

## SELECTIONS FOR THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

### 'THE INELEGANCE OF HURRY.'

There is an idea prevalent that to be in a hurry is a sign of importance, of large business and large achievements. It is a serious mistake. An experienced person always mistrusts the man who hurries, for he fails in emergencies. Serenity of mind and leisurely action are necessary to fine work of any kind. It is in leisure that the mind assimilates best.

Scipio Africanus<sup>+</sup> declared, 'I am never less at leisure than when at leisure.' A rare bit of wisdom of which all reflective minds know the value. If we admit this as true, the inelegance of a hurried manner has the best of reasons. It is wasteful, inconsistent with the finest action, and is caused by a man losing control of himself, and suggests an uneasy, indecisive mind.

A distinction, however, should be recognised between activity and excited hurry, and between slowness and self-possession. Activity with self-possession is the desirable condition.

### TROUBLES MADE BEAUTIFUL.

Most of the shells of the oyster are pearly in the interior; and as the true pearls are merely morbid growths, they may all produce pearls of various qualities. The formation of pearls is caused by the introduction of irritating substances, such as grains of sand, between the mantle and the shell. The irritation causes the animal to cover the obnoxious object with layers of pearl, which generally attach the foreign body to the interior of the shell. The Chinese produce pearls artificially by placing substances in the position just described; and we have seen some shells to the interior of which small metal images were attached by this pearly secretion.

When we look at a pearl, we look at an annoyance which has been ennobled. The oyster by itself is of merely nominal value. But the result of the oyster's own treatment of its irritation—the pearl—is something 'of great price'. Apart from its pecuniary

worth this gem has a moral significance. It suggests that troubles may be made beautiful, and reminds us that amongst mankind some martyrs are more remembered for the glory with which they invested their sorrows than for any other portion of their lives. Biography has its moral pearls, which are treasured long after the creators of them have perished, just as material pearls are valued long years after the oysters have been discarded.

### GOD CHOOSEETH.

There are men who have strong and laudable desires to serve the Lord, and who fervently pray for his glory; but he does not always seem to hear their prayers. There are various reasons for this. Sometimes men are unfit for the Lord's service. They are not purged from their sins; they are not vessels unto honour, *fitted* for the Master's use; and so he sets them aside as not adapted to his work. Sometimes men wish to do great things, but find themselves straitened, hindered, limited and circumscribed; sometimes they are reserved for still greater work; in other cases they are rejected of the Lord for reasons well known to him.

Moses longed to lead Israel into Canaan, but he was not permitted to enter the promised land. So David would gladly have built the temple at Jerusalem, but the Lord would not accept that service at his hands. Paul was forbidden by the holy Spirit to preach the gospel in Asia, and though he essayed to go into Bithynia, the Spirit suffered him not. In like manner we may have desires and aspirations for usefulness which will never be gratified. The Lord may see that we could not bear the exaltation and the honour which we seek. He knows far better than we do what is for our good, and so he would have us rest contented in his providence, not idle, but diligent; not careless, but watchful; not indifferent, but full of intense, earnest longing to do the will of God; yet patient under restraint, and content to be neglected and forgotten, remembering that 'they also serve who only stand and wait', and that the Lord in his own well-chosen hour can lead us forth to fulfil his purposes of grace.

—ZION'S WATCH TOWER, JANUARY 1ST, 1895—

<sup>+</sup> Scipio Africanus. . . (born 236 BCE—died 183 BCE, Liternum, Campania [now Patria, Italy]), [a] Roman general noted for his victory over the Carthaginian leader Hannibal in the great Battle of Zama (202 BCE), ending the Second Punic War. For his victory he won the surname Africanus (201 BCE).—[www.britannica.com/biography/Scipio-Africanus](http://www.britannica.com/biography/Scipio-Africanus)