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Poetry.

Judge Not.

BY ADELAIDE PROCTOR.

Judge not: the workings of his brain
And of his heart thou canst not see;
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,
In God's pure light may only be
A scar, brought by some well won field,
Where thou would'st only faint and yield.

The look, the air, that frets thy sight
May be a token that below
The soul has closed in deadly fight
With some infernal, fiery foe,
Whose glance would scorch thy smiling
Grace,
And cast thee shuddering on thy face!

The fall thou dar'st to despise
May be the angel's slackened hand—
Has suffered it, that he may rise
And take a firmer surer stand;
Or, trusting less to earthly things,
May henceforth learn to use his wings.

Scandal.

A woman to the holy father went,
Confession of sins was her intent;
And so, her misdemeanors great and small,
She faithfully rehearsed them all;
And, chiefest in her catalogue of sin
She owned that she a tale-bearer had
been,
And borne a bit of scandal up and down,
To all the long-tongued gossips in the town.

The holy father for her other sin
Granted the absolution asked of him;
But while for all the rest he pardon gave,
He told her this offence was very grave,
And that to do fit penance she must go
Out by the wayside were the thistles grow,
And, gathering the largest, ripest one,
Scatter its seeds, and that when this was done,
She must come back again another day
To tell him his commands she did obey.
The woman, thinking this penance light,
Hastened to do his will that very night,
Feeling right glad she had escaped so well.

Next day but one she went to priest to tell,
The priest sat still and heard her story through,
Then said, "There's something still for you to do,
Those little thistle seeds which you have sown,
I bid you go re-gather every one."

The woman said, "But Father, 'twould be vain
To gather up those seeds again;
The winds have scattered them both far and wide,
Over the meadowed vale and mountain side,
The father answered, "Now, I hope that from this
The lesson I have taught you will not miss:
You cannot gather back the scattered seeds,
Which far and wide will grow to noxious weeds,
Nor can the mischief once by scandal sown,
By any penance be again undone."

M. E. C. Johnson.

Religious.

Woman's Work in the Church.

BY H. T. BUFF.

This is not a question, in my judgment, which can be settled by human wisdom alone. There are certain plainly revealed facts in the Bible in regard to women, which clearly indicate the sphere which God intended her to fill, and the relation she sustains to man in all the duties and labors of life, both of a secular and religious character.

These facts must be regarded as way-marks to guide us in our reasoning upon this subject; and in no case are we justifiable in assigning her a work or position that would necessitate either a direct or indirect violation of the Lord's instructions to her; for his wisdom and his ways are above our ways.

And this much we must accept as a matter of faith, that to follow his instructions in regard to woman's work and her relations to man, will tend most to elevate our race and make woman both useful and happy. And whatever may have been woman's relation to man before their fall, it is certain that subsequently her desire was to be to her husband and he was to rule over her. See Gen. iii. 16. By this no one understands that the heavenly Father intended man to be a tyrant or woman a slave. It was rule without tyranny and submission without slavery.

This law was not peculiar to the Patriarchal and Jewish ages alone,

but was incorporated into and became a part of the instructions of the Holy Spirit in respect to women living under the Christian dispensation. This is expressly enjoined by the apostle in both the Corinthian and Ephesian letters:

But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God (1 Cor. xi. 3.)

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

For the husband is the head of the Church: and he is the Saviour of the body.

Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything (Eph. v. 22-24).

And so far as my knowledge extends, these instructions of the Lord in regard to the relative positions of man and woman have never been revoked to the present hour.

We are not unconscious of the fact that some men whose consciences are of age and have been turned out to do for themselves, who have a desire to flatter weak-minded women, talk freely of woman's rights; and that a few women who partake largely of the masculine gender question the wisdom of the Lord in these matters; and yet our faith in the ability of Him who created man to give him proper instructions, enables us to decide without the least mental reservation or self-evasion whatever, that the Lord's instructions to us in all matters are righteous and for our good, and only safety is in adhering strictly to his teachings in all things, whether they seem to us to be wise or unwise, knowing that He who sees the end from the beginning, knows best what is for our good; and this question now before us should not be made an exception.

Women were instructed to adorn themselves with "a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of the Lord of great price" (1 Peter iii. 4.) She was also taught to be possessed of a modesty becoming women professing godliness (1 Tim. ii. 9). Meekness, gentleness of spirit and modesty, naturally enter into the warp and wool of woman's composition. She was urged to cultivate these charming graces by the Spirit, and no outward adorning can add such grace, beauty and loveliness to the true Christian woman as these priceless jewels, and no woman can afford to engage in any work, either secular or religious, that would in the least tarnish them, or detract from their normal activity.

With those seeming restrictions thrown around her, there is a wide field of usefulness open to her in the church, and the very restraints which the Holy Spirit enjoins become instruments of power for good in the hands which no man can possess.

In point of privilege and enjoyment in the church, there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, and in this regard she is in every way man's equal; but in regard to work for the salvation of others, the same law which makes her the helpmate of man in other matters applies to her in the church. She is therefore not to take the lead or usurp authority over the man, or engage in any work in the church that would not be in perfect harmony with the fine texture of her womanly nature.

Reason and revelation combine to teach us that each have their respective spheres to fill, and fields of labor to occupy, and within these limits the measure of ability to do good should be the measure of duty governing both man and woman in their work. That woman has the ability to accomplish great good in the Master's service, we need only listen to the roll-call of those sainted women who have rendered invaluable service in the work of saving the world from sin and death. Those last at the cross, first at the sepulchre. The women with whom the apostles continued in prayer (Acts i. 14.) The woman who labored with the apostles, (Phil. iv. 3.) Hannah More, Mrs.

Clarkson, Lady Hastings, Mrs. Hemans, Mrs. Rowe, Mrs. Talbot, Grace Bennett, Lady Huntingdon, mother of the Wesleys, and a host of others, down to our mothers, wives and sisters, who have nobly sacrificed and suffered with us in this glorious work. In my opinion, the important part taken by woman in the spread of the gospel will never be known or appreciated until that day which will reveal all things.

In the church, as in all other matters, it is the province of man to clear away the rubbish and to do the rough hewing; but the polishing, adorning and finishing up must be done by the master hand of woman. Her nature and tender sympathies peculiarly adapt her to this kind of work, and no man can do it as well as she.

The visiting of the sick, looking after the destitute, teaching in the Sunday-school, her voice in song, prayer and exhortation in the social meetings, as well as her presence and songs in the regular service, open to her a field where she can enjoy the free exercise of her talents and make herself useful in the Master's service—all this she can do without the least detriment to that modesty and gentleness of spirit which ever characterizes the true Christian woman. It is my opinion that we as a people have suffered untold loss to the vital spiritual life of our congregations by imposing unwise, and, as I believe, unscriptural, restraints upon the female portion of our membership. As a rule, the refined and delicate texture of woman's nature is more susceptible of religious impressions than that of man, and that she can ascend the scale of spiritual life a little higher than it is possible for man to do, is a conclusion which I think is neither extravagant nor untrue.

And I give it as my opinion that no congregation can come up to the full measure of its spiritual life until every Christian woman in it is numbered among its active working forces.

In regard to the passage in 1 Cor. xiv. 34, which seems to prohibit women from taking part or being heard in public meetings on any occasion, it is only necessary to call attention to a rule of interpretation, the correctness of which is admitted by all parties, viz.: No doubtful passage of scripture should be interpreted to conflict with a fair interpretation of any other passage the meaning of which is not doubtful. Now that women did work in the apostolic age within the limits indicated in this paper, and that these works and duties were performed in the presence of the apostles and with their hearty approval, there is not a shadow of a doubt. Hence the instruction of the apostles to the women in the Corinthian Church was not intended to apply to well-informed, judicious Christian women in all other congregations; but simply to meet a certain existing emergency peculiar to the women of that church alone. This, to my mind, is the only satisfactory and harmonious disposition that can be made of the passage, for it is certain that the scriptures do not contradict themselves, and it is my honest conviction that we as a people never will enjoy a spiritual life equal to our privilege, until we can utilize the talents and influence of all Christian women in the churches.—Standard.

Nihilism.

The subject which is so profoundly agitating the political life of Russia, and has found advocates more or less violent in other parts of Europe, aptly illustrates the old saying that "there is nothing new under the sun." Nihilism is both a philosophical and theological question, and has presented itself to the world under one or both of these aspects for more than twenty centuries. The attitude it adopts under each of its distinct forms is that of denial, an attempt to reduce to nothing the subject it takes in hand, as its Latin name indicates. As a philosophical question it was first propounded by Gorgias, a contemporary of Socrates. His views as they were very briefly summed up, were 1st, that nothing exists. 2nd,

that if anything were, it could not be known. 3rd, that if knowledge were possible, it could not be communicated. As a philosophical question it has received the attention and been discussed by the greatest minds, as Kant, Hamilton and Descartes, in that department of study, from the time it was first propounded by Gorgias to the present day.

As a theological question it discusses the incarnation of Christ. The denial in this case is of the union of the different elements of body, soul and divinity into one person or nature. "The Logos" it is said, "did not unite with human nature; but simply clothed itself with it, as with a garment." The denial is not of existence in this instance, but of existence under this particular form. The Nihilism of the present day, as it exists in Russia, has both a philosophical and socialistic side. As a philosophical theory it is eminently destructive. Its creed is extremely simple. Among its more numerous and unintelligent advocates it means a complete subversion of all existing institutions. Class distinctions of all kinds are to be abolished. All laws are to be repeated and governments destroyed. Everything is to return as far as possible to its primitive condition, so that all may take a fresh and even start in life. These are, of course, the views of extremists, but the views of even the most moderate contemplate such sudden and radical changes in these matters that they would in reality be little less disastrous in their consequences. This doctrine, in its present form, began to assume shape in Russia some forty years ago under Alexander Herzen, who was then a student in the University of Moscow—but was soon expelled. It has thriven more or less ever since though the Government has frequently endeavored to crush it out, and has often banished or otherwise punished its leaders and advocates. But it has never previously attained the strength nor become the formidable power it now is. One curious fact, which makes the movement exceeding dangerous at present is, that by some strange fanaticism many of the middle and upper classes, who ought naturally in such a crisis to be the stay of the nation, are drawn into it. Whether the very severe measures which the Government has adopted are the wisest may be doubted; but there can be no question that the movement ought to be effectually checked, and at once.

J. B. H.

Optimists and Pessimists.

Optimist and pessimist are more or less terms of reproach, each conveying the imputation of a tendency to exaggerate. If so, then this is a rare time of exaggeration; for never, perhaps, has there been more of optimism on the one hand, and of pessimism on the other, than at the present day. Together they give a complete survey of the state of affairs, but few minds are so constituted as to be able to turn to either with satisfaction in order thoroughly to appreciate both sides. Unquestionably the pessimist is the more fortunate being. Whether his line is marked out by nature or adopted from calculation, there is no doubt it is the one best fitted to ensure success in the world. For the optimist at least tells that which most people like to hear. Everyone is delighted to be assured that things are not nearly as bad as they look. There is something consoling in the thought that a man who can reason at all should ground his conclusions on the pleasant side. In politics, for instance, what more agreeable than to be soberly and yet generally assured that the European concert is still in full harmony, and that each nation is playing its part loyally and handsomely? What can be more agreeable than such a statement backed by fair argument? And so in trade: if things do wear an ugly look, if banks are falling business is unprofitable, manufactures carried on at a loss, how sweet it is to listen to the optimist who murmurs that there is really little to

regret, that half of what appears is imaginary and the rest temporary—that to-morrow shall be as to-day, but much more abundant. His buoyancy exhilarates, the optimism with which he overflows is contagious, and breathes around the sanguine thinker a mild atmosphere of confidence. And perhaps he proves right. A few months pass: that which he forecasted comes about, the rivulets of commerce swell, the stream of trade broadens, and they whose argosies but now seemed nearing shipwreck rejoice exceedingly, seeing them float profitably into the harbour. And now of course, the optimist takes his place as profound philosopher or economist. But even if all prognostications go awry, if political complications become yet more entangled, if that reaction in trade so hopefully anticipated lags and delays until the heart of the merchant and the producer grows sick with waiting, still the sanguine speaker, writer, thinker, takes no harm. He is a well-meaning, good-hearted fellow, who has done his best to keep up with the times; but of course he could not foresee everything; and then the revival, the improvement, is—and so he still says—much nearer than is thought. Thus come what may, the optimist is always on the winning side. But as to the pessimist, or even him who takes by no means the worst possible view of matters, his fate is far different! That which he urges is usually received with distrust and often with aversion. And the pessimist is usually more eager than the optimist to tell forth that which is in him. For good fortune no man needs much preparation; for ill fortune it is different. So thinks the pessimist, whose very duty it is, therefore, to be as urgent as may be. Yet, should his warnings prove correct, not only must he share in the trouble he would and could not prevent, but he is extremely liable to be accused of having hastened the calamity. It is the opinion that he wished for the mischief he prophesied, if only to rejoice in the fulfilment of his forebodings. On the other hand, should his opinion prove wrong, he is frowned upon not only as an ignorant but as an ill-conditioned fellow. Let every man, then, who courts sunshine for himself take up with optimism. But for the sake of the world at large it cannot be wished that pessimism—which is for the most part a mapping out of probable and possible troubles—should cease.—Pall Mall Gazette.

What the sinner will suffer in the world to come we know only in hints and shadows. But we know very well what he will be in the world to come. The law of the development of character is a law that we understand. It is easy to show its workings and to prophesy its issues. And if you can clearly show a transgressor the thing that he is certain to become if he keeps on in evil ways, the sight will deter him from transgression more powerfully than any vision of suffering that you can set before him. Of what is to be inflicted upon him you must speak gradually; you do not know much about that; but of what will take place in him you can speak with perfect assurance, and his own conscience will bear witness to the truth of your words.—Editor's Table. Sunday Afternoon.

I have been a member of your church for thirty years," said an elderly Christian to his pastor, "and when I was laid by with sickness for a week or two, only one or two came to visit me. I was shamefully neglected." "My friend," said the pastor, "in all those thirty years how many sick have you visited?" "Oh," he replied, "it never struck me in that light. I thought only of the relation of others to me, and not of my relations to them."—Christian Register.

Great truths can gain nothing, and may lose much of their force, by being weakly affirmed.

The irony of the law is shown when a blacksmith is sentenced for forgery.