

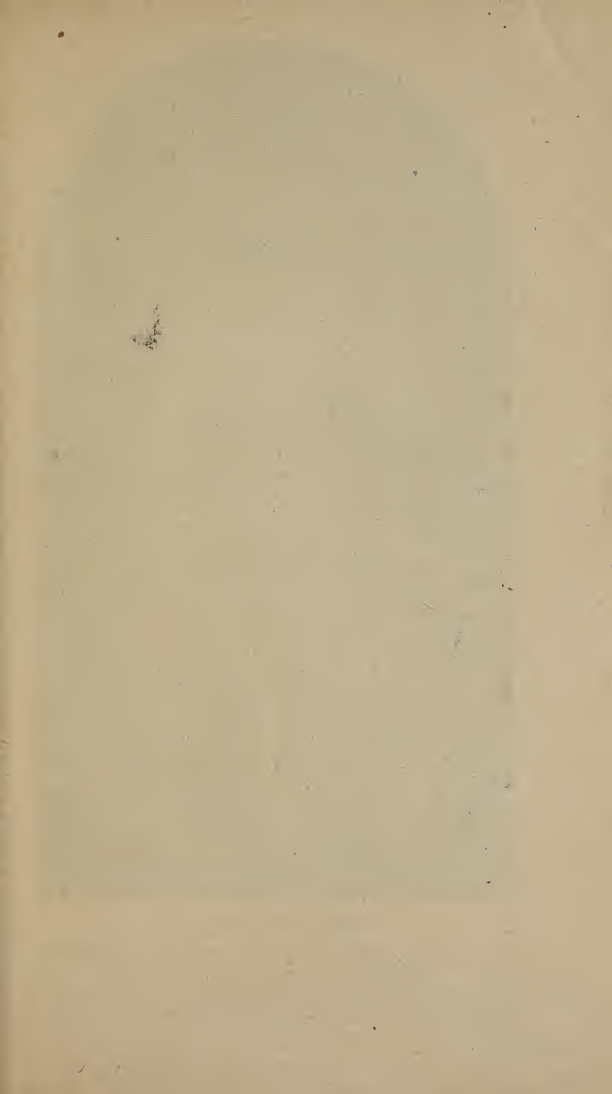
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"TAKE COURAGE!"

Across the centuries comes the calm reassuring voice of the Master, bidding us trust in Him. "Take courage!" He says to us today, as He did to His apostles then, in the midst of the storm-tossed waves.

“Take Courage!”

By

(Rev.) BRUNO HAGSPIEL, S.V. D.



FERVORINOS
FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

“Take courage: it is I,
do not be afraid” (Mark 6:50).



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“TAKE COURAGE!” *

To all men, in all climes, the figure of Christ has stood, from the day of His birth, for all the optimistic qualities we need so much. Generosity, Charity, Kindness, Patience, Mercy — beyond belief is the roll-call of the goodnesses of God the Son, made flesh for our sake. From Bethlehem until the Ascension His public life was nothing but an unselfish giving of Himself, in order to bring peace and joy and happiness to unhappy mankind.

Today, how badly we all stand in need of His helping hand! How sadly are we all deficient in that Christian optimism which alone can enable us to continue the welfare that is life! How gladly would we all be able to use *that genuine courage* which comes only from faith in Jesus!

Let us go to Him, and He will give us that courage.

WHAT IS COURAGE ?

“Courage is not just
To bare one’s bosom
to the sabre-thrust
Alone, in daring.

“Courage is to grieve,
To have the hurt, and make
the world believe
You are not caring.

* In the new version of the New Testament, put out by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, this is the form adopted in place of the traditional phrases of the Challoner-Rheims edition: “Be of Good Heart!” and “Have Confidence!”

"Courage does not lie
Alone in dying for a cause.
To die
Is only giving.
"Courage is to feel
The daily daggers
of relentless steel
And keep on living."

One of the loveliest words of promise from the lips of Jesus is recorded by Luke: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12, 32). Imagine! Christ's own kingdom is to be given to us. . . . With these words of our Lord as a certain guarantee, who would not have trust in the Savior? Who would not heed His commands, follow His wishes?

Do you remember that story of Jesus' meeting His apostles on the storm-tossed waves of Genesareth? The apostles had gone ahead by boat to Bethsaida, and Jesus was alone on the land. "And seeing them straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking upon the sea, and He would have passed by them. But they, seeing Him walking upon the sea, thought it was a ghost and cried out. For they all saw Him, and were troubled. Then He immediately spoke to them, and said to them, Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid. And He got into the boat with them, and the wind fell" (Mark 6, 50).

Matthew tells this same story but adds a touching incident omitted in Mark's version.

When Jesus spoke urging the apostles to

take courage, Peter "answered Him and said, Lord, if it is Thou, bid me come to Thee over the water. And He said, Come. Then Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water to come to Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind, he was afraid, and as he began to sink he cried out, saying, Lord, save me! And Jesus at once stretched forth His hand and took hold of him saying to him, O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt? And when they got into the boat, the wind fell."

WHAT A LESSON FOR US!

"All things are possible to him that believeth," said Christ Himself. His victory is your victory. If you believe this, how can you allow yourselves to slack your efforts, or to be downcast, or to be despondent? If you believe in your Leader, and trust Him, you will obtain renewed valor for the daily round of duties and disappointments, and fill your rôle, if not with glory, at least with a serene and steadfast courage.



This booklet, "Take Courage!" is the fourth of a series of five booklets which include the following: "Cheer Up!" "Be of Good Heart!" "Have Confidence!" "Take Courage!" and "Lift Up Your Hearts!" While "Cheer Up!" is intended mainly for people in every walk of life, the other four booklets have a special appeal for all those who desire a more ascetic spiritual approach to the problems of discouragement and pessimism.

Readers are urged to pass on their copies of these booklets to their friends and acquaintances; all of us need such encouragement in our daily lives.

FROM ALL CROAKERS, DELIVER US, O LORD!

Do you know what a croaker is?

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines a croaker as an animal that croaks, such as a frog or any of various fishes that produce croaking or grunting noises (as certain grunts or surf fishes) or one who croaks; a habitual grumbler; a foreboder of evil. The Oxford Dictionary adds: a croaker is one who talks dismally.

Have you ever met such specimens of croakers in your progress through life? Don't we actually come across such croakers only too often? Are you perhaps one yourself?

The following poem will paint their portrait for you, once for all:

THE CROAKER

Once, on the edge of a pleasant pool,
Under the bank where 'twas dark and cool,
Where bushes over the waters hung
And rushes nodded and grasses swung,
Just where the creek flowed outer the fog,
There lived a grumpy and mean old frog,
Who'd sit all day in the mud and soak
And just do nothing but croak and croak.
Till a blackbird hollered, "I say, yer know
What's the matter down there below?
Are you in trouble, er pain er what?"
The frog sez, "Mine is an orful lot;
Nothing but dirt and mud and slime
For me to look at just all the time.
It's a dirty world!" so the old fool spoke,
"Croakity, croakity, croakity, croak!"
"But yer looking down!" the blackbird said;
"Look at the blossoms overhead.

Look at the lovely summer skies;
Look at the bees and butterflies,
Look up, old feller! Why, bless your soul,
Yer looking down in a muskrat hole!"
But still, with a gurgling sob and choke,
The blamed old critter would only croak.
And a wise old turtle who boarded near,
Sez to the blackbird, "Friend, see here;
Don't shed no tears over him, fer he
Is low down just 'cause he likes to be.
He's one er them kind of chumps that's glad
To be so mis'erable-like and sad.
I'll tell yer something that ain't no joke —
Don't waste yer sorrow on folks that croak."



BE GOD'S CHILD!

Far better be a child than a savant.

Never has knowledge been so heaped up
for the common people to come and partake
of it as it is in our age.

The radio, newspapers, cheap books — man-
kind is fairly buried under the avalanche of
available information.

Confused by it all, man has lost the goal
and guiding star of his life. Seeking reasons
for existence in purely material backgrounds,
he cries aloud in despair, loses courage, for-
swears his Maker.

Today, the machines in factories seem alive;
the men operating them are the corpses.

Today, haste and hurry are the golden
calves erected for man's worship.

Men kick at circumstances, forget they can
rise above them. Men have lost the clue to
the spiritual childhood which alone can lead
us to Paradisal portals.

What is spiritual childhood? Well, it is, first of all, to have humility, to think nothing of ourselves; it is to rely as children do, on their Father, with absolute trust and confidence; it is to abandon everything, including ourselves, to God's hand. Children have no fear, no worry, no dread of the morrow. Their world is bounded by their parents, who shield them from harm and direct their steps. Children show us the way to our common home, heaven.

What did our Lord say? "Unless you become as little children..." You know the rest, don't you?



Did you ever stop to reflect that the first sermon which Christ preached was the Sermon on the Mount?

Right at the beginning of His public career it was necessary that He give a complete idea of what His teaching would be. And this He did in the imperishable beauty of the Beatitudes:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the land.

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice; for they shall have their fill.

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the clean of heart; for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.

"Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5, 3, 10)

Isn't it noteworthy that right away at the start He deals with one of the gravest of all problems: poverty? And omnipotent though He is, does He promise the poor that the burden of their poverty will be lifted from them?

No, He simply urges them to bear their burden willingly and happily, and theirs will be the kingdom of heaven. Then He continues with the ones who have borne trials and difficulties, the "meek in spirit" — and because they are willing to forgive and forget, and "have no nerves" and do not get on others' nerves, and do not let themselves get disturbed, nor embittered to the point of being angry, and are always ready to repay evil with good, they are promised that "they shall possess the land."

Study the Beatitudes. From them you will learn the way of living that Christ came to teach; and from them you will learn to face the daily struggle with greater valor, knowing the precious rewards awaiting the victor.



WAS YOUR PRAYER ANSWERED?

How many people pray earnestly for some favor, then when that request is not granted, turn rebelliously on God!

How trying it is to send up fervent prayers for something, and not have our petition allowed!

So many who once offered up their heartfelt petitions to God now sneer at His promise: "If you ask the Father anything in my name,

He will give it to you." "What," they cry, "did I not ask in His name, yet it was not given to me? Prayer is a fraud and a deceit." And they refuse any more to deal directly with God by prayer.

Let us examine the paradoxes of prayer.

The difficulty is that many people do not ask in His name; they ask for things that might be harmful. The following paradoxes will show you that prayer is always efficacious. But when, in our ignorance, we ask for things that are not conducive to salvation, its efficacy may take form in a way not anticipated. Here are some paradoxes:

He asked for a *stone*, and God gave him
bread.

He asked for *health* that he might achieve;
God made him *weak* that he might obey.

He asked for *riches* that he might be *happy*;
God gave him *poverty* that he might be wise.

He asked for *strength* that he might do *greater*
things;
God gave him *infirmity* that he might do *better*
things.

He asked for *power* that he might have the
praise of men;
God sent him *weakness* that he might feel
the *need of God*.

He asked for *all things* that he might enjoy
life;
God gave him *life eternal* that he might enjoy
all things.

He received *nothing* that he asked for;
Yet much more than he hoped for.

His prayers were answered, he was most
blessed.

One of life's most painful experiences is to pray and not find our prayers answered. Not every one can see God's favor visible over his enterprises. Not every one can, Moses-like, receive direct pledges from God.

Have more trust in the Lord. He knows what is best for you. A good mother or father will not let a child play with matches, nor swallow innocent-looking poison, nor run out into the street under the racing wheels of cars, nor will God allow His children to obtain their foolish desires just because it seems good to them.



In Bologna is a street called "Via Dei Malcontenti," the Street of the Discontented.

Aren't there many such streets and byways in many other cities? From day to day the number of discontented, dissatisfied people grows. Seldom does one find a truly happy man, such as the beggar who sang:

"Not one single hour
have I not been rich and gay;
God's will and mine
have been the same always."

The fault? Is it not that men today want their own way in everything, and refuse God the allegiance they owe Him? Few indeed have the desire to submit to Him in even such tiny matters as the weather, as did the traveler

who carved on the walls of a Swiss hunting lodge:

"It's God's will; therefore be still."

◆ ◆

With Father Rodriguez, the companion of St. Alphonsus, let us say: "Build up and tear down, O Lord, I am content. I desire nothing but what Thou dost will."

◆ ◆

St. Augustine tells us that nothing occurs by chance in the whole course of our life, but God overrules all. Just reflect, then, that if you seem to be struggling under a present burden of evil or suffering, God has allowed that to happen — and of course it is intended for your own good.

◆ ◆

One of our artists has immortalized in a painting the scene in which Columbus stands before Queen Isabella of Spain, telling of the new world to which he is about to sail by favor of her royal patronage. The young and beautiful queen bends forward from her throne in rapt and favoring attention. The old men, soldiers, priests and courtiers, look on with varying expressions of belief, incredulity, or contempt. The treasurer is bringing in the queen's jewels, which, like a true enthusiast, she is willing to sell to secure the means necessary for the launching of the tremendous enterprise.

Erect and majestic as a true prophet at the sublime moment of divine revelation, before them stands the great sailor of Genoa, his face alight with the joy of inspiration, controlled in its expression by the stately calm of science, his left hand resting on the chart,

and his right hand pointing to the new world beyond the untraversed, storm-tossed ocean.

The incarnation of courage himself, his confidence is infectious and communicates itself to those around him. Sublime in his destiny and in the existence of his land of promise, he laid his course due westward and then sailed it, as unmindful of the world's derision as of the perils of the unknown sea.

"Behind him, lay the gray Azores,
Behind, the gates of Hercules;
Before him, not the ghost of shores,
Before him, only shoreless seas.
The good mate said, 'Now must we pray,
For lo, the very stars are gone.
Brave Admiral, speak, what shall I say?'
Why say, 'Sail on! Sail on! and on!

" 'My men grow more mutinous by day,
My men grow ghastly wan and weak.'
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek,
'What shall I say, brave Admiral, say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?'
Why, you shall say at break of day,
'Sail on! Sail on! Sail on! and on!'"

"They sailed and sailed, as winds might
blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said, —
'Why now, not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.
The weary winds forget their way,
For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak, brave Admiral, speak and say' —
He said, 'Sail on! Sail on! and on!'

"They sailed! They sailed! Then spoke the mate,

"This mad sea shows his teeth tonight:
He curls his lips, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth, as if to bite.

Brave Admiral, say but one good word,

What shall we do when hope is gone?
The words leaped like a leaping sword, —
'Sail on! Sail on! Sail on! and on!'"



Sometimes Religious (Priests, Brothers or Sisters) complain to their confessors that they never get anything out of meditation. . . . Let us listen to what the Little Flower said about this. She actually confessed that she FELL ASLEEP during her meditations not once, but OFTEN. She writes: "I suppose I ought to be distressed that I so often fall asleep during meditation, and thanksgiving after Holy Communion, but I reflect that little children, asleep or awake, are equally dear to their parents; that to perform operations doctors put their patients to sleep; and finally that "the Lord knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are dust."

After all, in this as in so many other matters, the Lord remembers not our achievements and accomplishments but our efforts and endeavors. The worldly failure is often a spiritual triumph.



One "Blessed be God!" in adversity is worth more than a thousand "Thank Gods!" in prosperity.

Do not be troubled because you do not have great or shining virtues. God made a million tiny spears of grass where He made one tree. The earth is fringed and carpeted not with forests but with grasses. Only have enough of little virtues and common acts of fidelity to duty and you need not bewail your lot, that you are not a heroic outstanding hero or saint.

Someone has said that he is glad our Lord did not say, "Good and successful servant," for some of the most faithful have been failures from a worldly standpoint. Fidelity means success. It wins God's praise — and what more do we want?

Perhaps to make yourself more faithful in your daily round of duties all you need is to be a little more cheerful in your view of your situation. Try to be like St. Bernardine of Siena, of whom his companions said, "When Bernardine comes, weariness goes." Or think of the little flute and drum still preserved in the monastery at Avila, commemorating the holiday hours when St. Teresa would take them and play on them, for her own amusement and that of her Sisters. If you are cheerful for God's sake, you will be doing the best thing possible for your own.



SWEETS TO THE SWEET?

Do you find your meditations hard to get through? Is there a lack of sweetness in your communion with God? Have your prayers lately been like the prayers of the Lamaists, who spin a wheel around mechanically, and consider their invocation said? Is your soul

buried under layers of dust and dreariness, till it seems it cannot breathe?

Do not take this too hard. God sometimes baits us with a certain amount of sweetness in our religious exercises to induce us to strive closer to His side. Besides, to have sweetness and delight in such devotions does not mean we have earned it but simply that it is God's gift to us. It is a little "candy" which He allows us to have before coming with the lesson for the day....

And remember, many a wayward child is bribed away from further mischief with a stick of peppermint!

◆ ◆ ARE YOU WEARY OF WELL-DOING?

In his talks on the spiritual life, Father Faber has an excellent discussion on weariness in well-doing.

Nothing in the spiritual life is more deserving of close study. We might say that Father Faber realized there is a technique to sanctity and tried in his essay or conference to make clear that we must know HOW to get around obstacles on the road before we can make any progress along it.

Perhaps you are a Religious. You do not feel you have deliberately committed grave transgressions. But your soul is weary. You find no comfort in prayer. There is a dryness in everything you do. You feel deserted by God. You do not have ease of mind. Father John Tauler, O.P., the mystic, adjures us, in such case, to be sure God wants you to bear this interior dryness and darkness patiently and "you will be in better state than if you

were to enjoy many and great feelings of devotion."

In such desolation, and anxiety of spirit, not caring about anything, strive to remember the words of Job: "After dryness I hope for light."

In one of the mystic dialogues recorded by Blessed Henry Suso, he reports Eternal Wisdom as saying: "Every sick man imagines his own sickness is the worst, and every man suffering from thirst that no one is more miserable than he. Had I allowed other sufferings to afflict thee, thou wouldst have said the same. Therefore, be of good heart, pluck up courage, allow me to do as I will, and resign thyself to me, making no exception whatever. Knowest thou not that I only will a thing as best for thee, much more seeking thy good than thou couldst thyself? And remember that I am the Eternal Wisdom, and therefore am the only One who perfectly knows what is really best for thee."

If, then, you find that there is a dimness in the soul, and a burden of weariness upon you, is it not true that just this is what Christ wants you to endure for your own good? Let Him have His way, therefore, and you will find eventually that the weariness you are suffering is itself the greatest refreshment possible for your soul.

◆ ◆ THE SHADOW OF DESPAIR

In the religious life it is easy to become discouraged. Here we are, aiming at perfection, and we seem always to be playing a losing game. Here we are aiming at the goal set before us by Christ Crucified, and we fall

so far short. Here we are, desiring the glory of canonization and the ineffable bliss of heaven — and being held back by some irritating infirmities: we are not humble enough or obedient enough or punctual enough. Lo! before long, unless we watch out, we become languid (what's the use?), and we lose our spirit of joy (where is the spiritual delight which is supposed to attend striving after God?), and eventually we are disgusted with the whole idea of even trying to continue the fight.

Discouragement is the shadow of despair.

Once yield to such discouragement and dejection of your soul, and you will find yourself making excuses why you can avoid striving at all after perfection.

"Comfort's in heaven; and we are on the earth,
where nothing lives but crosses, cares, and grief,"

says Shakespeare, and it is easy enough for us to become faint-hearted, if we did not have before our eyes always the spectacle of Jesus bidding us "Take courage!"...

Every spiritual director knows he must have the words of the Psalmist on his tongue perpetually: "Expect the Lord, do manfully, and let thy heart take courage, and wait thou for the Lord" (Ps. 26, 14). More than wise saws or learned homilies do people need words of cheer and encouragement to make them keep on trying to attain God. More than ecstasies or inspirations from on high do they want and yearn for a cheery assurance in God's mercy, in an encouragement to trust in His love.



Have you got that habit of making an elephant out of a mosquito, a rhinoceros from a gnat?

When your nerves are jarred, isn't it easy for you to look at your troubles through a magnifying glass?

Or, perhaps you cherish your troubles and brood over them, and think of the person who innocently or otherwise caused them as your archfoe.... A senseless dog runs after the stone that struck it. Don't seek for second causes of your trials and troubles. Remember the saying in the story of Job, "Blessed is the man whom God correcteth" (Job 17, 18). Such as God loves He rebukes and chastises. Perhaps He is only testing you out with some petty annoyances, and you straightway consider yourself a martyr.

Try to maintain the spirit of St. John Chrysostom, the golden-tongued orator who underwent such persecutions at the hands of his enemies in high places.

He was great when he preached; great when he wrote; great when he ruled. But when he suffered he was greatest of all.

Exiled by the Empress Eudoxia he went forth from the country, knowing full well it was his death sentence, for he was already an old man. No relief or surcease from suffering was granted him, until he finally expired. His last words were: "God be praised for everything."



The only evil is sin. The only damnable thing in the world is sin — and that came into existence through man.

Hence the next time you call the roster of

evils which are plaguing you, please do not list as an evil such an item as POVERTY or SICKNESS. They are not evils: sin is. Poverty — as Christ Himself proved, by embracing a life of poverty — is one of the best ways to reach heaven. Riches encumber many a man on his journey through life; they weigh him down. St. Francis of Assisi idealized poverty into a lady of charm and graciousness: Lady Poverty, his mistress, he called her.

Sickness, too, knocks the pride out of many men and opens their eyes to the eternal truths. Any chaplain in any hospital can repeat countless stories from his own experience of men who were brought back to their God through the medium of a sickbed.

Everything created is perfect. Whether I make good use, bad use or indifferent use of it is my own affair.

If I use it for evil — well, then I am producing evil through such misuse of it. But let me not place the blame upon God if I am the author of my own evils.



“THANK GOD I’M A LEPER”

Here is a story of our own 20th century. It is a modern miracle to confound a world that does not believe in Christ.

A young girl afflicted with the “living death” of leprosy was abandoned by her family to the leper colony cared for by the Redemptorist Fathers in one of the Virgin Islands.

“Why did this happen to me?” she finally asked the priest-chaplain.

The missionary drew out his crucifix and placed it in her hands saying: "There is the only Person who has a philosophy of pain. . . . The pagans ignored pain, but Christ did not. He took it and gave it a positive value, the value of Redemption."

Before long the young woman was received into the Church, and when she received her First Holy Communion she burst forth with the strange expression: "Thank God I'm a leper, because through it I received the gift of the Catholic faith."

Let us turn to the latest newspaper for the sequel. (I am writing this during the first week of May, 1941). Here is the conclusion:

Devotions were held weekly in the leper chapel in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and one of the most popular requests was a return to good health. But no cure was sought by this girl. Nevertheless, our Lady rewarded the girl for her magnificent profession of faith. The young woman was cleansed completely of the contagion, and once more the glow of health was placed upon her cheeks. The doctors were amazed, but they put the official stamp of approval on the cure. The gates of the colony swung open and the girl who had exclaimed "Thank God I'm a leper" went forth free to mingle with society, a proof to our doubting Thomases of today that God watches and wards over all of us.



Every time I hear people complaining of their age and of how the decrepitude and weariness of their years is a great burden, I can't help but remember what a *really* old man once assured me: "The best years of life are between 20 and 80."

It is too bad how some writers on the spiritual life fall into oblivion. I am thinking especially of Louis Blossius, a 16th century author who drew on the sources of Blessed Henry Suso and Father John Tauler for much of his work. Both these latter writers were Dominicans, and are famous for their writings of a soaring mystic quality. One of Blossius' exquisite little books is called "Comfort for the Faint-hearted" (there is an edition published in England), and it is crammed full of the most pertinent and meaty sayings and explanations, dialogues and discussions, of just those wearinesses and annoyances which infest the spiritual life. If you can get a copy of this book, treasure it. It belongs on the same shelf as "The Imitation of Christ," and Scupoli's "Spiritual Combat."



Failure is normal. The worldly success is an abnormal man.



Too many people use their troubles as clubs with which to knock down the good spirits of others.

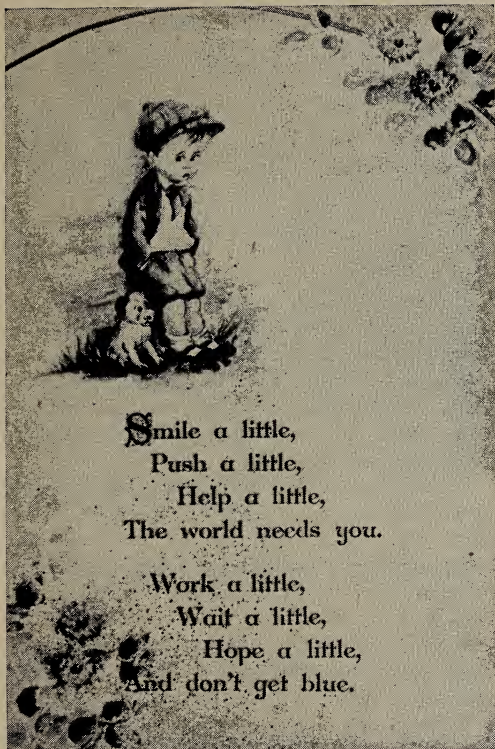
Everyone in this world has a cross to bear. Some people hide their cross with the blossoms of patience and hope; others wreath theirs with thorns of discontent and repining.

Smile at your own miseries, and you will be making it easier for your fellow-man to carry his cross.



Kind deeds and words, that's the true blue of piety; to hope the best, and do the best, and speak the best.

R. L. STEVENSON



Smile a little,
Push a little,
Help a little,
The world needs you.

Work a little,
Wait a little,
Hope a little,
And don't get blue.

GOD'S PROMISE

God has not promised skies ever blue,
Flower-strewn pathways always for you.

God has not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.

But God has promised strength from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

THE VALUE OF PATIENCE IN SUFFERING

1. Nothing more valuable can befall a man than tribulation, when it is endured with patience for the love of God, because there is no more certain sign of the divine election. But this should be understood quite as much of internal as of external trials.

2. It is the chain of patient sufferings that forms the rings with which Christ espouses a soul to Himself.

3. There is such a dignity in suffering for God's sake that we ought to account ourselves unworthy of an honor so great.

4. Good works are of value; but even those lesser pains and trials that are endured with peace and patience are more valuable than many good works.

5. Every sorrowful trial bears some resemblance to the most excellent passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and when it is endured with patience, it makes him who endures it a more perfect partaker of the passion of his Lord and Savior.

6. Tribulation opens the soul to the gifts of God, and when they are received tribulation preserves them.

7. What we now suffer God has from eternity foreseen, and has ordained that we should suffer in this way, and not in any other way.

BLOSIUS



It is not only in the New Testament that we find words of good cheer and of encouragement.

The Prophets in the Old Testament had a gigantic task: to shepherd the Chosen People

of God in strait ways, and to keep their spirits up with assurance of the Messiah to come. And again and again their words are explicit, and very plain: the Messiah will one day come, and hence nobody should be faint-hearted and slacken his efforts to be worthy of Him, when He did come.

Isaias cries out: "Take courage and fear not: . . . God Himself will come and will save you" (Isaias 35, 4). What could be clearer than this?

And so for thousands of years the Chosen People were kept from despair and a sense of abandonment by God through the messages of their prophets. God used these messengers to convey His complete promise that He would come and save them. . . .

Shall we, today, having our Lord's own promise, feel more faint-hearted than did the Jews of the Old Testament?



COMFORT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

Perhaps you find your besetting faults — try as you might — are still not conquered.

But do not let this cast you down, and make your dejection greater.

It might easily be that your conscience is becoming more tender and sensitive to your sins; it might easily be, again, that you are just more conscious of your faults than you were before, simply through turning the attention always upon them.

Or God may even allow us to stumble a little oftener in order to keep us humble. Or he may blur our sight in order to conceal

from us some other progress we may be making in the spiritual life.

If you have not conquered the sin which irks you — if temptations still assail you, and your defects loom again and again, as if never once vanquished — do not be despondent. As St. Francis de Sales says, "The dog goes on barking because he has not been let in."



Let us take with us a thought from perennially young Shakespeare to lighten our day:

"A merry heart goes all the day,
your sad tires in a mile-a."

We hear so much about his debt to long-dead authors, that it might not come amiss to reflect he was thinking of Ovid's "that load becomes light which is cheerfully borne."



A doctor who wanted a little boy to take some medicine regularly had trouble making the boy take it, for it was very bitter. He hit on a way to make the boy take it.

He told the boy he could drink it at any time of the day he chose. Then he instructed the mother and left the medicine with her.

In the morning, she poured out a spoonful and dropped it into a large glass of water. The boy tasted it, made a face, did not come back for the rest till noon. By then the medicine, which was thick and gluey, had partly dissolved in the water, and the boy found it still bitter. By evening he finished the large glass and found it still more bitter. He thought matters over that night, and the next morning got up early, and when the medicine

was put into the glass seized it quickly and drank the whole top of the fluid off, and with it all the medicine, which had not had time to dissolve. To his mother he explained his action: "You see, ma, by drinking it right away, I only get one bitter mouthful, but by drinking it through the day, I have to finish the whole glass, and then every drop is bitter."



Much has been said and written about the "sorrow songs" of the Negro whose cruel lot was to be transplanted across miles of ocean to a foreign shore, and to drag out a miserable existence as a slave, the mere chattel of a master often cruel beyond words. These spirituals often were burdened with the distilled grief and groan of the unfortunate black, but his native unconquerable cheerfulness flames through again and again. We can do worse than to adopt one of these tunes and adapt it to our own needs:

"Ef it rain or ef it blow,
Keep uh gwyne.
Ef it sleet or ef it snow,
Keep uh gwyne.
"Tain't no use to sit and pine
Ef de fish ain't on de line;
Jes' bait yo' hook ag'in an'
Keep uh gwyne."



A certain missionary spent fifteen years in China before being called to his eternal reward.

Eight years of his apostolate were passed in the active work of the missions; and then

he fell sick and was taken into the Lord's school of suffering, and lingered there for seven years before dying.

God, in inscrutable wisdom, compelled him to leave the busy highways and byways of the vineyard to take up an apostolate of suffering. Those who knew him well agreed that in the last seven years, thus spent in bodily anguish, he accomplished far more for the welfare of souls and for God's glory than in all his previous life of activity.

We are told how the Chinese Great Wall was constructed of mortar mixed with human blood. Does not this story remind us of such a parallel? Only if suffering is mingled with the structure of life, only if our blood is mingled with the Cause, can we hope to withstand the assaults of Satan and sin. Only through a bed of pain did this missionary actually achieve all that his travels and trials had failed to bring about.



"Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead thou me on;
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene—one step enough for me."

CARDINAL NEWMAN



THE PRAYER OF THE OPTIMIST

To be the King's jongleur in heaven is a fit reward for those who bring sunshine and laughter to the hearts of men.

God, grant that I may see the joke of things,
The little things that bother, now and then.
God grant my sense of humor may be strong
To weep a bit and then to smile again.

God grant there be a chuckle in each tear,
To every trial, God grant a funny half,
So when I'm being judged, perhaps you'll
say:

"Are you the soul who always tried to laugh?"

And when I nod and answer, "Yes, I am,
I tried to kill my troubles with a grin,"
Perhaps you'll smile and say, "That was a task!
But here's the Gate of Heaven. Enter in!"



During his presidency, honest Abe Lincoln pursued a course which drew down torrents of invective and hate and contempt. It left him unshaken. Said he: "I do the very best I know how — the very best I can, and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing that I was right would make no difference."

Well did he know that we are all carpenters of our own crosses. And he would have agreed with a later President, Theodore Roosevelt, that "he who has never made a mistake is one who never does anything." Great men, great blunders — little men, little blunders — no men at all, no blunders.

If you have been criticized for omissions and commissions in your life, don't take it too hard. There are many people who make fault-finding their avocation, forgetting that even a

tombstone will say good things about a fellow when he's down. Why not say them now about your fellowman while he's standing up?

◆ ◆ TAKE A LESSON

The seventh of ten children, Dorothy E. Nees, of Glistown, Pa., became blind in her left eye when she was six years old.

Nine years ago she walked into an open door and lost the sight of her right eye.

How many of us would be crushed by such a misfortune!

Dorothy started studying Braille, the medium of printed communication between blind people.

Now she goes to conventions, interviews people, attends momentous events, and keeps countless other blind people happy by writing them an account of what she has seen or heard. . . . Imagine a blind woman describing the annual festival surrounding the blooming of the cherry blossoms at the Nation's capital! But Dorothy did that. Dorothy has hundreds of pen-pals whose spirits she keeps up, to whom she portions out her share of the laughter and delight she gets out of the universe. If she were wealthy, one could dismiss this story more easily: but all she has is \$30 a month State pension. From this she pays for everything. . . . Says she, "God has shown me how to get the most out of my money."

Have you hitherto pitied yourself?

◆ ◆
A diamond is a chunk of coal that stuck to its job.

FOR MARRIED PEOPLE

So many married people find their daily lives a very burden, simply because they face a daily succession of squabbles, misunderstandings, arguments, flares of temper.

They lose courage because they have not learned how to AVOID such heart-wearying and grinding irritations.

I shall never forget the conversation I had with a great benefactor of our missionary work in foreign lands, on the occasion of his Golden Wedding Jubilee.

"Believe me or not, Father," he stated earnestly, "in all the fifty years of our married life, my wife and I have never had a misunderstanding or a squabble."

"John," I smiled, "you owe it to everyone to tell me your secret.... It sounds almost impossible."

"Well," he explained, "whenever a problem arose, Teresa would ask me, 'What do you think?' ... And I would simply reply, 'What do YOU think?' ... Then she would say: 'I think perhaps this would be the best thing to do.' And I would reply, 'That's EXACTLY what I thought' ... and the problem was settled. And of course, this also held good for any issue that I might bring up for joint discussion."

What a difference between such a married couple and many others whom I have known!

Too many married couples prove the truth of that saying of a Spanish king: "To have peace and quiet under the roof of a married couple, it is required that the man be deaf as a post, and the woman stone blind."

How often in the home will a humorous re-

mark avert the prolongation of a bitter quarrel, and make both parties see how petty was the argument!

When Xanthippe, after raging at her spouse, the famous philosopher Socrates, in an attempt to embroil him in a quarrel, found him serenely preserving silence, she tempestuously threw the dishwater over his head. Socrates could have beaten her; he could have scourged her with his eloquent tongue; he could have made that quarrel last indefinitely. What did he do? Calmly rearranging his robes, he commented on a natural law: "After so much thunder, it is only reasonable to expect a shower."

Get rid of mutual disagreements, and face the world together — "two against the world" — and you will be armed with the very fullness of courage.

◆ ◆
No pain, no palm; no thorns, no throne;
No gall, no glory; no cross, no crown.

◆ ◆
It takes a great sorrow to make a great saint. The saints of God are those who have locked up life's failures, humiliations, disappointments in the tabernacles of their own hearts where God alone may see the tragedy, while the world beholds only a joyful face. Remember that if Christ does not break the hearts over which He reigns, He comes of His own choice to reign in broken hearts.

◆ ◆
FAITH came singing into my room,
and other guests took flight:
FEAR and ANXIETY, GRIEF and GLOOM,
sped out into the night.

I wondered that such peace could be,
But Faith said gently, "Don't you see?
They really could not live with me."



Get the lovely habit each day of doing three things: something you ought to do, something you are not obliged to do, and something you hate to do. In time you will find many former failures turned into successes.



"He who has seen the whole world hanging on a hair of the mercy of God," as St. Francis of Assisi saw it, has no alternative but to be an optimist, for he has "seen the truth." Chesterton says that Rossetti discovered, bitterly, but with great truth, that the worst moment in the life of an atheist (or a pessimist) is the time when he is really thankful and has nobody to thank, and that gratitude, the badge of an optimist, produces in such men and women as St. Francis moments of the most pure joy ever known in this world. Remembering the thread held in the hand of God, can we fail to be — or become — optimists, too, forever thanking Him for keeping our balance?



In Egyptian tombs you will find the famed tear-bottles of the ancients.

Men wept even then.

Hundreds of years ago men walked the floor and wrung their hands.

Where are they now?

François Villon, the vagabond poet of Paris, penned perhaps the finest summary of it all: "Where are the snows of yesteryear?"

THANKS BE TO GOD

Thanks be to God for His goodness to me.
Thanks be to God now and in eternity.
Thanks be to God for the wonders He has done.
Thanks be to God for His dear and only Son.
Thanks be to God for our sweet Virgin Mother.
Thanks be to God for becoming our Brother.
Thanks be to God for His Body and His Blood.
Thanks be to God for His gift of the Rood.
Thanks be to God for His Sacred Heart benign.
Thanks be to God for this treasure divine.
Thanks be to God for my angel guardian bright.
Thanks be to God for morning, noon, and night.
Thanks be to God in all ages and in all climes.
Thanks be to God one hundred thousand times.
Thanks be to God in my joy and in my sorrow.
Thanks be to God for today and for tomorrow.
Thanks be to God in my illness and in my
health.

Thanks be to God both in poverty and in
wealth.

Thanks be to God in my work and in my
prayers.

Thanks be to God in my troubles and in my
cares.

Thanks be to God in my life and at my death.

Thanks be to God when drawing my last
breath.

And when, lifeless, my poor heart
shall lie at last under the sod,
then may my soul, in heaven apart,
sing thanks unto its Lord and God,
Sing thanks to Thee, O good and generous
God.



Not for naught is the Celt famed for his grin
and wit. The sadder the lot of a race, the

finer the spirit produced, in inevitable compensation.

"Life is for work, not for weeping," wrote Canon Sheehan.

◆ ◆

THE QUIET HOUR

My heart is tired tonight —
How endless seems the strife!
Day after day the restlessness
Of all this weary life!
I come to lay the burden down
That so oppresses me,
And, shutting all the world without,
To spend an hour with Thee,
Dear Lord,
To spend an hour with Thee.

I would forget a little while
The bitterness of fears,
The anxious thoughts that crowd my life,
The buried hopes of years;
Forget that mortal's weary toil
My patient care must be.
A tired child, I come tonight
To spend an hour with Thee,
Dear Lord,
One little hour with Thee.

I'm foolish, wayward, yes, I know —
So often wandering;
A weak, complaining child — but oh!
Forgive my murmuring;
And fold me to Thy breast,
Thou who hast died for me,
And let me feel 'tis peace to rest
A little hour with Thee,
Dear Lord,
One little hour with Thee!

In his compact spiritual booklet, "Living with God in My Heart," Father A. Noser, S.V.D., speaks of the martyrdom of the soul of the Little Flower. "She ate the hard and dry bread of spiritual aridity, of want of consolation in prayer daily throughout her religious life." For her it is "always night, always dark, black night." Father Noser continues:

"Seeing her suffer so much, one of her sisters remarked: 'To think that it may increase!' St. Therese replied: 'It is quite a mistake to trouble ourselves as to what I may still have to suffer. It is like meddling with God's work. We who run in the way of love must never allow ourselves to be disturbed by anything. *If I did not simply live from one moment to the next, it would be impossible for me to be patient; but I look only at the present. I forget the past, and take good care not to forestall the future. When we yield to discouragement or despair, it is usually because we think too much about the past and the future.*' How true! Hence, when she was told that some thought that she feared death, she answered: 'That may easily come to pass.... It will be time enough to bear that cross when it comes; meantime I wish to rejoice in my present happiness.' What strength and joy of soul would be mine in the midst of pain if I would but follow this wise teaching!"

◆ ◆

If Atlas had once thought about the size of the world he was carrying, he could never have carried it around.

◆ ◆

Not with distorted faces and clenched fists should we look up to heaven when adversity clouds the sky.

The little trials which we go through — are these not our credentials for a heavenly passport? Only those "washed in the blood of the Lamb" shall enter into His glory....

It is true, every day we are driven to distraction by petty worries; every day we lose heart and grow irritable over the pinpricks of life; we grow moody, brood, exercise (to the full) our antipathies to certain persons or things; we exaggerate our troubles and ills; we frighten joy away with our frowns and bid whole flocks of ravens and crows roost around us.

In His public life, Jesus taught us how to deal patiently with one another. He showed us how charity by silence was a practical virtue; and He proved by example how humiliations produced humility, the willingness to "take upon yourself ignominy and humiliations of every sort." There can be no humility without love of humiliations.

The next time you think your hardships are grievous reflect on the Sacred Writer's description of the God-man — "a worm and no man" — "from the crown of His head to the sole of His foot, no soundness in Him" — "only wounds and bruises and swelling sores."....

Then, perhaps, you will learn to clench your hands — not into fists of despair, but into hands that pray, clasped in limitless hope.

◆ ◆
Cowards accept defeat; the brave try again.

◆ ◆
Keep your temper; nobody else wants it.



The peace and joy and happiness of heaven — our home — were hardly ever portrayed so beautifully in art as when Fra Angelico painted these ethereal angels. The famous Dominican painter, usually called Fra Angelico da Fiesole, lived from 1387 to 1455, and left behind him marvels of all fresco work on the walls of many a convent, especially of the renowned Monastery of San Marco in Florence. Fra Angelico painted only sacred themes, refused all pay for his art, and started every bit of



work at his easel with prayer. Believing his work was directly inspired by Heaven, he would never change a design. The Church has confirmed his actual spiritual perfection by advancing him to the ranks of the Blessed. Studying his exquisitely drawn and delicately painted angels, one is attracted irresistibly to the final goal of all Christians, and longs ardently for that ultimate bliss which is heaven. To reach that supreme happiness, all the strife and strain of our day is well worth while.

AIN'T IT FINE TODAY?

Sure this world is full of trouble,
I ain't said it ain't.
Lord! I've had enough and double
Reason for complaint.
Rain and storm have come to fret me,
Skies were often grey;
Thorns and brambles have beset me,
On the road, but say!
AIN'T IT FINE TODAY?

It's today that I am livin',
Not a month ago.
Havin', losin', takin', givin',
As Time wills it so.
Yesterday a cloud of sorrow
Fell across the way;
It may rain again tomorrow,
It may rain, but say!
AIN'T IT FINE TODAY?

DOUGLAS MALLOCH



"What really tries our mettle both as men and as Christians is to labor resolutely, when duty calls us, at what we do not like, and by doing this, with the help of God, we acquire not only mastery over the things we are about, but what is still more important, a thorough command over ourselves." Thus Gladstone, the famous English statesman.



If we're thoughtful just a minute,
in whate'er we say or do;
If we put a purpose in it,
that is honest through and through;
We shall gladden life and give it

Grace to make it all sublime —
For though life is long, we live it
Manfully for all our time.

Just this minute we are going
Toward right or toward wrong,
Just this minute we are sowing
seeds of sorrow or of song.
Just this minute we are thinking
on the way that leads to God
or in idle dreams are sinking
to the level of the clod.



If you are a member of the human race,
let me assure you that at some time in your
life you will consider you have got a raw
deal, which you will find is due to one of
these reasons, or a situation arising from a
combination of them:

MONEY (TOO MUCH OR NOT ENOUGH)

SOCIAL INJUSTICE

BUSINESS TROUBLE

DOMESTIC TROUBLE

or just

ordinary

plain

everyday

STOMACH TROUBLE

You need not write me that I have diag-
nosed your condition properly.

Just do something about it. . . .



FEAR OF FAILURE

Fear of failure is the boulder in the path
of many a well intentioned plan.

Fear of failures reduces our effort.

It saps our strength.

It prevents us from winning.

Concern yourself about your problem or plan. But don't worry about its outcome. There is a vast difference between the two things.

E. H. Baynes gives us the slogan:

"There is just one test, you must ride your best — then you win, if you win or lose."



THE OTHER FELLOW HAS IT WORSE

in more cases than one, and you are possibly apt to magnify your handicaps.

A man in the Middle West lost both arms above the elbow when he was a boy.

By industry and inventiveness he managed to take care of himself daily, and even drive a car. To his friends he was always cheerful.

One day, however, with a twinkle in his eye he confessed that, though he had surmounted most obstacles, there was one thing he could not do.

Everyone wanted to know what this was.

"Well," he said slowly, "I find I can't put a collar button in the back of my shirt-band."

Do you have as cheerful a spirit in meeting your troubles?



Instead of being "run down" maybe you are just "wound up" too tight. . . . Learn to relax. Edison slept only 4-5 hours a day, but he had learned to take cat-naps or short rests in the odd moments of the day. He was always ready to start a new task.

We read once of an old Scotsman who would start counting, slowly, when anything happened which was especially exasperating: a delay, a trivial accident, interference or trouble of one sort or other: "One tomato, two tomatoes, three tomatoes." And rarely did he get as high as sixty tomatoes before all the annoyance was worn off and forgotten or else seen in its true light.



Genius is only the power of making continuous efforts. The line between failure and success is so fine that we scarcely know when we pass it: so fine that we are often on the line and do not know it. How many a man has thrown up his hands at a time when a little more effort, a little more patience, would have achieved success. As the tide goes clear out, so it comes clear in. In business, sometimes, prospects may seem darkest when really they are on the turn. A little more persistence, a little more effort, and what seemed hopeless failure may turn to glorious success. There is no failure except in no longer trying. There is no defeat except from within, no really insurmountable barrier save our own inherent weakness of purpose.



They said it couldn't be done, but the poor fool didn't know it and he went ahead —
AND DID IT!



Do not look at life's long sorrow,
see how small each moment's pain;
God will help thee for tomorrow,
So each day begin again.

The staunch race of the Scots has a rare quality: perseverance and endurance.

Memorize this Scotch ditty, and follow it.
"With toils and cares unending
Art beset?

Bethink thee, how the storms from heaven
 descending,
Snap the stiff oak, but spare the willow
 bending,
And bide a wee and dinna fret."



In 17th century England, Joseph Addison and Richard Steele inaugurated a sort of gentleman's paper, full of gossip, chitchat, comment on what the Christian gentleman should or should not do.

Addison, famed for his urbanity and serene mind, and for a style cool and limpid as his own personality, gave the clue to his entire life in these words of guidance: "Cheerfulness is a kind of daylight in the mind, filling it with a steady and perpetual serenity."

What finer definition could you have in few words than this of what it means to be a Christian gentleman?



What's the use of fretting?
If you've troubles, try forgetting.

Take things easy — praise or blame,
the world will wag on, just the same.

What's the difference anyhow
a hundred years from now?

Don't anticipate your sorrow.
When it comes, no need to borrow.

Get your sleep out, troubled one.
You cannot rush the slow old sun.

So let the seasons come and go,
bringing with them weal or woe.

Use the moments as they fly,
nor try to help them hasten by.

In life's long race you needn't hurry,
And if you'd win it, don't — don't worry!



“HAVE YOU HAD YOUR IRON TODAY?”

Do you remember that slogan? It sold a lot of merchandise. Everyone wanted pep — and they still do, so here is a definition of PEP for you to go by.

Vigor, vitality, vim and punch —
The courage to act on a sudden hunch,
The nerve to tackle the hardest thing,
With feet that climb and hands that cling,
And a heart that never forgets to sing,
— that's P E P !



He who has no future, has no life; he exists,
but does not live.

DR. O. BROWNSON



It is not the victory which gives happiness
to noble hearts, it is the struggle.

COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT



We are not among those who are given to
overmuch complaining. We have an especial
antipathy to the whole brood of grumblers,

and croakers, and murmurers. We have nothing to do with despair. Hope is our watchword, and our rallying cry. We love to fix our attention on the brightest, sunniest spot of every picture. If, as we look around us, we see many things which offend our eyes; if, as we listen to the onward march of passing events, we hear much which jars on our ears; if, as we compare things as they are with things as we would rather have them be, we find on every side ample room for improvement; we are bound to confess that we see much that is encouraging, hear much that gladdens our hearts, and daily meet with fresh reasons for thankfulness and gratitude.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA



HAVE YOU...?

He has achieved success who has lived well, laughed often, and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of little children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who has left the world even better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem, or a rescued soul; who has never lacked appreciation of earth's beauty or failed to express it; who has always looked for the best in others and given the best he had; whose life was an inspiration; whose memory, a benediction.



Don't worry about the future,
the present is all thou hast.

The future will soon be present,
and the present will soon be past.

“TAKE THEM AS YOU FIND THEM”

Don't disturb yourself about
Fair or stormy weather;
Squalls must sometimes whistle round
When people live together.
Some will smile, and some will frown,
You need never mind them;
Travel on as best you can —
Take them as you find them.

You are peacefully inclined,
And you sometimes wonder
Why the restless souls delight
In exciting thunder,
Rushing hastily along,
Clouds of dust behind them,
Never follow in their track —
Take them as you find them.

Some are of a different stamp,
Quiet, deep, and clever,
(Well, you know sincerity
Is canonized forever.)
Nature first, and habit then,
Crookedly inclined them.
Don't investigate them much —
Take them as you find them.

Pass a little grievance by,
Don't appear to heed it;
Be as helpful as you may,
Kind to those who need it.
Never flatter, never try
Skillfully to wind them
To your own peculiar view —
Take them as you find them.

They may think you very wrong;

You may think they wander:

Charity will whisper then,

"Better not to ponder."

Actions wear a different look

When motives are assigned them:

Keep your eyes upon yourself —

Take them as you find them.



The Indians have a proverb that when the sandal-tree is cut down, it covers with perfumes the ax that strikes it.

In the same way the true Christian should remember that adversity and trials leave their own distinctive perfume behind them.

And good fortune has a wearying and trying side to it, which few of us realize, until we have gained it and then have found it is too late to retrace our steps and remain in the happiness of our adversity.

Not for nothing did Petrarch write his book in the 14th century on this topic: "A Remedy Against Both Fortunes." He knew from experience what havoc both good fortune and misfortune can play with the soul of man, unless approached with the proper spirit.



The old Romans had one word: VIRTUS, which we translate today as VIRTUE.

But they meant by it: *manliness*, deriving the word from the noun VIR, signifying MAN. Then by easy steps it came to mean that which went with manliness: STRENGTH, and COURAGE.

In fact, you cannot have the one without the other.

You cannot be always courageous — we do not refer to the reckless flashy courage that desperadoes might evince, but rather the steady serene fortitude which NEVER yields; you cannot be courageous, unless you have a sizable amount of virtue within you.

By its very essence, Christianity demands of its believers that they have virtue and be courageous.



The generic term in Hebrew for man is "Hench." It means fever, or pain.

Montaigne declares that even pleasure in its greatest extent becomes pain.

Socrates taught his disciples that misfortunes were necessary to bring forth great thoughts and great virtues.

The great plays of the world are predicated on the groanings of man's heart against grief and tragic adversity — all the Greek tragedies culminating in that masterpiece, "Oedipus"; "Lear," "Othello," "Macbeth," "Hamlet" — the finest specimens of English drama; the heart-rending sorrows of Italian operas. And at the beginning of classic literature, it was the trials of Ulysses and the ruin of Troy which inspired Homer, and the afflictions of Aeneas which prompted Vergil to take up his pen. Nearer to our time, it took persecution and exile and resentment to dictate the cantos of "The Divina Commedia" to Dante, and his blind days drove Milton to the composition of the immortal "Paradise Lost," with its organ-stop harmonies.



Wisdom is to know that rest is rust and that real life is to love, to laugh and to work.

THERE'S A SONG IN EVERYTHING

In the meadow strewn with blooms,
In the lark that warbling soars,
In the wind that sobs and roars,
In the heather's purple brooms,
In the magic of each spring:
There's a song in everything.

In the mountain's hidden vein,
In the brook and in the streams,
In the pine trees' quiet dreams,
In the silver summer rain,
In the strength of eagle's wing:
There's a song in everything.

In the shifting autumn sky,
In the boat that gently sails,
In the rhythm of the flails,
In the white clouds floating by,
In the moon's pale, misty ring:
There's a song in everything.

In the orisons that rise,
In the blessings that descend,
In the lisped word of a friend,
In a mother's lullabies,
In the joy that yule logs bring:
There's a song in everything.

In the soul that hopes and fears,
In the hearts that love and trust,
In each "may" and in each "must,"
In all the hours, days and years
Of man's ceaseless wandering:
There's a song in everything.

Ah, if song is everywhere,
On the hill and in the plain,
E'en in sorrow and in pain,

And if all God made is fair,
You, dear heart, you, too, must sing,
There's a song in everything.

FREDERICK M. LYNK, S.V. D.



Do not shrink from suffering.

If you have the inherent qualities, you will emerge from the test with added luster.

Diamonds must be broken into shining planes by other diamonds. Gold must be tortured by incredible heats to yield all its glory. The glittering sands found on Arizonan deserts are immediately discarded by prospectors: they know that anything shining so brightly in its natural state must be "fool's gold" — iron pyrites, with absolutely no value.



Some people will find reason for going against any proposition others originate. They can find no good in it — left to themselves they would start nothing themselves and they refuse to encourage their neighbors to have enthusiasm enough to originate anything.

They are like Flaherty, who was approached by the parish priest and asked for a contribution to put an iron fence around the cemetery.

"Why, Father," he argued, "I don't see that I find any sense to it. Why a fence? There is nobody inside of that cemetery that wants to get out — and begorra! there's for sure nobody outside that wants to get in."



The man who gives up goes down.

B. C. FORBES

Don't expect nothing but pleasant hours in the twenty-four that make up a day. You would find it pretty monotonous, anyway.

◆ ◆

IT TAKES SO LITTLE

It takes so little to make us sad,
just a slighting word or a doubting sneer,
just a scornful smile on some lips held dear;
and our footsteps lag, though the goal seemed
near,
and we lose the courage and the hope we had,
so little it takes to make us sad.

It takes so little to make us glad,
just the cheering clasp of a friendly hand,
just a word from one who can understand;
and we finish the task we long had planned,
and lose the doubt and the fear we had,
so little it takes to make us glad.

IDA G. MORRIS

◆ ◆

Scientifically, the darkest part of the night comes just before the dawn.

Spiritually and mentally, we all know this is true.

But how many of us concentrate on thinking of the day ahead, of the new horizon of promise, instead of fretting over the gloom all about us?

◆ ◆

DO THE LAUGHING

Andrew Carnegie knew that to run a big business it is not enough to be a dynamo of work and ideas.

People do not always get their best results done just because the boss is a pusher.

Said Carnegie: "My young partners do the work and I do the laughing."

He knew how a creative and optimistic attitude gets things done. He trusted his assistants to get the details done, and kept himself free to attack the big problems. He did the laughing ... and was always ready for any difficulty.

◆ ◆

A little more kindness;
A little less greed;
A little more giving;
A little less creed;
A little more smile;
A little less frown;
A little less kicking
A man when he's down;
A little more "we";
A little less "I";
A little more laugh;
A little less cry;
A little more flowers
On the path of life,
And fewer on graves
At the end of the strife.

◆ ◆

If pleasures are greater in anticipation, just remember that this is true also of troubles.

ELBERT HUBBARD

◆ ◆

Adversity is sometimes hard upon a man; but for one man who can stand prosperity, there are a hundred that will stand adversity.

CARLYLE

BUT ONCE. . . .

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being — let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

◆ ◆
If you
your ears
would keep
from jeers,
these things keep meekly hid:

MYSELF and I
and MINE
and MY
and how I do
and DID. . . .

WM. F. NORRIS

◆ ◆
If you coddle your worries, they will be just like the Chinaman's famous queue — no matter how he turned, it always hung behind him.

And then some people are like Peter Schlemihl, who sold his shadow to the devil and was never happy thereafter. They simply *must* have something to irk them and shred their souls to bits.

They have never learned that to make a shadow, one need only stand in his own sunshine. . . .

◆ ◆
There are two qualities that are the property of only strong men: confidence and resignation.

ROCKEFELLER'S HEALTH RULES

When John D. Rockefeller, Sr., was 97 years of age, he stated that since his youth he had observed the following ten rules for health:

1. Never lose interest in life, business and the outside world.
2. Eat sparingly and at regular hours.
3. Get plenty of exercise but not too much.
4. Get plenty of sleep.
5. Never allow yourself to become annoyed.
6. Set a daily schedule of life, and keep to it.
7. Get a lot of sunlight.
8. Drink as much milk as will agree with you.
9. Obey your doctor, and consult him often.
10. Don't overdo things.

Enthusiasm is the greatest asset in the world. It beats money and power and influence. Single-handed, the enthusiast convinces and dominates where wealth, accumulated by a small army of workers, would scarcely raise a tremor of interest. Enthusiasm tramples over prejudices and opposition, spurns inaction, storms the citadel for its object, like an avalanche, overwhelms and engulfs all obstacles. It is nothing more nor less than faith in action.

HENRY CHESTER

◆ ◆

"Oh, give me the man who sings at his work," cries the redoubtable Carlyle.

Every boss would rather hear his employees whistling than whining.

Try the whistling; it is easier on your larynx too.



A word to the wise from Mark Twain:

"Grief can take care of itself; but to get the full value of joy, you must have somebody to divide it with."



The soldiers at the front during the last World War found their morale visibly improved with a simple song:

"PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES IN YOUR OLD KIT BAG AND SMILE, BOY, SMILE."

Do you have a marching song of this type to pep you up through the struggles of every day?



THOSE WHO LIKE EVERYTHING THEY HAVE ARE HAPPIER THAN THOSE WHO HAVE EVERYTHING THEY LIKE.



Nature compensates us beautifully for even our physical defects. Have you ever noticed that when a man has one short leg, nature so arranges it that the other leg is longer?



Yoh kin talk about your sorrow,
Yoh kin talk about your grief;
But it ain't no use to borrow
trouble — dat don't bring relief.
Yoh mus' face de changin' seasons,
so don't complain or doubt;
Yoh war put on earth for reasons
and dar ain't no backin' out.

De winter's mighty chilly,
and de summer's mighty hot;
de roads is long and hilly,
and dar ain't no restin' spot;
but, honey, don't be tearful,
jes' let yoh haht be stout;
Yoh might as well be cheerful,
'case dar ain't no backin' out.

PHILANDER JOHNSON



You tell on yourself by the way you speak to others. Ella Wheeler Wilcox compresses this thought in her poem:

"Talk happiness. The world is sad enough
Without your woes. No path is wholly rough;
Look for the places that are smooth and clear,
And speak of those to rest the weary ear
Of earth, so hurt by one continuous strain
Of human discontent and grief and pain.

Talk faith. The world is better off without
Your uttered ignorance and morbid doubt.
If you have faith in God, or man, or self,
Say so; if not, push back upon the shelf
Of silence all your thoughts till faith shall
 come;
No one will grieve because your lips are
 dumb.

Talk health. The dreary, never-changing tale
Of mortal maladies is worn and stale.
You can not harm, or interest, or please,
By harping on that minor chord, disease.
Say you are well, or all is well with you,
And God shall hear your words and make
 them true."

BOOST YOURSELF TOO!

How many business men have "booster" signs tacked up around their offices!

They know full well the value of having such little stimulants to urge their staff of salesmen and office clerks to keep pushing the company's business.

I have even heard it said that in the inter-departmental memos of the Campbell Soup Factories the word soup is always spelled with a capital S. To those clerks soup is not just soup . . . it is their business and livelihood, it is *S O U P*.

Do you boost your own personality the same way? Do you keep reminding yourself of the importance of stressing your own sense of peace and joy and happiness, without which you are letting your own self, your "business" run down?



THE SUICIDE

The man, his face almost concealed beneath the upturned collar of his expensive overcoat, stood in the shadow of one of the steel girders of the bridge, looking at the water fifty feet below. It was dark and forbidding down there, and there was a murmur like that of sighing as the water lapped about the concrete pylon of the bridge. He reached into his pocket for a last cigarette before — before making his escape.

The smoke billowed from his mouth as he reviewed the situation for the last time. Escape was what he was looking for. Escape from the futility of seeking what could not be found. He had tried everything. Wild

orgies of sensuality. Travel and excitement. Drink and dope. And now the last great failure — marriage. He had really loved the girl. She brought back to him faint dreams of happiness in simple things, solid things, holy things. But she couldn't stand him after a few months. No woman could. He demanded too much — gave nothing. He was too much a brute to be treated like a man. The river was the best place for him.

A man passed by as he finished his cigarette. Rather, a semblance of a man. He had no overcoat, and the clothes he had were shabby. The man saw him standing in the shadow and said:

"Got a dime I could have for a cup of coffee, mister?"

The other smiled ironically in the darkness. A dime! what difference could a dime make now?

"Sure, I've got a dime, buddy. I've got more than a dime." He took out a wallet. "Here. Take it all." There was about \$100 in the wallet, and he took it out and thrust it toward the tramp.

"What's the idea?" asked the tramp.

"It's all right. I won't need it where I'm going." He glanced down toward the water.

The tramp took the bills, and stood holding them uncertainly for a moment. Then he said:

"No, you don't, mister. I may be a beggar, but I'm no coward, and I won't take money from one either. Take your filthy money with you — into the river." He threw the bills over the rail and they fluttered and scat-

tered as they drifted slowly down toward the dark water. "So long, coward." He walked off.

The suicide gasped. Suddenly he wanted the tramp to have the money he had thrown away. He wanted to give — and couldn't. To give! That was it! To give! He had never tried that before. To give — and be happy.... He took one last look at the river and then turned from it and followed the tramp....

L. F. HYLAND



Let us be like Stevenson's hero, who "went up the great bare staircase of his duty, uncheered and undepressed" no matter what befell.



It's thus with worldly troubles; when the big ones come along, we serenely go to meet them, feeling valiant, bold and strong, but the weary little worries, with their poisoned stings and smarts, put the lid upon our courage, make us gray, and break our hearts.

WALT MASON



Ah! learn to make the most of life,
nor lose one happy day,
For time will never return sweet joys
neglected, thrown away,
nor leave one tender word unsaid,
— Thy kindness sow broadcast:
"The mill will never grind again
with water that is past."

SARAH DAUDNEY



A certain business man has this sign printed on his calling cards:

THROW AWAY YOUR HAMMER AND BUY
A HORN

In other words, don't knock — boost! Don't tear down, but see the good points in something and praise them. The next time you feel inclined to rip down the other fellow's work or character, throw away your hammer and buy a horn. Praise his good points. He will feel better, and probably act better, and eventually will do a better job. And you will not have lost your own sense of contentment.



The mind of the Church is like that of a solicitous Mother, ever mindful of her children's welfare. How better explain this than by noting that right in the midst of the solemn hush of Advent she sets aside one Sunday on which to rejoice, *Gaudete Sunday*. And again in Lent, she forgoes all the penitential atmosphere of the season in order to celebrate *Laetare Sunday*. And on such Sundays even the very vestments carry out the symbolism of joy: they are rose-colored. The very liturgy carries a daily exhortation: *Sursum Corda*. . . . "Lift up your hearts," that is, don't relax now — keep up your efforts and meantime rejoice, for soon will come the Birthday of Christ, soon will come the Resurrection, and your expectations of great joy shall be fulfilled.



Whatever your sex or position, life is a battle in which you are to show your pluck; and woe be to the coward! Whether passed on a bed of sickness or a tented field, it is

ever the same fair play, and admits no foolish distinctions. Despair and postponement are cowardice and defeat. Men are born to succeed, not to fail.

THOREAU

◆ ◆

Time and again we read in the autobiographies of famous after-dinner speakers, actors, public characters, that they prepared carefully for a festive occasion and rose to give their neatly tailored witticism or felicitations, only to find to their horror that they had lost their notes, or forgotten entirely the trend of thought they had decided on. And again and again we are told how a sudden inspiration came to their rescue and they produced a remark on the spur of the moment which "went over" far better than their original effort ever could have done.

How foolish to worry about such trivialities! How silly to fret about making an impression! These men, inured to the exigencies of such occasions, never let the situation get on their nerves. They simply kept calm, cool and collected, and the situation took care of itself better than they could have planned.

◆ ◆

Our President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, has an excellent bon mot credited to him: "When you get to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on."

◆ ◆

One can bear grief, but it takes two to be glad.

THE TOWN OF DON'T YOU WORRY

There's a town called "Don't You Worry"
on the banks of the River Smile,
where the Cheer-up and Be-happy
bloom sweetly all the while.
Where the Never-grumble flower
blooms beside the fragrant Try,
and the Never-Give-Up and Patience
point their faces to the sky.

In the valley of Contentment,
in the province of I Will,
you will find this lovely city
at the foot of No-Fret Hill —
there are thoroughfares delightful
in this charming little town,
and on every hand are shade trees
named the Very-Seldom-Frown.

Rustic benches quite enticing
you'll find scattered here and there,
and to each a vine is clinging,
called the Frequent Earnest Prayer.
Everybody there is happy,
and singing all the while,
in the town of Don't You Worry,
on the banks of the River Smile.

J. M. NEAD



The failures of life sit around and complain; the gods haven't treated them right; they've lost their umbrellas whenever there's rain; and they haven't their lanterns at night; men tire of the failures who fill with their sighs the air of their own neighborhoods; there's one who is greeted with love-lighted eyes — The Man Who Delivers the Goods.

FORGET IT!

If you detest this vale of tears, forget it!
If you've a whine for victims' ears, forget it;
the folks who toddle to and fro and do their
duties as they go don't care about your tale
of woe — forget it!

... Folks are pretty much the same; the
man who roars is most to blame; they'll treat
you as you play the game — forget it! You
have some gossip to relate? Forget it! A
scandal never pays the freight — forget it!



It is best to begin your folio; even if the
doctor does not give you a year, even if he
hesitates about a month, make one brave
push, see what can be finished in a week....
All who have meant good work with their
whole heart, have done good work, although
they may die before they have time to sign
it.... Life goes down with a better grace
foaming in full tide over a precipice, than
miserably struggling to an end in sandy
deltas....

R. L. STEVENSON



TEN THOUSAND PASS

Here is a little rhyme about opportunity. G.
G. Blande wrote it, and he has put into these
few lines pure gold. Are you one of the
ten thousand? What if you have passed by
and missed your great chance? ... It shouldn't
worry you. Perhaps the magic wine would
have gone to your head and done you more
harm than good.

Read on:

"I seek for none.
I knock at no man's gate.
I sit as one
enthroned in regal state.

Ten thousand pass
unheeding me and mine;
One kneels — his glass
I fill with magic wine."



FAITH IN YOURSELF

Believe that you can — and you will not fail, though great be the task begun. Believe that you can — though hard the trail, and rugged the road you run. Have faith in yourself. Just know you can and you're simply bound to do; and never a barrier, bar or ban can keep you from carrying through.

Believe in yourself and then go in and work with your heart and soul. Believe in yourself and you'll surely win, no matter how far your goal. There's a marvelous force in the faith that springs from this great and noble thought; by the magic spell of the strength it brings, the greatest of deeds are wrought.

Believe in your soul that you will succeed. For as surely as you hold this thought you will back your faith with the power of deed, till the last hard fight is fought. Aye, hold to that thought and you'll do your part in the way that it should be done. Just start with a winner's confident heart, and your battle is really won.

So go to it, now, and hit your stride, at the crack of the starting gun, and never falter or turn aside 'til the whole long course is run.

You may not be brilliant, or clever, or smart;
you may not be fast of pace, but if you have
grit and a confident heart, you'll be there at
the end of the race.

◆ ◆

LAUGH IT OFF!

If life seems to go all wrong,
Laugh it off!
Drown your worry in a song,
Laugh it off!
Do your work with smiling face,
Look ahead and keep the pace,
Be a winner in the race,
Laugh it off!

◆ ◆

One lifted a stone from my rocky road,
one carried awhile my heavy load,
one lifted his candle when all was dark,
one heard the song of the morning lark —
A look, and I knew a brother was near,
only a smile, but it banished my fear,
Ah! little you thought of the help you gave,
but the little you did was mighty to save!

◆ ◆

IT'S DEAD EASY TO DIE....

It really takes more to hang on, instead of
giving up. Robert W. Service wrote a first-
class poem on this once and called it "The
Quitter." Why not copy it and pass it
around? It might give the other fellow cour-
age, and it won't do you any harm to remem-
ber it from time to time, either.

Here it is:

When lost in the wild and scared as a child,
and death looks you bang in the eye,
and you're sore as a boil, it's according to

Hoyle

to cock your revolver ... and die.

But the code of man says: "Fight as you
can,"

and self-dissolution is barred.

In hunger and woe, oh, it's easy to blow,
it's the hell-served-for-breakfast that's hard.

You're sick of the game — well, now that's a
shame,

you're young, you're brave and you're bright,
you've had a raw deal, I know, but don't
squeal,

buck up, do your hardest and fight.

It's the plugging away that will win the day,
so don't be a piker, old pard,

just draw on your grit ... it's so easy to quit,
it's the keeping-your-chin-up that's hard.

It's easy to cry that you're beaten and die;

it's easy to crawfish and crawl;

but to fight and fight when hope's out of sight
— why, that's the best game of them all.

And though you come out of each gruelling
bout

all broken, beaten and scarred,

just have one more try ... it's dead easy to
die,

it's the keeping-on-living that's hard.



Whenever my work takes me to an office
building I am eternally amused by the sight
of people going through revolving doors.
You can tell a lot of characters by the way

people push their way through a revolving door. Some do so breezily; others gingerly, as though the door behind them might nip them where they "ain't" looking; others decorously, with dignity; still others heartily so that the door spins about merrily behind them . . . and some push it just enough to allow themselves through and let the fellow behind do his share . . . while the worst category of all gets into the compartment and LET'S THE FELLOW BEHIND HIM PUSH HIM THROUGH!

A little boy walked into a large firm one day and asked for a job.

He was so small the owner was amused.

"What is your motto, my son?" he asked.

"The same as yours," was the brisk reply.

"What is that?" inquired the puzzled owner.

"Why," said the boy, "the motto you have on the door there — PUSH!"

PS.: He got the job.



If you were busy being kind
before you knew it you would find
you'd soon forget to think 'twas true
that someone was unkind to you.

If you were busy being glad
and cheering people who are sad
although your heart might ache a bit
you'd soon forget to notice it.

If you were busy being good
and doing just the best you could
you'd not have time to blame some man
who's doing just the best he can.

If you were busy being true
to what you know you ought to do
you'd be so busy you'd forget
the blunders of the folks you've met.

REBECCA FORESMAN

LEARN TO LET GO

If you want to be healthy, morally, mentally and physically, just let go.

Let go of the little bothers of everyday life, the irritations and the petty vexations that cross your path daily. Don't take them up and nurse them, pet them, and brood over them. They are not worth while. Let them go.

That little hurt you got from a friend, perhaps it wasn't intended, perhaps it was, but never mind, let it go. Refuse to think about it.

Let go of that feeling of hatred you have for another, the jealousy, the envy, the malice, let go all such thoughts. Sweep them out of your mind, and you will be surprised what a cleaning and rejuvenating effect it will have upon you, both physically and mentally. Let them all go; you house them at deadly risk.

But the big troubles, the bitter disappointments, the deep wrongs and the heart-breaking sorrows, tragedies of life, what about them? Why, just let them go, too. Drop them, softly maybe, but surely. Put away all regret and bitterness, and let sorrow be only a softening influence. Yes, let them go, too, and make the most of the future.

Then that little pet ailment that you have been hanging on to and talking about, let it

go. It will be a good riddance. You have treated it royally, but abandon it; let it go. Talk about health, instead, and health will come. Quit nursing that pet ailment, and let go.

It is not so hard after once you get used to the habit of it — letting go of these things. You will find it such an easy way to get rid of the things that may mar and embitter life that you will enjoy letting them go. You will find the world such a beautiful place. You will find it beautiful because you will be free to enjoy it — free in mind and body.

Learn to let go. As you value health of body and peace of mind, let go — just simply let go.



FAITH

I will not doubt, though all my ships at sea
Come drifting home, with broken mast and
sails;

I will believe the Hand which never fails,
From seeming evil, worketh good for me;
And, though I weep because those sails are
tattered,
Still will I cry, while my best hopes lie
shattered,

“I trust in Thee.”

I will not doubt, though all my prayers return
Unanswered from the still white realm
above;

I will believe it is an all-wise love
Which has refused these things for which I
yearn;

And, though at times I cannot keep from
grieving,
Yet the pure ardor of my fixed believing
Undimmed shall burn.

I will not doubt, though sorrow fall like rain,
And troubles swarm like bees about to hive;
I will believe the heights for which I strive
Are only reached by anguish and by pain;
And though I groan and writhe beneath my
crosses,

I shall ever through my bitterest losses
The greater gain.

I will not doubt. Well anchored in this faith;
Like some stanch ship, my soul braves
every gale,

So strong its courage is, it will not quail
To breast the mighty unknown sea of death.
Oh, may I cry, though body parts with spirit,
"I do not doubt," so listening worlds may hear
it,

With my last breath!



Don't trouble trouble until trouble troubles
you. In brief, teach yourself neither to cry
for the moon, nor to cry over spilt milk. You'll
never get the moon, and the milk is gone
for good.



I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day.
I'd rather one should walk with me than
merely tell the way.

The best of all the preachers are the men
who live their creeds,
For to see good put in action is what every-
body needs.

EDGAR GUEST

When trouble troubles you,
Sing, baby, sing;
Sing like the birdies do,
Sing, baby, sing!

Sing all the day,
Sing, baby, sing;
And the blues will go away,
Sing, baby, sing!



How we revere the pioneers of America!

Of them it was fittingly said: "The cowards never started and the weak died on the way."

It took men to face the plagues and perils of the Wild West. It took courage and confidence to face the dismal future, whose horizon was so often silhouetted with the four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. It took men.

If the call came today, could you be a pioneer?



CONQUER SELF!

In all the straits and walks of life,
your duty is in all your strife
to conquer self.

No matter where you go each day,
whate'er you do, whate'er you say,
first conquer self.

To conquer others you must be
the master of yourself, you see,
and conquer self.

If you are conscious-stricken too,
remember something's wrong with you,
then conquer self.

To perfect self and conquer sin,

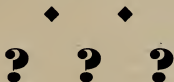
should be your task in life to win,
so conquer self.

The one who conquers self, you know,
will conquer death, the common foe,
by conquering self,
for death then has no pain nor fear,
to him who has perfected here,
and conquered self.

O Jesus, Thou hast conquered death,
to save my precious soul;
oh, help me conquer "Self" each day,
in all I do and say.

Then, when life's course is ended,
my task on earth is done,
my "Self" on earth is conquered,
and Thy embrace is won.

O Heart of Jesus, I trust in Thee;
let me not be confounded eternally.



*Years ago the following made the rounds.
We reprint it here merely to show how far a
pessimist can go, once fairly started.*

".... Life is just one damn thing after another. Man comes into this world without his consent, and leaves it against his will. During his stay on earth, his time is spent in one continuous round of contraries and misunderstandings. In his infancy he is an angel; in his boyhood he is a devil; in his manhood he is everything from a lizard up (including a skunk). In his duties he is a fool. (If he raises a family, he is a chump; if he raises a check, he is a thief; if he raises a million by stock juggling, he is a financier). If he is a

poor man, he is considered a bad manager, and has no sense; if he is a rich man, he is considered dishonest but smart. If he is in politics, he is a grafter and a crook; if he is out of politics, you can't place him, as he is a useless citizen. If he goes to church, he is a hypocrite; if he stays away, he is a sinner. If he donates for foreign missions, he does it for show; if he doesn't, he is stingy. When he first comes into the world, everybody wants to kiss him; when he goes out, they want to kick him. If he dies young, there was a great future before him; if he lingers before dying, he is in the way. Life is a funny proposition. . . ."



Think you, to *thank* you the Lord, for an un-thinkful, unthankful heart can scarce enter the heavenly gate.

Of course, unless you think, it is not possible to thank anyone. And conversely, in order to thank, one has to think, too. The real fact of the matter is that both words have the same root. Here is a good opportunity to be thankful that we are able to think, to thank. Alleluia!



WHAT IS IT ALL?

What is it all when all is told,
This ceaseless toiling for fame or gold,
The fleeting joy or bitter tears?
We are only here a few short years;
Nothing our own but the silent past;
Loving or hating, nothing can last.
Each pathway leads to the silent fold,
Oh! what is it when all is told?

What is it all? A grassy mound,
Where day or night there is never a sound
Save the soft low mourn of the passing breeze,
As it lovingly rustles the silent trees.
Or a thoughtful friend with whispered prayer,
May sometimes break the stillness there,
Then hurry, away from the gloom and cold.
Oh! what is it all when all is told?

What is it all? — just passing through —
A cross for me and a cross for you.
Ours seem heavy while others seem light,
But God in the end makes all things right;
He "tempers the wind" with such loving care,
He knows the burden that each can bear,
Then changes life's gray into heavenly gold.
Ah! that is all when all is told.



The famous painting by Guido Reni depicting St. Michael conquering the devil is the study of *the fight of an angel*. St. Michael's face is serene and untroubled. His angelic powers make light of the task of disposing of the archenemy of mankind. Victory seems effortless to him.

The picture of the death of St. Jerome painted by another great medieval artist delineates for us each harrowing detail which has accompanied the saint's struggle for perfection: it is *the fight of a man* that is here fixed on the canvas. The bones seem almost breaking through the flesh, the eyes are blurred with pain and long-endured suffering, the scars on his body and soul are all but visible.

You cannot be a great man or a saint and not pay the price.

OUR FEARS OF TODAY

Today, every possible type of dread and worry and fear besieges the souls of men.

Mankind is beset by a continuous and harassing storm of panic blended of imaginary peril and actual evil.

How, then, to determine which things we really ought to fear — how, then, to decide which horrors we should armor ourselves against?

In the twelfth chapter of St. Luke the Evangelist records the exhortation of the Divine Master which was especially aimed at precisely this contingency in the lives of men. Not only does Jesus tell us what to fear, but He tells us definitely and concretely what NOT to fear. Read it for yourself:

"And I say to you, my friends: Be not afraid of them who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do.

"But I will show you whom you shall fear: fear ye him, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say to you, fear him.

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

"Yes, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: you are of more value than many sparrows."

Then He tells them a little story to explain how foolish it is to be covetous, and returns to his theme:

"Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat; nor for your body, what you shall put on.

"The life is more than the meat, and the body is more than the raiment.

"Consider the ravens, for they sow not, neither do they reap, neither have they storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them. How much are you more valuable than they!

"And which of you, by taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit?

"If then ye be not able to do so much as the least thing, why are you solicitous for the rest?

"Consider the lilies, how they grow; they labor not, neither do they spin; but I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these.

"Now, if God clothe in this manner the grass that is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more you, O ye of little faith!

"And seek not what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; and be not lifted on high.

"For all these things do the nations of the world seek. But your Father knoweth that you have need of these things.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."

It would repay every one of us to read and reread that entire chapter. There is more of the Lord's exhortation, and in our time of turmoil and terror, what more steadfast and enduring words exist than these, spoken so many centuries ago in a spirit of divine tenderness and solicitude?

Our fears of today existed yesterday and the century before yesterday, and the only clue past those obstacles and pitfalls is in the words of Jesus Himself.

Does the road seem long and weary? Does the burden on your shoulders weigh you down with anguish and strain? Does the view ahead of you appear gloomed over with clouds and storms? Turn to your mother, Mary — and she whose heart was pierced with seven swords of sorrow will not turn her ear away from your story of worry or sickness or doubt. The little poem added here is worth remembering; if our mother will not listen to us, who then will?

MARY, MY HELP

In the midst of all your trials

Mary is forever near.

Hear her words of gentle accent:

"Courage, child, and have no fear."

Working with her, working by her,

You can tread as Jesus trod.

'Tis the secret to be holy

And to do the Will of God.

When the path seems hard to nature,

She will watch with anxious care;

Her sweet smile will lighten labor,

And her love will strengthen prayer.

Through her to your Jesus offer

Life for life, and love for love;

Then she'll weave your crown of glory

In our endless home above.



