



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Sept. 25 '52

"The Promise of His Coming"

I stood watching the crowd leaving the large auditorium. The fourth sermon of the evangelistic effort, in which the evangelist had spoken powerfully on the imminent return of Christ, had just come to an end. One man, evidently recognizing me as being connected with the meetings, approached and addressed me with this cynical statement: "I heard the same old story twenty years ago."

Let us imagine another place and another large concourse of people. They too are listening to an evangelist as he warns them, in words burning with earnestness, to flee from God's wrath, which is soon to fall upon all living flesh.

When the preacher has closed his last appeal in words of deepest pathos, and his listeners begin to depart, one turns to another and says, "I heard the old fellow preach the same thing 120 years ago, and it hasn't happened yet."

But the terrible doom that Noah warned would come, did come. And we can imagine our hypothetical scoffer being swept to his death in the colossal cataclysm.

It is a human weakness to regard an extended delay as proof that an expected event will not take place. But God is today withholding His judgments in order that those very scoffers who are saying, "Where is the promise of his coming?" might have a chance to be saved.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. . . . For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb. 10: 35-37.

The Banner of Cheerfulness

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Sept. 19 1952

Overlooking and dominating the picturesque and historic city of Edinburgh in Scotland is the famous Edinburgh Castle, scene of so many romantic and interesting incidents of the past. The story is told that on one occasion the castle was besieged for many weeks by an English army.

The garrison knew that the besiegers were counting on hunger to help them take the castle, but were determined that they would hold out as long as possible. Gradually, however, the food supply diminished, and then was gone. At last, hoping to lead the British into thinking that there was still ample food, they hung an old cowskin over the wall. The next day they dyed it a different color and hung it over the wall again. On the third day the besiegers saw still a different-colored hide on the wall. The stratagem worked. The enemy lost heart and withdrew.

At times we are sorely besieged by trials, doubts, and discouragements. Sometimes we almost feel, like the great apostle to the Gentiles, "that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life." But "thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." Ps. 60:4. So let us hang out a banner of cheerfulness and courage and faith, and the dark enemy himself will eventually become discouraged and leave us.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Oct. 23 '52

The Door of Opportunity

It is amazing the meaning that can sometimes be packed into one small word. One of the most interesting words in the Bible is found in 1 Corinthians 16:9, and has only three letters, "and." "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, *and* there are many adversaries."

"*And* there are many adversaries." In that one word are found a superabundant confidence, given by the Holy Spirit, and an infinite faith in God. Paul sees, standing inside the door of opportunity, a scowling, threatening mob of enemies. But with the blessing of God he is resolved to walk through the door to do the task he has been assigned. Oh, there will be a few stones and brickbats and hard words, but they and the adversaries are only incidental to the magnificent opportunities he sees ahead.

"*And* there are many adversaries." Let us be honest. Wouldn't we probably write, "*But* there are many adversaries," or possibly, "*If* only there weren't so many adversaries"? But Paul mentions them only as an inconvenient fact.

What a world of meaning Paul put into that one word. He may have written it with but small thought of the insight he was giving us of his great character, doubtless he did, but it is there.

Oh, that we might gather to ourselves more of the grace and faith of Jesus, that we might use more and where today we are using buts and if only.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Oct. 16 '52

"Today Is the Day We Live!"

Back in my old home town in Newfoundland I used to enjoy tuning in to one of the local radio stations each morning as it came on the air. While an old grandfather clock, ticking majestically in the background, added meaningful punctuation to his words, the announcer would say slowly and solemnly, "Yesterday is gone, tomorrow never comes, today is the day we live!"

"Yesterday is gone!" Its words have all been spoken. Its deeds have all been done. Its moments all are past, and only on the books of heaven are their records kept, complete and irrevocable. Whether our yesterday was a day well spent, or a portion of wasted probation, is forever settled, and heaven itself cannot undo the past.

"Tomorrow never comes!" Tomorrow is but a word to describe something we know nothing about. Tomorrow is but a landmark along the banks of Time's stream, which seems to be forever approaching, and yet which is always just ahead. It is a blushing maid betrothed to Time, who, approaching the end of the betrothal, takes his name upon her and becomes Today.

"Today is the day we live!" Yet even now but a little portion of time is ours. Just a step, a ray of light, a heartbeat. God has given us that much. How many steps, how much light, how many heartbeats, only He knows. So let us, in these moments, seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and let us today, like Paul, lift eyes of faith toward heaven and say, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Oct. 30, 52

Without Spot or Wrinkle

Little Bobby had met with a boyish temptation and had fallen, so daddy took him aside and began to explain to him the necessity of battling temptation and of trusting in Jesus to overcome.

"And you know, Bobby, that there are devils around us all the time, trying to get into our hearts, and as soon as we do wrong in they come. But if you want to go to heaven, you can't take any devils with you."

Bobby thought a moment. "But, Daddy, can't I take even a wee, wee little devil with me?"

How often professed Christians are like Bobby. They overcome the big evils, but somehow they allow the seemingly small things to remain in their lives, fooling themselves that such a "wee, wee little devil" won't matter.

"Satan leads many to believe that God will overlook their unfaithfulness in the minor affairs of life; but the Lord shows in His dealings with Jacob that He will in no wise sanction or tolerate evil. All who endeavor to excuse or conceal their sins, and permit them to remain upon the books of heaven, unconfessed and unforgiven, will be overcome by Satan."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 620.

The Word of God states unequivocally that to enter heaven, we must be without "spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," and that "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Nov. 27 '52.

In Quietness and Confidence

Some time ago I was listening to a morning devotional period on the radio. During his talk the speaker used as an illustration a party game that young folks sometimes play. Each participant takes a lighted candle and tries to beat the others to the far side of the room and back without putting out the flame. He noted that usually the winner is not the one who goes with a great rush, but the one who is calmly unhurried and who pauses for a moment when the flame flickers and seems about to go out.

These times in which we are living are being referred to as the Atomic Age. They might just as well be called the hurry age. Speed is the aim in almost every phase of life, so that modern man has become "a victim of high blood pressure, enlarged heart, failing circulation, jangled nerves."

Though it is true that "the king's business required haste," yet we are admonished that "in returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Isa. 30:15. Perhaps it might be helpful to note the last phrase of the verse, "and ye would not."

If our spiritual flame seems to be flickering and wavering at times, it may be that we need to pause and meditate and pray until it burns full and calm and strong once more.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Dec 11, '52

Taking the Strain Out of Life

Placed at prominent positions around factories or on construction jobs, safety posters are frequently seen illustrating the right and wrong way of doing certain tasks. One poster depicts the right and the wrong way to lift a heavy load. The wrong procedure is to bend from the waist with the knees held straight. The correct way is to bend the knees and lift, thus relieving the strain on the back.

In this safety placard we see an important spiritual lesson. Are we lifting the loads that come to us day by day the right way or the wrong way? Do we bend our knees before God in prayer, asking Him for strength and wisdom to accomplish our tasks, or do we depend on our own feeble strength, which is unequal to the demands?

For one to try to lift a heavy weight without bending the knees makes him liable to an injured back. If we try alone to lift the load of temptations and problems that are our daily lot, we are endangering our spiritual tendons and muscles. We are in danger of becoming spiritual invalids. It is only by humble dependence on God that we can gain power for the day. Therefore, let us "pray without ceasing" for help with our every problem, and let us "trust . . . in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength." Isa. 26:4.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Dec. 4 '52

The Power of Habit

There had been an exceptionally heavy fall of snow that winter, and then a mild spring. The little creek, usually so quiet and friendly, had become a muddy, vicious torrent, carving away great chunks of gravel and rocks and topsoil, hurling them irresistibly along its swirling way.

The not-too-intelligent hired man had taken the team of horses out and had evidently attempted to cross the creek at the customary place to get over into the adjoining field. But the driving force of the water was too much for the horses, and, while several bystanders watched helplessly, the man, weeping like a child and calling despairingly for aid, was swept downstream with the horses, and together they drowned.

That man lost his life because of a habit. He had always crossed the creek at that place and had experienced no difficulty. But this time the inoffensive stream had become a raging monster, which destroyed him.

Many bad habits at first are little trickles that run harmlessly through our character. But gradually they become broader and deeper and stronger. As time goes on the oft-repeated act widens and deepens the channel until the current once so harmless, becomes an uncontrollable power that carries its helpless victim to physical and spiritual death.

The Preacher wrote, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth . . . and walk in the ways of thine heart . . . : but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." And verily it seems that God has ordained that part of the judgment is sometimes to be executed in this life in broken bodies and twisted minds, a warning to others of the awful results of sinful habits uncontrolled.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Dec. 25 '52

Are You Walking in Circles?

I remember once having read the story of a man who was traveling alone across the snowy northlands of Canada one winter's day. Ahead of him lay nothing but the level, unbroken prairies and the gray sky. After a while, coming upon some footprints in the snow, and deciding that they were heading toward the same destination as himself, he followed them. The day advanced, the sun began to drop toward the west, but his destination had not been reached, although the time required to make the journey had passed.

Suddenly he noticed a familiar snow formation, and the truth slowly dawned upon him that he had been walking in one great wide circle, following his own footprints.

The reason why that man walked in circles was that he had no landmarks, no guides, to show him the way he should go. He thought that he was progressing in the right direction, but he wasn't.

Wherever we go in life we must have either landmarks or a guide to direct us. Without them the years are but wintry wastes, and the sun sets with no destination in sight. Millions are wandering thus, some of them thinking they know the way, others uncertainly, aimlessly, hopelessly traveling. Yet there is a sure, an unfailing Guide. We need not *think* we know the way, or walk in circles, or become lost, for Jesus, who has journeyed this way before, says, "Follow Me; I will show you the way of life."



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Jan. 2 '53

A Rule of Life Needed

Have you ever tried drawing a long, perfectly straight line without using a guide rule of some kind? Perhaps some people can do it, but if there are such, they are exceedingly rare. And a very small child cannot draw a straight line even with a rule.

On the other hand, it takes no trying to draw a crooked line. One could easily do it with his eyes closed.

In these observations we have an illustration of a law of life. A person has to put forward no effort at all to do wrong. It comes naturally. Man is born to sin, "as the sparks fly upward." But to do right requires a great deal of painstaking care and effort, and even then, without a straight and true guide we are going to find ourselves "crooked."

This needed rule we have in the perfect commandments of God, His ten words. Here is the law by which our "lines" are to be judged, as we are told by the apostle James.

But even with the rule we cannot of ourselves draw a straight line; so, just as a father guides the uncertain hand of his small child, Christ takes our unskilled hands and traces for us the line that meets the standard of the perfect rule. "Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness . . . ; make thy way straight before my face." Ps. 5:8.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Jan. 18 '53

Charged With God's Power

The thermometer registered a frigid ten below as I stepped into my old car that January morning and pushed the starter button. The motor gave a few halfhearted whines, and stopped. Again and again I tried, but it was no use. There was not enough power to get the engine to "catch." I am not much of a mechanic, but I didn't need to be told what the trouble was. The battery was all but dead.

There are millions of people in the world today just like that old car. They know that they ought to be up and going. There are things that should be done and things that have to be done, but somehow they never do get done. So they sit and push, as it were, on their "will" buttons, and the motor turns over a few times rather weakly, and stops. After a little while the need for action causes them to give another push. So their will motor makes another ineffectual turn or two, and quits again. And all the time the battery, the source of the will, is getting weaker.

An unfortunate condition indeed, but there is no situation for which the great Mechanic does not have a remedy. So may we suggest the following prayer if you are so troubled: "Lord, take my heart, for I can not give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I can not keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 159.

And with the vivifying current of His love coursing through us, our will is charged with the power of Heaven, and we are enabled to accomplish those pressing duties.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Jan. 22 '53

God's Eyes Are Not Closed

On the study wall of a preacher friend of mine hangs a picture of Christ. Looking at it from a few feet away, one would think that the eyes are closed, but closer examination finds the deep-set eyes open and searching.

Those who believe in a God that set the world in motion and then lost interest and wandered off to another part of the universe are not few. They view the monstrous evils, injustices, and suffering that can be seen all around as tangible evidence for such a belief. They say, in the words of the psalmist, "The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it."

But the poet gives a graphic assurance of God's watchcare:

"Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,—

Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,

Standeth God within the shadows, keeping watch above His own."

Yet many times even those who believe in the constant interest of the Creator are sometimes tempted to wonder whether that interest is an active one. How often trials come. How frequently misfortune and injustice seem to dog their heels. "Why does not help come?" they ask. But we have the pledge that all those things are only God's workmen, ordained to shape and polish us to be pillars in the temple of His glory. So, truly, the eyes of the Lord are not shut that He cannot see, neither is His arm shortened that He cannot help, for, "he ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves." Ps. 66:7.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Feb. 19 '53

Tempting the Tempter

Our little one-year-old boy, like most one-year-olds, I suppose, used to enjoy getting at daddy's books and scattering them all over the floor. After some weeks of patient training he finally learned that such things were not to be done—or we thought that he had learned.

But one day he slowly approached those tempting books and stood for some moments looking at their many-colored backs. Then cautiously and hesitantly his tiny hand went out and touched one—and his fall was complete.

With a great deal of patience God teaches His children the necessity of leaving certain things alone. Perhaps, as in the case of my little lad, it is forbidden books. Or it may be other kinds of amusement or business. There are a thousand things that Christians dare not meddle with. And sometimes it may seem that God has succeeded, when one day we go and stand right in front of the very things that caused our fall so frequently before, and tempt the devil to tempt us. It is little wonder that we fall.

The other day a friend was telling me how vividly he was conscious of his guardian angel's presence. If he would linger for a moment at some forbidden thing, he could almost hear his angel say, "Now, Jim, you know very well that you shouldn't stay here. But if you insist, I'll go on a little way and wait for you." Then he seemed to feel the withdrawal of his angel's presence.

We need to pray for, and cultivate, such a consciousness. And we need to keep afar off from temptations, for experience teaches us abundantly—our own experiences and other's—that to linger and look is in far too many cases to gamble, to fall.

R.H. Feb. 12, '53

Life's Common Fellowship

The tiny bay smiled sunnily in the calm beauty of a fair summer's afternoon. I sat alone in a little boat, hands clasped about my knees, absorbing some of the loveliness and peace into my soul. Then, without warning, a bird appeared out of nowhere and lighted on one of my thumbs. Startled, I moved slightly, and at once it was gone, winging swiftly over the rippling waters.

Sadly I watched it go, for I felt that by my involuntary movement I had destroyed an opportunity for communing a few brief moments with one of God's little creatures.

How deeply sin has affected the creation of God! The tiny things were intended to be friends of man, adding a sweet companionship and affection to his Edenic existence. But now, for the most part, they consider him to be one of their natural enemies, and, in many instances, with good reason.

But one day soon redeemed man will once again enter into his rightful relationship with nature, and the barriers that now stand so irremovably between the families of creation will be eternally broken down.

Imagine, if you can, the wonder of that reunion, when all life shall blend together in a common fellowship and glorious praise to Him who has brought us out of the darkness of sin and its results. God help us that we may all add our hearts and voices to the grandeur of that day.

R.H. Feb. 26 '53

Rock or Sand?

The people had listened spellbound to the sermon. It was the most gripping they had ever heard. And now the speaker had come to a tremendous climax: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. . . . And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand." Matt. 7:24-26.

Many lessons might be drawn from these words of Christ. One is found in the attitude of the builders. The man who built upon the rock did not seek a building lot with soft ground, which might be easily prepared. He chose the hardest of all, stone, for he knew that once his foundation was solidly laid, few forces in nature would be sufficient to move it.

On the other hand, the second builder sought out the most convenient building lot he could find, and it was sand. It took no back-wearing toil to prepare it. All that he had to do was set his framework up and build. He knew that there were risks connected with erecting his house on such unstable property, but the convenience was worth the chance, he decided.

How often we find people with that attitude. They know their spiritual house is set on an unstable foundation, they know they ought to work a reformation in their lives, but it requires a great deal of work to do that, so they decide to take the easy way out.

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house." Verse 27. And we all know the sad results. Let us be admonished by these solemn words.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R & H. Mar. 5 '53

"Under New Management"

The old service station had an altogether different look. A fresh coat of paint brightened its former drabness. Its windows had been polished up, and there was a general appearance of cheerful neatness and prosperity about the place. Then I noticed the new sign set close to the roadside, "Under New Management."

Converted people have a new look too. "Mrs. Brown has certainly changed a lot since she joined your church." These words, spoken of a woman who had, only a few months before, found all her pleasure in the gay life of the world, told of the work God had done in her heart. She had been cleaned up, and a new sign was hanging outside, as it were, proclaiming to her old associates and to the world that she was "under new management."

When God takes over in our lives there are bound to be changes. The old character, so run down and poorly managed by the previous manager, Sin, is given a new manager, Christ. He takes over the books, and straightens up our accounts. He cleans up the premises, so that all might see that things are now being done differently. The business is run on an entirely new basis.

Peter and John had been men of rather unattractive exteriors, so far as characters were concerned. But they had their lives cleaned up, they put Christ in charge, and the Sacred Word informs us that men "took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13. Oh, that the world might so take knowledge of every one of us!



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R & H. Mar. 12 '53

Be Filled With the Spirit

It was evening worship time at the college, and the dean of men was speaking to his dormitory family in the little chapel.

"No doubt you have all had the experience of picking up your fountain pen and beginning to write, only to have a great unsightly blot of ink spread across your clean page," he was saying.

"Generally there are two reasons for this. Either the pen is empty, or it is cold."

He then went on to apply the illustration to the field of Christian experience. We rise each morning with a clean, new sheet before us, and with high and holy resolutions to keep it so. But all too soon we spread a great dark smear across its whiteness, sometimes ere we have finished our salutation to the morn. And frequently the difficulty lies in the fact that our lives are not completely filled by His Spirit.

And often we are cold to God. The beams of His love have not been allowed to shine into our hearts, and melt the thick, cold selfishness that incrusts it. The warmth of His grace is not permitted to thaw out the fountain of kindness and love so that it may flow evenly out to record upon the page of time in clear letters the beauty of a day spent for Him.

We don't like to waste a great deal of expensive paper by having our pens constantly blotting. But how much more wasteful it is to have page after page of our lives blotted and spoiled by sin.

"Wherefore be ye not unwise. . . . But be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:17, 18), and warmed with His warmth.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R & H. MAR. 19, 1953

Expert Fisherman

The fishing enthusiast sat among his reels and lines, his plugs and spinners and flies and spoons, and looked them over speculatively. He wanted to have a good catch to show for his day's fishing, so he had to choose his bait with care. This one had worked well with bass the last time but hadn't done so well the time before. Then there was that red and white spoon; it had always caught plenty of perch for him. And what about the small green one with the red glass eyes? So with meticulous care he chose the lures that experience had taught him were most likely to reward him with a nice string of fish by evening.

The world's most expert fisherman is Satan. Six thousand years of experience have given him abundant knowledge of the baits that work best. For one type of people he has found that money "hooks" them every time. For another type, pleasure does excellently. Others are caught on the subtle barbs of honor or ambition or excess leisure or discouragement. Oh, Satan is the "Complete Angler," who knows all the tools, and every trick of the trade.

And today, my reader friend, he has very probably been dangling some subtle bait in front of you, hoping that you would "take." I wonder whether you approached it gingerly and inspected it? Or did you nibble a little at it, maybe? Careful, friend; it takes only a second to get on the hook, but once on it isn't easy to escape. Most fish never do, remember?



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R & H. Mar. 26, 1953

Higher Up, Much Higher Up

For weeks the engineers had worked and schemed to build up a solid foundation through the morass, so that the bridge might go across. Thousands of tons of gravel had been dumped in. Great stones had disappeared into the sucking mud, and still the constructors could find no substratum substantial enough for the heavy piles. Plan after plan had been tried and found ineffective. Time after time the long, thick piles had been hammered into the ground, only to sink down with nothing solid on which to rest.

Finally, after thousands of dollars had been spent and thousands of hours wasted, they were compelled to abandon the site and try to cross at another place higher up. Almost immediately bedrock was found, and the bridge went across strong and firm.

No normal human being wants to be lost. Self-preservation is the cardinal urge. But most people want to stretch the bridge of salvation from the dark plains of Sin to the pleasant hills of Righteousness, across a bog of human nature, by human endeavor, a worse than hopeless task.

The way to salvation is higher up, much higher up. We must build upon Christ, "the solid Rock." For truly "all other ground is sinking sand."

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3:11. "The foundation of God standeth sure." 2 Tim. 2:19.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Apr. 2, 1953

Summer or Winter Soldier?

Are you a summer or a winter soldier?

Anciently, generals quite commonly had the difficult problem of holding their armies in the field together when the rigors of winter closed in. Scores and sometimes hundreds of troops would desert in the face of extreme cold and hardship. And so the term "summer soldier" is sometimes used to refer to such runaways.

It is not flattering to have that kind of name applied to oneself. But it is helpful to face the possibility squarely, for premeditation is essential to meeting such a problem, which is bound to be rooted deep down in the character. And recognition of a weakness is a long forward stride toward correcting it. So, applying the question more subjectively, let us ask ourselves: "Am I a summer or a winter Christian? Am I facing the everyday discouragements, trials,

and vexations that buffet me as a real Christian should, or am I shrinking beneath the blows that sometimes fall so bluntly upon me?"

If we are summer soldiers now in the small skirmishes of life, we can be quite certain that, unless we fly to God at once for strength and fortitude, we shall crumble when the mightier battle is joined.

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they weary thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Jer. 12:5.

Summer soldier! Winter soldier! Which is it?



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Apr. 9 '53

Hidden Faults

The senior theology student stood before the large congregation gathered for Sabbath school, and began his review of the previous week's lesson. I listened casually to his words for two or three minutes, and then he spoke a sentence that jolted me wide awake and set me off on a new and serious line of thought. "We are all a great deal worse than we think we are."

Was it true? Was I worse than I appeared to myself? And then I began to think of little experiences that had somehow shaken hidden faults in my character out into the open. And I remembered noting things in the lives of others, very obvious faults apparent to everyone else except their owner. And Christ prayed for His murderers—a prayer telling us they did not realize the magnitude of their sins: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

In the book of Revelation we are told that the 144,000 will stand "without fault before the throne of God." And we are all candidates for that group.

How earnestly we need to pray the prayer of the psalmist who seemed to have been thinking along the same line, "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults." Ps. 19:12.

"We are all a great deal worse than we think we are." How much we stand in need of God's transforming power!



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. Apr. 16 '53

Uphill or Downhill?

The old boatbuilder paused at his work and brushed some wood shavings from the gunwale of an almost completed boat. Then he looked at his visitor earnestly. He had never had the advantage of a formal education, but he did have a well-balanced perspective of life and a deep, personal acquaintance with God. They had been discussing the marks of a genuine religious experience, and now he spoke with conviction, "I tell you, when you think you're all right you're all wrong, but when you think you're all wrong you're likely to be all right."

There is a good deal of simple truth in the homely philosophy of that old man. Satisfaction with your Christian experience is a pretty good sign that things aren't what they should be. It is an indication that the road you are traveling has turned downhill, be it ever so slightly. Perhaps you are having an experience such as is had by many visitors to Magnetic Hill at Moncton, New Brunswick. There you have to keep your foot on the accelerator of your car to go "downhill," but if you are going "uphill," you can switch off your motor and coast very easily.

Satan is a past master at the art of camouflage. He can make you think that you are climbing, when all the time the road is getting more and more downhill.

How is it going with you, friend? Things moving along quite smoothly? Perhaps, just to be sure, you had better pull aside for a minute and check up as to whether you are climbing or going downhill.



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. April 23 '53

God's Unstinted Generosity

The air was filled with millions of tiny silken parachutes as the breezes blew the cottonwood seeds across the fields and roads.

Walking through the cottonwood grove, I found them lying in a fluffy carpet, which rose above our ankles. Never before had I witnessed such great prodigality on the part of nature. Yet out of those millions of seeds only a very small number would ever find proper growing conditions and take root and become trees.

Such apparent extravagance on the part of nature is not uncommon. Yearly animal and plant life multiply seed infinitely, but only a tittle ever reaches fruition.

In these conditions we can see how the God of nature is giving us an object lesson of His love. With unstinted generosity He pours His rich affection upon all peoples everywhere. Diligently it seeks for proper soil in which to spring up and thrive and grow. But only here and there does it find what it seeks. For often it falls by the wayside and is devoured. And sometimes it falls upon stony ground, and dies in the

burning noonday sun. And many times it falls among thorns and is choked. And only a very small amount finds a responsive heart and grows and develops. As God's love falls upon our hearts, is it finding a soil made ready to receive it?



Minute Meditations

By Thomas A. Davis

R.H. April 30 '53

"Joy Cometh in the Morning"

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Ps. 30:5.

A mountain of trouble rivaling Everest loomed over me, casting a heavy shadow of anxiety around, so that in comparison the dark night shades were as nothing. Sleep came home late that night, and the distant town clock tolled a weary two before it turned out the light of consciousness. But with the morning sun the forbidding mountain shrank to something about the size of a molehill, and the Stygian shadows melted into the ocean of morning light.

Perhaps it is the effects of the accumulated fatigue of a day of physical or mental toil. Or possibly there is something about the night, an atmosphere, if you like, that seems to warp and magnify so many things out of their true shape and proportion. Psychologists will have an explanation. But whatever the reason may be, David described an experience that comes at times to just about all of us.

And doubtless under the impact of such an experience many people have performed unwise acts which, had they "slept on it," would never have been done.

"Beware of desperate steps; the darkest day, Wait but tomorrow, will have passed away."

The real problem seems to be lack of trust in God and His absolute ability to meet every situation for us. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." Ps. 37:5. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7.