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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

The Old Year's blessing.

I am fading from you,
But one draweth near,
Called the angel-guardian,
Of the coming year.

If my gifts and graces
Coldly you forget,
Let the New Year's angel
Bless and crown them yet.

For we work together;
He and I are one:
Let him end and perfect
All I leave undone.

I brought good desires,
Though as yet but seeds;
Let the new year make them
Blossom into deeds.

I brought joy to brighten
Many happy days;
Let the new year's angel
Turn it into praise.

If I gave you sickness
If I brought you care,
Let him make one Patience,
And the other Prayer.

Where I brought you sorrow,
Through his care, at length,
It may rise triumphant
Into future strength.

If I brought you plenty,
All wealth's bounteous charms,
Shall not the new angel
Turn them into alms?

I gave health and leisure,
Skill to dream and plan,
Let him make them nobler,
Work for God and man.

If I broke your idols,
Showed you they were dust,
Let him turn the knowledge
Into heavenly trust.

If I brought temptation,
Let sin die away
Into boundless pity
For all hearts that stray.

If your list of errors
Dark and long appears,
Let this new-born monarch
Melt them into tears.

May you hold this angel
Dearer than the last,—
So I bless his future,
While he crowns my past.

ADELAIDE A. PROCTOR.

Religious.

"It is well."

"Twas a low grave they led me to, o'er-grown with violets of the spring, and starry moss, and all the sweet wild flowers that disclose their hues and fragrance round the dreamless couch, as if to tell how quietly the head, that here had throbbled so feverishly, doth rest.

"Twas a low grave, and the soft zephyrs played gently around it; and the setting sun gleamed brightly on the marble at its head, bearing the date, the name, the few brief years of one whose *blessed lot* it was to pass to the fair Land of Promise, ere the *chill* and *blight* of this dark world had power to cast a shade on life's pure blossom; while the dew of morning was upon its leaves, and all the outward world was beauty; ere the eye had ever wept in secret or the heart grown heavy with a sorrow unconfessed.—Was it a bitter lot? That stainless stone answered the query: but one line bore one brief inscription, thrilling the deep heart of those who, leaning o'er that narrow mound, mused over life's vain sorrow:

"It is well."

Ay, the deep words had meaning; but what grief had taught the lone survivors thus to count the sum of all, and, struggling with their tears, write only "It is well?" Oh well for her to rest on that green earth—to lay the head unwearied on its bosom, and to seek a refuge from the coldness of the world ere yet its shaft had pierced her

"It is well."

And, oh! for us who, musing o'er that grave, sigh for the rest a stranger's breast hath found. Were it not well, in the heart's hour of grief, when earth is dim, and all her shining streams discourse no more in music to our ears,—when shadows rest upon her brightest flowers, and the continual sorrow of the soul doth darken sun and moon, to dream at last of a still rest beneath the lowly stone—a calm unbroken slumber, where the eye shall weep no more in sadness, and the pulse, forget its quick wild throbbings?

O'er that grave such were my musings, till a deeper truth broke on my mind, as the blue violet shed its sweetness round me, and the evening winds brought fragrance from afar. And then I prayed, in lowliness of heart, that I might bear in faith "the heat and burden of the day;" and never till his purpose was fulfilled, and every errand He had set performed, in trusting patience, sigh for dreamless rest; nor till the impartial pen of Truth could write above that quiet refuge—"It is well."

S.

"In one point."

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."—James 2: 10.

The Rev. Mr. Leupolt, of India, found some difficulty in getting the idea contained in the above verse impressed upon the minds of the natives. Argument was resorted to, but without avail. "Never," says he, "could I make the common people understand me without a parable." In this parable he described a scene on the Ganges. "The day was dismal the wind roared, the thunder pealed, the lightning was vivid, the waves of the Ganges rapid. The infuriated element threatened destruction to every vessel upon its waters, and no boat could outlive the storm for any length of time.

"But see! What is that? It is a boat in distress, filled with people, rapidly hurried along by the waves. Between the peals of thunder the shrieks of the people are heard. They fear the rocks on the shore, to which the current is driving them. What can be done for them? Could they but be drawn into the creek, they would be safe. Those on the shore look anxiously around and discover a chain near them. A man instantly fastens a stone to a rope, binds the other end to the chain and flings the stone into the boat. The rope is caught. The people eagerly lay hold on the chain, while those on shore begin to draw them in, amid the raging elements, toward the creek. They already rejoice at the prospect of deliverance; but when they are within a few yards of the land, one link of the chain breaks!—I do not say ten links, but *one link*, in the middle of the chain!

"What shall these distressed people do now? Shall they still cling to the unbroken links? 'No, no!' says one of my hearers: 'overboard with the chain, or it will sink sooner!' What, then, shall they do? 'Cast themselves upon the mercy of God!' exclaimed another. 'True,' I replied. 'If one commandment be broken, it is as though all of them were broken. We cannot be saved by them: we must trust in the mercy of God, and lay hold on the almighty hand of Christ, which is stretched out to save us.' I have frequently used this parable, and always found it to answer."

"This poor woman hath cast in more than they all."

More in the sight of Him who looks not merely at the amount given, but at the ability of the giver,—not merely at the quantity contributed, but at the motive and heart of the contributor.

There are few of our Lord's sayings so much overlooked as this. There are thousands who remember all his doctrinal discourses, and yet contrive to forget this little incident in his earthly ministry. The proof of this is to be seen in the meagre and sparing contributions which are yearly made by Christ's church to do good in the world. The proof is to be seen in the miserably small incomes of all the missionary societies, in pro-

portion to the wealth of the churches. The proof is to be seen in the long annual lists of self-complacent guinea subscribers, of whom many could easily give hundreds of pounds. The stinginess of professing Christians in all matters which concern God and religion, is one of the crying sins of the day, and one of the worst signs of the times. The givers to Christ's cause are but a small section of the visible church. Not one baptized person in twenty, probably, knows anything of being "rich towards God" (Luke xii. 24). The vast majority spend pounds upon themselves, and give not even pence to Christ.

Let us mourn over this state of things, and pray God to amend it. Let us pray Him to open men's eyes, and awake men's hearts, and stir up a spirit of liberality. Above all, let us each do our own duty, and give liberally and gladly to every Christian object, while we can. There will be no giving when we are dead. Let us give as those who remember that the eyes of Christ are upon us. He still sees exactly what each gives, and knows exactly how much is left behind. Above all, let us give as the disciples of a crucified Saviour, who gave himself for us, body and soul on the cross. Freely we have received. Let us freely give.—*Rev. J. C. Kyle.*

*It is probable, according to Arias Montanus and Brennus, that the words "all her living," mean "all her daily income," and not all her property.

It may be well to remark in this connection, that nothing can be more absurd than to say, as some do, that they contribute "their mite" to an object, when they probably contribute some trifling sum which they do not miss, and which bears not the most remote proportion to the widow's scale of liberality.

A real gentleman.

He never dresses in the extreme of fashion, but avoids singularity in his person or habits. Is affable with his equals, pleasant and attentive to his inferiors.

In conversing he avoids hasty, ill-tempered, or insulting remarks.

Never pries into other people's affairs. Detests caves-dropping as among the most disgraceful of crimes.

Never slanders an acquaintance. Does never, under any circumstances, speak ill of a woman.

Never cuts an acquaintance who has met with a reverse of fortune.

He always pays the postage on his letters of business, and in advance for his newspaper.

"Conversation."

OR, "THE COMMERCIAL'S WAY TO BE SAVED."

There are few opportunities so favorable for candid conversation as railway travelling; and though a commercial traveller myself, I think I may be allowed to say there are few persons better qualified than commercial travellers for sustaining intelligent conversation. A short time ago I was travelling with two, who, for intellectual ability, might not be surpassed by any on the road. I felt an anxious desire to know what were their thoughts on that most important of all subjects, the salvation of the soul.

In course of conversation, I inquired of one of them, "How do you really think a man is to be saved?" He replied, "No doubt the man who keeps the ten commandments is a happy man, and I believe that is the way to be saved." His fellow traveller remarked, "I did think so, but I heard Dr. some one, of Leeds, preach a sermon which convinced me that it was only necessary to keep the last six." This was said in all seriousness. I replied, "I will not say ten, nor six; but now, if one had to be kept for salvation, tell me who could be saved? If Adam, happy in innocence, did not keep one, but fell, would it not be a fearful thing for us, fallen in sin, and surrounded by innumerable temptations, as we are, to have our eternal salvation to depend on our perfect obedience even to one command? No! my friends, redemption through the blood of Christ is a very different thing from trying to keep the commandments. We must have redemption first through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins; and obedience will come after. Not the obedience of law-keeping for salvation. That is impossible when you have got it first. It would be ut-

terly impossible to be in this carriage; and at the same time have something to do to get in. Just as impossible is it to receive Christ as my salvation, and yet have to keep the law to get saved." "I never saw it in that light," said my friend opposite.

Well now, reader, of course I do not know your religious sentiments, but, ten to one, you are on the same ground as the commercial. If I were to ask ten persons in any carriage the same question, very probably nine of them would have some indistinct thought, that it is something we have to do for God which will save us, and that if we do it worthily, we shall be saved. And if one out of the ten were to say, "Oh! no, it is what Christ has done for me that has saved me," I should be glad to hear even one out of ten give the glory to Christ. Well, now, is it not a miserable thing to be tormented with uncertainty year after year, and not only uncertainty, but often the person who tries most to keep the commands, feels more keenly the gnawing of conscience, and the burden of sin. Yes, no words can describe the anguish of heart that some feel who are thus trying to get saved by keeping the law. Oh, the weight of guilt! The law can give you no relief. It can give you no relief. It can only curse you. For, "as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.'" (Gal. iii. 10.) And you know well that you cannot continue in them. Again and again you have tried, but all in vain. You cannot even be what you wish to be, much more what the holy law of God requires. But you hope to be better yet. You hoped that long ago; but still you are rather worse than better.—Some try to get saved this way, until, tired out, they give all up in despair, plunge headlong into sin, and perish in infidelity. There are few infidels but who were made so by false religion. Just as salvation by works is preached, infidelity increases, until, as in popish countries, you can hardly tell which is which. Is it not a solemn thing that so few even in England know the difference between the *saving gospel*, and the *cursing law*?—Well, you say, "If man cannot keep the law, why was it given?" It was given because of transgression, that sin might be manifested, that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world proved guilty before God. (See Rom. iii., and Gal. iii.) But the gospel sets Christ before us, sent down from heaven. God having concluded all under sin, He now brings Christ and sets him forth, the righteousness of God. This Holy Jesus became the substitute for sinners; and now it is not they who must do something to live; and He has died for our sins according to the Scriptures, God declared His acceptance of that sacrifice for our sins by raising Him from the dead. Mark, this is not a question of men's opinions; but the very righteousness of God is at stake; the word of God puts it so.—(Rom. iii. 21—28.) "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins," &c. Yes the death of Christ is God's own remedy for my sins; to deny it or doubt it is to make God a liar. Dare you say God is not just, and the justifier of him that believeth? How is it, with the record of God in our hands, as given by the Holy Ghost through the preaching of the apostles and in all the Epistles, that believers are saved entirely by grace through Christ Jesus, and not by works of their own: I say it is not marvellous, that men will not believe God himself?

Reader, was not this an instance of the truth of that statement of the word of God: "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of of this world?" Just think of two commercial travellers, bright, intelligent men, but as ignorant of God's way of saving sinners as any Jew or Mahomedan on the face of the earth. The commercial's way to be saved, by keeping the law for salvation, is the thought of every unconverted person, however learned. It is the professed doctrine of the millions of the Greek and Romish churches. In principle it is the same with every shade of heathenism. Something that man can do to satisfy the god or gods of his own choice. Some wonder that so many are going over to Romanism. The wonder is that all who are