

SECTION X.

I.

41. THE LOST DAY.

FAREWELL, oh day misspent!
 Thy fleeting hours were lent
 In vain to my endeavor.
 In shade and sun thy race is run
 For ever! oh, for ever!
 The leaf drops from the tree,
 The sand falls in the glass,
 And to the dread Eternity
 The dying minutes pass.

2. It was not till thine end
 I knew thou wert my friend;
 But now, thy worth recalling,
 My grief is strong, I did thee wrong,
 And scorned thy treasures falling.
 But sorrow comes too late;
 Another day is born;—
 Pass, minutes, pass; may better fate
 Attend to-morrow morn.
3. Oh, birth! oh, death of Time
 Oh, mystery sublime!
 Ever the rippling ocean
 Brings forth the wave to smile or rave,
 And die of its own motion.
 A little wave to strike
 The sad responsive shore,
 And be succeeded by its like
 Ever and evermore.
4. Oh change from same to same!
 Oh quenched, yet burning flame!
 Oh new birth, born of dying!
 Oh transient ray! oh speck of day!
 Approaching and yet flying;—

Pass to Eternity.

Thou day, that came in vain!
 A new wave surges on the sea—
 The world grows young again.

5. Come in, To-day, come in!
 I have confessed my sin
 To thee, young promise-bearer!
 New Lord of Earth! I hail thy birth—
 The crown awaits the wearer.
 Child of the ages past!
 Sire of a mightier line!
 On the same deeps our lot is cast!
 The world is thine—and mine!

MACKAY.

CHARLES MACKAY, LL.D., a British author, born in Perth in 1812. He was partly educated in Brussels, and after returning to England, published a volume of poems. He became attached to the staff of the "Morning Chronicle" newspaper in 1834, so remaining nine years, and was editor of the "Glasgow Argus" three years. He has written much and well, both in prose and verse, and ranks among the first of the present British authors. Many of his songs have attained great popularity, and the music to which they are set is in some cases of his own composition.

II.

42. IT WILL NEVER DO TO BE IDLE.

ONE day, on my return from a long walk, I was driven to take shelter from a rain storm in a little hovel by the roadside—a sort of cobbler's stall. The tenant and his son were upon their work, and after the customary use of greetings, I entered familiarly into talk with them, as indeed I always do, seeing that your cobbler is often a man of contemplative faculty—that there is really something of mystery in his craft.

2. Before I had been with them long, the old man found that there lacked something for his work, and in order to provide it he sent his son out on a job of some five minutes. The interval was a short one, but it was too long for his active impatience; he became uneasy, shuffled about the room, and at last took up a scrap or two of leather and fell to work upon them. "For," said he, "it will never do, you know, sir, to be idle—not for me at any rate—I should faint away."

3. I happened just then to be in an impressible mood, without

occupation myself, and weighed somewhat down by the want of it; accordingly the phrase, the oddness of it in the first place, and still more the sense, made a deep and lasting impression upon me. As soon as the rain had spent itself, I went my way homeward, ruminating and revolving what I had heard, like a curious man over a riddle. I could not have bestowed my thoughts better; the subject concerned me nearly, it went to the very heart of my happiness.

4. Some people are perpetual martyrs to idleness, others have only their turns and returns of it; I was of the latter class—a reluctant, impatient idler; nevertheless, I was so much within the mischief as to feel that the words came home to me. They stung my conscience severely, they were gail and wormwood for me. Nevertheless, I dwelt so long, albeit perhaps unwillingly, upon the expression, that I became, as it were, privy to it; I was in a condition to feel and revere its efficacy; I determined to make much of it, to realize it in use, to act it out.

5. I had heard and read repeatedly that idleness is a very great evil; but the censure did not appear to me to come up to the real truth. I began to think that it was not only a very great evil, but the greatest evil—and not only the greatest one, but in fact the only one—the only mental one, I mean; for, of course, as to morality, a man may be very active, and very viciously active too. But the one great sensible and conceivable evil is that of idleness.

6. No man is wretched in his energy. There can be no pain in a fit: a soldier at the full height of his spirit, and in the heat of contest, is unconscious even of a wound;¹ the orator in the full flow of rhetoric is altogether exempt from the pitifulness of gout and rheumatism. To be occupied, in its first meaning, is to be possessed as by a tenant—and see the significance, the reality, of first meanings. When the occupation is once complete, when the tenancy is full, there can be no entry for any evil spirit: but idleness is emptiness; where it is, there the doors are thrown open, and the devils troop in.

7. The words of the old cobbler were oracular² to me. They were constantly in my thoughts, like the last voice of his victim

¹ Wound (wɔnd).

² O răc' ū lar, resembling or hav-

ing the authority of a divine message; positive.

in those of the murderer; my mind was pregnant with them; the seed was good, and sown in a good soil—it brought forth the fruit of satisfaction.

8. It is the odds and ends of our time, its orts¹ and offals, laid up, as they usually are, in corners, to rot and stink there, instead of being used out as they should be—these, I say, are the occasions of our moral unsoundness and corruption; a dead fly, little thing as it is, will spoil a whole box of the most precious ointment; and idleness, if it be once suffered, though but for a brief while, is sure, by the communication of its listless quality, to clog and cumber the clockwork of the whole day. It is the ancient enemy—the old man of the Arabian Tales. Once take him upon your shoulders, and he is not to be shaken off so easily.

9. I had a notion of these truths,² and I framed my plan after their rules; I resolved that every minute should be occupied by thought, word, or act, or, if none of these, by intention; vacancy was my only outcast, the scape-goat of my proscription. For this my purpose I required a certain energy of will, as indeed this same energy is requisite for every other good thing of every sort and kind: without it we are as powerless as grubs, noisome as ditch-water, vague, loose, and unpredestinate³ as the clouds above our heads.

10. However, I had sufficient of this energy to serve me for that turn; I felt the excellence of the practice, I was penetrated with it through all my being, I clung to it, I cherished it. I made a point of every thing; I was active, brisk, and animated (oh! how true is that word) in all things that I did, even to the picking up of a glove, or asking the time of day. If I ever felt the approach, the first approach, of the insidious languor, I said once within myself, in the next quarter of an hour I will do such a thing, and, presto, it was done, and much more than that into the bargain: my mind was set in motion, my spirits stirred and quickened, and raised to their proper height. I watched the cloud, and dissipated it at its first gathering, as well knowing that, if it could grow but to the largeness of a man's hand, it would spread out everywhere, and darken my whole horizon.

11. Oh that this example might be as profitable to others as

¹ Orts, fragments; refuse.

² Truths (trɔfhs).

³ Un' pre dēs' ti nāte, not decreed or foreordained.

the practice has been to myself! How rich would be the reward of this article, if its readers would but take it to heart—the simple truths that it here speaks could prompt them to take their happiness into their own hands, and learn the value of industry, not from what they may have heard of it, but because they have themselves felt and tried it! In the first place, its direct and immediate value, inasmuch as it quickens, and cheers, and gladdens every moment that it occupies, and keeps off the evil one by repelling him at the outposts, instead of admitting him to a doubtful, perhaps a deadly, struggle in the citadel; and again its more remote, but no less certain, value, as the mother of many virtues, when it has once grown into the temper of the mind; and the nursing mother of many more.

12. And if we gain so much by its entertainment, how much more must we not lose by its neglect! Our vexations are annoying to us, the disappointments of life are grievous, its calamities deplorable, its indulgences and lusts sinful; but our idleness is worse than all these, and more painful, and more hateful, and in the amount of its consequences, if not in its very essence, more sinful than even sin itself—just as the stock is more fruitful than any branch that springs from it. In fine, do what you will, only do something, and that actively and energetically. Read, converse, sport, think, or study—the whole range is open to you—only let your mind be full, and then you will want little or nothing to fulfil your happiness.

III.

43. DANGERS OF DELAY.

SHUN delays, they breed remorse,
Use thy time while time is lent thee;
Creeping snails make little course,
Fly their fault lest thou repent thee.
Good is best when soonest wrought,
Ling'ring labors come to naught.

2. Hoist up sail while gale doth last,
Tide and wind stay no man's pleasure;
Seek not time when time is past;
Sober speed is wisdom's leisure;

After-wit is dearly bought,
Let thy fore-wit guide thy thought.

3. Time wears all his locks before,
Take thy hold or else beware,
When he flies he turns no more,
And behind his scalp is bare.
Works adjourned have many stays,
Long demurs breed new delays.
4. Seek the salve while sore is green,
Festered wounds ask deeper lancing;
After-cures are seldom seen,
Often sought, but rarely chancing.
Time and place give best advice,
Out of season, out of price.
5. Drops will pierce the stubborn flint,
Not by force, but often falling;
Custom kills by feeble dint,
More by use than strength enthralling.
Single sands have little weight,
Many make a drowning freight.

SOUTHWELL.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL, an English Jesuit, was born at Horsham St. Faith's, Norfolk, in 1560, and martyred at Tyburn, Feb. 21, 1595. Educated at Douai, he entered the Society of Jesus at Rome in 1573, and in 1586 was sent to England as a missionary. In 1592 he was sent to the Tower of London, and there tortured ten times, in order to make him disclose a supposed plot against Queen Elizabeth. He was a poet of more than ordinary ability, and a prose writer of excellence. His works have passed through several editions, the latest complete one having been published in 1823; his poems were reprinted so late as 1856. The most important of these are entitled, "St. Peter's Complaint and Other Poems" and "Maenonia, or Certaine Excellent Poems and Spirituall Hymns." Among his prose works are "The Triumph over Death," "Epistle of Comfort to those Catholics who Lie Under Restraint," "One Hundred Meditations on the Love of God," and "Marie Magdalen's Funeral Teares."

LIKE as the waves make toward the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place, with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,

Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
 And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.
 Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
 And delves the parallels in beauty's brow;
 Feeds on the rarities of Nature's truth,
 And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow.

SHAKESPEARE.

IV.

44. RIGHT USE OF WEALTH.

WE are stewards or ministers of whatever talents are entrusted to us. Is it not a strange thing, that while we more or less accept the meaning of that saying, so long as it is considered metaphoric,¹ we never accept its meaning in its own terms? You know the lesson is given us by our Lord under the form of a story about money. Money was given to the servants to make use of: the unprofitable servant dug in the earth, and hid his lord's money. Well, we, in our poetical and spiritual application of it, say, that of course money doesn't mean money, it means wit, it means intellect, it means influence in high quarters, it means everything in the world except itself.

2. And do you not see what a pretty and pleasant come-off there is for most of us, in this spiritual application? Of course, if we had wit, we would use it for the good of our fellow-creatures. But we haven't wit. Of course, if we had political power, we would use it for the good of the nation; but we have no political power; we have no talents entrusted to us of any sort or kind. It is true we have a little money, but the parable can't possibly mean anything so vulgar as money; our money's our own.

3. I believe, if you think seriously of this matter, you will feel that the first and most literal application is just as necessary a one as any other—that the story does very specially mean what it says—plain money; and that the reason we do n't at once believe it does so, is a sort of tacit⁴ idea that while thought, wit,

¹ *Mēt'a phōr'ic al*, pertaining to the sign of comparison; as, "that or comprising a metaphor—a figure man is a fox."
² *Tāc' it*, implied, but not expressed; silent.

and intellect, and all power of birth and position, are indeed given to us, and, therefore, to be laid out for the Giver—our wealth has not been given to us; but we have worked for it, and have a right to spend it as we choose. I think you will find that is the real substance of our understanding in this matter. Beauty, we say, is given by God—it is a talent; strength is given by God—it is a talent; position is given by God—it is a talent; but money is proper wages for our day's work—it is not a talent, it is a due. We may justly spend it on ourselves, if we have worked for it.

4. And there would be some shadow of excuse for this, were it not that the very power of making the money is itself only one of the applications of that intellect or strength which we confess to be talents. Why is one man richer than another? Because he is more industrious, more persevering, and more sagacious.¹ Well, who made him more persevering and more sagacious than others? That power of endurance, that quickness of apprehension, that calmness of judgment, which enable him to seize the opportunities that others lose, and persist in the lines of conduct in which others fail—are these not talent?—are they not, in the present state of the world, among the most distinguished and influential of mental gifts?

5. And is it not wonderful, that while we should be utterly ashamed to use a superiority of body, in order to thrust our weaker companions aside from some place of advantage, we unhesitatingly use our superiorities of mind to thrust them back from whatever good that strength of mind can attain? You would be indignant if you saw a strong man walk into a theater or a lecture-room, and calmly choosing the best place, take his feeble neighbor by the shoulder, and turn him out of it into the back seats, or the street. You would be equally indignant if you saw a stout fellow thrust himself up to a table where some hungry children were being fed, and reach his arm over their heads and take their bread from them.

6. But you are not the least indignant if when a man has stoutness of thought and swiftness of capacity, and, instead of being long-armed only, has the much greater gift of being long-

¹ *Sa gā' cious*, of quick perceptions; discerning and judicious; wise.

headed—you think it perfectly just that he should use his intellect to take the bread out of the mouths of all the other men in the town who are of the same trade with him; or use his breadth and sweep of sight to gather some branch of the commerce of the country into one great cobweb, of which he is himself to be the central spider, making every thread vibrate with the points of his claws, and commanding every avenue with the facets of his eyes. You see no injustice in this.

7. But there is injustice; and, let us trust, one of which honorable men will at no very distant period disdain to be guilty. In some degree, however, it is indeed not unjust; in some degree it is necessary and intended. It is assuredly just that idleness should be surpassed by energy; that the widest influence should be possessed by those who are best able to wield it; and that a wise man, at the end of his career, should be better off than a fool. But for that reason, is the fool to be wretched, utterly crushed down, and left in all the suffering which his conduct and capacity naturally inflict?—Not so. What do you suppose fools were made for? That you might tread upon them, and starve them, and get the better of them in every possible way?

8. By no means. They were made that wise people might take care of them. That is the true and plain fact concerning the relations of every strong and wise man to the world about him. He has his strength given him, not that he may crush the weak, but that he may support and guide them. In his own household he is to be the guide and the support of his children; out of his household he is still to be the father, that is, the guide and support of the weak and the poor; not merely of the meritoriously weak and the innocently poor, but of the guiltily and punishably poor; of the men who ought to have known better—of the poor who ought to be ashamed of themselves. It is nothing to give pension and cottage to the widow who has lost her son; it is nothing to give food and medicine to the workman who has broken his arm, or the decrepit woman wasting in sickness.

9. But it is something to use your time and strength to war with the waywardness and thoughtlessness of mankind; to keep the erring workman in your service till you have made him an unerring one; and to direct your fellow-merchant to the oppor-

tunity which his dulness would have lost. This is much; but it is yet more, when you have fully achieved the superiority which is due to you, and acquired the wealth which is the fitting reward of your sagacity, if you solemnly accept the responsibility of it, as it is the helm and guide of labor far and near.

10. For you who have it in your hands, are in reality the pilots of the power and effort of the state. It is intrusted to you as an authority to be used for good or evil, just as completely as kingly authority was ever given to a prince, or military command to a captain. And, according to the quantity of it that you have in your hands, you are the arbiters of the will and work of the country; and the whole issue, whether the work of the state shall suffice for the state or not, depends upon you.

11. You may stretch out your scepter over the heads of the laborers, and say to them, as they stoop to its waving, "Subdue this obstacle that has baffled our fathers, put away this plague that consumes our children; water these dry places, plow these desert ones, carry this food to those who are in hunger; carry this light to those who are in darkness; carry this life to those who are in death;" or on the other side you may say to her laborers:

12. "Here am I; this power is in my hand; come, build a mound here for me to be throned upon, high and wide; come, make crowns for my head, that men may see them shine from far away; come, weave tapestries for my feet, that I may tread softly on the silk and purple; come, dance before me, that I may be gay; and sing sweetly to me, that I may slumber; so shall I live in joy and die in honor." And better than such an honorable death, it were that the day had perished wherein we were born, and the night in which it was said there is a child conceived.

13. I trust that in a little while, there will be few of our rich men who, through carelessness or covetousness, thus forfeit the glorious office which is intended for their hands. I said, just now, that wealth ill-used was as the net of the spider, entangling and destroying: but wealth well used, is as the net of the sacred fisher who gathers souls of men out of the deep. A time will come—I do not think even now it is far from us—when this golden net of the world's wealth will be spread abroad as the flaming meshes of morning cloud are over the sky; bearing with

them the joy of light and the dew of the morning, as well as the summons to honorable and peaceful toil.

14. What else can we hope from your wealth than this, rich men of our country, when once you feel fully how, by the strength of your possessions—not, observe, by the exhaustion, but by the administration of them and the power—you can direct the acts—command the energies—inform the ignorance—prolong the existence, of the whole human race; and how, even of worldly wisdom, which man employs faithfully, it is true, not only that her ways are pleasantness, but that her paths are peace; and that, for all the children of men, as well as for those to whom she is given, Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and glory?

Adapted from RUSKIN.

SECTION XI.

I.

45. THE LAST OF THE NARWHALE.

[The Story of an Arctic Nip.]

AY, äy, I'll tell you, shipmates,
If you care to hear the tale,
How myself and the royal yard alone
Were left of the old Narwhale.

2. A stouter ship was never launched
Of all the Clyde-built whalers;
And forty years of a life at sea
Have n't matched her crowd of sailors.
Picked men they were, all young and strong,
And used to the wildest seas,
From Donegal and the Scottish coast,
And the rugged Hebrides.
Such men as women cling to, mates,
Like ivy round their lives;
And the day we sailed the quays (kēz) were lined
With weeping mothers and wives.

They cried and prayed, and we gave 'em a cheer,
In the thoughtless way o' men;
Göd help them, shipmates—thirty years
They've waited and prayed since then.

3. We sailed to the North, and I mind it well,
The pity we felt, and pride,
When we sighted the cliffs of Labrador
From the sea where Hudson died.
We talked of ships that never came back,
And when the great floes passed,
Like ghosts in the night, each moonlit peak
Like a great war-frigate's mást,
'T was said that a ship was frozen up
In the iceberg's awful breast,
The clear ice holding the sailor's face
As he lay in his mortal rest.
And I've thought since then, when the ships came home
That sailed for the Franklin¹ band,
A mistake was made in the reckoning
That looked for the crews on land.
"They're floating still," I've said to myself,
"And Sir John has found the goal;
The Erebus and the Terror, mates,
Are icebergs up at the Pole!"

4. We sailed due North, to Baffin's Bay,
And cruised through weeks of light;
'T was always day, and we slept by the bell,
And longed for the dear old night,
And the blessed darkness left behind,
Like a curtain round the bed;
But a month dragged on like an afternoon
With the wheeling sun o'erhead.
We found the whales were farther still,
The farther north we sailed;

¹ Sir John Franklin, an English naval officer and Arctic explorer, born at Spilsby, Lincolnshire, April 16, 1786; died in the Arctic regions, June 11, 1847. Several expeditions were sent in search of him, but his fate was not certainly known until 1859, when a record of his death was discovered by the McClintock expedition.