

lest in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments. And I cannot tell you the blessedness of being a Christian. I can talk freer, laugh louder, and play more hoisterously a thousand fold than I would dare to if I were all the while sporting on the brink of perdition. What need I care if the cars run off the track and break my leg? It is better for me. I thereby escape a worse evil, or it would not have occurred. God orders all concerning me, and orders all for my advantage. If I should lose my life on this train, I should be with him, inconceivably happier than ever before. What need I care what happens? I love him. He loves me. I trust him. He cares for me. He provides for me. Godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. My bread and my water are sure. All things work together for good to them that love God. Hence he tells us to 'Rejoice evermore;' 'And again I say, Rejoice,' says Paul. 'The joy of the Lord is their strength,' God says of his people. The reason so many of your Christian friends have so little joy is because they have so little Christianity. They are happier, as it is than you are. They would not give up the peace of mind they have for all the world. And yet they have very little compared with what they might have. They do not believe half the promises of God. They believe one, or two, or a few. They trust Jesus to save them from hell, but do not fully believe his promise to save them from sin. Hence they do sin; and then they feel badly because they have done wrong. A part of their sadness results from a tender conscience. They feel sorry when they have grieved the loving Saviour by sins which you never think of as such. Then again some of them are poor and do not trust him for daily bread, but fret and worry to get it for themselves. Some of them have other griefs, known or unknown, and do not cast them all on Jesus, but try to bear them themselves. They seem to think the little things of life too little for him to notice. They do not really and heartily believe that he notices lovingly everything concerning them, that not a hair falls from their heads without his will; hence they go through life largely destitute of comfort, for life is made of little things. Let a great sorrow come upon one of those, and you will see how she bears it.

"I have seen it. My aunt was always fretting and worrying until I could not bear to be with her. But when her husband died, she bore it like an angel. She felt it, too; I know she did. But somehow she seemed strengthened to bear it."

"That is just it. She was 'strengthened to bear it.' She went and told Jesus. If she had taken all her ills, small as well as great, to him, she would have been strengthened to bear them all. And not only so; she would have been enabled also to 'Rejoice always,' and so to be a much happier, and, therefore, a more useful Christian."

"I wish all Christians were so."

"So do I."

"Won't you tell them to be?" (timidly.)

"Yes. Will you be such a Christian?"

After a long pause, she said, in a low tone, "I would like to be."

"Would you? If you would, you may be. God is love. The heart of the loving Father yearns over the prodigal. Will you return to your Father's house where there is bread enough and to spare? Have you not been feeding long enough on the husks this world affords? Do you not know now that they cannot satisfy the cravings of the soul? Think of the love of Jesus. Think of all he has suffered, and of all that he has done, to save sinners. Remember his long-suffering patience with you. Remember his love. Remember that he longs to see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. Oh yield up your heart to him? How long has his Holy Spirit been wooing you with the whisperings of heavenly love? Why not trust and be happy?"

"But first I must repent and be sorry and pray for forgiveness, and then perhaps—"

"No; you must not," (firmly.)

She looked up surprised. "Must not?"

"No. No nothing of the kind is necessary or desirable. If you have sorrow enough for sin to want to quit sinning, you have repentance enough for salvation. To think you must go through a long process of crying and tears, of re-

pentance and prayer and agonizing, in order to come to Jesus, is a device of the devil. It is putting these in the place of Jesus. Go to him just now. Here as you are, sitting in this seat, you may tell Jesus all your heart, you may trust him as your Saviour, this instant if you will, and he will make you what he wants you to be. You cannot make yourself any better. Don't try it. Give yourself up to him and let him do it. He can and will. He says so. Only trust him. It is not some great thing far off you have to do. It is a little thing near at hand. Only trust him. Only rely upon his promise for everything. Fear not, only believe."

The time had come to leave the train. The spire of the well-known church, and the home of loved ones, were in sight. A single word of farewell, to which a grateful glance and a warm clasp of the hand responded, and we were on the platform, while the train with its hundreds of living souls thundered on. Did she trust the Saviour? Does she love him? We know not. We have never seen her since. We hope we shall meet her again; if not here, on the hills of heaven, to talk of that pleasant interview in the cars, and to recount what the Lord has done for us since.

She was wrong in her prejudices. But who shall say there was no ground for them? Alas! is not her characterization too true of many, perhaps most Christians? Oh why should it be so? It should not. Shall Jesus ever be wounded in the house of his friends? Shall his people hinder his cause as they do, and their own happiness as well, and persist in so doing by distrusting him? It shall not always be so. "Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." In him shall all the tribes of Israel joy, and shall glory." God speed the day! According to thy faith be it unto thee!—*Christian at Work.*

So far is charity from impoverishing that which is given away, like vapors emitted from the earth, it but returns in showers of blessings into the bosom of the person that gave it, and his offspring is not the worse, but infinitely better for it.—*Horne.*

"A fool's heart is in his tongue; but a wise man's tongue is in his heart."

Y. M. C. Associations.

The Year Book of the Young Men's Christian Associations has just been issued by the International Committee. It contains Reports of 825 Associations in North America, 285 in Great Britain and Ireland, 65 in France, 15 in Belgium, 293 in Germany, 406 in Holland, 204 in Switzerland, 79 in Sweden, 6 in Italy, 8 in Spain, 1 in Austria, 13 in Australia, 2 in India, 4 in Syria, 3 in South Africa, 2 in Japan, and 1 each in Madagascar and the Sandwich Islands.

The American group is not only the largest in number, but also in financial strength, and in its working force. The American Associations hold property in Buildings, Furniture and Libraries, worth more than \$3,000,000. The Christian communities of the country have appreciated the value of this work for young men enough to contribute for its sustentation during the past year \$400,000, a sum larger than the current expenses of the Associations for any previous year.

The agencies employed by them are Reading Rooms, Libraries, Social Meetings, Lectures, Educational Classes, Employment Bureaus, Bible Classes, Prayer Meetings, and other services of a religious character.

The managing executive officer of the Associations is known as the General Secretary. The efficiency of the Associations in their work for young men, depends largely upon the number of societies which command the services of a qualified General Secretary. This number has been steadily increasing, and the Year Book now contains the names of 178 persons employed as General Secretaries and agents of the local Associations and of the International and State Committees. 26 of these Secretaries have their offices in as many Railroad Depots, and their field of labor is among Railroad men, and at 46 other Railroad Centres a work of this character has been commenced.

Among the students in 96 colleges, Associations are formed and are at work: 37 German speaking branches of the Associations are also in operation.

The International Committee is the executive bureau or agency of the affiliated American Associations, having its headquarters in New York City, and has general oversight of the work, having a corresponding member in every State and Province.

The Year Book contains reports from the eight Secretaries of the International Committee concerning their labors at the West, in the South, and in other sections of the U. States and Canada; also among railroad men, college students, German speaking young men, and colored young men at the South; among other interesting facts they report that during the past year 43 new college associations have been organized, 14 Railroad Secretaries or Christian Superintendents have been located at as many railroad centres. At the West, 7 General and 2 State Secretaries have been secured. In New England, 4 General and one State Secretary have been secured. At 32 State and Provincial Conventions, 1,461 delegates represented 402 Associations.

The entire Year Book sets forth compactly and interestingly what Christian young men the world over are doing on behalf of their fellow young men in city and country, in the college and on the railroad, among commercial travelers, and among all classes of young men.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. The poor rich man.

A BIBLE READING.

"And when Jesus saw that, he was very sorrowful, (and) he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of God; for it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."—Luke xviii. 24 to 26.

Well what did he see that made him sorrowful?—We think the "sorrowful" in the 24th verse refers to Christ. Was it the widow's gift? was he sorry that that poor widow had given away all her living? No! Was he sad because the poor gathered around him; because he saw their squalor, and wretchedness? No! Was he sorrowful because he saw the blind coming to him for sight; the lame and maimed to be helped, the palsied and paralyzed to receive strength; the deaf for hearing? No! Was he sad because he fixed his gaze upon the universal Lazarus of woe, and recoiled from the sight? No. Was he sad because he saw the woman bowed with that infirmity of 18 years' standing; or that other victim with the bloody issue, an incorrigible case; or because he saw the duplicity of the Jews, or the heart of Judas, or the fall of Peter? Or was he thinking how soon he must leave these disciples,—like sheep among wolves—in a Christ-hating world, and did this make him sad? Or was he thinking of his home—its glories—its pleasures in contrast with his present abiding place—its trials—its annoyances? Or did he see the garden of sorrow—the cross of sorrow—Gethsemane and Calvary, and did this make him sad? No. He had just seen a rich man, a man who had wealth, and wealth which had a man. This was the trouble, there as it always is—riches had the man, not so much the man the riches. This man though rich came humbly—or at least in the attitude of humility. He prays—he enquires. He boasts, but he seems willing to be instructed. This was remarkable conduct for a ruler. His conscience was restless. He was uneasy—was not satisfied with himself—self-righteousness never is—"What lack I yet?" "I am nearly perfect, but not quite," please add the finishing touch. He wanted something though he had everything. He was a poor, rich young man. Rich, moral, loveable, influential yet *Christless!* "Well," says Christ, "Do you want eternal life? 'Eternal life' why I have it now, only I should like very much to have your approval—to have you set your seal on the job." One thing, says Christ, "thou lackest." "Only one thing? well, I suppose I can make that up." "I hardly thought he would say that, but it isn't much, What is it?" Now hear Christ's answer. "Go and sell all that thou hast and distribute to the poor, and come follow me." If he had said, "Sell all and invest in other enterprises which will yield more income, or sell all and deposit it on four or five per cent inter-

est, he might have listened; but to sell and give to the poor! what had the poor ever done for him? that was too much. But worse still he must become a companion of poor men—the disciples. He must follow the poor despised Nazarene. He would not do it. He would have bought heaven. He would have done almost any reasonable thing, except this one thing. The answer of Christ to his question was like a thunderbolt from a calm clear sky. It overwhelmed him, "and he went away sorrowful." Christ could help every other class of sinners, no matter how needy, but he could do nothing with rich men: He associates wealth with godlessness:—"Woe unto you who are rich, etc." He represents him as lifting up his eyes in torment:—"and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." He is sorrowful as he sees these silver chains cast about their victim, but he could do little for them. Why? Too full now. A vessel full of earth cannot be filled with water. God and mammon are not friends. Gold and godliness are seldom joined in holy wedlock. The man who will have the "calf" for his God cannot at the same time have Christ as his Saviour. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." In the beatitudes Christ has a "blessed" for almost every body who needs a blessing, but none for the rich man, i. e., for the man whom wealth has, not the man who has wealth. The love of money is the root of all evil; not its possession merely. It is not the "almighty dollar" that ruins men, but it is the adoration paid to it instead of to the Almighty God. This is the difficulty. This young ruler wasn't sorrowful "because he was very rich," so much as, because he could not keep his wealth and keep Christ at the same time. He could not do this because he could not love two objects at the same time. He would not give up his riches for heavenly treasure so he turns away sorrowful.

But Christ makes a comment on his conduct: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." As if he had said, "It is an impossibility." Just as if I should say to that man six feet tall—stout in proportion—struggling to enter the church door through the key-hole, "You can not do it sir, impossible!" Or, just as I might say to that man who is struggling to pass a door only wide enough to admit his person, with a monstrous burden lashed to his shoulders which refused to pass with him or let him pass, You cannot do it, sir. "Shake off your pack or stay out, impossible!" Hear that! ye who hoard and hide and grasp the world, Hear that! ye who are rich and love it. Hear that, ye whose hearts are closed to the claims of humanity; whose ears are deaf to the wail of poverty; who listen not to the sad low moan of wretchedness. Ye whose eyes are shut to the visions of sorrow, and want, environing your very existence. Hear that, ye who make a Christ of your gold while the cause of Christ, like Lazarus at the rich man's gate lies in rags, full of sores, getting only the crumbs that fall from the table of opulence and luxury. Hear that covetous Christian, ye who dwell in lordly mansions, ye who feast at the table of luxury, ye who sleep upon beds of down, ye who recline upon couches of yielding crimson, ye who sit behind curtains of finest Damask and who proudly tread carpets as soft as the lawn, ye who roll in luxury and live in wantonness—while ye dole out to the needy cause of Jesus your pittance of cents or dimes. Think ye that it would be any easier for you? Think ye that the gate will spring ajar at the touch of jewelled finger; or that the watch-word at Heaven's Portal is *Wealth?* Think ye that ye can "neglect the great salvation," by failing to send it with your money to others and yourselves be saved? Think ye that Christ has made a dispensation in your favour, that you are to be, "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, while others fought to win the prize and sailed through bloody seas?" No! "He that would be my disciple must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." "Who was rich yet for our sakes became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich." Hear that, ye who

profess to follow a poor Redeemer who gave himself away—all the wealth of heaven—for worse than paupers, and think ye that ye can pass the pearly gates with these burthens when Christ has said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God? When Christ has said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on the earth, etc." "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon; for where the treasure is there will be the heart be also."

"Well, who then can be saved?" was the response. If a rich man cannot be, who can be then? He has every thing his own way. He commands respect and homage here, why not there? Like the golden image on the plains of Dura he is adored, why not be an object of divine approval. He knows how to save here, can't he save there as well? He has leisure; he has money; he has character; he has honor; what lacks he yet? Who then can be saved? Yes, but salvation is a race as well as a grace, and these weights of wealth pull down the wings of flight. These burdens, bound upon the soul by money attachments, hinder the course. "Wherefore—lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset and run the race." Gold is heavy. The love of it adds mightily to its gravity. This—"Riches"—is one of the most ponderous weights Satan has in his gymnasium." If then money and the love of it, are a hindrance to salvation, if in fact riches be a disqualification for Heaven, who that has it will desire to keep it, or who that has it not will strive to secure it?

Don't try to drive a camel through a needle's eye. He won't go. Its work and worry for nothing. It won't pay for whip snappers or "trochees," to cure the sore throat caused by the shouting in the effort. But many are trying this, many in the church and out of it. That needle's eye is the entrance to the kingdom of God. You'll find it hard to crawl through stripped of everything. Like Bartimeus, you must come to Christ by "casting away your garment." You can carry no worldly packs through this gate, "for strait is the gate and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it." Well then, if you love the world you are trying an impossible thing—trying to drive your camel,—avarice, gain, wealth, through the "needle's eye." Christ will fasten the lasting cords of divine love to your soul and draw you through the portal, and bind you to his throne only when you cut asunder the bonds that fasten you to the world and to wealth.

Friend, Art thou rich? Has God blessed you in golden store? And hast thou been withholding from him his just claim? Hear the voice of Jesus: "Sell all thou hast and distribute to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." The cause of Jesus needs cash. While you sit in your soft cushioned pew sabbath after sabbath, and hear the blessed gospel of Christ, myriads around you are in darkness—dying for "LIFE." Starving for "BREAD." Thirsting for "WATER." The gospel-fair ship of salvation, lies at the pier freighted—ready to sail, but she wants hands—money will do this—calls from near and far say, Come and help us. "Distribute to the poor" cause of Jesus—in this "follow Christ," and then "thou shalt have treasure in heaven." The gospel-fair bird of Paradise sits perched on the topmost bough of the tree of life, ready with the olive branch of peace in her beak to carry it with its message to other climes, but by hard treatment and starvation her glorious plumage is sullied—her wings are shorn—wings are wanted—golden wings—silver wings—Paper (Bank Note) wings—you can do this, and bid her speed her flight—carrier dove of heaven—with the news to the last of a blessed Redeemer.

Reader, whether like or unlike this ruler, rich or otherwise, do not do as he did—turn away sorrowful. But hear the voice of God. Come gather with the throng who stand on the crystal pavements of the Judgement Hall of the Universe. Hear the Judge speak the welcome, or pronounce the doom of the good, or of the bad. On what principle does he proceed? Listen!—(Here quote Matt. xxv. 34 to the last verse). O, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world,—if he gain a little of it,—and loose his own soul?"

G. H. G.