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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

Homewards.

Dropping down the troubled river
To the tranquil, tranquil shore;
Dropping down the misty river,
Time's willow-shaded river,
To the spring embosomed shore,
Where the sweet light smileth ever
And the sun goes down no more.
O wondrous wondrous shore.

Dropping down the winding river,
To the wide and welcome sea;
Dropping down the narrow river,
Man's weary wayward river,
To the blue and ample sea;
Where no tempest wrecketh ever,
Where the sky is fair and free,
O joyous, joyous sea!

Dropping down the noisy river,
To our peaceful, peaceful home;
Dropping down the turbid river
Earth's bustling crowded river
To our gentle, gentle home;
Where the rough roar riseth never,
And the vexing cannot come
O loved and longed for home!

Dropping down the eddying river
With a Helmsman true and tried;
Dropping down the perilous river
Mortality's dark river,
With a sure and Heavenly Guide;
Even Him who, to deliver
My soul from death, hath died;
O Helmsman true and tried!

Dropping down the rapid river,
To the dear and deathless land;
Dropping down the well-known river,
Life's swollen and rushing river,
To the resurrection land;
Where the living live for ever
And the dead have joined the band,
O fair and blessed land.

Religious.

Father Taylor's Conference Meeting.

BY MRS. MADELINE LESLIE.

Antonio wandered up and down the square. He had no object in view. He cared for nothing except to rid himself of the anxious thoughts, which, since his last conversation with his good friend, Mrs. Murray, continually intruded themselves into his mind.

His guilt as a sinner before God, the danger of living on from day to day, careless and thoughtless of the salvation of his soul, his ignorance of the way to come to Christ, rushed with terrible power through his soul, until he was well nigh distracted.

Unconsciously he had approached the Bethel chapel, from which at this moment issued the sound of many voices uniting in a hymn of praise to God. He stood under the open window and listened—

"Palms of victory,
Crowns of glory
We shall wear,
In that beautiful world on high."

Oh with what a thrill of pain; he said to himself, as the chorus of many fervent, earnest voices died away: "I know nothing of that beautiful world; I shall not be there."

Then there came an irresistible longing to join that company of worshippers. He walked slowly down the narrow alley to the vestry door; but then, trembling with excitement, and the fear that he should be considered an intruder he hesitated for several minutes before he dared enter.

Once within the room, a man near the door beckoned him to a seat. A gentleman in the desk was at this moment giving an account of a remarkable appearance of the Aurora Borealis which he had witnessed in early life.

"I was but a boy then," he went on; "and my father called me to witness the wonderful scene. Hundreds of people were standing in groups on the snow, which was crimson from the reflection of the fiery red glow of the sky. The whole heavens seemed in a blaze: indeed we could almost imagine we heard the hissing and crackling of the flames, as the fiery forks shot upward, while ever and anon the stars appeared to drop from their places in the firmament.

"A terrible awe fell upon the wondering group. At last I remember that one man, in a subdued voice, said: 'I suppose the day of judgment will resemble this.'"

"The solemn words, 'day of judgment,' passed from one group to another, until, with one accord, the assembled multitude fell down on their knees before God, while from many a poor creature, one hour before careless and thoughtless of his Maker, came the heart-rendering cry, 'God have mercy upon me, a sinner.'"

"In one part of the common a poor widow knelt, her hands and eyes upraised, while from her quivering lips an earnest, oh how earnest! prayer was heard, 'God have mercy on my son.'"

Antonio, who had been leaning forward with strained eyes and clenched hands, listening to every word of the speaker, sank back pale and breathless with terror. For a few moments his heart beat so fiercely that he could not fix his mind upon the exhortation to immediate repentance, which followed.

He covered his face with his hands, and wept aloud.

Presently his attention was arrested by a voice saying in a loud, earnest tone, "Mean, cowardly, skulking! No wonder the snow blushed crimson."

He looked up to the desk, and instantly recognized that friend and father to the sailor, known to every part of the world as Father Taylor.

At this moment every feature of the good man was stamped with contempt and utter loathing.

"Yes," he repeated, "how mean, how cowardly, for men, who all their lives had despised God, who had scorned his offer of mercy, who had laughed, perhaps, at the suffering of his Son, now, in the first moment of danger, to fall upon their knees and cry to him to save them!"

"No, young man," pointing in the direction where Antonio sat crouching behind a pillar, to escape observation; "no, aged sinner, when the heavens are on fire, and the earth is being rolled together as a great scroll, it will be too late to call upon God. It will be too late for you, mothers, to cry to him to save your sons. He will have something else to attend to in that terrible day. If, before that awful hour, you have not repented of your sins; if you have not ceased to do evil, and learned to do well; if you have not chosen Christ as your Saviour, another cry will be heard from your lips.

"Yes," he added, in an impassioned tone, "you will call upon the rocks to fall upon you and hide you from the face of Him who sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

"Come, then, you that have one particle of manhood. Come now, while the sky is serene, while God is waiting to be gracious, stand up like men," drawing up his form and folding his arms across his breast, "and call upon his name, confess your sins, and supplicate his mercy. Come now, while you have it in your power to show Him that you are grateful for His love; devote the life He has given, and a hundred times preserved from the wretches grave, to Him and His service forever."

"I do! I will!" cried the poor boy, starting unconsciously to his feet.

"Let us pray," said Father Taylor, falling on his knees.

And most earnestly was the youth before him, and all others who were "feeling after God, it happily they might find him," commended to divine mercy.

Antonio's heart echoed every word. A new life seemed begun in his soul. He did not understand himself. He wondered where was the dreadful load he had been carrying so long. He kept repeating the petitions, and saying, "I will seek him; I do seek him now. O God have mercy on me, and save me!"

When he sat down, after the prayer, he saw that many around him were weeping; but he no longer wept. His soul was exultant; he longed to sing, to shout, and presently, in a voice broken by emotion, joined in a hymn which echoed the sentiments of his heart. The closing lines were these:

"Love I much, I'm much forgiven,
I'm a miracle of grace."

When the hymn was ended, a young man arose and in a low, almost inarticulate tone

began, "Father Taylor I've come home, and I've fallen again, I was tempted, and I could not resist. I see now that I have been depending too much on my own strength. I thought I was strong; and so I went down worse than ever before. Oh, I'm afraid I've been dishonoring God, and dishonoring religion. I'm afraid I've ruined my soul!"

"My son," responded the good man tenderly, as the youth sank weeping into his seat, "God can't be played with in this manner. Once, twice, thrice, and now for the fourth time, you have fallen in drunkenness, after having hoped that your sins were pardoned. You are weak, you can not endure temptation, and you must flee from it as you would from the plague. You must distrust yourself and rest wholly on God; but remember he won't aid you while you throw yourself in the company of drunkards."

A low groan from the back part of the house arrested the attention of the speaker, and he quickly made his way to the spot.

Many present arose in their seats, while Father Taylor directed one of the sailors to support his fainting and apparently dying companion. Nothing could now be heard but low sobs of suppressed feeling.

After a few moments the man revived from his swoon, but thought himself dying. He whispered a wish to lay his head on the heart of the kind Father who had so many times spoken words of comfort to his aching heart.

"So you shall, my son," was the tender reply; "but you will soon be where you can lean your head on the bosom of your Saviour." The poor man burst into a cloud cry, "Oh God, help me! O God save my soul! Oh, do pray for me!"

The audience were becoming terribly excited and Antonio with his hands clasped upon his heart looked as if he were about to faint.

"I hope you will keep quiet," said Father Taylor, in a voice which trembled in spite of himself. "He is a poor fellow from the hospital, but he will soon be at rest. Let us pray for him."

He knelt in the aisle retaining the hand of the poor sufferer, whose groans and cries for help and peace mingled painfully with the supplications of the good man in his behalf.

At length he became more composed, his sobs ceased, and two men assisted in removing him to the hospital.

A few solemn words of entreaty from the sympathising pastor to all present, to prepare for death while in health, stating that he had reason to hope that their suffering friend was thus prepared; and then an elderly man arose, and in a touching tone of humility said, "I hope God has pardoned me, I have been a dreadful sinner, and it seemed too much to expect him to do it; but I do think he has forgiven me for Christ's sake.

"Just like him," said Father Taylor, his furrowed countenance shining with holy joy.

"And now," continued the man, "I have such a space here," putting his hand bronzed to his heart; "my heart is sweated nigh bursting with love to him. Oh, comrades try him: take him at his word; see if one minute with his love isn't worth a whole life without it."

He sat down quite overcome, while a low response came from the desk, "That's a true copy! Oh how precious those words are!"

It was now a late hour and the meeting was about to be closed, when a low voice was heard from the back-seat, and a man weeping as he confessed that during his last voyage, he had gone back into sin, and backslidden from God. Now he expected God would say, "cut him down, why cumbereth he the ground."

"I want to tell a little story," exclaimed a man springing up from his seat. "I live a great way off from here. I am a Swede. Once I had grapevine, it grew great, high; but I had no grapes. Then I not water my vine, I say let it die. One day I go out and it look like great stick, all dead; I take out my knife, I begin to cut it down.

"But I stop, I look down and there leetle grapevines. I laugh, I say, 'I not cut you down, I take care of you,' I dig round it, I water it, I watch it well."

"By and by my vines grow tall and big; had three bushel grapes from tem last year."

"Now my brother, take care the vine God give you; don't you be discourage; dig

round your withered heart, water it well; prune it; then you have three bushel fruit some time."

He had scarcely resumed his seat when after an earnest, whispered conference with his companion, a young man apparently about twenty-five, arose and said: "My friends, a son of christian parents, belonging to another church in this city, wants your prayers. My agony is very great; my system is shattered; my nerves are unstrung by an attack of delirium tremens, from which I am only partially recovered. I have walked my room hours to-day praying for strength to overcome this terrible hankering for strong drink. I was told that if I came here, I would not be scolded but prayed for. Oh, if you will aid me and strengthen me! If I can feel that christians are pleading with God for me, I may hope to prevail with him. Oh, if you can help me to reform, how my mother will bless you."

A burst of tears interrupted him, when the weeping pastor bowed the knee to lay his case before God. Fervently he besieged the mercy-seat for his weak, erring, but penitent son.

We know that such prayers do and will prevail.

The Cost of an Estate.

"WHAT is the value of this estate?" said a gentleman to another with whom he was riding, as they passed a fine mansion and through rich fields.

"I don't know what it is valued at; I know what it cost its late possessor."

"How much?"

"His soul."

A solemn pause followed this brief answer. The person to whom it was given was not seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

The late possessor referred to was the son of a pious man who supported his family by the labour of his hands. The son early obtained a subordinate position in a mercantile establishment in the city. He was then a professor of religion. He continued to maintain a reputable profession till he became a partner in the concern. He then gave increasing attention to business and less to religion. Ere he was an old man he had become exceedingly wealthy and miserly, and no one who knew him, had my suspicion that he had ever been a professor of religion. He purchased a large landed estate, built the costly mansion referred to above, and died. Just before he died, he said: "My prosperity has been my ruin."—*Observer.*

OPEN COMMUNION EXEMPLIFIED AND DEVELOPED.—The following is communicated to the *Christian Times*, by a correspondent;

"The members of a small Baptist church had been sorely pressed on the ground of their restricted communion. They worshipped in a schoolhouse alternately with their Pedobaptist brethren, and were thus compelled to give their views a special prominence, not in word, but practice. At a Methodist quarterly meeting held near them, the presiding elder gave a very broad invitation to all who were, or desired to be, christians, to partake of the communion. To this broad call many responded, and among them two sisters of the wife of a deacon of the Baptist church above mentioned. They were professed Universalists, but considered themselves included in the open invitation. They believed themselves christians. An excellent Presbyterian brother, who saw them go forward to participate, drew back, and declared this to be a communion quite too open for him. This circumstance also disgusted many intelligent Pedobaptists, and confirmed the little church in their closeness of fidelity to Scripture."—*N. W. Baptist.*

Silence in afflictions is a christian's armor of proof; it is that shield which no spear or dart of temptation can pierce. While a christian lies quiet under the rod he is safe. Satan may tempt him, but he will not conquer him; he may assault him, but he cannot vanquish him.