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MOTTOES FOR THE MILLION.

BY THE

REV. ROBERT MAGUIRE, M.A.

What I Owe, and How to Pay It.

“Non nobis, Domine.”—PSALM cxv. 1.

“That I (how late
A neighbour of the worm) should e'er forget
The wonders of Thy goodness ray'd on me,
And cease to celebrate, with matin harp
Or vesper song, Thy plenitude of love
And healing mercy!”

AMID the wreck of the Fall, and among the ruins of our former greatness, there yet appear some few indications of the past, some shattered remnants of primitive innocence,—the lengthening shadows of a glory departed. Around the dismantled towers of man's original constitution some wild flowers are found still sprouting in an ungenial soil—flowers fair and lovely, and worthy of cultivation for a better destiny and for a nobler end. These, however, are few and far between, scarce and scanty in the garden of a fallen world. They have but little depth of earth, and drag on a slender existence amid the rough stones of the ruin, over which no ploughshare has ever passed, or can possibly pass. In this dreary position they are exposed to the wanton winds of heaven, to the scorching heat of the sun, to the wintry cold and nipping frosts; and are, indeed, as the flower of the field, which in the morning groweth up and in the evening is cut down and withereth.

In the little number of these better characteristics of man is the feeling of GRATITUDE.

There are two retrospective emotions of the heart,—of opposite character, and conflicting in their nature. Memory, at one time or another, differently acted upon, may be re-

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garded as the common parent of both these emotions, which, in the abstract, may be similarly defined as resulting from a sense of certain treatment received, with a desire to pay it back again. According to the medium through which memory looks upon past experience, these retrospective emotions will start into existence and manifest their power. They are called by the respective names of Resentment and Gratitude. Two men may look upon the same scene or landscape; one may look through green spectacles, the other through spectacles of a bluish colour. Each will see things in a different light,—one green, the other blue. So is it with memory, and the medium through which it views the past. If Memory looks with an evil eye and an embittered spirit on the reminiscences of life, all the by-gones of her experience will provoke the feeling of Resentment. But if she regards the past as a connected series of kindnesses received and favours done, the whole aspect of affairs is instantly brightened and enlivened, and, with a pleasing delight and a thankful heart, Memory carries you back through the scenes of your past life. This is the view that awakens the feeling of Gratitude, and expands the soul in the enjoyment of a happy retrospect. The one is ever morose, and sullen, and dissatisfied; while the other is ever happy, and pleasant, and joyful.

It is said that Contrast heightens effect; and certainly from the valley beneath you can best appreciate the height of the mountain above; and better realize the whiteness of the snow-drift by the contrast of the melancholy mantle of the funeral pomp that slowly treads the snow-clad walks of the cemetery of the dead.

Thus, we may, perhaps, the better understand the true character of Gratitude by the contrast of the contrary emotion—Resentment. Anger or Resentment is a passion of the mind arising from a sense of injury received, and a desire to retaliate or be avenged of the wrong-doer. This is an evil passion of the corrupt and carnal mind. It seeks to gain the mastery over man; and unless it be controlled with a resolute hand, it will lash itself into fury, like the angry tempest, and will not spare. Human Resentment will compass sea and land in order to attain its purpose. It

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will undermine your happiness and sap the foundations of society, so as to accomplish its ultimate design, and expend the uttermost of its wrath. Resentful, relentless, insatiable, it never says "Enough." 'Tis like the wild Indian in the jungle, or the Hottentot in the kraal; it will whet its sword, and sharpen its scimitar, and bend its bow, and poison its javelin-point, and with sure and steady aim despatch its arrow into the breast of its victim. It knows only to quiet its spirit of anger in the fulness of revenge; to drown its frenzy in the blood of the slain; and turn from the fierceness of its wrath in the destruction of the offender. Such is human Resentment—a combination of the memory of wrong, and a desire to retaliate the deed.

Now, if this were the only retrospective emotion in man's breast, he would be quite eaten up of wrath and wretchedness. Life would become a perpetual quarrel; a civil war would utterly consume and desolate society. Man would continually be in the dust of the arena, struggling for the championship of strife; and, like Ishmael and the wandering Arabs of the desert, his hand would be against every man, and every man's hand against him.

But, thank God, there is a kindlier emotion in the mind of man. When Memory looks back upon the past, there opens up a fairer field and a nobler fight for the exercise of her powers. There is such a feeling as GRATITUDE. This is the opposite of Resentment. It consists of a combination of a sense of kindness received, and a desire to recompense the favour.

Gratitude awakens man's soul to a happy consciousness of good done or attempted; it fills him with emotions of love to the doer of the deed of friendship; it calls into active exercise the finer feelings of the man, and brings into play the softer sentiments of our better nature. Gratitude renders a man loving and grateful, sensible of obligation, and ready to oblige in turn. A man thus impressed will, according to the strength of his feelings and the circumstances of the case, deny himself, in order to pay a debt of gratitude. He will most willingly put himself to inconvenience, so that he can recognize and repay the obligation. He will consider no trouble too great, provided he can in-

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dulge the happiness of a grateful heart ; and this is, indeed, a legitimate and blessed indulgence ; for, like every virtue, Gratitude meets with its own reward in its very exercise. Indeed, some persons are enabled so to overcome themselves with this emotion of love, as that they can even revenge themselves in this blessed way ; experiencing the truth of the adage—

“The sweetest revenge is to do good to our enemies.”

The ordinary definition of Gratitude expresses well its character and object : Gratitude is “a virtue disposing the mind to an inward sense and an outward acknowledgment of a benefit received.” The inward emotion, not content with the precincts of its home in the human heart, seeks opportunities of working itself out in the active exercise of its beneficent powers.

This feeling may be illustrated in the nature of the dumb beast. The dog will bark and bite at a stranger, or at one who has done him an injury ; this is his resentment. But that same dog will frisk and frolic about his master, and lick the hand that feeds him ; this is his gratitude. It may be a very humiliating doctrine to propound, but it is, nevertheless, strictly true, that the instinct of Gratitude is found, and largely developed, too, in the brute creation. So far as the mere emotion, the natural instinct, is concerned, there is not a very great difference after all ; and I believe it may equally well be asserted of the man as of the brute, that he is “gentle when stroked, fierce when provoked.”

Resentment is a part of our evil nature, constituting a portion of the Old Adam still lingering in this body of sin. It must be subdued. Gratitude is a remnant of innocence, sadly reduced to a very shred, but still capable of cultivation. Then let it be cultivated, carefully tended, and jealously guarded. The cultivation of Gratitude is the best and surest way to the subjugation of Resentment. The word “Gratitude” is derived from a Latin word which means “thanks,” or “thanksgiving:” it is, therefore, a matter of the heart and the affections. We have incorporated into our language the Latin word “*gratis*,” the meaning of which is well understood. Advice and medical

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attendance may be given *gratis*; a book, a favour, or any privilege may be given *gratis*. This denotes that no money has been paid for it; and yet there is some return to be made. That which is given *gratis* is given "for nothing but thanks." The least we can do is to allow the feelings of a grateful heart to breathe forth a blessing on the head of our benefactor.

Gratitude, therefore, is not a *legal* transaction, nor does its exercise acquit the man of all his obligations to his friend. The giving of thanks is only the graceful expression or acknowledgment of still continued obligation. He that gives a favour does not sell it; it is a free gift, and, as such, gratitude for the favour does not repay it, for, being a free gift, it cannot be repaid. In business transactions it is simply a matter of buying and selling, of paying or receiving money; it is a legal contract. A man may sue you at law for non-payment of a debt of money, but he cannot sue you for non-payment of gratitude. Thus, gratitude is not a legal, but a moral transaction, committed to the free will and voluntary choice of men, and for that very reason we ought to be ever foremost in discharging this blessed privilege, being, as it were, put upon our honour in the matter of its fulfilment. We may pay off a debt even to the last farthing; but gratitude we can never repay, even in part, much less to the uttermost obligation.

This puts Gratitude on its rightful basis; plants its throne within the heart; renders its outgoings as the results of its own voluntary action; manifests its source from whence it springs, even from the fountain-head of pure love; and illustrates how this virtue is susceptible of still higher cultivation, and may achieve still further attainments.

The scope for Gratitude is in two directions, each opening up a wide field and large exercise-ground for discipline and energetic labour. 1. Gratitude from man to man; or Human Gratitude. 2. Gratitude from man to God; or Divine Gratitude.

1. The former of these, HUMAN GRATITUDE, is comparatively of low caste and character. It is held by us, to a great extent, in common with the brute creation. It is the slender skeleton of its former self, unclothed, unformed, un-

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fashioned, morbid, and dead. Human Gratitude is sometimes regarded as a *quid pro quo*, and assumes the aspect of payment made in return for value received. Sometimes it is a matter of mere courtesy, civility, constraint, or etiquette. Very frequently the fashion and usages of society will dictate *words* of gratitude, when *deeds* of gratitude ought to be manifested. In such cases the expressions of mere professed gratitude are accounted very cheap. Some cannot afford anything else than words; and, no doubt, their very soul goes out after their benefactor; the *words* of such are *deeds*. So that, in any case, the motto of true gratitude must be "Deeds, not words." Yet how often have we not heard the vague and worthless apology "that you take the will for the deed!"

Human Gratitude is a little, tiny plant, having scarce room wherein to grow. Its real developments are choked and checked by the forms and formalisms of society, and by the narrow limits of the human heart. It is a short-lived, evanescent, transient thing. A stray spark of Gratitude may, perchance, lead you to the door of a friend who has befriended you, and you may thank him; but I have known not a few whose Gratitude is such that you shall never see their face again until they call for a second benefit! This is that cool, calculating, cold-blooded Gratitude which is, after all, the merest selfishness. If it ever gives outward expression to itself, it is in something that costs nothing. The gratitude of the chief butler was of this kind. He had received a great kindness, and he promised to remember, and never to forget, his benefactor; yet he did forget; and Joseph was long consigned to oblivion, and was at last indebted to other circumstances for his deliverance from prison.

This spirit of interested attention, calling forth the exercise of mere interested gratitude in return, is sharply rebuked by our Blessed Lord: "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do

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good, and lend, hoping for nothing again ; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest : for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.”—*Luke*, vi. 32—35.

And again : “ When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours ; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind : and thou shalt be blessed ; for they cannot recompense thee : for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.”—*Luke*, xiv. 12—14.

The basis of true gratitude, then, is laid in pure disinterestedness of motive and singleness of purpose. Gratitude, to be of any worth, must be that sterling outgoing of the heart, sensible of goodness, anxious to repay it, striving to recompense it, and yet conscious that the obligation can never be repaid. We illustrate this in our own experience. Suppose a favour is done by the love of a friend. He may, perhaps, start you in life, or relieve you in a strait, or rescue you from pecuniary difficulty. The obligation thus incurred can *never* be repaid ; and for this reason : you cannot possibly reckon up the real value of that timely help. It pervades your whole life, and its influences are felt by your family, even by your children’s children. No system of single or double entry can pursue the consequences of that friendly interposition through all its ramifications and continuous fruits. You are, therefore, utterly precluded from forming even a rough estimate of the true value of that obligation ; and surely it stands to reason that such an unknown quantity cannot be repaid. Your debt of Gratitude still remains.

Yea, it might possibly be in your power to pay off an obligation of a friend, pound for pound ; but yet, having done this, you have not been able to recompense *the motive*—the kind and generous motive that gave power, and life, and reality to the favour done. You may pay his bill “ in full,” and yet leave altogether untouched the feeling that prompted the kind action. The kindly motive still remains, and from that you can diminish neither jot nor tittle. You

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must be contented to be always indebted to such a friend, and under a continuous and undiminished obligation. I do not mean to say that you are to be his slave and he your master. This would be to spoil the favour, and take the very heart and soul out of the obligation. The man that would even remind you of such an obligation in order to extract a favour from you, at once changes the favour into a matter of bargain or of purchase. Gratitude cannot be constrained by law; the slightest compulsion alters its nature. It cannot work in chains; it must be free and unfettered; out of the constraining principle of pure love bringing forth its peaceful fruits from the storehouse of a willing heart. The man thus influenced by feelings of true gratitude will seek to do honour to his friend; will shrink from doing him dishonour; will bless his name even though others curse it; will vindicate his reputation when it is assailed; and stand up for him, even though he stand alone in his defence.

Still, after all, human Gratitude is but the puny growth of a heavenly principle. It is stunted here, not being naturalized to the chilling atmosphere of a wicked world. An exotic plant, it strives against contrary influences. Its fibres have no depth in the rocky soil of the human heart; and scarcely maintaining its life in the hard concrete pavement of human society, it rarely survives the desolating tread of the busy throng, and with difficulty holds its own amid the blasts of sin and of the carnal mind. A plant so tender needs the vital warmth of a fairer and more genial clime to nourish its native strength and advance its true development. Accordingly, on earth it thrives not; and human history affords but few instances of gratitude beyond that which is of a commonplace character. It supplies but few specimens of the heroic kind. The best phases of human Gratitude are so fraught with mixed motives, and so interspersed with interested views, some cherished thought or speculation, that it comes to be reduced to the bare *name* of Gratitude.

If, then, we would discover true Gratitude, pure and simple, we must look for it elsewhere than in a world like this, and observe its growth in hearts that are somewhat

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more than earthly, and in an atmosphere partaking of that which is heavenly. This is—

2. DIVINE GRATITUDE: by which I mean that emotion of the heart which comes from God, is given by the Spirit, and which returns, in its words and works, back to its birth-place—Heaven, and to its Author—God.

This is the only true description of Gratitude—not earth-born, but of heavenly origin. It is the Christian virtue which disposes the mind to an “inward sense” and an “outward acknowledgment” of the best gifts—the gifts of a beneficent God, which call for the fullest exercise of lively Gratitude. In the greatness of the gifts of Heaven we ought to trace the corresponding dimensions of true heartfelt Gratitude. “Freely ye have received; freely give.”

But how great, inestimably great, are the gifts of God in comparison of our Gratitude! The plentiful showers that revive the earth, and replenish the springs of water, and fill the flowing rivers, and swell the ocean depths,—these are gifts rained down from Heaven; but the only acknowledgment sent back again is the slender mist of the morning or dew of the eventide. And even so our gratitude to God is in much the same proportion to His gifts as “the mist resembles rain.”

On the contrary, see man’s work, and God’s abounding returns. The seed is planted in the ground—that is man’s work; but God giveth the increase, and maketh it to bring forth some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, some an hundred-fold; not only giving “seed to the sower,” as the basis of a future seed-time and the earnest of future harvests, but also supplying “bread to the eater,” replenishing the world with food, and filling it with the full horn of plenty.

Oh! for a heart to render to the Lord “the debt immense of endless gratitude!”

Some one has well said;—“As there is no end to the lovingkindness of Jehovah, so there should be none to our gratitude.” The whole course and experience of our lives constitutes one continued call to fervent gratitude. God *ever present*; not to be forgotten, as though He were an absent friend, but to be kept in memory, as being ever

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nigh; yet, inasmuch as He is the Unseen, Invisible One, being "out of sight," He is too often "out of mind." God *ever working*; constantly reminding us of His continual care, benevolence, and love. Another loud call for gratitude; but, alas! too often neglected. God *ever manifested*; made known by His works and by His word. The flower of the field is His; it lifts its open face to heaven, and receives the sunshine, and the showers, and dutifully responds to its Maker's requirements, putting us to shame; for even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. God *ever knowing*; and, therefore, ever reading our hearts, judging whether gratitude be there or no; grieved if, after all, there is no sacred incense of a holy heart, and no unfeigned thanksgiving arising to His throne, as the oblation of the morning and evening sacrifice.

Everything about and around us is calculated to call forth, suggest, and elicit this feeling of Divine Gratitude. All Nature is redolent of this thought; Revelation is eloquent in the inculcation of this duty; Experience is ever bearing its testimony and witness to this call to Gratitude.

"There's not a plant or flower below,
But makes Thy glories known;
And clouds arise, and tempests blow,
By order from Thy throne.

"His hand is my perpetual guard,
He keeps me with His eye;
Why should I then forget the Lord,
Who is for ever nigh?"

A friend may die, and your gratitude, in its outward acknowledgment, may die with him. A friend may depart to a distant shore, and opportunities for your gratitude may cease. A former friend may prove ungenerous and unkind, and thus cancel all claims to continuance of your gratitude. But Jesus never dies; He ever liveth, to receive the glad homage of a grateful heart. Jesus is never distant, but is ever near, about our bed and about our path, spying out all our ways. Jesus is never unkind; He is the Unchangeable One, always loving and always good, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Manifold as are the gifts of God, so manifold are the calls for our gratitude. Day after day, and

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night following night, fresh instances arise to evoke the gratitude of a thankful heart. All the evils that befall us proceed, directly or indirectly, from ourselves; but all our good things come from Him who is the Author and Giver of every good and perfect gift. Ofttimes in the midst of judgment, well deserved by us, He has remembered mercy which we have not deserved. Surely, Heaven awaits and expects our gratitude; "for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

This response of gratitude to God is not *payment*, even in part. I have already said that human gratitude is not a legal transaction between man and man; and so Divine gratitude cannot be regarded as a legal transaction between man and God. No amount of gratitude can possibly acquit us of our obligation to God. The best and most acceptable gratitude is that which works itself out in the exercise of the gifts and talents committed to our charge. "What hast thou, that thou hast not received?" When God intrusts to us a gift, it is that we should use it well; and in the right using of it consists its own great reward. Therefore—

"Talk not of talents; what hast thou to do?
Thy duty be thy portion—*five* or *two*.
Talk not of talents; is thy duty done?
Thou hadst sufficient, were they *ten* or *one*.
Lord, what my talents are, I cannot tell,
Till Thou shalt give me grace to use them well;
That grace impart; the bliss will then be mine,
But all the power and all the glory Thine!"

The best return for gifts is to use them according to the wish and intention of the donor. Our parents gave us education; our respect for their kindness is best evidenced by a diligent use of the gift. If they did not leave us money, they have left us a legacy more valuable still—an honourable reputation and an unsullied name; it is for us to use these favours, and thus express our gratitude to those that bestowed them. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"—*Matt.* vii. 11.

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And, verily, our heavenly Father does give good gifts to His suppliant children. He bestows precious talents, manifold opportunities, glorious privileges, and the choicest blessings. "*Non nobis, Domine!*" "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake!" From Thine hand they have come; to Thy glory they shall be used; into Thine own possession shall they be rendered back again: so that when Thou comest, Thou mayst receive Thine own with usury.

The form of "General Thanksgiving" in our Book of Common Prayer contains a most beautiful and instructive summary of what true Gratitude suggests to the thankful heart. God is acknowledged as the "Father of all mercies;" and we accuse ourselves as being His "unworthy servants"—venturing, however, to offer Him our "humble and hearty thanks." We bless Him for "our creation:" we are His; and He made us. We are His as no other portion of creation is; for while he made every living creature "after his kind," the winged fowl, the cattle, and the creeping thing—each and all after their respective kind, He made man in His own image, and after His own likeness: "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him;" with a heart to feel, and power to acknowledge God's gifts and bounties. We thank Him for our "preservation:" if we were not His, He would not so take care of us. We are His great concern; His peculiar care; His own personal interest. He is ever guiding, and guarding, and protecting us; therefore we thank Him, for He is good, and His mercy endureth for ever. "And for all the blessings of this life:" too numerous to mention, too many to tell the recital of them all. What a mass of unnumbered mercies may be included within this sentence! The whole review of the past time of our lives is marked at every step by some interposition, protection, mercy, or saving health of His right hand.

Our thanksgiving continues—"but above all, for Thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ!" Above all! Yes, this is the chiefest cause of a Christian's gratitude. This, that is greater than "creation;" more saving than "preservation;" the

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crowning blessing of this life ; the crowning glory of the life that is to come. It is "inestimable love ;" love, whose height none can scale, whose depth none can fathom, whose length and breadth none can measure ; love, that passeth knowledge ; that surpasseth human understanding. This love includes all the scenes of an Incarnate God ; and conducts us through "the means of grace to the hope of glory."

"In His blest Life
I see the path ; and in His Death, the price ;
And in His great Ascent, the proof supreme
Of immortality !"

This Gratitude, moreover, is established upon the true groundwork—the ground of the heart. All these blessings are given *gratis*, "without money and without price ;" therefore our Gratitude must proceed from "hearts unfeignedly thankful ;" and be manifested, not in lip-service only, but in life-dedication also—"not only with our lips, but in our lives ;" not in mere profession of words, but in self-consecration, "by giving up *ourselves* to Thy service." And all this to be evidenced by signs following—by permanent proofs of Gratitude, perpetual fruits of praise—"by walking before Thee in holiness and righteousness all our days."

This service of Gratitude thus rendered to God (be it again remembered) is not payment, no,—not even to the smallest tittle. Our works that proceed from a grateful heart can never be quoted as a set-off against any sin of ours. God has given to us a free-will offering ; our Gratitude, therefore, cannot repay it. The free-will offerings of our hearts may be presented to God, not on the constraint of law, but on the constraining principle of love. If they are offered as a legal return for mercy received, they will not be accepted. There is no merit in the work itself ; the only value is in the motive that prompts the doing of it. A little child may offer to a beloved parent a present or a gift of its own making. The offering may, in itself, be very weak and very small, imperfectly wrought and rudely finished. It may not bear the test of the most superficial

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criticism. You may, perhaps, smile at its insignificance, while you receive it. But it is accepted for all that ; and your heart yearns over the dear little one that has presented it. It is cherished and preserved as a choice and lovely thing ; and this by reason of the motive of love and affection which suggested the gift.

Now, if that child were to demand payment for the offering, such a request would instantly alter the whole face of the transaction. It would then lose its moral aspect, and become a mere matter of business. You would, accordingly, proceed to estimate it according to its money value ; you would narrowly pry into its defects ; and perhaps, on the merits of the case, reject it altogether. You would thus stand in an altered relationship toward your own child, who, by a presumptuous demand, had so far forgotten the true element that constitutes a grateful offering—the constraining principle of filial love.

Thus is it that God accepts the oblations of our Gratitude, if offered, as children alone can offer, in the spirit of heartfelt love. They are accepted, not for any merit in themselves, but for the simplicity of the motive that offers them, and through the merit of Jesus, who, as our High Priest, presents them. The childlike, unpretending innocence of a loving heart clothes our imperfect offerings with grace and beauty ; covers their manifold defects ; and in the glory that excelleth, the exceeding glory of Jesus, they are as pure incense in the presence of God.

“ My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,
Were but the feeble efforts of a child.
Howe'er perform'd, it was their brightest part,
That they proceeded from a grateful heart.
Cleansed in Thine own all-purifying blood,
Forgive their evil, and accept their good.
I cast them at Thy feet—my only plea
Is what it was—dependence upon Thee ! ”

What incentives there are to call forth the Gratitude of man towards God ! Redeeming love, how vast, how great, how measureless ! That God should become a man of grief—for man ; that He, the alone beloved, the alone

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begotten, should thus become a man of sorrows, despised and rejected of men, and I so vile! What base ingratitude! That Jesus should be put to shame, and die a death of ignominy, and I so ungrateful! Oh, the dark ingratitude of man! We, the recipients of unnumbered mercies, and yet so full of sin! These are the wounds "with which I was wounded in the house of My friends!" Ungrateful man, thus to kill the Prince of Life!

When Cæsar lay wounded with many a dagger-point, at last one plunged deeper than they all. The dying conqueror cast a glance at the perpetrator of this deed, and exclaimed, "And you too, Brutus!" This was his former friend, his colleague, and companion; and this was "the unkindest cut of all." But what was this to the vile ingratitude wherewith we respond to the gifts, and providences, and favours of Heaven! Every sin we commit is but to crucify Christ afresh, and to put Him to open shame. Every offence of man is just another nail, nailed to the Cross through the body of Jesus.

Have we not, then, still to learn much about this matter of Gratitude? Christ Jesus has given His life, His blood, His all—yea, His very self—for us. Then, "where are the nine?" where is the evidence of true gratitude? where the manifestation of our thankfulness? where the utterance of praise? Can it be that we forget such a Saviour, and such a salvation, and such boundless love? "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy!"

"Non nobis, Domine!" was the shout of victory of the Knights Templars, when in olden times they went forth to fight the battles of the Crusades. They sought to cast forth the abomination of desolation, which stood where it ought not, even in the holy places, where existed the footprints of the life of Jesus. They girded themselves for the strife, in order to recover the land once consecrated by the personal ministry of the Son of God. "O Lord, in Thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded!" And when conquest crowned their conflicts, flushed with victory, they

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raised the shout of triumph, as the voice of a mighty host—
NON NOBIS, DOMINE!

We are engaged in a nobler cause, in a holier crusade, and under a greater Captain. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the ruler of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." The object of our warfare is to cast out the abomination of desolation, Satan's indwelling power, from the once consecrated precincts of the human heart, and deliver it empty, swept, and garnished, as a meet and fitting temple of the Holy Spirit. This battle is the Lord's: and if we fight under His banner, we shall be more than conquerors through Christ, who loved us; and then lift up a mighty voice of praise and Gratitude—NON NOBIS, DOMINE! And as we enter in triumph into "the rest that remaineth," new songs of Gratitude shall tune our hearts and voices; and when our days of work and travail are ended here, and the Sabbath of Eternity draws on, Gratitude lifts her notes still higher and still louder, saying—

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BY THE

REV. ROBERT MAGUIRE, M.A.

Mark Time! Attention!

“Ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”—JAMES, iv. 14.

“Grey dial-stone, while yet thy shade
Points out those hours are mine,—
While yet at early morn I rise,
And rest at day's decline,—
Would that the SUN that formèd thine,
His bright rays beamed on me,
That I, wise for the final day,
Might measure Time like thee!”

WE are continually reminded, by the lapse of Time, what is the fleeting character of all earthly things. Nothing here is permanent; nothing here continueth in one stay. Time is “as a moth fretting a garment,” gnawing, corroding, till the texture resolves itself into its native dust. Everything is on the move, proceeding onward to the end, progressing toward its final consummation. This round world revolves and moves, till it shall, one day, move no more. The seasons move; they come, and go, and shall recur again, until the present order of things, ordained in ancient days, shall be finally interrupted; and seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall cease; and as surely as rivers run their appointed courses, and continue till they are lost in depths of ocean, so man's days and years continue till they have quite run out their strength, and merge into the ocean of eternity. This beating pulse continues to denote the action of life, until the flow of life has ebbed, and the



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beating pulse shall cease to throb. Our fleeting moments, by constant and continuous accumulation, become hours, and days, and months, and years; and we bring our years to an end as a tale that is told.

These truths are too often forgotten; the lessons of Time are learned only to escape from memory; resolutions are formed only to be broken; promises made only to be forfeited. Surely these things ought not so to be.

On the clock of All Souls' College, Oxford (I think it is), there is a motto pregnant with meaning—" *Pereunt et imputantur* ;" *—a sentence conveying a telling lesson as to the value of Time, and uttering a solemn remonstrance against the fearful neglect of Time by most men.

TIME! What is Time? It is a monosyllable, easily pronounced, oft uttered, frequently trifled with, but containing within it millions of ideas, and millions of responsibilities. It is easy to think of it; but it is hard to express one's thoughts, or to clothe in words a subject so weighty and important. The great Roman orator professed this difficulty. "It is difficult," said he, "to define Time." † St. Augustine, too, confessed his inability—"If no one asks what Time is, I know it; but if you ask me to explain it, I know it not." ‡ And some one else has said—"If you do not question me, I understand it." §

So much for our ability to express in clear and definite words the idea of Time—that mysterious principle which operates on everything, and yet touches nothing. We are familiar with Time; we live in it, and move in it, and within its period we have our being. We have so much of it on hand, that we spend it profusely, extravagantly, wastefully. We surely ought to know something about it; and yet we know it but a little, and esteem it even less than that little!

Time is a finite thing, proceeding from, and tending towards, the infinite. Time is partial, progressing onward

* "The hours expire, but are laid to our account."

† "Difficile est Tempus definire."—CICERO, 1 *De Invent.*

‡ "Si nemo ex me quærat, quid sit Tempus, scio; si quærenti explicare velim, nescio."—AUG. 2, *Confess.* 24.

§ "Si non rogas, intelligo."

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to that which is perfect. Coeval with the sun; yea, the first-born of creation, Time shall be the last to die. Time derives from eternity her birth, and in eternity she shall find her lasting grave. Time is as the blank page between the two Testaments, on which are registered the records of the families of men. Time is the parenthesis occurring amid the current context of eternity, within the limits of which is written the whole history of man.

“Time, the first-born of creation,
First to live and last to die;
’Twi’xt the first and last pulsation,
Time unfolds her mystery.

’Mid the context of th’ Eternal,
This parenthesis to scan,
Is to read within its limits
All the history of man!”

All things here are partial; that is, made up of parts. Ocean consists of individual drops of water, as distinct as the drops of rain; witness the tiny particles of spray. The world and matter consist of minute grains of sand; witness the clouds of dust driven by the breeze of the summer-tide. All finite and temporal things are, of their very nature, partial. Human society is so: all the amendments of the past and attainments for the present, are but so many partial steps and stages of progress toward ultimate perfection. “When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

Such, too, is Time. Its periods are distributed into moments, hours, days, weeks, and months. These are the constituent parts of years; and the year is in itself an integral part of Time. Such is the stuff that Time is made of!

And Time itself is a fraction—a part of eternity; only a fragment; a portion of a vast and boundless continent; dismembered, but yet a portion; still bound to its mother country by many a link of sympathy, holding in intimate connection things temporal with the things that are eternal.

Time is an Island fixed in a mighty ocean, still holding communion with the mainland, deriving therefrom its tem-

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poral and spiritual supplies, and day after day dispatching convoys of emigrants to the further shore of the Spirit-land. It is a Dependancy of a vast Empire, subsisting by the express will and pleasure of its Sovereign Lord and Master, who first bade Time begin, and who yet again shall bid it cease to be.

The existence of Time is marked very much as our own existence—by pulsation. The constant ticking of a clock, what is it but as the constant beating of my pulse! In the one, as in the other, there is the same motion, rapid and quick, proceeding onward in continuous succession. There is no intermission; no suspense of action; but each beats its pulsation, and then seems to ask, and to obtain, permission to beat again. Ay, if we were wise, we would count our Time, not by years, or months, or days; but we would “count Time by heart-throbs;”—

“For our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave!”

Time is, as its own ready-reckoner, the Time-piece. It is marked on its dial-plate and outward surface with periods, larger and smaller. The lesser periods advance unostentatiously, and scarcely noticed or perceived; the larger periods chime their quarters or strike their hours, or bring round their anniversaries, and thus tell us with their tongue of eloquence how Time is passing. But still the pendulum swings on, and Time is not yet run out. We know not when, or where, or how soon, the chain may exhaust its last link, or the mainspring snap asunder, or the silver cord be loosed; and the machine so curiously wrought, this piece of human mechanism, “so fearfully and wonderfully made,” may come to a stand-still, and all be over!

Time is as a river. From the source of its rising at the fountain-head, it runs in its appointed channel with its incessant current to the sea. For those that sail adown its stream there are floating marks provided—way-marks for the weary, beacons for the wanderer; either as timely warning against danger or cheerful encouragement to progress.

THE DESCRIPTION OF TIME.—How is Time figured forth to the human understanding? In the rude ages of

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Heathendom, Time was personified in the legends of their mythology. It may be instructive to inquire into their ideas, and their mode of expressing them. All the great spiritual principles were carnalized by the Heathen mythology. What, then, do they say about Time? Time, or the God of Time, was called by the name of Saturn. He was the son of Cœlus and Terra (*i.e.* of Heaven and Earth). His elder brother, Titan, a great giant of those days, resigned to him his kingdom on condition that he should rear no male offspring. Therefore (said they) Saturn devoured his own sons as soon as they were born. But Rhea, his wife, contrived to preserve and bring up Jupiter, who afterwards sat upon his father's throne as king of all, both of gods and men.

Is this mere fable or romance, or an unmixed legend of human origin? Nay! There lurks within it an element of another kind, and it bears upon its very face the stamp of Revelation. Much of the Heathen mythology is based upon antecedent facts of Revealed Truth. Original Revelation became intermixed with human Tradition; man, having received Divine instruction in the infancy of the world, proceeded to find out for himself "many inventions," and thus lost his way; but, with all his fabulous additions, he has not wholly got rid of Revelation. There it continues as the original substratum, underlying much of man's creation; and if it be sought for, it will reward with success the search of the inquirer.

Learn, then, these lessons from the mythology of the Heathen respecting Time:—It is the offspring of Heaven and Earth, constituting a bond of connection between them both; so that each is interested in its progress, and is intent upon its career. A Greater than Time, a Giant of Omnipotence, hath appointed to Time his kingdom, to rule in His stead, and to be His Viceroy; but on condition that he bring up neither son nor offspring. Time accepts the sovereignty and fulfils the condition. We are his sons, his progeny, and we have scarce been born when we must die; for this devouring Time will not suffer us to live. So that, when Time himself shall die, he shall leave no heir to take his inheritance, nor son to sit upon his throne.

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The line shall be extinct, his lineage exhausted, and his race run out. In Time's first-born son,—“in Adam, all die.”

Yet there is one of Time's own sons, one that was “made of a woman, made under the law”—the Man, Christ Jesus—who has survived the wreck of the desolation of Time. He lives now; He shall live after Time; He shall rule in Time's stead, and be King of all, when “the kingdoms of this world” (Time's present sovereignty) “shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.” Christ shall then be All and in all; the Lord of Time as well as of eternity. “The cometh the end!”

Time is further described in the emblems of all nations as an old man, yea, very old, decrepit with age; a wayworn and weather-beaten old man—with wings, a mowing scythe in his hand, and a forelock upon his brow.

Here, lessons crowd upon us, taught in the schools of mythology: the age of Time is great in proportion to the age of man; Time being the sole survivor of generations past. His wings signify the rapidity of his progress; the mowing sickle represents his ravages; and the forelock upon his forehead is trite as a teacher of men—inculcating this lesson, that Time may be anticipated, but once he has passed by, he cannot be overtaken.

“Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age:
Behold him, when pass'd by; what then is seen,
But his broad pinions swifter than the winds!”

And while eternity has ever been represented by the golden ring, without beginning and having no end, but going ever round and round; the figurative device representing Time is the emblem of a fish coiled in a circle, and eating off its own tail; a process which, if it be suffered to continue, must bring the fish to a speedy end. And even such is Time, the very same as the emblem teacheth—self-destroyer, working out the consummation of all, and ending itself at last.

THE VALUE OF TIME.—Its character and nature will best teach us what is its value. Time is aptly described as a mighty river, whose current, ever fed by the fountain

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continuously flows until that fountain ceases. The minute particles of water constitute the length and depth of that river. And even so, particles or moments constitute the current of Time. One of the best definitions of Time I have ever seen, is that of Archytas:—"Time is a continued flow of *nows* or instants." Yes, while I write, another "*now*" is passing; and already it is past! And another comes, and *it*, too, is gone. Thus Time flies. How important, then, rightly and duly to appreciate and use the present "*now*!" That which is now present is the only one we can count upon. The past is not *now*; the future is not *yet*. The past is dead; the future is still unborn. The present "*now*" is all that is available; the only proportion of Time that is in our hand or at our disposal.

"Not a moment flies,
But puts its sickle in the fields of life,
And mows its thousands, with their joys and cares."

Man lives in this continuous succession of instantaneous "*nows*;" this is his period of Time; and hence man is limited in power, in life, and in thought. But God, to whom the future and the past are as the present, dwells in an "Everlasting Now." Hence His Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence.

Some one has said that "moments are the younger children of their old father, Time." And 'tis true. There they flit and dance and play about him as he passes; and they ring the merry chimes and changes to the swift motion of his onward footsteps. But wait! a day shall yet come, when the last of his children shall live to die, and then the aged man shall himself stand on the crumbling verge of his allotted span—a precipice of darkness abruptly terminates his path, and in a moment he plunges off into the chasm of his fall, into the grave of his decease, into the abyss of eternity. This shall be Time's catastrophe; and then shall Heaven take an oath of the Eternal "that Time shall be no more." Therefore—

"Redeem we Time; its loss we dearly buy."

The hours are laid to our account. If the stars of the

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heavens are numbered; if the sands upon the sea should be numbered; if the very hairs of our head are all numbered; much more are the days of our life written in God's Book of Remembrance, and every one of them laid to our account. "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—*Ps.* xc. 12.

This is a solemn thought. Each moment!—What is the value of the breathing of a breath; the beating of a pulse; the throbbing of a heart! Yet what do men think of the value of things? Go to the exchange, the bank, the mercantile office, the counting-house. See the busy throng, all engaged on business, courting mammon, labouring for the mere present, and perisheth—and ask them, What is Time? In comparison of the care bestowed on heavenly things, there is but little anxiety, if any at all, about their spiritual interests. In the way most men live, one would almost suppose the value of things to be transposed—that Time was Eternity, Heaven and Hell—that awful Future—a mere vapour which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Much more do men seem to care for the perishing things of Time, than for the abiding things of Eternity!

THE WASTE OF TIME.—Time is a treasure, a valuable commodity, and it is scarce. Then, buy up all you can, and use it well. So brief is its space, so narrow is its sphere, so rapid is its flight, we marvel how small account is taken of heavy losses in the wasting of Time. Men lose money, and the loss turns their brain; but they lose Time more carelessly and vagantly, and yet seem not to give the matter a thought. In comparison of the age of Patriarchs our Time is but an handbreadth. Jacob lived to twice the age of our men, and yet he said—"Few and evil have the days of my life been."—*Gen.* xlvii. 9. How much ought we to value the present briefer span of human life!

Now, there is a vast difference between Time and Money as commodities entrusted to the custody of man. There are but few men who have Money (I mean, money worth anything of); but every man has Time. There is an Aristocracy of Money, but there is no Aristocracy of Time. Money can be recovered; but lost Time, it is impossible to recover. The good housewife in the parable, when she had lost

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piece of silver, did light a candle, and sweep the house, and her diligent search was rewarded with success; but the foolish virgins in another parable lost something more valuable than Money—they lost Time. And while they went to make up the loss, the Bridegroom came; and on their return, they found that “the door was *shut*.”

“Be wise to-day; ’tis madness to defer!”

Moreover, you may have Money accumulated in capital, to trade upon; but Time is given only in continuous dividends, to be used in the giving of them, and a large percentage of profitable returns may be derived from the proper use of the dividends of Time. Time is the poor man’s currency; his Time is his Money; whereas his capital is his industry, sobriety, and thrift.

Again, there are no savings banks for Time, as there are for Money. If you have, now and then, a sum of money, for which you have no present or profitable use, there is a savings bank near you in which you may put it by in safety, with these three advantages:—1, You have put it out of harm’s way; 2, You have it to draw upon in the hour of need; and 3, You receive your own with interest. But none of these are to be found in connection with Time; neither savings bank, nor lodgment, nor interest, nor future use. Your Time is dealt out to you *now*—to use it, or else to abuse it. It passes, and, in a moment, it is gone—irrevocably gone; but it is laid to your account.

If, therefore, you sometimes feel that you have half an hour or an hour hanging loosely on your hands, uncertain what to do with it, remember you cannot save it for another occasion. It is passing away from you—for ever! How valuable would such an accumulation of Time be esteemed by most men, when they draw nigh to the gate of Death! If they could but recall or recover their lost days and hours, how much better they would use them when the King of Terrors is in his terrible advent and ascendancy. Voltaire, after a life of scepticism and outrageous infidelity, would have given all he was worth for even a small accumulation of Time past and neglected, by which he might stave off the shaft, *until* he had made his peace with God! Alas! alas!

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it cannot be. Like most of our blessings—health, comfort, family, and friendships—never so highly prized as when they are lost ; so “ we take no note of Time, but from its loss.”

The habitual use or abuse of Time is already interwoven in the language of ordinary life. We commonly use such phrases as these:—We “ gain Time,” “ lose Time,” “ throw away Time,” “ spend Time,” “ anticipate Time,” “ retard Time,” “ speak against Time,” “ waste Time,” “ kill Time.” Strange treatment, this ! That the self-same gift should thus differently employed ! And, stranger still, that a man should be found deliberately intent on “ killing ” Time ! Well may Time utter his plaintive accusation—

“ Still, man ’s my foe ! Ungrateful man, I say,
Who meditates my murder every day.”

The Decalogue commands, “ Thou shalt not kill.” And perhaps, we are all inclined, however we may charge ourselves with the breach of other commands of God, yet to hold ourselves guiltless in the matter of *this* law. In reality we are verily guilty in this respect, for most of us are guilty of the daily habit of killing Time. This awakens some very solemn thoughts on a very solemn thing:—*Time is Eternity!*—is Eternity to us ! Think you, that Eternity would have ceased to be, since Time has been ? Nay ! Time is Eternity in embryo. All the dread issues of Eternity—the issue of life or death, are wrapped up now in the womb of Time. Time is pregnant with all the solemn and weighty interests of man,—interests that shall live and work and never cease throughout Eternity. Therefore the language of the poet

“ Who murders Time, he crushes in the birth
A power ethereal.”

Indeed, our conduct with regard to Time is full of inconsistencies.—For example, we all more or less, complain of the shortness of Time ; and yet we all have in our hands more than we know what to do with. We give frequent utterance to the theory that our days are very few ; but we proceed in practice as though our days would never end. We deplore that Time is so short, and yet there are many small and large portions of our life that we would be glad to escape from.—“ The minor longs to be of age, the

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be a man of business, then to make up an estate, then to arrive at honours, then to retire. Thus, although the whole life is allowed by every one to be short, the several divisions of it appear long and tedious. We are for lengthening our span in general, but would fain contract the parts of which it is composed. The usurer would be very well satisfied to have all the time annihilated that lies between the present moment and next quarter-day. The politician would be contented to lose three years of his life, could he place things in the posture which he fancies they will stand in after such a revolution of time. The lover would be glad to strike out of his existence all the moments that are to pass away before the happy meeting. Thus, as fast as our time runs, we should be very glad in most parts of our lives that it ran much faster than it does. Several hours of the day hang upon our hands, nay we wish away whole years; and travel through time as through a country filled with many wild and empty wastes, which we would fain hurry over, that we may arrive at those several little settlements or imaginary points of rest which are dispersed up and down in it.*

The great waster of Time is that oft-quoted thing called "To-morrow." It wasted yesterday; it wastes to-day; and it will waste itself. To-morrow promises many things, and very fair, but the day of its promise is the day of its death; and "To-morrow" never comes. Most truly has it been said that "Procrastination is the thief of Time." Yea, it is the greatest Time-killer of all; and thus, by putting off, and still deferring, it comes to be likewise true, that procrastination is the thief of *souls*. For many a man goes down into the grave, with "To-morrow," lingering upon his lips.

Time ought to be computed, not by the length of our days or by the number of our years; but by the *use* we make of them. A man may be very young in age, and yet be esteemed old in experience; while another may have grown old in years, and yet, to all practical purposes, be a very child, inexperienced, untutored, and untaught. One man may be more mature and ripened at twenty, than

* Addison: *Spectator*, No. 93.

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another at sixty. 'Tis not the quantity, but our years we must look to,—the actual use have been applied. A landed property is according to the mere extent of ground, which vast tracts of wilds, and wastes, and moors state of its cultivation, the amount of its produce, and the sum of the yearly rent it yields. One man rich with five acres, than another with a hundred may by cultivation make it yield more than the land of his neighbour.

But there ought really to be no waste except intervals in our possession of Time. Yet there is a deal of waste. And if our personal properties were wasted as our Time presents, they would be worthless. A good adage is that—"Waste not; want not." Those who neglect the adage, there is nothing to befall them but the experience of that other, which saith—"Wilful want!" Very wasteful, indeed, is our use of Time. We must, therefore, take the counsel of the proverb—"What a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

"I wasted Time, and now doth Time waste me
For now hath Time made me his numb'ring
My thoughts are minutes!"

We can never come to a thorough understanding of the Value of Time, until we learn to form a right estimate of the loss of little things. It is the accumulation of small losses, that constitutes great losses. A moment is a trifle! So you say. A few minutes—they are trifles in a sequence! So many persuade themselves. In the course of time, these moments and minutes are mounting up to a number of Hours, and gradually accumulating to a number of Days. "I have lost a day!"—Is that nothing? *et imputantur!*

Little things become very great. Rain-drops are powerless in themselves, yet constitute the overflowing of a desolating flood; and it is a similar combination of small things lost, that deluge the soul in the flood of perdition. Little care of little moments.

There is many a mechanic in our metropolis who would be very glad to-day to have the sum of three

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hand, to lay out on the comfort of his home or family ; but he has it not. Now, suppose that mechanic begin at once to save a penny a day, the sum is more than completed this day twelve months—not counting the interest, if lodged from time to time in a savings bank. And on the same principle, a minute a day would mean something like six hours in the course of the year ; but this, as I have said, we cannot accumulate ; therefore, let us use the fleeting moments while we have them. The proverb is good—“ Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves ! ” So would I apply the remark to my theme, and say—Take care of the minutes, and the days and the years are safe. The moments are the outposts and advanced sentinels of Time ; let them be destroyed, and Time itself must be undone in its very citadel ! Some one has said, with experience to support the saying, that “ we waste our time in minutes ; we waste our money in shillings ; and we waste our happiness in trifles. ” All little things !

THE DOMINION OF TIME.—Time is a Master, and must be obeyed. What is anything without Time ? The wise man says—“ To everything there is a season, and a Time to every purpose under the heaven. ”—*Eccles.* iii. 1. There is Day-time for the active works and duties of the day ; and Night-time for rest, retirement, and repose. There is the morning for preparation ; the noontide for labour ; the eventide for home, and family, and study, and profitable recreation. What is a house without a clock, but a scene of confusion ? What is a man of business without a watch but a man out of time ? A public clock that is always wrong is a public nuisance. A railway negligent of its Time-tables is a vexatious inconvenience. A regiment of soldiers on the march, without keeping time, is an undisciplined mob. We must all keep Time : clerks and secretaries and officials and public men must all keep Time. The Sun keeps time in his rising ; and the same also knoweth his going down. Music without Time is a very discord of jangling sounds—

“ Music, do I hear ?

Well, then, keep Time. How sour sweet music is
When Time is broke, and no proportion kept ! ”

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Time is a Governor who holds dominion over the world like this you must be up to time's use at all. Time introduces all upon the earth, and when "time's up," he strikes his bell and they are gone again. He has seen, in his day, strong towers rise, and he has seen them crumble into dust; he has seen thrones and dominions exalted and he has witnessed the rise and fall of nations. He outlives all change and chance, vicissitudes of fortune may escape from foes, or baffle a sickness, but he cannot cheat Old Time or resist his sway.

"I am a monarch, whose victorious hand
No craft eludes, no regal power with-

THE ULTIMATE TRIUMPH OF TIME.—
His career terminate in triumph. He ever
onward! is his ceaseless cry. He stops not
His mowing sickle—how it reaps! He is
great and plentiful! He spares nor age,
condition of life. With unsparing hand and
he pursues his deadly conquests, subduing
assistance or reverse. The sand-glass runs
itself; implacable and unmerciful is this
tender mother weeps beside the child of
he cares not for her tears, and, with a
plucks the fair flower—oh, with what
soil of the human heart! The afflicted
hands in agony of care, and lays hold on
clothing to beseech him yet to spare the
hope and love. Old Time with one hand
him, while with the other he reaps down
The husband, in calm and measured speech
his threshold; but Time is not a man to
God to grant a supplication; and so he
lessly rends away the desire of his eyes
children look imploringly—they are orphans
yet he heeds them not, but onward to his
cruel hand uproots the hope, the stay,
support in life, and leaves the remnant
world—a widow with an orphan family!

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There he goes, Old Time! If we say, "Go up, thou baldhead, go!" for mocking him, the bears of the wilderness will rend us; we must submit; we must obey; for Time must fulfil his perfect work, and attain a final triumph. Suppose I propound you a riddle:—

"Ever eating, never cloying,
All devouring, all destroying;
Never finding full repast,
Till I eat the world at last!"

What meaneth this? This is TIME! Until he hath subdued all, his mission is not accomplished. He must triumph!

THE DEATH OF TIME.—Yes, Time itself must die. Short-lived shall be the Triumph to which he shall attain. Only himself shall live to enjoy it, for he shall have outlived all. Then they that have used Time and not abused it shall see him die; and from the high watch-tower of the Heavens beholding his final catastrophe, they shall bless the Lord of Eternity that they had been enabled, by God's grace, to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise men, redeeming the Time." In that day Time shall be no more!

Live in Time, as a preparation for Eternity—waiting for the end of your pilgrimage. Here is the time and place for work; your rest is not here; there will be time enough for rest in eternity. Continue in earnest expectation, looking up, "for now is your Salvation nearer than when you believed." Wait, then, for Eternity!

I have somewhere read this narrative:—A gentleman once passing through a street in London, observed a large crowd of people hooting, jeering, and laughing. A young woman had attracted the attention of the crowd; she was dressed in white garments, coarse but clean. She passed through the crowd as though she observed them not. There was a frantic smile playing upon her lips, and a wild look of expectancy in her eye. Her story was this: She had been espoused to one whom she dearly loved. The wedding-day arrived. She and her friends were already standing before the altar of her God, when the sad news was brought to her that the bridegroom had just died on the very threshold of

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his own house! Reason reeled beneath the blow. Her peculiar dress. Her mental affliction had obliterated the melancholy fact from memory, and there she was expecting the bridegroom. Full of this expectation she ever in readiness, and heeded not the scoffing of the multitude. Her hope sustained her.

So let us be; but with a better hope, a glorious hope full of immortality; waiting upon the Lord; looking for His appearing; "having our conversation in Heaven from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." The world may mock and scoff and jeer; but remember! Say to the multitude as Paul said to the Roman Governor—"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." Make use of this as a preparation for Eternity. Be ready dressed for the bridal; and, behold, the Bridegroom cometh!

"Time's an handbreadth; 'tis a tale;
'Tis a vessel under sail.
'Tis an eagle on its way,
Darting down upon its prey.
'Tis an arrow in its flight
Mocking the pursuing sight.
'Tis a short-lived, fading flower;
'Tis a rainbow in a shower.
'Tis a momentary ray,
Smiling through a winter's day.
'Tis a torrent's rapid stream;
'Tis a shadow; 'tis a dream.
'Tis the closing watch of night,
Dying at the rising light.
'Tis a bubble; 'tis a sigh:
Be prepared, O man, to die!"

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MOTTOES FOR THE MILLION.

BY THE

REV. ROBERT MAGUIRE, M.A.

Fragments Remain; so Nothing is Lost.

“ Evil communications corrupt good manners.”—1 Cor. xv. 33.

“ Whatever my state, be it weak, be it strong,
With honour or sweat on my face,
This, this is my glory, my strength, and my song,—
I stand like a star—in MY PLACE.”

“ NONE of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself:” such is St. Paul’s declaration concerning the responsibility that attaches to the exercise of Influence.—*Rom. xiv. 7.* No act that we perform is so utterly independent as to stand by itself apart from antecedent causes and consequent effects. No man’s life can possibly be either insignificant or obscure, and none can be so hidden as that his influence should be immaterial to others. Man is too important a being to pass through life unnoticed, unobserved. Both in his origin and his destiny he ranks far above a mere cipher, and is more accounted of than any other portion of creation. He is one of many, all of whom are made in God’s own image; and that is something. He is one of the “sons of Adam;” and Adam was “the son of God;” and surely this near relationship to God is something. He is rendered capable of living a God-like life—in the infancy of childhood here, and in its fulness and ripe maturity hereafter; and surely this is everything!

We dwell in the midst of manifold influences; it is by Influence we live. The influence of the air affects us; the influence of the wind, and climate, and season, and weather,

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is felt by us. There is the influence of mesmerism in the passing of a hand, influence is communicated from one to another. There is telegraphic influence, which conveys a message by sea or land on the speed of the wind or the wing. The laws of Nature are all under the ex-acting Influence. The orbs in space are kept in their orbits, not by the swathing bands of compulsion, nor by the records of bondage, but by the influence of attraction. The tides ebb and flow twice a day under the Influence of the moon; and from their dead level they rise, follow the attractive power, until they wash the margin of our globe. It is the power of Influence that gives to the magnet the loadstone its quality of attraction. Leaven has a leavening influence; salt has a preserving influence; iron has a corrosive influence; and death has a corrupting influence. There is, in fact, scarce anything in Nature but is more or less affected, either as a cause or consequence of Influence. As the guiding of the charioteer directs the war, so may the Influence of one man be exerted upon another. The failure of one great house of business will be the result of varied influences throughout all its manifold dependencies, and a single political incident may so influence the course of a nation almost to turn it upside down.

Human society is peculiarly susceptible of Influence. The Creature is so linked to creature, and man to man, that the law of sympathy interweaves itself with all the threads of the concerns of life. It would, indeed, be passing strange if it were not so. Could it possibly be that mere material circumstances can influence each other, and that man, with all his spiritual faculties, is dead to the power of Influence? Can man no power of persuasion to exercise over his neighbour, no influence for good or evil?—no capacity of improving the opportunity of leavening the circle of his acquaintance? Our experience of the world is, that every man is more or less influenced by his neighbour or friend. In popular elections, it is by influence (rightly or wrongly used) that one man becomes the people's choice in preference to another man. In politics and great social questions and in the law, made to the mind of man; debates are conducted with earnestness and spirit; arguments are freely canvassed.



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thus it comes to pass that public opinion is formed. The Press wields an almost universal influence. The Pulpit exercises its wholesome sway over the religion of the land. Men's minds and sentiments are altered or moderated by the influence brought to bear upon them. Our very conversation, the asking and giving and taking of advice, are evident proofs of the power of Influence, for direction or misdirection, for guiding aright or leading astray.

In forming a due estimate of the force of Influence, we must duly appreciate the importance of little things. We too often overlook the importance of what we call "trifles;" but, in weighing the value of Influence, we must take cognizance of even the small dust of the balance, lest, trifling as it is, it should unduly turn the scale. We sometimes think our *thoughts* are of small account, because they are unseen, and, like the winged arrow, leave no trace behind. This is a great mistake; for our thoughts oftentimes fructify into actions, and embody themselves in lasting monuments. Every act of man is the product of an antecedent thought or design. The slender thread carries the cord, and the cord carries the cable, and the cable anchors great navies. So a single thought develops into a desire; the desire creates the act; and the act may influence the fortunes of millions. Whence comes death, but from antecedent influence of evil thoughts? "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."—*Jas. i. 15.*

It is by little and little, drop by drop, that the waters wear the stones. The delicate ivy, "creeping where no life is seen," takes to its tiny self such strength as rends the tombstone in twain, and breaks the rugged rocks in sunder. The great oak-tree was once a single seed. Particles of dust are the constituency of the material world. Particles of spray are the constituency of the ocean. A single spark may set fire to the forest primeval. The helm is but a small part of the leviathan of the deep, and yet it turns it hither and thither. A massive chain of iron may be rendered useless by the weakness of a single link. Waifs and strays floating on the waters will indicate the course of the current; and a straw driven by the breeze tells which way the wind

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blows. The turn of a street, or the (so-called) : the moment, may be everything to your well esteems nothing trivial. The very hairs of our very birds of the air, are under His cognizance and "It is but the littleness of man that seeth no gr a trifle." The source of a mighty river may enough, and so obscure as to be utterly unknown bubbling fountain is, in its influence, the pare flood. Every little mountain rill or tributary stre to the influence of the main.* A grain of sand trifle; and yet, in combination with its sister ato stitutes the rampart of the shore which God "h for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, tha pass it."

Influences may be exercised for evil or for good soever a man may do in the flesh must have an in one way or the other. Acts good or bad are v acts indifferent, if any, are but very few. Inf evil is followed by eternal consequences. Inf good begets everlasting issues. Either way, In immortal.

I.—Influence for evil. St. Paul quotes the Menander: "Evil communications corrupt good There is a good old proverb in current use, which selfsame truth: "Show me your company, and you what you are." The company in which we r companionships we form, the intimacies we cul be the best evidence to prove the man and his cor

"Who can bring a clean thing out of an uncl one!"—*Job*, xiv. 4. "Doth a fountain send fo same place sweet water and bitter?"—*Jas.* iii. things are palpable inconsistencies in the do Nature; what else, then, can they be in the k grace? Such evil influences contaminate and wage continual war against the soul. True relig consist with "evil communications." Therefor Apostle, "Be ye not unequally yoked together

* The etymology of the word "influence" is derived from the flowing of a stream into a river (*in fluo*); thus con influence to the power and depth of the current.

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believers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"—2 *Cor.* vi. 14—16.

Evil communications are easily acted upon; alas! too easily imitated, and too implicitly copied. Being so easily communicated, they ought to be the more carefully avoided. It is a dangerous experiment to trifle with evil influences. Associating ourselves with these, whatever be the motive, is not good. Unless duty calls, it is better to turn from it and pass away; yea, while in the path of duty, to hasten with all possible speed away from the contact and contamination of evil. The physician may walk the hospitals: this is his vocation and calling; but if you desire to escape infection, it will be advisable for you to keep aloof from danger. The warrior, whose duty calls him, may enter the fore-front of the hottest battle; but if you have no calling there, I would advise you to keep at a distance, and beyond the range of cannon-shot. The lawyer may deal with law-suits, because this is his profession; but if you would retain your money and peace of mind, you will keep out of law. None of us can safely mingle in the society of vicious companions; for we are fallible and weak, and susceptible of evil influences; and instead of lifting the fallen, we may fall with them into like degradation. The only MAN that could securely descend into the regions of vice and sin was JESUS CHRIST, the friend of publicans and sinners. Even the degraded and the outcast found in Him a benefactor. "Neither do I condemn thee." Truly, "this Man receiveth sinners." And this security encompassed the person and ministry of Jesus, because He was the Sinless One; "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners."

It is in the nature of seed to reproduce itself; and even such is Influence. But it is of the first and last importance what kind of seed a man soweth. Good seed brings forth an hundredfold; this is well and good. But evil seed is alike plentiful in its produce. The weeds of the sluggard's garden rapidly cover the ground, and soon communicate

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their seed to the neighbours' fields. The wind scatter them broadcast, and ere long they have overrun a whole province. A farmer in Australia once ordered a certain kind of grass-seed to be sent out from the home country. In due time he planted the seed; and lo! there sprung up a plentiful crop of thistles. A mistake had been made in executing the order; but the influence of that seed-sowing has never since been overcome in that vicinity.

Even so is the influence of men's actions. No evil deed that is done can be without its eventful consequences. Men's works follow them, for evil or for good; and, perhaps long after God has pardoned sin, its influences still exist. The spendthrift exhausts his purse, runs through his property, beggars himself and his children, and so involves himself in debt and difficulty, as that his children to many generations cannot free themselves from the still lingering influences of his extravagance. One man may easily contract obligations which it will require many men to defray. So is it with the sins of men; oftentimes they follow them to the grave; yea, and outlive the sinner. There are hereditary diseases that, even to the third and fourth generation have not worked themselves out. Some men inherit a good name, and others inherit a bad one. No man stands quite alone in his sin, or in his sorrow, or in the consequences of his offending. Influence is the immortality of the deeds of most men.

What manifold influences for evil exist in a crowded city and in a densely-peopled metropolis! Where people congregate, there you will find, as in Vanity Fair, the outworking of the deadly influences of vice, and crime, and villany. One person thus influenced (though, at first perhaps, more sinned against than sinning) becomes a new centre of evil, bent upon the destruction of others. Who can estimate this continuous and ever augmenting circle of evil consequences? Generation after generation feels the effect; it seems as though it would never die out; it lurks and lingers, and breaks out again, as though to tell what the power of Influence is. If you score a notch in a sapling tree, the incision will not heal with lapse of time; but, the tree grows, the notch will both widen and deepen.

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growing with its growth, until at length, in the aged tree, it appears as a yawning wound in its side. Little influences grow to vast importance.

Literature exercises a large and wide-spread Influence, for good or for evil. The evil communications of profane writings are of a lasting character. A single act or word may have a short-lived Influence; but a vicious book reproduces itself a thousandfold; cannot be recalled; and long after the writer has repented of the deed, it continues its deadly issue, spreading a moral contagion all around. I have heard of an infidel whose works against religion obtained a wide circulation; and though conviction laid hold upon his mind, and he afterwards deeply regretted the act, yet he could not stay the influences of his own writings. There he lived, beholding the baneful Influence of his former self; and when he himself shall be forgotten, his books will live and teach after him. The evil publications of the present day exercise a fearful influence on society. They inflame the passions; they vitiate the conscience; they defile the heart; they burden the memory with remembrances of sin; they incline the soul to evil and mischief. What is the history of all the misery, and sorrow, and sin, that oppress the world, but the workings of evil influences, imperceptibly imbibed and secretly nurtured, until they gained a fatal ascendancy, made war upon the soul, and led the whole world into bondage?

The Influence of a single word may turn away your feet from the House of God, and entice you into the paths of evil. Man's nature is downward bent, inclined to evil. It is hard to turn that impetuous current. Influences of evil come from Hell, and back to Hell do they return—not empty-handed, but laden with the copious spoil of undying souls. Evil influences are the chains and manacles and iron fetters forged in the blazing furnace of the pit, and sent, as the messengers of Satan, to bind the strong man, bereaved of his strength, and to lead him captive to the dungeon of darkness. Beware of evil influences; they are the beginning of a fearful end! So true is it that "the evil that men do lives after them."

II.—Influence for good. As it is true that "evil com-

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munications corrupt good manners," so is it true "good communications" cultivate all that is holy and good. Evil company is for evil consequences; and good companionships tend to every good thing. Kindred men enjoy the fellowship of those that are likeminded; and oft communion they strengthen and mature each other's strength. "They that feared the Lord spoke often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it; and a Book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name." *Mal. iii. 16.* Such fellowship is not overlooked; it is registered by God himself; and note is taken of the conversations of God's people; and it is thought worthy of being recorded in the Book of remembrance. Thus registered in the archives of Heaven, the Influence of Christian communion becomes as permanent and perpetual as the Book of Remembrance; that is, never forgotten, never out of date. It is as possible to perpetuate good as it is to perpetuate evil. Salt pervades the mass, and thus preserves it. Ought the Influence of good men to pervade society and stamp its impress upon the public mind. To the Christian Church is a great responsibility committed, and a weight of trust accorded. "Ye are the salt of the earth." If righteous men had been found in Sodom, their Influence would have flung back the fire and brimstone from the Cities of the plain; and Sodom and Gomorrah had been preserved. For lack of such Influence, the doomed cities were destroyed.

The good that men do, lives after them; and which we are glad to trace the still pursuing steps of goodly Influence. We can take no such interest in tracing the influence of evil; but, sickening at the awful task, we gladly turn to the train of Influence for good. This seems also to be God's mind and desire in the matter. Judgment is a strange work; but it is His favourite property to show mercy and to forgive. Hence Jehovah has proclaimed He will "visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the *third* and *fourth* generation of them that hate Him;" but a more lengthened tether of remembrance is extended to the just; for He "showeth mercy unto *thou*

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(of generations) of them that love Him, and keep His commandments."*—*Ex.* xx. 5, 6. Such was the testimony of the Psalmist's aged experience: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."—*Ps.* xxxvii. 25. Influences for good are of eternal consequence.

What is or may be the influence of one good man? He leavens society with his own spirit and example. He gives a tone to the profession of religion by his daily practice of its precepts. He hallows the circle of his intimacy and acquaintance. It is no secret who he is, and whom he serves. The world cannot but take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus. He communicates of this Influence to others, whereby they go forth to influence more. The life of one such man is associated with influences for good which eternity itself shall not be able to exhaust.

Again: what may be the Influence of one good minister in his pulpit and in his parish. The words of one man are spoken to thousands for their benefit and instruction; and the spiritual food of each is common to all. The miracle of feeding the multitude is thus reproduced. The bread of life is dispensed to many; and thousands feed upon that which in itself is small, but which is multiplied by the blessing of the Son of God. To preach to others is, indeed, a privilege which, if rightly exercised, must wield a mighty influence over the minds and consciences of men.

Influence is always of a continuous character, increasing and ever augmenting its power, and continuing even long after we have ceased to follow it. Its effect is as that of the pebble dropped into the waters of a tranquil lake; creating circles, continually widening and extending those circles, until they are stayed by the outer margin of the shore; and, but for this margin, no doubt they would still advance and yet increase. In fact, we know not but that those eddying circles would still progress, long after the

* This is the interpretation conveyed in the Jewish translation: "And showing mercy unto thousands of generations of them that love me."—*Benisch*. It is also so rendered by Ainsworth: "Unto thousands; that is, to the thousandth generation." This rendering imparts new emphasis to the passage.

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human eye had lost perception of their motion. Influence of that tiny pebble that has thus produced effect upon the uttermost extremity of the lake advances with an almost incredible speed, and exerts its influence tens of millions of miles away. We see the light of the sun; and if we were removed millions of miles off, we would still see that light, for in its influence it continues to follow us. Sound is conveyed by being borne upon the wings of the wind; each vibration of the atmosphere propels the air, and thus the sound's influence enlarges and advances; and, no doubt, it continues to advance, long after the human ear has ceased to discern the sound. It is not because sound does not travel far enough, that we do not hear it; but that our hearing is not acute enough to catch its remote influences.

It is a marvellous thing how some influences increase and multiply. Let me suppose a problem in arithmetic, in which certain figures are set down, and you are to work them out to a definite result. In the process, you may make a mistake; it may be in a single figure. If this error be not corrected, its Influence will continue increasing and multiplying to the very end; and, by that time, it will be augmented to a formidable mistake. So that if you correct the error, you must work back to the point of origin; set that to rights, and then take heed ever to the end. Even so is it with the Influences of a man. "He being dead, yet speaketh." For good or evil, influences are of mighty moment.

As an illustration of this, I quote the following story of influences:—Once upon a time, more than two hundred years ago, a pedlar with his pack entered a village in Shropshire. His wares consisted of odds and ends of old iron, singing ballads and songs, and also a few books. He went to a farm-house, and the farmer bought a little book, "The Bruised Reed," by one Dr. Sibbs. The farmer read the book, and afterwards a portion of his time was spent in religious work, which one of the servants lent him, "Repentance." Through the means of these books, that pedlar's visit, God was pleased to open the eyes

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young man, to see his state by sin, and his salvation secured by Christ Jesus. That young man was Richard Baxter, the great Puritan Divine, whose name and whose praise are in all the churches. Baxter's writings were subsequently read by a youth, who was so influenced by them as to devote himself to the service of God. This was the eminent Philip Doddridge. But the chain continues: Doddridge wrote a work entitled, "The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." This book was diligently studied by a young man, who was led by its instructions to a life of holiness and true religion. This was William Wilberforce, the deliverer of the captive slave. He, too, in his turn, wrote a book, called "The Practical View of Christianity," which was the means of the conversion of Legh Richmond; and there are thousands at the present time who can bear testimony to the worth of Legh Richmond's valuable works—"The Dairyman's Daughter," and "The Young Cottager."

Now, trace back this train of circumstances to its source, and see what is the power of a single energetic influence: "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" And who can stay these influences now, or make them to falter in their course? It is not only that each of these links is a part of a chain of consequences, but each has become the centre of its own circle of influence, and the parent seed of fruitful harvest-fields of spiritual grain. Small beginnings often lead to great results. There was once a single influence set in motion in an obscure village in Wales, which has since filled the whole world with fruit. One day during the year 1802, the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, in Merionethshire, was walking in the streets of the village, and meeting a little girl he asked her what was the text of the preceding Sunday's discourse? The child was silent; and being again pressed by the question, she wept, and said, "The weather, sir, has been so bad, I could not get to read the Bible." The fact was this, she had not been able to cross the mountain, seven miles off, to a friend's house, in which she was accustomed every week to read the Sunday text; and this was the only copy of the Bible within her reach: "The word of the Lord was precious in those days."

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This incidental circumstance brought Mr. Charles London, and led to the establishment of the British Foreign Bible Society. That child's want was the seed of the supply of the wants of millions. Who can rightly estimate individual Influence or the powerful effect of a single incident?

The lives of some have been great central points of public Influence, from which have diverged all forms of fashions of humanity, philanthropy, and true religion. We cannot all expect to be thus publicly influential; we all aspire to the foremost rank of that army where the leaders are great, and all are heroes. There are many whose lives are obscure and hidden all their journey through, and whose opportunities for good are few and far between. There are few men of "one talent" in the world, and these cannot expect to attain to the "ten talents" by a sudden leap or casual circumstances. Yet, in their lowly state, and in the littleness of their talents, they have a work to do, an influence to employ, and privileges to use; and all these for the good of their fellows, and to the glory of God. Every man is a centre, be the circle of that centre large or small. Every man has at least one talent entrusted to his charge; let him diligently use it. The condemnation of the unfaithful steward was not because he had but one talent, but because, having one talent, he buried it, and used it not. Influence is like money—it increases by the right use of it. There is nothing gained by hoarding gold; the rust and moth will corrupt it. There is nothing gained by monopolizing Influence, but idleness now, and condemnation at the last. The smallest grain of dust, dropped into the deep well, produces its circle of influence. Then, should man, the image of his Maker, be less influential than a mere atom of sand, and, recognizing no circle of usefulness, fulfil no part in life? The least and weakest may be influential; and whatever be the advantages of outward circumstances, yet the good alone are great.

"Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good;
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."

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There is, for example, the Influence of parents. The parent of poverty has this much in common with the wealthy parent—that he is a centre, from which Influence must go forth. The Influence of a father or mother over the child is not an accident of circumstances, but a settled law of nature. What the father is, that the child is very likely to become. An old proverb says, “The tree gives the nature and fashion to the fruit.”* “Like father, like son :” this is private and domestic Influence. “Like priest, like people :” this is public and ministerial Influence. “Like palace, like cottage :” this is kingly, and queenly, and princely Influence. Let none despise his individual Influence, whether it be on a larger or smaller scale. If the Influence of parents were used wisely and well, their families would contribute to the welfare and well being of the land: “our sons would be as plants grown up in their youth ; and our daughters as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.” If parental Influence were thus exercised, and parental character thus reproduced upon their children, then we might well exclaim—“Happy is that people that is in such a case ; yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.”—*Ps.* cxliv. 12, 15. As it is, the beneficial Influence of parents is not duly exercised. Parents generally forget that their children are observing their going out and their coming in ; that they are ready to imitate the example that is set before them ; that the words, and conduct, and habits of their parents by-and-by become their own ; and in all respects, they bear the moral, as they generally bear the physical, image of their fathers—a second edition, “enlarged,” perhaps, but not “improved.”

The Influence of comrades, too, is very powerful. The workman at the bench can wield a mighty Influence over his fellow-workmen. Circles into which I cannot penetrate, he has access to ; and minds, over which I may have no power, may be swayed by him. Like are influenced by like ; and I am convinced that many opportunities for good are lost by those who neglect to use their little Influence.

The noblest exercise of Influence is that of the Christian

* “Arbor naturam dat fructibus atque figuram.”

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man; and its power proceeds from the fact that it is the Influence of Christ working in him. As Christ is formed within us, so are our Influences for good: "The love of Christ constraineth us." If true religion be impressed upon our hearts, each of us must become a centre of Christian Influence, like the ripple on the lake, or as the wave of the flowing tide, moving onwards until it reaches the furthest shore. True religion, like true charity, "beginneth at home;" but it does not stay in its course, or confine itself to the narrow precincts of its birthplace. Religion is conscious of its heaven-commissioned power, and proceeds in its influences onward to the fulfilment of its errand. There is no Influence like that which is in Christ Jesus. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me."—*John*, xii. 32. Therefore saith the Scriptures—"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."—*Isa.* xlv. 22.

Christ crucified thus becomes the Centre of our Faith, our Hope, our Love. Through Him all Christian Influence is conveyed to our hearts; and through Him these influences are from the heart sent forth to the outer circumference of our circle. He, the great attractive Influence of our souls; and His love the energetic Influence impelling us to action. By the power of His attraction our hearts are bound to the Heart of Jesus. This Influence restrains us from the eccentric and erratic wanderings to which by nature we are prone; retains us in the orbit of our path, and keeps us ever circulating within the range of the warmth and life, and light, and genial Influence of the Sun of Righteousness.

"Compulsion from its destined course,
The magnet may a while detain;
But when no more withheld by force,
It trembles to its North again.
Thus though the idle world may hold
My fettered thoughts a while from Thee,
To Thee they spring, when uncontrolled,
In all the warmth of Liberty."

CHRIST and THE CROSS! What peaceful Influences flow therefrom! Pardon originates there. Faith and Justification

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tion are "rooted and grounded" there. Sanctification is the goodly fruit that grows from the root thus planted at the Cross of Jesus. All the gifts and graces that accompany salvation are embodied there. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," are the fair flowers that rise from the root of Jesse, watered by the streams of Calvary. "If there be any virtue, if there be any praise," it begins, continues, and is ended there. As is the Influence of Christ, so is the Influence of the Christian. It is ever advancing, and augmenting, and reproducing itself. Two of John's disciples followed Jesus. One of the two was Andrew. He finds his own brother Simon, and conducts him to Jesus. Next day Jesus findeth Philip; and Philip findeth Nathaniel, and brings him to Christ. Nicodemus, impressed with the knowledge of the Messiah, uses his Influence as a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, thereby delivering Jesus from their conspiracy, and breaking up the band of conspirators.—*John*, vii. 50—53. The woman of Samaria had no sooner ascertained that Jesus was the Messiah, than she proceeded to exercise her Influence upon the townsmen of the city of the Samaritans. All that have ever been truly influenced by the Spirit of Jesus, have put forth their Influence in the spread of His cause and kingdom.

No man's history is complete until his Influence, for good or evil, has ended. Hence is it that the final Judgment is postponed. No act of man is as yet ripe for judgment; for the Influences of that act have not yet worked themselves out to their consummation. The sins of men are prolific seeds, still bearing fruit, and propelling their influences to after generations. If you but lift your hand, and beat the air, the Influence of that act is felt throughout miles of space in the undulations of the atmosphere thus set in motion. If you blow a blast on a trumpet, or, it may be, speak but a word, you hear its echoes again and again, and these awaken their own echoes; and the Influence of that sound, though dead to your deaf ears, "yet speaketh," in tones imperceptible to our dull senses. And even such

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is sin, in its Influences upon man's present and future welfare.

Is not this an awful view of sin—still living, and still working after us? That after we are dead, the Influence of our sins continue still to live—the seed of many seeds and a thousandfold harvest by-and-by! Till then none can reckon up a proper estimate of the deeds of man; and until its last Influences shall have ceased, man's sin is not ripe for judgment. Only this, be it known to every man, that in his every act, and thought, and word, he is setting in motion an influence for good or for evil, whose fruits are endowed with a power of immortality—the savour of life unto life, or the savour of death unto death!

What then? Seeing that Influence is so mighty and so permanent, let the Influence of our lives be for good. Let us spend and be spent in our Master's service, whether we be with five talents or with two, or even with but one. "Occupy till I come," saith the Lord of those servants who are entrusted with the charge of His talents. Let each begin to-day to use them well and profitably; and then the welcome salutation:—

“WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT!”

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