

April 10

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. 1 Peter 5:6

IT is indeed no easy matter to tread the pathway of humility, to continually check the human aspirations and to keep the sacrifice on the altar until it is fully consumed.

Pilgrim Echoes 209 "The man who has pride in his heart is not free. He is in bondage of the worst kind... If called upon to pray he is not free to think of things that would be best to say, not free to utter his heart's feelings... Pride makes one think too much about the congregation and to little about the Lord."

Pilgrim Echoes 125 "'Do you have that pain whenever you make a mistake?' "Yes, whenever I make a mistake." "Are you sure? Is it whenever you make a mistake, or when you only happen to make mistakes that other people know about?" "Why, I haven't any pain when nobody knows about it." "Then pride is your trouble." If we had the right spirit, we would be sorry for the mistakes that nobody knew about, as well as for the mistakes that everybody knows about. But if we can say that it is only the mistakes others recognize and see that we are sorry for, then the right condition is not present, and it indicates that pride is present. But if on the other hand we can truly say that we are as sorry for the mistakes nobody knows about as for those that everybody knows about, it is an indication that we are imperfect but it also shows that the healing work is going on."

R3595:2:3-7 "God's people should beware of pride as they would avoid the most deadly plague.

This rule, always good, and well backed by Scripture, seems doubly needful to those who are blessed with the light of present truth. This may seem strange: it may be reasoned that the receiving of so much grander views of God's character and plan would make his people feel the more insignificant and humble, the more dependent on divine goodness, the more trustful of God and the less trustful of themselves. And this should be the effect, always and ever: but alas, with very many it is not so.

Many get to feel that the knowledge of the plan of the ages proves them specially wise or great or good: they seem to forget that God hides the truth from the wise and great--that no flesh should glory in his sight. They love the truth selfishly, as dealers love their merchandise, for the sake of what they can get for it. If they cannot hope for wealth in exchange for the truth they can hope for small notoriety--to appear wiser than others, that they may dole it out in fragments and thus perpetuate their notoriety for wisdom, and gratify their pride or vanity. Such people do little to help circulate the present truth. If they cannot avoid it, they may mention MILLENNIAL DAWN or ZION'S WATCH TOWER or *Tabernacle Shadows* or *Food for Thinking Christians* or *About Hell* or *About Spiritism*; but when they do so it is usually with some disparaging remark; as for instance, that they "disagree in a good many things;" or that "they pin their faith to no man's coat sleeve, but go to the Word of God direct."

GRACE FOR THE HUMBLE

Beware of all such people; sooner or

But thus it is that we are to work out our own salvation to the high calling with fear and trembling, lest we come short of worthiness for the prize of the high calling promised to the faithful overcomers who tread closely in the footsteps of our blessed Forerunner, who was meek and lowly of heart.

later, unless they reform, they will fly the track entirely, and injure more than they ever helped. God does not wish such people to serve his cause, and will surely permit their vanity to stumble them,--however much their natural ability--and it is generally people of real or fancied ability who are thus afflicted with the spirit of pride and vanity. God opposeth the proud, but showeth his favor to the humble. We call every reader of our publications to *witness* that the author has never boasted of his *wisdom* or *originality*, either publicly or privately. We have boasted in the *truth*, and shall continue to boast of it--that no human philosophies can hold a candle to its brilliant electric ray; but we have never boasted of being its originator. On the contrary, it is because we did not manufacture it, but because God has revealed it "in due time" as "meat in due season," and because it is so much more wonderful than we or any other human being could originate or concoct, that we have confidence that none other than God is its Author and its Revealer.

If by the grace of God we have in any degree been used by him in serving present harvest truths to others, we rejoice in the *service*, and will continue to strive to be faithful to our stewardship: but as for vanity on this account, we see no room or reason for it. We are well aware that our Master could readily have found many others as fit and worthy of the service, and many more capable naturally: we can only suppose, therefore, that herein as previously--"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty,...and the things that are despised...to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."--1 Cor. 1:27-29.

We therefore caution all who by the grace of God have been translated out of darkness into God's marvelous light, that they walk proportionately the more humbly before the Lord: because, if the light received should become darkness, how great would be the darkness, and how hopeless the condition! It would, as the Apostle declares, be better for such never to have known the way of life. If salt lose its flavor it is good for nothing more than sand."

R5956 "DANGER IN SPIRITUAL PRIDE... The Apostle Peter evidently had this besetting danger of spiritual pride in mind when he wrote to the Church: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." (1 Peter 5:6.) "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted," said the Master.

ONE SYMPTOM OF THIS SOUL-SICKNESS

How may we know spiritual pride? some one may inquire. One of the most serious things in this connection is that those who have spiritual pride very rarely

It is when we are thus humble and faithful that the Lord makes us His chosen vessels to bear His name to others. Thus emptied of self, He can fill us with His Spirit and with His Truth, and we can go forth strong in the Lord of hosts and in His mighty power, to do valiant service as soldiers of the cross. Z. '93-7R1487:5

are aware of it. They sometimes have forms of godliness which not only deceive others, but deceive themselves and hinder them from seeing the spiritual pride which is working and which others may more readily see.

When you feel that your attendance at meetings, your reading of so many pages of SCRIPTURE STUDIES per day, your distribution of so many tracts, or your circulation or loaning of so many books, are matters to be boasted of--then take care! That disposition to boast is an indication that you would be in danger of catching spiritual pride if circumstances were favorable. These are all good and laudable things, all proper things; and you should feel a proper degree of self-congratulation that you find yourself able and willing to turn from the daily newspaper or novel, the reading of chitchat, or the writing of chitchat, to do things so reasonable, so proper, so much in harmony with the Divine will. But any disposition to boast of the matter should lead you to a careful scrutiny of thought--of the motives lying behind these activities in the Lord's service.

We are not meaning to say that it would be improper to give a testimony in which all of these things might be brought forward as an encouragement to others or as a proof that we love the Lord and are anxious to serve Him. What we are cautioning against is a spirit, or disposition, to boast of anything that we might be or do as the Lord's children. We have nothing whereof to boast. If we gave all of our goods to feed the spiritually poor, all our time to circulating the Truth, and all of our energy to the honoring of the Lord's name, we should feel that, having done all, we had not really profited our Lord, but merely found an opportunity of showing Him a little of the devotion of our hearts in acknowledgment of the numberless blessings already received at His hand, and the still more wonderful favors which He has promised shall be ours, if faithful. Well did the poet write:

"I want the first approach to feel

Of pride or fond desire!"

STILL FURTHER SYMPTOMS

Another form of this disease of spiritual pride manifests itself in a hypercritical attitude of mind. When one attends a testimony meeting, or a Berean class, and hears no real good testimony but his own, hears no proper answer except his own to any of the questions, never sees an Elder in the chair who knows how to lead a meeting anyway--these should be considered dangerous symptoms of spiritual pride.

Not that all these things might not *possibly* occur, but they are surely not likely to occur continually. It would be perfectly proper for us to give such attention, and to be so well informed, that we would be able to see quickly any unscriptural proceeding or any instance of very poor judgment that would be a hindrance to the effectiveness of the services. It would be proper, too, if ever we saw that the best interests of the class

were not being served--and if, after waiting patiently for a while, we found that they were not likely to be corrected--it would be entirely proper for us, in a meek and quiet spirit, to call attention to the fault, either in the Class or to an elder, or whatever would be the most effective and least demonstrative way. "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory," but everything for the glory of God.

And right there we need to be careful, too, lest we get into the way of thinking that everything that harmonizes with our ideas is to the glory of God, and that whatever would not harmonize with our ideas could not be pleasing to Him. Well did the Apostle write: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools." (Ephesians 5:15.) Well do we see the meaning of this word "circumspectly"-- that it signifies with close scrutiny on every hand, especially as respects thoughts, motives, intentions.

"BE NOT MANY OF YOU TEACHERS"

Well did St. James write, "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that a man shall receive the severer trial." (James 3:1.) While, as we have pointed out, all of the Lord's people are specially susceptible along the line of spiritual pride, there seems to be a special danger surrounding all who become in any manner identified with the promulgation of His Truth.

It is a special privilege, indeed, to tell out the Message of God's grace to all who have a hearing ear. How thankful we are that it is not--as it was once supposed-- the exclusive privilege of the clergy, but that

the Lord declares that all who are His consecrated people and who receive the begetting of the holy Spirit have, through it, the anointing to preach the Good Tidings to the meek and to bind up the broken-hearted! (Isaiah 61:1.) We are glad of this privilege, which includes our private conversations with neighbors and friends. But what a privilege to be God's ambassadors, and in His name to tell of the coming Kingdom, of the great provision God has already made through the death of Jesus, of the grand outcome, and of how the kings and priests of that Kingdom are now being called out of the world, experiencing a change of nature in preparation for their future work!

Old as the Message is, it is so new and wonderful, if rightly presented, as to awaken astonishment in the honest-hearted who hear. They wonder, how did this ordinary man (or woman) ever come to understand and be able so beautifully to portray these wonderful things? Perhaps they give a hint of their surprise. Then comes a danger-moment for taking the disease of spiritual pride. Just a little swing of the mind; and you think that it is wonderful that even you should know about such things when the great mass of mankind have not the remotest conception of them, and that even some of the ablest and most talented ministers of the Word of God are ignorant respecting these things in the Bible.

If you are taking the disease of spiritual pride you will doubtless feel a straightening of your back. You are beginning to feel more important, and to look more dignified

and to feel that, after all, you are somebody great. Your voice indicates this, too; and your hearer notices it. Then he begins to feel that it is not the Word of the Lord, but that, as you seem to admit, it is something that you made up--something that you are responsible for, and he thinks less of it on that account.

The proper attitude, as all will agree, is that the Lord's people should feel greatly *humbled* instead of greatly *exalted* and heady in respect to these opportunities for telling the Truth to others. We should feel our unworthiness. We should realize that the Plan is not ours; that we have merely heard of it ourselves; that it is really God's Plan; that we are honored as His servants to tell it out. But if we allow any impression to go out that it is by any wisdom on our part, or any skill, that the beauty is seen in the Message, then to that extent we are taking glory to ourselves which belongs to the Lord, and doing injury to ourselves proportionately by failing to demonstrate our worthiness to be used by the Lord in the present and in the future. The wonderful privilege of speaking as ambassadors for the Lord, to tell of His greatness and Plan should humble us with the thought that He has privileged *us*, whereas He has angels, who excel in strength and whom He might have used in communicating this most wonderful Message."

R1486 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

EXALTATION VIA HUMILITY

"Let him that would be greatest among you be servant of all....One is your master, even Christ, and All ye are brethren."--Matt. 23:10,11.

Pride is selfishness gone to seed. The selfish spirit greedily gathers to itself as much as possible of all that it esteems good and valuable --wealth, learning, honor, fame and distinction among men. A measure of success in the acquisition of these treasures further leads the selfish soul to a feeling of self-complacency, independence and indifference to the well-being of others, which, gradually but rapidly developing into arrogant and self-assertive pride, will continue to ripen with every gleam of the sunlight of temporal prosperity. As selfishness continues to ripen it swells itself to ridiculous proportions and delights to vaunt itself, and gloats over its imagined importance and worthiness of honor and praise.

Who can love such a disposition? It is utterly unworthy in all eyes save its own. No wonder, then, that it is written, "God resisteth the proud and giveth his favors to the humble." And again, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." How could it be otherwise? for these inflated values must at some time come down to a solid basis: wind will not always pass current for worth, and the punctured bubbles of earthly vanity will reveal the true status of every individual. And well will it be in the cases of those in whom the humbling realization does not awaken a spirit of rebellion and strife against God, which must inevitably end either in contrition or in destruction.

How much easier and how much wiser is the course of humility. The humble spirit seeketh not its own, is not puffed up, and does not attempt to speculate on inflated values, does not think of self more highly than it ought to think, but thinks soberly--neither overrating nor underrating its own acquirements or achievements. Humility strives always to do business on a solid basis, though it strives lawfully to acquire a real worthiness and to achieve the true glory of the divine commendation and favor.

The man who underrates his worth comes much nearer the truth

than the man who overrates; for the fact is that no member of the fallen race, however favorably he may compare with some of his fellows more bruised by the fall, has anything whereof to boast. Consider, for instance, how meager is the aggregate of human knowledge in every direction. As a race we are unable to trace our own history for centuries from the beginning, or to account for our origin, or to prognosticate our destiny. We are unable to fully comprehend the deep philosophy of our physical and mental organisms. There are mysteries within us and all around us which the wisest men cannot fathom; and only those narrow souls whose world of thought is bounded by the horizon of their own temporal interests ever vaunt their learning or wisdom, or feel that they have aught of which to boast. Their fellow-men may call them great and wise and reverend, but they know too well how small and ignorant they are and how unworthy of reverence, realizing that beyond the ken of their short vision are vast unexplored fields of knowledge. The truly noble soul feels humbled upon the borders of the vast unknown, thankfully accepts the divine revelation as to his nature, origin, destiny, etc., and patiently awaits the Lord's good time for a fuller understanding of all the mysteries of his wondrous grace. Pride of wealth or of fame is of still more ignoble character. Wealth selfishly hoarded and enjoyed certainly adds no degree of merit to the possessor, whether he inherited or acquired it; and fame among fallen men only proves that he who gained it has not to any considerable extent outstripped the popular limit of advancement. At best he is only abreast of his times. The man who has outstripped the current of popular thought is never a popular or famous man. Every such one has had to attest his true moral courage by facing popular opposition and enduring the popular reproach; or, in other words, by humbling himself.

In view of these considerations we see how just and wise is the

divine rule for abasing the proud and exalting the humble, and how sound our Lord's counsel to his disciples, to cultivate the spirit of humility and to avoid even the appearance of pride. Observing the growth and manifestation of this spirit among the Pharisees, who did all their works to be seen of men, who loved the uppermost rooms at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi, he said, "But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren"--or, in the language of to-day, Be not ye called Reverend Doctors of Divinity, and let there be no distinctions of clergy and laity; for one is your truly reverend Lord and instructor, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. "Let him that would be greatest among you be servant of all;" for the divine rule is that "whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

God's plan, viewed as a whole, shows that the exaltation of any individual or class of his creatures is always for the purpose of blessing others who are not so exalted. Thus, for instance, the exaltation of our Lord Jesus and his Church is for the blessing of all others; so also was the election and special favor to Israel to result in blessings to the nations not so favored.

Such a rule, it will readily be seen, is the prompting of the highest benevolence and of the fatherly love of God for all his creatures of every name and order, and manifests the depth of his wisdom as well as his love, both in rewarding the truly worthy and in bringing righteous and benevolent power forward for the accomplishment of righteous and benevolent ends. Thus in benevolent service and mutual love he will in due time bind together in one the whole family in heaven and in earth, through the mediation and service of the greatest of all servants, Jesus Christ.

Let us heed this counsel of the Master, and let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time. (1 Pet. 5:6.) We have already done so to some extent in refusing to own as our masters the various heads of the great nominal church. We own neither Luther, nor Calvin, nor Knox, nor Wesley, nor Campbell, nor any other man or body of men, as our master; nor do we own the pope of Rome as our pope, our Father: God is our father, and his anointed Son is our Lord and head. To them, and not to our brethren, let us look for the reward of faithfulness: "For," says the Apostle (Heb. 6:10), "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye have shown toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

^[1]It is indeed no easy matter to tread the pathway of humility, to continually check the human aspirations and to keep the sacrifice on the altar until it is fully consumed. But thus it is that we are to work out our own salvation to the high calling with fear and trembling, lest we come short of worthiness for the prize of the high calling promised to the faithful overcomers who tread closely in the footsteps of our blessed Forerunner,--who was meek and lowly of heart.--Phil. 2:8,12.

It is when we are thus humble and faithful that the Lord makes us his chosen vessels to bear his name to others. Thus emptied of self, he can fill us with his spirit and with his truth, and we can go forth strong in the Lord of hosts and in his mighty power to do valiant service as soldiers of the cross.

^[1] Apr. 10 Manna, 1Pet. 5:6

R5185 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)
ST. PETER'S EXHORTATION TO THE ELDERS

"Humble yourselves...under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."--1 Peter 5:6.

AS THOSE who have received Divine grace and the knowledge of the Divine purpose, the Lord's people have certain ambitions which are right and proper, and which should be rightly exercised, regulated and governed. No one should be without a laudable ambition. We cannot imagine God to be without ambition. Those who have little or none pass through life in a kind of maze, accomplishing very little for themselves or others, and usually fail in all they undertake.

There are, however, noble and ignoble ambitions. Some people are ambitious to become great, renowned; others are ambitious to rule; still others are ambitious for wealth, for social distinction, or for titles and honor amongst men. These are all selfish ambitions, yet they are the power that moves the world today--in business, social, political and even religious circles. These are all wrong ambitions; and though they may not all result in evil, yet they are all selfish, and tend toward evil. Many are seduced by selfish ambitions into doing those things of which their consciences do not approve.

The Christian has set before him the most noble ambition possible. God is calling from the world a people for His Name. Before these He sets the loftiest ambition. These are invited to become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. This is an ambition which inspires them to develop all the higher qualities of mind and character, in order to prepare themselves for the society, friendship and fellowship of the Heavenly Father and the Lord. Let us have this high ambition ever before us, as an incentive to the most earnest endeavor to heed the Word of the Lord.

Those who take this course are very pleasing to the Father. He has a great work to be done, and is seeking a people who will do it. Christ Jesus is the Head of this great work, and His Kingdom is to rule and bless the world, that in the ages to come, God may show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us. (Eph. 2:7.) Those who appreciate this high calling wish to be where God has invited them to be. Those who do not care for what God has offered or who do not wish to conform to the terms should not enter the race for the prize.

Those who have the heavenly ambition should not forget that they have the treasure of the new nature in earthen vessels. To this

class it becomes a laudable ambition to serve one another and to build one another up in the most holy faith. The Bride is to make herself ready. (Rev. 19:7.) So these should seek to get ready themselves and to help others of the dear family of God.

DANGER INVOLVED IN THE ELDERSHIP

To desire the office of a bishop, a shepherd, is a good ambition. (1 Tim. 3:1.) If one properly attends to the shepherding of the flock, he will not have time for other interests. Those who have been called to the position of Eldership amongst the Lord's people should consider this an honor and a privilege from the Lord; and they should be very careful to seek it, not for filthy lucre's sake, but with a ready mind. (1 Peter 5:1-4.) But in seeking this position let each one remember that there is danger of the development of pride and the assumption of power.

Those who have the high privilege of serving as an Elder Brother should watch themselves to see that they do not lord it over God's heritage. They should remember that they are not the Chief Shepherd, but only under-shepherds. If any should lord it over the flock, he would bring injury to himself as well as to the Church; for in thus doing he would be cultivating a spirit of pride.

St. Peter tells us that "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:5.) Therefore if in the Lord's service one is humble, his course not only inures to the benefit of the Class, but it is the only way by which anyone will gain a position in the Kingdom. The Eldership is an honorable office which not only has great privileges attached to it, but has also great temptation and great danger. St. James says, "My brethren, be not many [of you] masters [teachers], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."--James 3:1.

The Apostle exhorts those that are Elders doing a work that is necessary to be done, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God." Everything is being done by the mighty power of God, by which He is causing all things to work together for good. We cannot interfere with the Divine will. We might permit pride or fond desire to hinder our own progress, but we cannot hinder the Plan of God.

We all desire to seek the best way to serve others and yet to

gain the great reward. St. Peter shows us that way--"Humble yourselves." As the poet has expressed it,

"I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much."

This spirit will make us very fearful of developing any pride or bombast or desire of lording it over others. So, then, we humble ourselves and remember that God will especially bless those who are more lowly, more trustful in the Lord, and in due time will exalt them--at the Second Coming of our Lord.

Sometimes, indeed, the humble-minded of the Lord's people may be less esteemed in the Church than are some who lack this important quality of character. There is in mankind a general tendency toward brow-beating. They would rather have some one who will ride rough-shod over them than one who is gentle and moderate. Therefore they may not like us. But we are not to seek what they would like best in us. Rather we are to remember that we are to serve the Lord in His way, and that our chief responsibility in the Lord's sight is for *ourselves*. We are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt us in due time.

PRIDE IN KNOWLEDGE OF TRUTH INJURIOUS

All these matters show us that our proper attitude is that of humility. The sentiment of our hearts should not be that of pride, but of meekness, humility, faithfulness.

Pride is selfishness gone to seed. The selfish spirit greedily gathers to itself as much as possible of all that it esteems good and valuable--wealth, learning, honor, fame and distinction among men. A measure of success in the acquisition of these treasures leads the selfish soul to a feeling of complacency, independence and indifference to the well-being of others. This spirit, gradually, but rapidly developing into arrogance, self-assertive pride, will continue to ripen with every gleam of the sunlight of temporal prosperity. As selfishness continues to ripen, it swells itself to ridiculous proportions and delights to vaunt itself, and gloats over its imagined importance and worthiness of honor and praise.

How much easier and how much wiser is the course of humility! The humble spirit seeketh not its own, is not puffed up, does not attempt to speculate upon inflated values, does not think of itself more highly than it ought to think, but thinks soberly--neither overrating nor underrating its own acquirements or achievements. Humility strives always to do business on a solid basis, though it contends lawfully to acquire a real worthiness and to achieve the true glory of the Divine commendation and favor.

There is a disposition on the part of many to be rather boastful

on account of the Truth, as though we had originated the Truth. How foolish this is! We have made no truth. We have merely gotten rid of some of the errors that formerly blinded our eyes. *The Truth is God's*. He has allowed us to see out of the darkness of ignorance and superstition into the Truth of His Plan. If a man who had seen a beautiful picture should then boast as though he had painted it, we would say, "Foolish man! You did not *make* that picture. You merely *looked at it*. You have nothing to boast of concerning it."

We did not make any part of God's Plan of the Ages. If we had attempted to do so, we would have made a failure of it. Our attitude of mind, then, should be, "Come, we will show you what God has arranged, what God has pictured." Thus we would glorify God and be helpful to others; for to whatever extent we manifest pride or self-consciousness in the Truth, to that extent we do injury to ourselves and to others. The world would say, "We have just as able Doctors of Divinity in our denominations as you have--just as wise to teach us the Truth."

Our proper course, therefore, is to make it plain at the very beginning that we are of the right spirit--the meek, humble spirit of the Master. God is permitting us to see things in His Word, concerning which it is His due time to turn on the light. The picture was there all along, but the clouds and darkness made it so dim that we were not able to discern its beauties. Now the light is being turned on, and, as the poet has expressed it,

"Wonderful things in the Bible we see."

Instead of self-confidence, wisdom dictates a distrustfulness of self, remembering its weaknesses and imperfections, and correspondingly the greater reverence for God and reliance upon Him, which more than anything else will strengthen us and enable us to depart from the evil of our fallen estate.

It is indeed no easy matter to tread the pathway of humility, to continually check the human aspirations, and to keep the sacrifice on the altar until it is fully consumed. But thus it is that we are to work out our own salvation to the Divine nature with fear and trembling, lest we come short of worthiness for the prize promised to the faithful overcomers who tread closely in the footsteps of our blessed Forerunner, who was meek and lowly of heart.--Phil. 2:8,12.

It is when we are thus humble and faithful that the Lord makes us His chosen vessels to bear His name to others. Thus, emptied of self and filled with His Spirit, and with His Truth, we can go forth, strong in the Lord of Hosts and in His mighty Power do valiant service as soldiers of the Cross.

[Poems Of Dawn Page 43]

THE TRANSFORMATION

TO the Potter's house I went down one day,
And watched him while moulding the vessels of clay,
And many a wonderful lesson I drew,
As I noted the process the clay went through.

Trampled and broken, down-trodden and rolled,
To render more plastic and fit for the mould
How like the clay that is human, I thought,
When in Heavenly hands to perfection brought!

For Self must be cast as the dust at His feet,
Before it is ready, for service made meet.
And Pride must be broken, and self-will lost--
All laid on the altar, whatever the cost.

But lo! by and by, a delicate vase
Of wonderful beauty and exquisite grace.
Was it once the vile clay? Ah! yes; yet how strange,
The Potter hath wrought such a marvelous change!

Not a trace of the earth, nor mark of the clay--
The fires of the furnace have burned them away.
Wondrous skill of the Potter!--the praise is his due,
In whose hands to perfection and beauty it grew.

Thus with souls lying still, content in God's hand,
That do not His power of working withstand--
They are molded and fitted, a treasure to hold,
Vile clay now transformed into purest of gold.