but Ben was firm—he must bury the Frenchman. After that some young sailors offered to help him. But he firmly refused that offer. "No," said he, "you are young and strong, and would be missed; I am deaf and old, and of little consequence."

He reached the spot in safety, and when the enemy perceived his design the firing ceased. In solemn silence the old fellow dug the grave and buried the body.

Then he returned to his ship and was questioned by Sir Sidney Smith.

"Well, Ben, I hear you've buried the General."

"Yes, your honor."

"I understand you had nobody with you."

"But I had, your honor."

"Ah! Who had you?"

"God Almighty was with me sir."

##### MISTAKES.

"Never be ashamed to apologize when you have done wrong," says an eminent writer. "Let that be a law of your household. The best thing I ever heard of my grandfather, whom I never saw, was this: That once having rebuked one of his children, he himself—having lost his patience, and perhaps having been misinformed of the children's doings—found out his mistake, and in the evening of the same day, gathered all his family together and said: 'Now, I have one explanation to make, and one thing to say, Thomas; this morning I rebuked you very unfairly; I am sorry for it. I rebuked you in the presence of the whole family, and now I ask your forgiveness in their presence.' It must have taken some courage to do that. It was right, was it not? Never be ashamed to apologize when you have done wrong."

—REMEMBER in all things, that if you don't begin, you will never come to an end. The first weed pulled up in the garden, the first seed in the ground, the first shilling in the savings-bank, and the first mile traveled on a journey are all-important things; they make a beginning and hold out a hope, a promise, a pledge, an assurance that you are in earnest in what you have undertaken. How many a poor, idle, hesitating outcast is now creeping and crawling on his way through the world who might have held up his head and prospered if, instead of putting off his resolutions of industry and amendment, he had only made a beginning!

##### DANGER IN SUCCESS.

No part of human life is free from temptation. There are exposed places which everyone feels must be guarded. What is most of a surprise to us is the appearance of danger in unexpected places. Failure has its temptations; success opens chasms unknown to its opposite. No great virtue is required to improve the lessons of adversity, but only virtue and wisdom can secure and retain the full advantage of victory. Many a man who has run with steadiness the rougher course, has lost his balance the moment he has entered the high road of prosperity. David was a model of self-control, prudence and courage, through the long contests with soul; the climax of victory opened seams and exposed weak places in his character. The man who was too conscientious to take the life of Saul when prowling upon his track, in the high day of prosperity ventured to commit adultery and murder. In the capture of Jericho, Joshua held every soldier in the line of duty; but the moment the city was taken new dangers entered, and by the sin of a single soldier the conquering host was turned back in a Bull Run rout.

##### STICK TO ONE THING.

"Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel," is the language of the Bible. Whoever expects to succeed in any undertaking, must enter into it with a hearty and earnest will to do his best. When a trade or profession is chosen, no obstacles, be they large or small, must be allowed to stand in the way of mastering that trade or profession. However much we may deprecate the old-time custom of indenturing apprentices, the system, in its practical results, operated almost always for the lasting good of the apprentice. Generally, it insured to him a good trade and a wholesome discipline that fitted him for success in business. At the present time very many young men undertake to acquire a trade, and after a brief time abandon it, because there are unpleasant duties to be performed and obstacles to be overcome. They consider themselves accountable to no one, and go and come at the bidding of caprice, or an unsettled, easy mind. The result of this is to send into the world young men who have not half learned their trades, of unstable character, who drift from post to pillar, and who succeed in nothing but strolling along the highways of life, melancholy wrecks of men.

We would earnestly entreat every young man, after he has chosen his vocation to stick to it; don't leave it because hard blows are to be struck or disagreeable work performed. The men who have worked their way up to wealth and usefulness, do not belong to the shiftless and unstable class, but may be reckoned among those who took off their coats, rolled up their sleeves, conquered their prejudice against labor, and manfully bore the heat and burden of the day. Whether upon the old, worn-out farm, where our fathers toiled diligently, striving to bring back the soil to productiveness, in the machine shop or factory, or in the thousand other business places that invite honest toil and skill, let the motto ever be—"Perseverance and industry." The baby training of the nursery was good enough in its place, but it won't answer all the demands of an active life. This is not a baby world. We must expect to be knocked and jostled about in the stern conflict, and get run over, if we are not on the lookout and prepared to meet the duties of life with a purpose not to shrink from but to fulfil them. A young man with a good trade or honorable profession, as he goes forth into the world with his mind made up to stick to his trade or profession, is not obliged to ask for many favors. He will hew his way to success while the unstable and shiftless will grow tired, despair and fail.—Selected.

MR. GLADSTONE'S second contribution to the Youth's Companion deals with an American subject, "Motley, the Historian and Diplomat," whose characteristics he sets forth with remarkable vigor and simplicity. Mr. Blaine has written an article on "Our Government" for the same periodical.