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"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

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Poetry.

There's nothing lost.

There's nothing lost. The finest flower
That grows within the darkest vale,
Though lost to view, has still the power
The rarest perfume to exhale;
That perfume, borne on zephyr's wings,
May visit some lone, sick one's bed,
And like the balm affection brings,
It will scatter gladness round her head.

There's nothing lost. The drop of dew
That trembles in the rosebud's breast,
Will seek its home of ether blue,
And fall again as pure and blest,
Perchance to revel in the spray,
Or moisten the dry, parching sod,
Or mingle in the fountain spray,
Or sparkle in the bow of God.

There's nothing lost. The seed that's cast
By careless hands upon the ground,
Will yet take root, and may at last
A green and glorious tree be found;
Beneath its shade, some pilgrim may
Seek shelter from the heat at noon,
While in its boughs the breezes play,
And song-birds sing their sweetest tune.

There's nothing lost. The slightest tone
Or whisper from a loved one's voice,
May melt a heart of hardest stone,
And make the saddened heart rejoice.
And then, again, the careless word
Our thoughtless lips too often speak,
May touch a heart already stirred,
And cause that troubled heart to break.

There's nothing lost. The faintest strain
Of breathing from some dear one's lute,
In memory's dream may come again,
Though every mournful string be mute.
The music of some happier hour—
The harp that swells with love's own words—
May swell the soul with deeper power,
When still the hand that swept its chords.

Selections.

TRIALS.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

At their first conversion, very many of the people of God are called to pass through the entire trial which Abraham endured. Some of us, it is true, were born of pious parents, and our conversion was a theme of joy to the house; it made jubilee; the fatted calf was killed, and there was music and dancing. But others were born as children of the Philistines; our parents were haters of God. I may be addressing such. No sooner did you begin to attend the house of God, than your father was the first to laugh at you, and when you were detected on your knees, mother, brother, and sisters, all assailed you with sneers and ridicule. It may be that you have suffered much household persecution for the sake of Christ's cross, and the profession of it you have made. Moreover, you may have been called to separate yourself from your whole ancestry; for in looking back you cannot detect on the family tree one branch that ever bore heavenly fruit. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. The whole family has been given up to Satan, and you have been called to bear a lonely protest to the gospel of Christ; you have come out, you have blighted your own worldly prospects, you have drowned your own interest in crossing the river. You have suffered the loss of all things for Christ's sake, and perhaps at the time you may have been greatly staggered; nay, even now, you may be passing through the fiery trial. You may be staggered in your soul, and saying, "Can this be right? shall I give up my religion, shall I put back into port, or shall I encounter these waves that threaten to submerge my vessel?" Dear brothers and sisters, if father and mother forsake you, then the Lord will take you up. "He that loveth father and mother, and house and lands, more than Me," saith Christ, "is not worthy of Me." You must leave all for Christ's sake. Be prepared. If they will come with you, take the compliance gladly; if they will not, then come alone; "Come ye out from among them; be ye separate, touch not the unclean thing." Be an Abraham. Leave everything; and if you do this in faith, verily ye shall not lack your

reward. He is able, and He has promised to you in this life ten times more than you lose for Him, and, in the world to come everlasting life.

Such Christians as I have referred to, who are not called in early life to endure this trial, frequently have to bear its counterpart at another stage in their journey. On a sudden, their minds are enlightened with regard to the pure simplicity of the gospel; their family is professedly religious, and they have been in the habit of attending a certain place of worship with their kindred and friends, till at length a change passes over their religious views. Perhaps it is a doctrinal change; they have imbibed the orthodox faith from the pure fountain of revelation itself, unalloyed by the traditions and qualifications of men; they have cast away all the heterodox glossary of man, and have determined to believe nothing but the sovereign grace of God. Perhaps their views on baptism may have changed, and seeing nothing in scripture to warrant infant sprinkling, they have come out with a determination to practice believer's baptism. It may be that this entails the scoff and scorn of all who know them. This grieves the hearts of those who know and love Jesus, and the question arises with them, "What shall I do?" These matters may be non-essential; shall I keep them back? Shall I for charity's sake weaken my testimony. Shall I only bear testimony to points on which I may agree with other people, and hold my tongue about the rest. Oh, my dear friends, such carnal policy, if you practise it, will do you serious injury. Whatever you believe, carry it out. Depend upon it, a grain of truth is a grain of diamond dust, and it is precious. There may be truths non-essential to our salvation; but there are no non-essential truths with regard to our comfort. Every truth is essential. We must keep back none, but follow the Lord wholly; let this be your song—

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where He goes,
'Hinder me not,' shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose."

The tendency of the present age is to temporize; we are asked continually to qualify our testimony; to cut off some portion of the truth we preach; to smooth down and polish our words. God forbid; we will not do so. Whatever we believe to be true, to the last jot and tittle we will speak it out. I hope, so long as I live, there will always be a straight road from my heart to my mouth, and that I shall be able to preach whatever I believe in my soul, and to keep nothing reserved. Do you the same. Though you should forsake all, and should be by all forsaken, for the truth's sake, with Abraham's trial and Abraham's faith, you shall have Abraham's honour and Abraham's reward.

Again, this trial of faith cometh oftentimes in matters of providence. We have been lining our nests very softly, and counting all the eggs that are laid therein, with the greatest cheerfulness and delight; we have had much goods laid up for many years, and all of a sudden, Misfortune, like a wicked boy, has climbed the tree, and pulled down the nests, and the birds had to fly, and we have said "Whither shall we go?" But God has comforted us, and we have said in our hearts, "Every tree in the forest of earth is doomed to the axe; why, therefore, should we build our nests here? Let us fly away and find our home in the rock of ages." And God has rewarded our faith. Our business, though suddenly blighted when flourishing in one place, has been, when removed amidst sad misgivings and dark uncertainties, even more flourishing in another; or if not, if trials have multiplied and poverty has succeeded wealth, yet grace has increased, and as our afflictions abounded, our consolations have much more abounded. I believe, dear friends, that many and many a time you, in providential journey will have to go forth, not knowing whither you are going. But it is good for you; do not murmur at it. If the father of the faithful had to do it, why should the sons murmur? The father of the family must not know whither

he was going, and shall you, the sons and daughters, long to read the future with wistful, curious eyes? No, wherever God in His providence guides you, let it be your joy to know that He is too wise to err—too good to be unkind.

Let us follow the Shepherd with a ready mind, because He has a perfect right to lead us wherever He pleases. We are not our own—we are bought with a price. If we were our own, we might repine at our circumstances; but since we are not, let this be our cry, "Do what Thou wilt, O Lord, and though Thou slay me, yet will I trust in Thee;" we are not true to our profession of being Christians, if we pick and choose for ourselves. Picking and choosing are great enemies to submission. In fact, they are not at all consistent therewith. If we are really Christ's Christians, let us say, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth Him good."

And then, in the next place, we ought to submit, because wherever He may lead us, if we know not where we go, we do know one thing, we know with whom we go—we do not know the road, but we know the guide. We may feel that the journey is long, but we are quite sure that the everlasting arms that carry us are strong enough, be the journey ever so many leagues in length. We do not know what may be the inhabitants of the land into which we may come, Canaanites or not; but we do know that the Lord our God is with us, and He shall surely deliver them into our hands.

Another reason why we should follow with simplicity and faith all the commands of God, is this, because we may be quite sure they shall all end well. They may not be well apparently whilst they are going on, but they will end well at last. You sometimes see in a factory the wheels running some this way, and some the other, and some crossways, and they seem to be playing all sorts of antics, but somehow or other the devisor brings them all to work for some settled object. And I know that, come prosperity or come adversity, come sickness or come wealth, come foe, come friend, come popularity, or come contempt, His purpose shall be worked out, and that purpose shall be pure, unmingled good to every blood-bought heir of mercy on whom His heart is set.

Ministerial Fearlessness.

EVER since the ancient prophet fearlessly cried in the ears of the sinning king "Thou art the man," boldness in the utterance of unwelcome truth has commanded the homage of men. No passage in the history of our Lord's incarnate life is more thrilling than the record of His terrible denunciations against the profaners of His temple. Paul, the prince of preachers, rejoices in his farewell address to his Ephesian friends, that he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God during the three years of his ministry among them; and, since Paul's day, not a few have gained an undying name on earth, and the martyr's crown in heaven, by their fearless utterance of needed truth.

True courage is so rare a virtue that it exacts universal homage, and even when seen in its lowest form of brute bravery upon the battle-field, secures the plaudits of the multitude. In its rarer forms of mental and moral fearlessness, it is worthy of the highest admiration. Its elements are, a profound reverence for God, and an intense love for the souls of His creatures. That courage which, based in the fear of God, overcomes all fear of man, and from a sense of duty uniformly speaks the truth in love, enables its possessor to encounter danger, difficulty, scorn and ridicule, without fear of shrinking. This nerved Daniel to brave the wrath of the king, and John the Baptist to reprove Herod. This sustained the reformers in preaching the simple truths of a pure gospel against the corruptions of an apostate church. And the ministry of our quieter times need it as well, to resist a reformatory morality claiming to be the religion of Christ. A far braver heart is required to adhere to the

simple, trite, but vital truths of God, relying upon them, pressed upon the conscience with earnest, and persistent zeal, to save the individual and the nation, than is shown in hurling against opposers the fiercest invectives that ever came from the lips of self-elected reformers. To do the latter, needs neither humility, modesty, charity nor bravery.

True heroism requires the speaking the right truth at the right time, lovingly uttered, and trustingly watched until it produces its fruit. "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you," says Paul. True courage does not imply the want of common-sense. That which was profitable to the Bible-instructed Jews of Jerusalem might not be profitable to the philosophic and idol-worshipping Greeks on Mars' Hill. And Paul, as did Paul's Master, presented truth as men were able to bear it. Fear of God, and love for souls, led him to declare just those truths, at a given time, which, in the exercise of a wise discretion, he had reason to believe God would bless. The highest fearlessness in the pulpit to-day demands this same discretion as to the time, matter and manner of preaching.

Nor does moral intrepidity consist in launching against others fiery anathemas, imagining one's own morbid or malignant thoughts and feelings to be the thoughts and feelings of the Almighty one. "I shunned not to declare unto you all the counsel of God," was Paul's claim—not the clamours or opinions of men, but the counsel of God. The utterance of these counsels in their simplicity, and in the spirit of Him who is love, with an abiding faith in their efficacy, notwithstanding the pretensions of a humanitarian gospel exalting itself in the very temple of God, requires and exhibits a profounder heroism than that possessed by the noisiest reformer of the age. He alone who reverences the law of God more than he fears the scorn of men, who loves the souls of the perishing more than he desires the praise of the populace, will calmly, steadily, and persistently confine his teachings to the counsel of God, nor exalt the vagaries of his own brain to a level with the revelations of the Most High. —*American Messenger.*

Giving a Test of Christian Character.

OUR Lord has made giving to be an agency of great importance in carrying forward his work. Other things may be more intrinsically needful than money, but the work cannot be accomplished without it; and it seems to be just for the lack of this that it now lingers. Everything else is more abundantly provided. The way is open. Obstacles have been removed. The preparatory work, to a great extent, has been done. Much prayer is offered. The blessing of God is waiting to descend. Missionary candidates are coming forward in increasing numbers. But the money is wanting. It is kept back. O for a revival of primitive benevolence!—a revival that shall take hold of the property as well as the persons of men, and bring that into the service of Christ. For this, let earnest prayer be offered to the Great Head of the Church, that He will not merely open the hearts of our youth to go, but of our mechanics and merchants and farmers at home, to consecrate their property, and the income of their labor, to the spread of the gospel. When that day shall come, and giving shall no longer be accounted as an incidental act in our Christian worship, but a part of it, and of equal importance with prayer and praise—then and not till then, may we look for the rapid and speedy evangelization of the world.

Giving is one of the severest tests of faith and Christian character, as it is also of the richest means of grace. This is the reason why it is so much insisted on in the Scriptures, and why it is so necessary to urge it now. Up to a certain point, Christian effort for the conversion of the world costs but very little self-denial. All wish well to the object; all pray for it, with more or less earnestness and sincerity; and there are but few, at the present day, who refuse to give something, when they are solicited,