

Scripture. Proverbs, 31-26

Text. Text Proverbs 26⁻²⁰ ^{where no wood is}
^{there the fire goeth}
^{out.}

Subject: Feed the ^{whole} man.₁

I suppose that we all have days when it seems to us that the fire ~~goeth out~~ is almost extinguished. Perhaps we have over-exerted ourselves, and there comes a reaction. We feel listless, apathetic and almost lifeless. The day dawns brightly about us, we see people going to their various interests, in their accustomed energetic way but still we hang back, and do nothing. For the time being our interest is lost, and we are willing to stand aside and let the endless procession

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pass by. We heed not the
calls, which yesterday would
have aroused us to our
most intense activity. The
mere physical movements
are made only by great
effort, and as for our
brain — why! it is
simply a blank. Thinking
is almost intolerable, not
to say impossible. Books,
our friends in almost every
word, desert us here, and
we are content to let the
world wear fort without
making any effort to keep
pace with it.

On such days we are
like the machine, which
has been disconnected

from the great shafting
^{that} which transmits the power
for the whole factory. All
about the machine is
activity, bustle, and work, wheels
are turning, the forces of manu-
facture is going on, the raw
material is being transformed
into the finished product, but
still the one machine stands
idle.

Such days, I think, occur in
the lives of each one of us. If
we can recall one of them, if
we can make a mental picture
of how we feel on such a day, we
will then be able to understand
the condition into which we
allow ourselves to drift for a
period much longer than a

day, or a week. Sometimes we see a whole life thus fused. Day after day, year after year, a humor being ^{traced} back his bitter aimless life, until old age comes upon him, and he can hardly point to one worthy thing well done.

Such apothetic periods are seen not only in individuals, but also in nations. Perhaps it will help us to realize the nature of these strange losses from activity, and their ^{danger} to us, if we stop to recall one or two such periods in the familiar history of our

own ^{country} history, and the early history of the people to ~~whom~~ where we trace our ancestry.

The Middle Ages, commonly called the "Dark Ages" stand as a most striking example of such a period of gloom in the history of European civilization. ~~At~~ During all the period of the middle ages men and women lived amidst the very conditions which in later years gave enthusiasm to the scholarship of the Renaissance, and excited the great Protestant Reformation. All monastic libraries filled with the most interesting MSS.

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were open to the public, but
there were no scholars to
search them out, and give
to people the literary gems
of the past. On all sides
were evidences of earlier
civilizations, but they excited
no interest. Monuments
with interesting historical
inscriptions, half buried
in the earth, were not at-
tractive enough to wake
men unearthing them. Pa-
trarch was it said to have
been the first man to climb
a hill for the purpose of
getting ^a view of the
landscape. It was a
period of littleness and
stupidity,

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In our country of activity and energy we have not been entirely free from periods of listlessness and indifference. We are still in the midst of a period of corruption and mal-administration in our municipal government. In city after city from one end of the country to the other, we read of corruption and jobbery. The periodic attempts at reform, especially the wave of reform in municipal governments, which is now spreading over the country are but indications of an awakening from ~~such~~ the slough in which rottenness becomes feasible.

Money a war would

stoutly maintain that we
 are falling into a period
 of great religious apathy, -
 that the great mass of the
 people are spiritually and
 religiously benumbed and
 deadened. They would
 assert that interest in
 things religious has become
 so dull and torpid that
 the very existence of the
 church is threatened.

Inclined to believe,

we are in danger of losing
 ourselves in such periods of
 semi-sleep, and there is
 danger in it. Many a man
 falls into one never to
 awaken, or to awaken only
 when it is too late to wake
 amends. The danger of

of these periods of apathy becomes
affrent to us when we see
from a distant the things dangers
and disastrous results in
the history of nations during
long and years of relaxation.
Proud and noble Rome never
awakened from her age of
moral and political corruption.
It was too late to mend
when Rome discovered that
those, in whose hands her safety
^{had been}
~~was~~, entrusted, were willing
to sell their ancient city for
a sum of gold. It was too
late to avert the Protestant
Reformation, when the Catholic
Church awoke from her long
centuries of bold in-worship
and commercialism.

Rome gained control of the world, while Greece was lost in the luxuries of her conquests. While Rome in her turn enjoyed the fruits of her victories, the new Gods from the North stepped into power and became the masters of the world.

While our own great statesmen and men of honor and integrity rested after the intense struggle of the Civil War, men of low aims and selfish motives gained control of local governments, and, as we have seen, it is only now are we beginning to

arouse ourselves to the great
need of honesty and purity
in politics.

Likewise is this true in our
own lives. Tom after war had
lost himself in a period of
self indulgence and inactiv-
ity. He had awakened to find
that his opportunity is gone.

Some live, active men are
stopped in part of him while
he has been asleep. The power
and influence which he
once wielded, has found its
other hands. ~~Ref. Ben Franklin~~
is not the only man who has
awakened from a 50 year
sleep to find the world changed.

It is the natural and inevit-
able result of failure to feed

the fire. "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out" holds true in the history of nations and in the lives of individuals. "Eternal vigilance is the price of success," says the same thing. It suggests to us our national and ever threatening danger.

"Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out" How true that holds in our individual lives! You and I, who are striving to realize a higher plane of life, who are striving after the goal of noble work and unswerving. Know how menacingly this

low work, and low fer-
riment must be our efforts
if we are to escape the dull
sluggish life of stagnation.
^{Parable here that} Here we find the cue to our
way of escape. If the fire
is extinguished because of
a lack of wood, it is perfectly
evident that our only duty
is to supply the fuel.

Think for a moment of this
question of the supply of fuel
in the case of our bodies. The
fire and energy of the body is
soon extinguished, unless we
keep a generous supply on hand.
Disease follows quickly in
the wake of physical laxness.
Many a college athlete falls
victim to some chest disease

singly because he fails to
 keep up the supply of fuel to
 which his body had become
 accustomed in college days
 when his life demanded
 great physical activities.

Why a strong young man
 and woman fade away
 into lives of semi-indol-
 ence and languor, singly
 because they follow the
 lines of least resistance
 and fail to supply the
 body with the proper fuel
 of exercise and nourish-
 ment. If we would keep
 our bodies in proper trim
 for the strong race of life,
 we must remember
 that the fire needs fuel.

Every one knows how quickly the fire of mental activity will become extinguished, unless a constant supply of fuel is added for the free use of the brain. Gradually the field of thought narrows down to the most commonplace things, and only one or two ideas can be counted upon as our stock of mental equipment. A warped brain of one idea is the logical outcome of such ill treatment. Even in this age of specialization, there is little room for "the won of one idea".

"A won behind the times" is another product, ^{of} poorly supplied brain fuel. How common he is, and what a cold

shoulder he gets in this
 life. Over the market
 wait for the farmer who
 does not keep abreast of the
 times, and has a sharp
 eye out for every suggestion
 that will enable him to
 grow better crops? It does
 not take great power of
 observation to see by the
 general appearance of a
 farm, whether or not the
 farmer is behind the
 times. Very quickly, too,
 does a professional man
 find that the world
 understands with what
 kind of fuel his ~~sufficed~~
 brain is ^{being} sufficed very
 quickly ^{1 a} the physician, a

teacher, a preacher knows that there is ~~not~~ place in the world for his dwarfed undeveloped brain, which is trying to do the labor of a fully developed one. He soon becomes "a man behind the times," and is forced to take his seat among the mental invalids. As for a business man, who stunts his brain thus — why! he simply is not a business man, nor can he ever become one. Yes! we know full well that we must supply fuel for the mind ere the fire will become extinguished.

The problem immediately arises as to how we may keep of this

supply of mental fuel. Of course that depends upon individual tastes, but there are two suggestions that all of us may follow. The first one is to keep our eyes and ears open. Every moment of our lives, so many wonderful things are happening that it ^{never} overcomes one to think of it. The growth of a flint involves all the wonders of life. A bit of stone will reveal ages of history. Animal life in all its forms is intensely interesting, and will supply the brain with thought for a life time. Whatever work

one way ^{does} do, however mechanical it may be, may become the source of high mental activity. Many of our greatest inventions are the product of an ~~active~~ ^{active} ~~mind~~ ^{mind} observing the processes of most mechanical labor. Then we are constantly surrounded by that ever fresh and interesting human nature. Every life is worthy of study, and will yield abundant mental fuel if we but take the trouble to collect it. So the first suggestion is for us to keep our eyes and ears open.

Then in the second place it is always a good thing to compare our own ideas with

those of other people. Talking
is of course the natural and
common way, ~~but~~ we are all
bound to talk. It is good
for us, but it has its limit-
ations, and we seek a
wide^N field of comparison
in books. There are many
dangers involved here, but
if you ^{we} use books as a
means of sifting out and
correlating our own ideas
into a system, we shall not
abuse them greatly. To
know what other men have
thought, and why they
have thought so is a very
necessary part of the process
of supplying our mental
fuel, so our second

suggestion is to read, read
carefully, and thoughtfully.
but remember that oak fuel
with ^{the} burning qualities of
white oak, cannot be
found in a growth of
sawfly under brush.

After all if life is rational
and things are what they seem.
the development of the body
and mind are only stepping
stones to the development of
the soul. The soul is the great
eternal reality, and it is to
the supply of fuel for keeping
the fire of the soul burning
brightly that we must devote
ourselves most zealously.
"What shall it profit a man

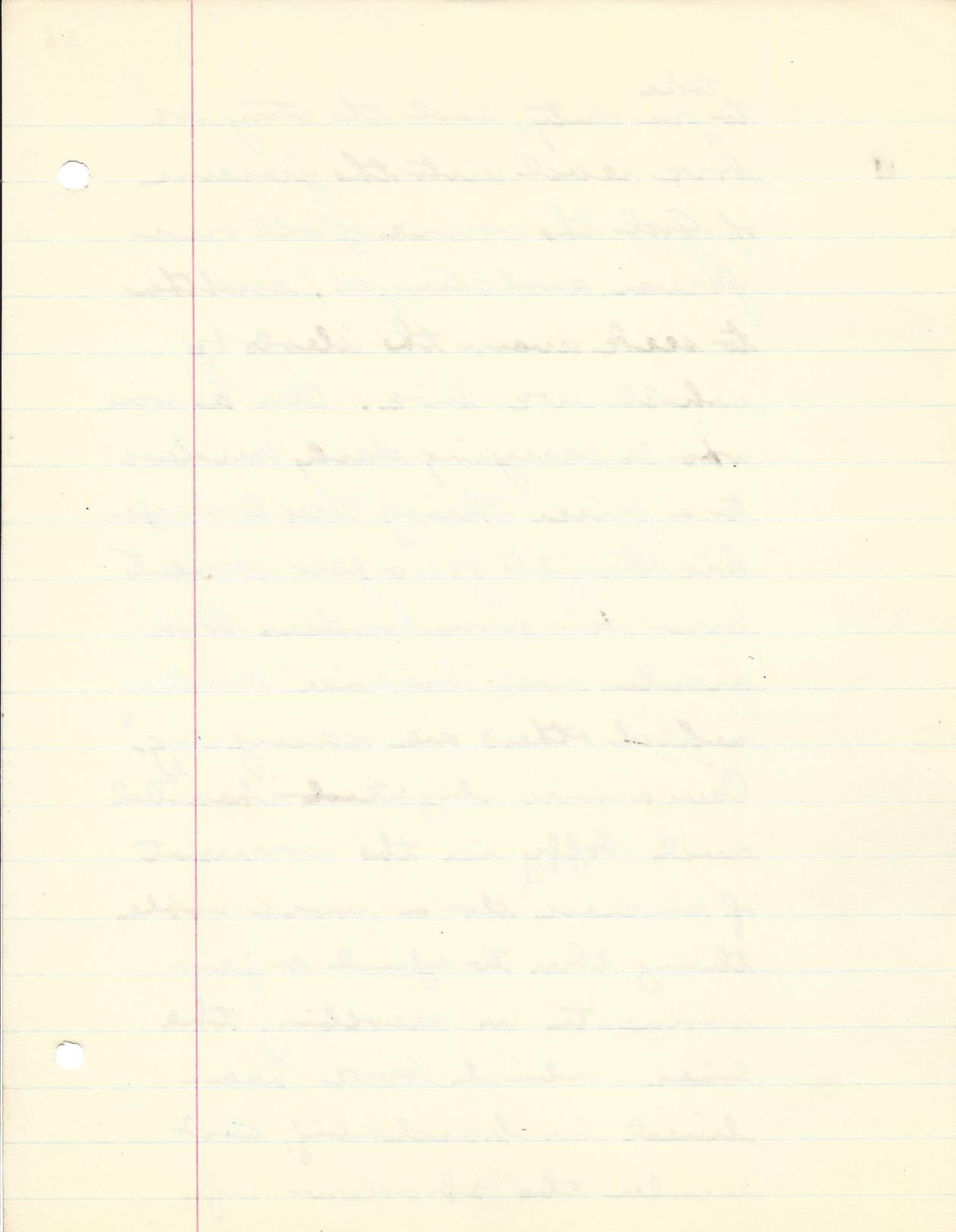
if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" So I say, we must all be spiritually minded. I do not mean that we must love ourselves in religious sentimentalism, but we must learn to look at life in all its relations and comprehend the greatness and the depth of it.

Prayer is the natural and proper way of feeding the soul, and we have yet to learn the true wants and nobility of the woman who in deepest earnest spends a few moments of each day in prayer. Formerly the habit of formally

prayers were very common here among our New England families. Each morning before the day's work began, many families used to gather about the family fire side to listen to the reading of a short passage from the Bible, and then in a simplicity, which was characteristic of early New England days, they joined in a few moments of simple prayer. Thus did our fathers feed their spiritual life. I can remember the atmosphere of the morning prayers to which I listened in childhood in the dining room at my grand father's farm. I wish that this custom were more common now a days.

What was noble and manly
way for a woman's family
to begin a day's work? Simply
to take our common every-
day problems of into the
presence of the Ideals by
which we are trying to
live, simply to go to
the Supreme Wisdom for
guidance and instruction.

~~If we have a great duty~~
~~to perform.~~ If we have
a great duty to perform, how
can we get greater courage
and inspiration to perform
it nobly and manfully
than to read of some great
noble soul like Jesus or
Paul, and then in a few
moments of joy to



take
to our duty, and the story we
have read into the presence
of God the source of all our
power, and strength, and then
to seek away the idols by
which we live. Can a man
who is carrying daily burdens
to a finer thing than to transfer
his thoughts for a few moments
from his own burdens to the
greater and heavier burdens
which others are carrying?
Can a man light-hearted
and happy in the moment
of success do a more noble
thing than to spend a few
moments in recalling the
lines which have been
lived in hardship, and
under the shadow of

apparent defeat, and to remember that his own success but places a greater responsibility upon him.

I am not one who believes that all good is in the past, and all evil in the present. I do not look to the past for the "Golden Age," but in this simple custom of beginning the day with family prayer, I am certain that our fathers had a custom which we ought to follow. It tends to simplicity, and simplicity is a luxury in these days of complexity. One can see the courage, inspiration and devotion which one may receive by a simple prayer, if he but recalls that beautiful prayer of Robert

Louis Stephenson, uttered the
night before his death in
far away Iowa.

Washfield Hill

Aug. 30, 1903