

Select Reading.

"If you will consent to my marriage with your daughter, she will be treated as if she were an angel." "That is," was the matter-of-fact reply, "in a short time she would not have anything to wear."—*Galveston News.*

—Swift could not bear to have lies told him, which his natural shrewdness and knowledge of the world generally enabled him to detect; and when the party attempted to palliate them, then his usual reply was, "Come, come; don't attempt to darn your cobwebs."

—The first woman who has had entire charge of the female department of Pennsylvania's new hospital for the insane, Dr. Alice Bennet, wore a cap and gown at the recent commencement of the University of Pennsylvania, held in the city of Philadelphia, and received the degree of Doctor of philosophy.

—James Russell Lowell, says the *London Vanity Fair*, "is a learned, kindly, strong, pleasant, honest man. He writes with great quickness and facility, and always with great correctness, that English language of which he is so proud and so fond; and he is personally altogether one of the most delightful of men."

—The man who has money in the bank and plenty in his pocket can wear a straw hat four weeks longer than the one who is in debt for his last week's board. Why is it?—*Detroit Free Press.*

—After the choir of one of the churches in Ithaca had performed a rather heavy selection, the minister opened the Bible and began reading in Acts xx., "And after the uproar had ceased."

A WELL THAT NEEDED A CLEANING.—The following articles were taken from a well recently at Pollock, Missouri: Four wash pans, eleven half-pint cups, two hats, four tin dippers, one brass tablespoon, one boot and one shoe, and one basket, one teacup and one saucer, two half gallon buckets, one piece of lightning rod. Evidently the family that had used that well was not lacking in small boys as well as general unthrift.

—Canada appears to be coming to the United States, and the people are annexing themselves, if the Dominion itself declines to come under the Stars and Stripes. The United States Consul at Port Sarnia reports officially that 77,053 passed over the river at that point last year to take up a permanent residence in this country.

—The best life, the most valuable, and the most solidly happy, is one which is so full of something out of self—so intent on some noble enterprise, or rendered so enthusiastic by an ideal of what life should be—that the events which ripple its surface do not disturb its full and deep undercurrent.

—Miss Charlotte Mary Yonge, the author, is now fifty-seven years old. She is a woman devoted to religious work. The profits of her book, "The Daisy Chain," amounting to \$10,000 she used in building a missionary college in Auckland, New Zealand, while a large portion of those derived from the "Heir of Redcliffe" went to the equipment of the late Bishop Selwyn's missionary schooner *The Southern Cross*.

—The "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" acknowledges the same lamentations in the realm of poetry as other poets do. He says in a recent kind letter to a young lady asking him for a public poem, which he felt constrained to decline: We that make rhymes are expected to turn them on as you turn on water through a faucet, whenever it is wanted. But writing poetry is like shooting ducks or geese—you may load up and paddle off, and watch all morning and never see duck or goose, except yourself as reflected in the water.

Weak Congregations.

What then constitutes a weak congregation? Poverty does not, for there are many which are poor as respects the goods of this world, who are strong in the Lord and rich in good works. Primitive Christians were poor, yet the Roman Government, with all its power, was not able to stay the onward march of the cause which they pleaded. Neither does fewness of numbers necessarily make a congregation weak. We must not imagine that there is power in mere numbers. The greatest crowds are found at places of amusement. That which constitutes real weakness, is a lack of spiritual energy and hearty devotion in the work of the Master. That congregation is weak whose members do not feel a personal responsibility before God. If these weak congregations ever become strong those persons who belong to them must become "living epistles" of honesty, purity, and Christian consistency. Of such material "five shall chase a hundred, and a hundred shall put ten thousand to flight." We want, then, a system of things that will enable us to send these weak congregations a preacher who shall teach them that the poorest can do something, and that all are required to work. Such congregations must have teaching that will invigorate and energize their forces.—They must be impressed with the necessity of helping themselves.—*The Disciple.*

His Vacation Day.

"This is what they call a vacation day, a day of rest, is it?" queried Mr. Smiley, as he fanned his blood-bursting face with his dollar and a half Panama. "I was up before daylight rummaging around and packing up lunch baskets and getting matters in good shape about the house, to leave, locked up the cellar windows and nailed up the hen house. Got so excited for fear I should miss the train that I didn't eat any breakfast; stood up in the horse-car a mile and a half, stood up in the steam-car forty-three miles, lugged this confounded lunch basket a mile and a quarter to the grove, and then did the whole thing backwards coming home. Just got here and lost the door key. You'll never catch me resting again. Ah, there comes Hannah, up the walk. I shall have to help her to climb into a window, and that'll be a nice little job to wind up a day's rest." The last seen of the old gentleman he was tugging a chopping block for Hannah to step upon to reach the window sill, just as the good woman had pulled the key from behind the sitting room blind.—*New Haven Register.*

Writing Materials.

The materials for writing have varied in different ages and nations. Among the Egyptians, slices of limestone, leather, linen and papyrus—especially the last—were universally employed. The Greeks used bronze and stone for public monuments, wax for memorandums, and papyrus for the ordinary transactions of life. The Kings of Pergamns adopted parchment, and the other nations of the ancient world chiefly depended on the paper of Egypt. But the Assyrians and Babylonians employed for their public documents, their historical annals, and even for their title deeds and bills of exchange, tablets, cylinders, and hexagonal prisms of terra cotta. Some of these cylinders, still extant, contain valuable records of ancient history. To this indestructible material, and the happy idea of employing it in this way, the present age is indebted for a detailed history of the Assyrian monarchy; while the decades of Livy, the plays of Leander, and the laws of Anacreon, confided to a more perishable material, have either wholly or partially disappeared among the wreck of empires.—*Ex.*

What Kills.

In the school, as in the world, far more rust out than wear out. Study, is most tedious and wearisome to those who study least. Drones always have the hardest time. Grumblers make poor scholars and their lessons are uniformly "hard and too long." The time and thought expended in shirking would be ample to master their tasks. Sloth and gormandizing kill their thousands where over-study harms one. A curse rests on laziness and gluttony. By the very constitution of our being they are fitted to beget that torpor and despondency which chill the blood, deaden the nerves, enfeeble the muscles and derange the whole vital machinery. Fretting, fidgeting and anxiety are among the most common causes of disease. On the other hand high aspirations and enthusiasm help digestion and respiration, and send an increased supply of vital energy to all parts of the body. Courage and work invigorate the whole system, and lift one into a purer atmosphere above the reach of contagion. The lazy groan most over their "arduous duties," while earnest workers talk little about the exhausting labors of their profession. Of all creatures the sloth would seem to be the most worried and worn.—*The Sanitarian.*

—If the earthly history of some of our brethren were written down; if a faithful record were kept of the way they spend their time; if all the hours of idle vacancy, or idler occupation were put together, and a very small amount of a useful diligence deducted, the life of a bird or a quadruped would be a nobler one, more worthy of its powers and more equal to its Creator's end in forming it. Such a register is kept. Though the trifler does not chronicle his own vain words and wasted hours, they chronicle themselves. They find their indelible place in that book of remembrance with which human hand cannot tamper, and from which no erasure save one can blot them. They are noted in the memory of God. And when once this life of wondrous opportunities and awful advantages is over—when the twenty or fifty years of probation are fled away—when moral existence, with its facilities for personal improvement and serviceableness to others, is gone beyond recall—when the trifter looks back to the long pilgrimage, with all the doors of hope and usefulness, past which he skipped in his frikky forgetfulness—what anguish will it move to think that he has gambled through such a world without salvation to himself, without any real benefit to his brethren, a busy trifler, a vivacious idler, a clever fool!—*Dr. James Hamilton.*

—When a person, as he grows to adult years, finds his imaginative faculties dwindling away, so that he no longer takes any pleasure in dwelling upon anything that he cannot see, or hear, or touch, let him not think that this downfall of a God-given power is a thing either creditable or excusable. People who are unable to think or talk about anything that is not perceptible to the natural senses, are people who have wasted or destroyed a gift which ought to have raised them from the realm of the material or the animal, into that of the immaterial and the spiritual. The highest powers of faith cannot be exerted by men and women who have accustomed themselves to think only of business and household cares, or merely personal concerns. A person who crushes out his imaginative powers may have spiritual discernment and religious insight, but he is likely to find that the materialism which invades one of the highest powers of the soul will attack the highest power of all. "Keep alive and active the great faculties of memory, sympathy, and imagination, and hope, and faith," says a thoughtful modern preacher. If we let imagination die, and forget that things unseen may be far truer than things seen, we must not be surprised if hope and faith also fade away.—*S. S. Times.*

—A man came into an editor's room, with a large roll of manuscript under his arm, and said, very politely: "I have a trifle here about the beautiful sunset, yesterday, which was dashed off by a friend of mine, which I would like inserted, if you have room." "Plenty of room. Just insert yourself," replied the editor, gently pushing the waste paper basket toward him.

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