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## Poetry.

### SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

BY REV. THERON BROWN.

Shame on th' official pride too nice  
To hear a warning, or take advice!  
Shame that ever, on land or ship,  
The touchy stiffness of conscious rank  
Should chafe to listen, and scorn to thank  
A clever hint from a humble lip.

"We must right her, sir," the carpenter said,  
"The ports are dipping, the ship will keel."  
As he mended the *Royal George*, just laid  
At Spithead down, "by Parliament heel";  
And the starched lieutenant, with gruff dis-  
dain,  
Ordered the man to his work again,  
Nor heeded him, till too late to save  
Nine hundred souls from an ocean grave.

"Better lie to, and wait for day,"  
Said the quartermaster off *Sambro* light  
When the proud *Atlantic* steamed astray,  
With none to put her reckoning right.  
But the sailing-officer cloaked his plight  
And snubbed the truth in a lordly way.  
"Captain or mate my work may touch,  
But you are neither, and know too much."  
—And the ship, with her sleeping lives below,  
Sank at *Marr Island's* rock of woe.

"You're nearing land, or the seaweed lies;  
The Gulf-Stream more to the south must run,"  
Said a sailor-passenger, old and wise,  
To the mate of the *City of Washington*.  
Feeling her way seven dismal days,  
The vessel had groped through fog and haze;  
And not a man of her captain's mess  
But swore to her bearings, nevertheless,  
And they jested the wise old man: "Oho!  
Keep your advice till better you know.  
Those weeds—Lord pity you,—they show—  
A child could enlighten you in a minute—  
This is the Gulf-Stream—we are in it."  
Nine hours longer they held their boast,  
And struck on the *Nova Scotia* coast.

Has it come to this, when terrible need  
And sudden doubt of the way and deed,  
Straighten a human cause or trust,  
And the titled leaders falter and shrink,  
That the helpful word, or the judgment just,  
Or the thought worth a thousand lives to think,  
Which offers the victory and escape  
Must back in the utterer's throat be thrust,  
If it comes in an unofficial shape?  
So might it be—and each blunderer hold  
Wearing badge and button, should die untold.  
Ah, so might it be, all good men say,  
And the sooner conceit would have its day,  
If the arrogant who no counsel take  
Played fool, with only themselves at stake—  
But where are the laws whose power shall  
bind  
The fools whose suicide slays mankind?

This plain lesson at least may live—  
You'll learn it, pride, in spite of your scoff;  
Since your will is dear at the price you give,  
Why, spare on occasion, a trifle off,  
And flatter a fellow-being's pains,  
By serving yourself with his heart and brains.  
And whatever order or "right divine,"  
Or mission, the devil for you may forge  
O'er any *Atlantic* or *Royal George*,  
To sink the craft with its freight of souls,  
Off some *Marr Island*, or *Gull Rock Shoals*,  
Henceforth humanity's voice and sign  
Shall claim authority great as thine;  
And justice, reason and God demand  
That whose stretches a royal hand  
O'er ship, or market, or school, or State,  
To rule infallible, and makes claim  
To greatness independently great  
O'er old men's counsel and young men's  
blame,  
And the common people's yea and nay,  
Shall earn it by knowing more than they.

W. & R.

### MARCH

In the snowing and the blowing,  
In the cruel sleet,—  
Little flowers begin their growing  
Far beneath our feet.  
Softly tap the Spring, and cheerily,—  
"Darlings, are you here?"  
Till they answer: "We are nearly,  
Nearly ready, dear."  
"Where is Winter, with his snowing?  
Tell us, Spring," they say;  
Then she answers: "He is going,  
Going on his way."  
Poor old Winter does not love you,—  
But his time is past;  
Soon my birds shall sing above you,—  
Set you free at last!"  
—St. Nicholas.

Truth may be crushed  
But never hushed

## Religious.

### BAPTISTS OF THE LAND OF LORNE.

A STORY OF THE OLDEN TIMES.

Of the many excellent persons who have been summoned from my circle of acquaintances to their reward in the year that is now past and gone, I knew no one who was riper for the great change than an old Highland lady in the Far North, who died in the last quarter of 1874. A devoted member of the Free Church, she was one of a race that is, I am afraid, fast passing away, faithful to the Master; sternly jealous of His honour, and rigidly upright in the ways of life, not giving in to modern effeminacies and modifications. I often used to think, as I watched her, that, if need were, she would have sealed her testimony with her blood. Yet, with all her firm attachment to what she believed to be vital truth, there was mingled a tender appreciation of every form of goodness, as developed in other communions than the one to which she herself was so staunchly attached; and under her roof the missionary and faithful preacher of the Cross, no matter what might be his denomination, ever found the warmest of Highland welcomes and was made to feel himself thoroughly at home. In her house there was a prophet's chamber, and it was rarely empty, for she and her excellent son were in the habit of entertaining ministers, lecturers, and missionaries from all parts of England, America, Ireland, and Scotland. She was not debarred by her love for the principles of her own church from recognizing and loving all who love the Lord Jesus, by whatever name they are called; and when she had guests like Mr. Vibbert, one of the representatives of the Massachusetts Universalist Church, General Neal Dow, Dr. Landels, Narayan Sheshadri, or Gerald Massey—and her guests were of all denominations—she treated them with the utmost courtesy and kindness, but was ever ready, if an opportunity presented itself, to quote some apt passage of Scripture which she thought might be useful for her guests to ponder. In any discussion regarding points of difference, her appeal was always to the law and to the testimony; and in knowledge of her Bible she had few equals. Such discussions were always pleasant and profitable; and all who came in contact with her wondered at her memory for Bible texts. If one repeated a verse, she could in most cases tell the book and the chapter in which it occurred. She had a great respect for the Baptists; and this feeling probably had its root in the following circumstances, which she was often in the habit of relating, and which seem worthy of transcription as a chapter in the history of our northern church which has not yet found its way into print. She used to tell the story in Gaelic; but I will give it in English.

The parish in Argyleshire where Mrs. Campbell was born had for its minister a man of the "Moderate" school. His preaching was to the effect, that they were a model people in his parish; there were no drunkards or immoral persons among them; and if they continued as they were doing, they were sure of heaven. The necessity of the new birth was either unknown or untaught. The need of the blood of Christ and of the Holy Spirit's teaching was never mentioned. My friend's father attended the parish church; but not so his wife, her mother, who was a very godly woman. She used to cross over to Rothesay, in the lovely island of Bute, on the Sabbath, when the weather permitted, in a small boat, her two sons rowing, along with one or two like-minded neighbours. Rothesay, even in those "Moderate" days—it was at the dawn of the present century—had two Evangelical ministers, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Flyter, and she heard them; but

she also occasionally attended the preaching of Mr. Donald McArthur, who was a Baptist, and one of her sons, Alexander Brown, was a regular hearer in the Baptist conventicle. The parish minister, the Rev. Mr. McTavish, was very ill pleased that these parishioners should go elsewhere, and spoke to Mr. Brown, sen., on the subject.

Minister: Mr. Brown, how is it that your wife and family are neglecting the Kirk?

Mr. Brown: Atweel, sir, they gang to the Kirk at Rothesay.

Minister: No good can come of this wandering away on Sabbath, and, Mr. Brown, you will rue it if you don't hold in your wife and family with a firmer hand.

Mr. Brown: May be sae, minister, but I aye thoct my wife was a better judge o' preaching than mysel'. Her 'ather was the godly Pheadhan Michael (the Gaelic for Peter Brown). Ste goes to hear the Rev. Mr. Robertson.

Minister: I hear she also goes to hear that vagrant preacher McArthur, and that he has been holding meetings in your barn. If this is to continue, I'll have you before the Session.

Mr. Brown: No sae fast, minister. It is true Mr. McArthur has called at the house after travelling a long distance, and that he got some food and a bed; but we would do as much for the gaberlunzie (the wandering beggar).

Minister: So you say; but you had Donald Baan (Gaelic for White), and Peggy McVicar, and others along with that ranter.

Mr. Brown: Could we do less than ask our neighbors in to say "guid-by," and join in a word o' prayer.

Minister: I hear your son Sandy is not only going to McArthur, but has become one of the ranters himself. This cannot be tolerated in my parish. Tell him that I wish to see him before the Session to-morrow evening.

So saying, the minister galloped away. The result was that the sturdy old farmer would not allow his wife to be interfered with, although he himself attended the parish kirk. He gave the minister's message to his son, however, who accordingly went the following evening to the meeting of Session, and was spoken to by the minister.

Minister: I hear you are become a follower of that Baptist rascal McArthur, and I have to tell you that unless you give it up and attend the parish kirk you will be excommunicated.

Sandy: I have never heard McArthur preach anything but the gospel and I do not think it a crime to hear the gospel.

Minister: A fine story, indeed! Hear the gospel from a vagrant like that! I understand you have become a ranter yourself.

Sandy: No, sir, I have not taken upon myself to be a preacher, which is what I suppose you mean by ranter; but I have gathered in the children on Sabbath evening to teach them, as they are neglected by you.

Minister: How dare you say so? What warrant have you for teaching in my parish?

Sandy: My warrant is here, sir (taking out his Bible and reading): "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." "And let us not be weary in well-doing." "As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men." "Feed my lambs," &c. That is my warrant, sir; and until you can show me from the Word of God that I am doing wrong I will continue to act as I am doing.

Minister (losing his temper): How dare you say so to me, sir? I will get you excommunicated. (Turning to the beadle) John, put him out for his insolence.

Sandy (coolly lifting his Bible, and buttoning his coat): I came here expecting if I was wrong to have it shown me from the Bible; but instead of argument I am to be ejected. All I

need say is, that if you cannot convince me by argument, neither John nor you will be wise to lay hands on me, in case you fail in that, too.

So saying he walked out of the Session-house. He was a powerful man, and would have been more than a match physically for both the minister and his man. The result was that Sandy was struck off the roll, or excommunicated. He died in 1864, aged about ninety years. He had been principal elder in the Free Gaelic Church of Rothesay from shortly after the Disruption until his death. The excommunication prevented any of family receiving church privileges until the disruption severed bonds which deprived the good and conscientious man too often of privileges, while the careless, indifferent, and unworthy enjoyed them.

W. H. W.

—Freeman.

### ST. PAUL THE IDEAL OF A GENTLEMAN.

The *Contemporary Review* of England say: "St. Paul was the ideal of a gentleman. Witness his delicacy and tact, seen pre-eminently in advice and reproof: 'I praise you not'—this is his euphemism for 'I blame you.' 'I partly believed it,' when told of the divisions among his children. Mark his delicate tact with Festus, Agrippa, Felix. Note the dignity and sweetness on receiving the gift from the Philippians church, the grace with which he rejoices that 'your care of me hath flourished again'; then the anxious guarding against hurting their feelings; also the helpfulness for them: 'Wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.' Let any one curious in these points read from the tenth to the twenty-first verses of Philippians iv. The passage is full of subtle touches of character. Professor Blunt, in the first of his lectures on the 'Parish Priest,' admirably traces out this characteristic of St. Paul, though from another point of view than ours. And, once more, if any reader would have a perfect model of consummate tact and intense delicacy, let him study St. Paul's urging of a request that might have been a claim, in the Epistle to Philemon."

### CHEERFUL OFFERINGS.

BY REV. W. H. PAYNE.

"Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord."—1 CHRONICLES XXIX. 9.

An interesting illustration of the offering of Christian willingness was recently exhibited in the village of Catfield, Norfolk. This place is situated in the Yarmouth Circuit of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, and in this Circuit it was resolved to undertake a mission in Western Africa; and the first Primitive Methodist Missionaries were sent from Yarmouth to that dark part of our world. Hence, a lively interest was felt throughout the Circuit in this branch of the missionary enterprise. Rather more than three years since one of the members of the Church in Catfield was impressed with the conviction that he could do more for the Mission if he were to devote more of his substance to this good work. He therefore resolved to select half a pint of beans and send them to the missionary meeting, with the request in a note which was attached to them, that some two friends would plant them in succession for three years, and give the entire proceeds to the missionary society. The gentleman who presided on the occasion was a Baptist, and he offered to take half; the member of the Church took the rest. At the close of the meeting the beans were counted, and the number was found to be two hundred and fifty-six in each quarter of a pint. On the third anniversary a most enthusiastic missionary meeting was held, the chapel had appropriate decorations for the occasion, when the chairman of

the meeting three years before again presided, and stated the result of his produce as two quarters, three pecks, and three pints, the sale of which realised £5 5s. 3d. The other gentleman adopted a novel mode of procedure; planting each bean at a distance of ten inches apart, his produce was—first year, eleven pints; the second year, nine bushels one and a half pecks; the third year, thirty-four quarters, one coomb, two and a half pecks, which was sold for £76 6s. 6d. together realising £81 14s. 9d. for the benefit of the Mission. The same gentleman offered to take half a pint of beans for another three years' produce, which give promise of a greater yield. Another friend undertook the planting of a large potatoe and its produce for three years. "The people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord." Cannot some readers of the *Messenger* resolve to go and do likewise on behalf of our own honoured Mission. "This I say, He which showeth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.) The lesson is so obvious, that it scarcely needs enforcing. We see how true are the words of the wise man, "The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watered others, shall himself be watered" (Prov. xi. 25).

The incident shows how easy a thing it is to devote our substance to God. We sometimes sing—  
"With my substance I will honour  
My Redeemer and my Lord;  
Were ten thousand worlds my manor,  
All were nothing to His word."

Alas! this is too often mere "lip-service." There is amongst many professing Christians no storing for God. The miserable sums doled out into the treasury of the house of the Lord reflect but little piety or self-denying love for the donor. If this incident of cheerful offering should be read by any such, let the question come home to you, "How much owest thou to thy Lord?" He gave Himself for you, will you not willingly give of your substance for the support of His cause amongst men, and the extension of His kingdom in the earth,

"That man may last, but never lives,  
Who much receives, but nothing gives;  
Whom none can bless, whom none can thank,  
Creation's blot, creation's blank."

The incident also gives encouragement to individual exertion for the good of our fellow-men. If two hundred and fifty-six beans produce in three years thirty-four quarters, so we may calculate how blessed would be the results of Christian consecration. If one Christian brought one convert to Christ in a year, one becomes two; two becomes four in two years; four, eight in three years; eight, sixteen in four years—and, if this calculation is followed out, in ten years one becomes a thousand, in twenty years a million, in thirty years a thousand millions. It was recently said, "If the Christian church will give itself to this business of preaching the Gospel, it has wealth enough and men enough to preach it in the next ten or twenty years to every creature. All we need is a willing mind, a Pentecostal spirit of prayer, and faith and zeal. Only expect what God promises to give; only attempt what God bids you do, and the thing will be done." Will not some reader resolve to bring one to Christ? To begin now, with prayer for the teaching of the Spirit, to speak with their children and their friends—to do their share in presenting the truth to every man's conscience in the sight of God! Shall we sleep, while souls are perishing? No, rather let us be up and doing. "The night cometh when no man can work" (John ix. 4). But some one may read this who has not himself come to Christ. You cannot lead others to one to whom you are a stranger.