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# THE CHRISTIAN TREASURY

## A FAMILY MISCELLANY

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**CHRISTIAN TREASURY.**  


CONTAINING

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF VARIOUS  
EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS.

THE SPIRITUAL RELATION OF CHRISTIAN WORK TO THE  
CHURCH AND THE INDIVIDUAL.

BY REV. ROBERT SMITH, A.M., CORSOCK, BY DALBEATTIE.



**L**N the general aspect of the case, it is readily admitted by all that a mutual connection does exist between life and work. The difficulty lies in realising its importance, and especially the importance of the fact that the connection is not one-sided, but in the strictest sense mutual.

Life is necessary to work, but work is equally necessary to life. And this holds good not only in principle, but in degree. Work gives back to life as much as it first received from it. The law of the physical world—that action and reaction are equal and contrary—is of equal force in the spiritual. The hammer delivers a blow to the anvil, but the anvil returns it back again to the hammer. And so it is with all things that are in a true sense mutually related. The cause becomes an effect, and the effect is turned into a cause alternately. So it is, as between *truth* and *life*. The knowledge of truth produces life—life in its best form as a living experience—but this last is the key to all further increase of knowledge. So also does it stand with the second pair, *life* and *work*, with which we have at present specially to do. The first condition of Christian work is true Christian life; but the first condition of the maintenance and increase of true Christian life is faithful Christian work.

Nor is this reflexive influence of work on the life from which it springs to be regarded

as incidental, or only of comparative value. The work must, of course, vary in form according to the circumstances of each individual. But in some form or other it is an essential element of his Christian calling. Without it, his spiritual life can never be healthful or strong. And, indeed, its entire absence would argue the extinction of life altogether.

As hinted already, there are two pairs of reciprocal relations to be attended to here. Truth, life, and work are all co-related. Of these, truth is related to life, and life to truth; and, again, life is related to work, and work to life.

It thus appears that the life occupies a middle position, being related to truth on the one hand, and to work on the other. Truth, entering the soul through the channel of faith in the power of the Holy Ghost, kindles the new life there; but by the same power it issues forth again, and appears in all works of holiness and love.

But this circuit of life must be complete. There must be a reverse as well as a direct current; and if it be interrupted in either direction, the flow of life ceases. Now, it is admitted on all hands that spiritual life must be nourished and sustained by Christian truth. But I doubt whether the idea be so familiar to our minds as it ought to be, that it is equally dependent on Christian work for its growth and strength.

Two utterances of our Lord concerning His own life possess a deep significance in relation



## MAKING MEMORIES.

BY J. E. MILLER, D.D.



WE are all making in our to-days the memories of our to-morrows. Whether they will be pleasant or painful to contemplate depends on whether we are living well or ill. Memory writes everything down where we shall be compelled to see it perpetually. There have been authors who, in their last days, would have given worlds to get back the things they had written. There have been men and women who would have given a right hand to blot out the memory of certain passages in their lives, certain acts done, certain words sent out to scatter blight or sorrow. There have been artists whose eyes looked in old age upon the pictures they had painted, finding rare pleasure in the thought of the beautiful things they had wrought; and there are hearts that are like picture-galleries, filled with the memories of lives of sweetness, purity, and blessing. We are thus, each of us, preparing for ourselves the house our souls must live in in the years to come.

While we are sowing the seeds of memories in the hearts of others, by our words and acts, we are also making memories for our own souls to feed upon in the after days. Carsten Niebuhr, the distinguished traveller, was blind in his old age, but he had traversed many lands in his earlier years, and had looked upon many lovely scenes, and as he sat in the darkness his face would often brighten into a rich glow, as if some inner light were shining through. He was looking again upon some gorgeous scene, pictured on the walls of memory in bygone days. So we may make in our days of youth such memories as shall brighten all the days of old age when they come.

The poet Longfellow, in one of his tender poems, has these lines:—

' Childhood is the bough, where slumbered  
Birds and blossoms, many-numbered;  
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

' Gather, then, each flower that grows  
When the young heart overflows,  
To embalm that tent of snows.'

The thought is very beautiful—that youth must gather the sweet things of life, the flowers, the fragrant odours, while they lie everywhere, to have old age filled with sweetness and gladness. We do not realise how much the happiness of our after years depends upon the things we do this year.

It is our own life that gives colour to our skies and tone to the music that we hear. Holding a polished shell to our ears, and hearing from within it a sound like the distant roar of its former ocean home, we fancy that it is the echoed dash of the waves on the rocks that the shell gives forth; but when we learn the facts, the fancy of the ocean's treasured music vanishes, and we discover that it is only the quivering of our own fingers, the throbbing of our own pulses against the hollow, resonant shell that causes the sound. It is not the ocean's roar at all, but the beating of our own heart's pulses that we hear. So the voices that we hear in this world, whether musical or discordant, are really from within our own hearts, the echoes of our own yesterdays.

What is true of our individual lives is true also of our homes. We are making their memories day by day and year by year. What they shall be in the end will depend on the home-life we are living now. We can make our home a fairy palace, filling it with delights, covering the walls with beautiful pictures, planting lovely flowers to fill the halls and chambers with delicious fragrance, and hanging cages of singing birds everywhere to pour out sweet notes of song; or we can cover the walls with hideous images and ghastly spectres to look down upon us, and plant only briars and thorns about the doors to flaunt themselves in our faces while we sit in the gloom of nightfall. We may make the memories of our home so tender, so precious, so sacred, that each life that goes out of our doors shall carry a holy benediction upon it

wherever it moves. Or we can make its memories a blight, a burden, a curse, which shall never be lifted or removed.

Surely the subject is important enough for at least one earnest thought at the beginning of the year. If we are wise we will always test our actions as we go through life, by inquiring how they will appear when we get past and beyond them and look back at them. Those things that will make a sweet memory we may safely do, but things that will cause regrets when we remember them far down the years or nearer, we had better leave undone.

If we are to live for ever amid the memories we are making hour by hour, is it not worth our while to give to each hour some memory to carry that will be sweet for ever? Is it not better to plant roses than thorns for the path of our feet in the after days? We must remember, too, that we pass this way but once. Days never come to us a second time, and they are swiftly gone, bearing whatever memory we give them to treasure for us. If we would write any memory of blessing upon them, we must do it as they glide on.—*Westminster Teacher.*

## LUTHER AND HIS REFORMING ACTIVITY IN OPPOSITION TO CATHOLICISM, UP TO 1525.\*

BY JULIUS KOESTLIN, D.D., PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY AT HALLE-WITTENBERG.



LUTHER, without being disturbed by the excommunication, could, as we see, work in Wittenberg, and from Wittenberg far around him. Even in the other parts of Germany, the wide extent of the empire really afforded wide room for the spread of his doctrine. In the succeeding Diets a majority was no longer to be obtained for the carrying out of the course of action which the edict of the Diet of Worms required, and the experience which they now had of Luther, when he had again entered upon public life, only contributed to confirm this state of things.

Hadrian VI., the new Pope, whilst he firmly held fast to the scholastic doctrine of the Middle Ages and to the authority of the Church, yet, in consequence of his sincere acknowledgment of the evils existing in the Church, and of his own earnest and austere personal character, brought about an expectation of a new period, with energetic efforts for reform in the Romish Church, at least with reference to discipline among the clergy and monks, as well as to a conscientious maintenance of ecclesiastical ordinances, so that even men like Erasmus might contentedly remain therein. And his intention now was with all severity to have made an end of the Lutheran heresy and its innovations. And he also, with regard to Luther's person, went into low revilings and slanders, as if he were a drunkard and debauchee, which, from Römelingen down even to the present time, have again and again been revived. These slanders were, at least, without doubt held by Hadrian to be true; but Luther never allowed himself to be much concerned by them, and in his letters to Spalatin he styled Hadrian as simply

an ass. With great zeal Hadrian further sought, like so many Romish Churchmen after him, to act upon the minds of the Princes, by affirming that whosoever despised the holy decrees and the rulers of the Church, would act in the same way towards any worldly throne.

But the Diet assembled at Nürnberg in the winter 1522-23 answered the pressing request of the Pope by renewing the old complaints of the German nation, and, on its part, by pressing for a free Christian Council to be held in Germany.

An unfortunate military undertaking, which at that time Sickingen had the daring to lead against the Archbishop of Treves, and in which, while fighting for his own aggrandisement and the interests of the German nobility, he at the same time declared that he wished to open up a path for the Gospel, had not the bad consequences for the Evangelical party in the kingdom that its enemies hoped for. Sickingen was defeated by the more powerful forces of the allied Princes, and died of his wounds; but Frederick the Wise and his Evangelical theologians had, as was perfectly evident, nothing to do with the violent measures of the knight. Luther asserted, when he heard of the undertaking of Sickingen, that it would verily be a bad matter, and when he heard of his overthrow, that God is a just but a wonderful judge.

The following Diet, from which, after the early death of Hadrian, Clement VII., his successor, a modern Pope after the fashion of Leo X., anew sought the carrying out of the edict of Worms, resolved in its Recess of April 18, 1524, that the States of the Empire should conform with it as far as possible, that the Lutheran and other new doctrines should first be 'examined with the highest industry,' and, along with the complaints about burdens, should be presented as a first reason why the council judge for should be

\* Translated for the *Christian Treasury* from the German of Luther's *Leben* (third edition), by Julius Koestlin. Leipzig: Fues's Verlag. 1883.