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Poetry.

Lost for Want of a Word.

Fallen among thieves and dying,
Priests and Scribes passing
The place where he is lying,
He is too faint to call,
Too far off to be heard,
There are those besides life's highway
Lost for want of a word.

Lost for the want of a word;
All in the black night straying
Among the mazes of thought,
False lights ever betraying,
Oh! that a human voice
The murky darkness had stirred,
Lost and benighted forever,
Lost for want of a word.

Lost for want of a word,
A word you might have spoken,
Who knows what eyes may be dim,
Or what hearts may be aching or broken,
Go scatter besides all waters,
New sick at hope deferred,
Let never a soul by thy dumbness
Be lost for want of a word.

A Star.

The sky is full of cloud and rain,
And very dark the night;
But far above the frowning clouds
The stars are shining bright.

So life is oft-times filled with storm,
The night seems long and drear,
But throughout all the darkest hours
The star of faith shines clear.

Faith in our God, and in His Word,
His love so full, so free—
And so we are content to walk
A path we cannot see.

And some day in the years to come,
When our dear Lord sees best,
The clouds will lift, the sun will shine,
And life be full of rest.

Zion's Advocate.

Religious.

The Olives of Mentone.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

There is no need to tell anyone who is tolerably conversant with the Scriptures, and who is accustomed to make occasional use of a Bible dictionary, that the olive is at once one of the most singular and most useful trees in the world. Mentone is an olive district, on the southern coast of France, and during his recent prolonged residence in that delightful winter retreat Mr. Spurgeon has found a profitable recreation in studying the nature, or, as it might be expressed, the many-sided life of the oil-bearing trees. There seems to be nothing in nature that yields him more delight than an olive plantation; as he sat beneath them during the last sunny days of his sojourn in the South he noted well their gathering material for those fresh illustrations which abound in all his sermons. On Thursday, the 17th instant, being the first week evening service the pastor has conducted since his return, he preached a very striking sermon from Hosea xiv. 6, "His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon." The sermon occupied about fifty minutes in delivery, had ten short divisions, and in every one a parallel was drawn between the Christian and the olive.

Mr. Spurgeon commenced by speaking of the many hours he had lately spent in the grateful shade of the olives, and from his manner the hearers could see how intensely their companionship had been enjoyed. He then came to the first illustration.

I. The believer in a healthy state is like the olive, because both have a beauty which grows upon the beholder. Olives are not trees which inspire love at first sight. They require to be looked at again and again. Then whatever beauty there may be in an individual tree, they are finest in the mass. So the beauty of Christian character is discovered more and more if looked for; but the beauty is more manifest in the church as a whole.

II. The beauty of the olive is of a sober kind, a beauty which could not easily be exactly described. It was

a sort of grey-green, rather sombre; and hence in these particulars corresponds with the Christian character that ought never to have in it what was merely showy.

III. The olive and the Christian are so far alike that they are ever abiding. You may look at some trees and remember that a few months ago they were bereft of their leaves. It is not so with the olive; that is always green; it never casts its leaves. In a like manner, in a spiritual sense, the true Christian is ever green.

IV. The beauty of the olive and that of the Christian are alike because each are very varied. Olives vary exceedingly. At one time they may be of a deeper or paler green, and then they will appear to be almost white. So believers had their peculiarities; and the preacher went on to say that he liked to spy out their excellencies. Like the tree, they might have their seasons of change; but in all its many phases of life the olive was a thing of beauty and a joy forever. There were Christians who seemed to be ever the same; and Mr. Spurgeon said he should like to be so if he could always be at his best. Some however were always at their worst, and it was not advisable to have one cracked string to the harp, and to be always playing that.

V. The olive and the healthy Christian both show individuality. In an olive grove there are no two trees alike. Some of the branches are twisted; others have various shapeless shapes. It seemed as if they were in an agony and remembered the grief of Him who was so often beneath them. Then a young olive never made the shape one might suppose it would from its tendencies. Hereupon the preacher pointed out the charm there was in individuality. It would be folly for a naturally cheerful spirit to grieve because he is not more sombre; while a pensive, sorrowful soul need not think it is wrong because he is not exhilarated. There must be variety in a great house and in a great garden. The olives were not all alike; but still all were olives. One Christian might be very different from another, and yet both were like Christ.

VI. Part of the beauty of the olive and much of the beauty of Christian consist in the fact that each is full of life. The trunk of an individual tree might appear split, as if it had a hard time. It would even appear to be rotten, but would not be so. The tree might even seem to live in an agony through having to draw oil from the rock. If hewed down it would spring again, or at least suckers would appear. It was so with the Christian; he would live; there was no killing the life of God in the soul of man.

VII. Seven being the number of perfection, Mr. Spurgeon under that head chose to speak of the olive's abundant fruitfulness. The peasants of Mentone would tell people that the olive crop was the best that could be grown. The production of the fruit involves only little labour, and the oil is used for numberless purposes. The native uses it at his meals, burns it in his lamp, and as ointment or as medicine makes it serve him in sickness. So the hardiest Christian is he who does most. Usefulness in the world is the one thing to be aimed at.

VIII. Under this head it was shown that the beauty of the olive often lay in its progeny. Around an aged olive would be seen several trees springing up from the old roots, so that when the worn out tree has gone these more than make good its place. It was a beautiful thing to see a Christian with successors growing up around him. It was to himself (Mr. Spurgeon) one of the greatest joys of life to see his children walking in ways of godliness. He mentioned having seen young shoots around an old trunk which looked as if they were around the parents' board. "Children like olive plants round Thy table." Christians had beauty in their children.

IX. The beauty of the olive sometimes suffered diminution. He saw one garden which did not charm; for

the trees were lopped and out because some of the boughs were unfruitful. They looked wretched and pitiful. So the Christian had seasons in which he could only cry, and they were wronged if their characters were judged of by what was seen in them at such times. The trees were cut to make them fruitful; and so, "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous," but afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

X. In the last place Mr. Spurgeon said that to himself the choicest beauty of the olive grove consisted in the fact that it always reminded him of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the shade of the olive you could not help thinking of the agony in the garden. So the true Christian ought ever to remind beholders of his Master. All who saw him ought to be able to see that he had been with Jesus.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Parental Influence.

Dear Editor,

I was once walking with a friend over a grave-yard. Of a sudden my friend threw down his right hand pointing with his finger, to a moss covered grave, exclaiming with great emphasis, "but for the man, whose remains lie there, I should to-day be an infidel; that man was my father."

The influence of his father's life was a living witness for the religion of the Bible. Others he could doubt, their profession of religion he could assail, but when his father's life came in review, reality of the religion he professed. Others receive no confidence from the life of a parent, profess never so strongly though they may.

The sacred principles of religion are violated in their dealings with men, their tempers are easily ruffled, their tongues unbridled, slander and evil readily bestowed on others, evil surmises cherished, and unkind words liberally used, their children know these things, and their estimate of religion is formed thereby. They doubt its reality, perhaps despise its professed sanctity, and treat it accordingly. Thus one parent leads his child to believe in its reality, while the other leads his to disavow its existence, and despise its professed God-likeness.

The bearing of the parent's conduct has its influence, whatever department may be filled, either by father or mother. 'Mother is rejoicing' said a thoughtless young man, at the instance of his mother's ill will, when something had ruffled her too easily excited temper. But above all other things, upright conduct in business transactions has its beneficial influence. Dishonesty, on the other hand, has a contrary effect. It is rarely ever, that a young man of pure motives and upright conduct comes from a parent whose conduct is dishonest.

But Mr. Editor there is another feature in Parental Influence by no means to be forgotten. I refer to its lasting effects. It is not for a day, a week, or a year. Long after the flesh shall have turned to dust, parental influence will have its place among the things that are. It is work for eternity; hence the necessity that it shall be for good only. Alas! alas, how many are indifferent to its tendency.

The position held by the mother among her children for a time, during their younger years, gives her an opportunity of exercising an influence, greater than that of the father, over her offspring. The careless reproof, often accompanied with an injudicious promise either of reward or punishment, made only to be broken, has a sad influence in causing the child to disregard the word of the parent.

An unwavering regard for principle under all circumstances will not fail to make a lasting impression for good. On the other hand, a careless regard, will leave it a matter of indifference, whether principle, expediency, or convenience be the rule of conduct.

Oh! ye parents. How much depends on the influence you exercise is beyond our knowledge. But one thing is certain. No influence is lost. The whole is garnered for eternity.

MENTOR.

For the Christian Messenger.

Theology at Wolfville.

No. 4.

In my last paper, allusion was made to the need which exists of a larger supply of ministers to meet the growing wants of the churches. That need is so real and pressing that no inquiry as to the means of remedying it can be deemed out of place. Various explanations have been offered of the comparative fewness of young men offering themselves to the work of the Christian ministry. Some have traced it to the representations which every now and then appear to the effect that the supply already exceeds the demand; others to the meagre support which ministers as a general thing receive as compared with those who engage in other professional work. But whether these explanations account for the fact or not, it yet remains true that the number of young men yearly entering the ministry falls considerably below the yearly demand; if our observation be extended over a wide area—say the different evangelical denominations of the United States and Canada, it will be found that the percentage of young men in the different institutions of learning, having the half as high as it was a few years ago. The ministry is not overstocked, as some persons seem to think, nor is it likely to be. Those who are truly fitted for ministerial work and willing heartily to engage in it, will not be long in finding it to do,—will not be long in finding a church already made for them, or, under God, in making one for themselves. Those who are not thus fitted and willing, whom few persons wish to listen to or employ, show hereby that they have never been called to preach the gospel, and had therefore better turn their attention to some other occupation.

The present demand is chiefly for ministers of first-class talents and qualifications; for it is these, be it remembered, that best succeed in the humblest as well as in the highest spheres of Christian labor and influence. It is not every person that is fit to do the work of an evangelist; no amount of zeal can atone for ignorance and incapacity.

If the ministry be overstocked anywhere, it is at its base. Higher up, where superior ability is required, there is abundant room. And it is so in all callings and professions; for skilled labor there is ample employment and ample compensation.

The young men now specially needed for the ministry are not those who could succeed in no other calling, nor even those whose only qualification is piety; but those rather for whom nature as well as grace has done much,—men of large minds and large hearts, of broad sympathies and strong common sense. No gifts and qualifications, in fact, are too excellent or extraordinary to be laid upon the altar of Christ, and used in his service.

To give young men of this stamp such Theological instruction as shall fit them for efficient work as ministers and pastors in these Maritime Provinces, is the object contemplated in the establishment of a Theological school at Wolfville. I have shown that by means of such school a larger number of ministers will be produced and a larger number retained. But other reasons might be adduced.

It might be shown—
2. In the second place, that hereby our young men will come into truer

sympathy with the work they will be called upon to perform. Every species of training develops a bias and aptitude corresponding to its kind. Men may be educated out of sympathy with their surroundings as well as into sympathy with them, may come to feel so partial to the customs and institutions of other countries and communities as almost to despise those of their own. Other things being equal, the minister who enters most sympathetically and appreciatingly into the wants and susceptibilities of the people among whom he labors, will be most successful and happy in his work. Accordingly the training that most happily conduces to this end must be regarded the best for him. As the Georgics of Virgil, though containing useful reflections for the tillers of the soil in Italy and Sicily, would not make the best practical farmers for the granite hills of New-England, so it may be doubted if the Theological schools of the latter place, as Newton and Andover, though furnishing instruction suited to the wants of the churches they more immediately represent, would yet be the best for those expecting to labor in these provinces. Take the matter of the delivery of sermons to which considerable importance attaches, as it is the principal means by which the preacher comes into contact with his hearers and lays before them the fruits of his Theological studies.

Now the prevalent custom of New England is to read, to which the homiletical teaching of its divinity schools conforms. But reading sermons is not generally acceptable in these parts; the judgment and taste of the people are against it; and I believe the argument is principally on their side.

As a general thing the best ministers for any country are the men who have policy could be more unwise or more unsuccessful for any people to adopt than that of importing their ministers from abroad.

The Englishman, for example, often finds it difficult to adapt himself to the state of things he finds on this side the Atlantic, and therefore not unfrequently returns.

But the tendency of the policy of educating our young men abroad and that of the policy of getting them from abroad already educated must be nearly the same. The brain and heart power with which the Almighty has endowed our youth, is not exceeded elsewhere under the sun. Let us make the schools in which they are to be trained, not less able than those found abroad, but more adapted to our circumstances, more in harmony with the genius and aspirations of our people, and the largest and most satisfactory results will be achieved.

It will be seen that the difficulty of building up a Theological school among ourselves, and of retaining our young men for our home fields, will continue to be felt so long as any material support is given to the policy that advises or obliges them to go abroad.

Nothing is more natural than that persons should think well and speak well of the Institutions at which they have studied, and from which, it may be, they have received important benefits. Accordingly we find that those who go to Newton and become its alumni, as well as participate in the pecuniary assistance which it offers, are not slow to extol its virtues, which they seek sometimes to make more prominent by disparaging the humble efforts of their brethren in the same direction at home. Thus that which makes Newton strong, makes Wolfville weak; the yearly exodus of young men is perpetuated; some of them never return to us; and the complete development of denominational independence and power is rendered impossible. But this leads me to thoughts which must be reserved for the next paper.

D. M. WELTON.

"It was a great instruction," said a saint in Cromwell's War, "that the best courages are but beams of the Almighty."—Emerson.