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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.
A Wish.

I would not care to own a heart whose only hope of bliss,
Was centred in the fleeting joys of a frail world like this;
That never thought of nobler things than worldly pomp or power,
And bartered its eternal joys for those of life's short hour.

I would not care to own a heart that never strove to rise,
Above its own depravity, above earth's vanities;
Whose life ambition was to wear the fading wreath of Fame,
Whose highest glory was to hear the honour of its name.

I would not care to own a heart that deemed it weak to love,
That never felt one holy throb of pure affection move;
That proudly boasted it could stand unmoved by sorrow's tear,
Yet trembled in its cowardice when pain or death were near.

I would not care to own a heart in whose deep hidden cell,
Unhallowed love's unholy flame was e'er allowed to dwell;
Where Purity is but a sound, and Truth is but a name,
And Virtue's voice is hushed to hear the luring voice of Fame.

But I would wish to own a heart that stands secure and strong;
That fears not to uphold the right, or to denounce the wrong;
That takes Truth for its guiding star, in her defence is bold,
And holds the glory of its God dearer than gain of gold.

And I would wish to own a heart that proudly, nobly beat,
Too high to stoop to take a part in meanness or deceit;
Scorning each ungenerous thought, crushing all worldly pride,
Nor seeks from God's all-searching eye its inmost thoughts to hide.

And I would wish to own a heart whose highest love was given,
To Him who lived and died for us—whose highest hope was Heaven;
That trembles not when trials come, nor shrinks from Duty's call,
But puts in God its holy trust, and makes Him all in all.

ALICE SHEARLAND EMMS.
Sussex, N. B.

Religious.

From Australia.

OVER THE RANGES ON AN IRON HORSE.

Mr. Spurgeon's son who is in Australia, writes home to the *Swor and Trowel*, accounts of his experience in that marvellous land:

"The Southern and Western Railway of Queensland already penetrates more than 300 miles inland, and on its way to the present terminus, Roma, traverses two ranges of hills at the height of between two and three thousand feet above sea level. In the formation of such a road there were, of course, numberless difficulties, which, however, have had to yield to engineering skill and perseverance, and now the railway, with all its curves and tunnels and gradients, may be reckoned as a complete triumph. Some of the wildest and grandest scenery imaginable is to be seen on this trip. The incline is so great, in places, that progress is slow enough to allow of a protracted view, and lately many of the giant gum-trees have been cut down so that the view may be uninterrupted.

On our right tower the rocky hills, clad for the most part with various species of the gum, whose dark foliage and barkless trunks form always a striking feature in Australian forest scenery. Their great white limbs stand out in contrast to the shaggy, ever-brown foliage above them, and present an appearance which, to English eyes, is peculiar, but withal picturesque.

I was travelling on September 8th, 1880, bound for Toowoomba, a township distant 100 miles from Brisbane, and situated at the top of the second range. Our train started shortly before four in the afternoon, and about six o'clock the guard met me on the platform of a station at which we waited a while, and addressing me by name, asked if I would like to see "the range." I answered "Yes," hardly knowing why he asked, and was then introduced by him to the engine-driver, and offered a ride on the locomotive. The driver and his mate seemed well pleased to have me with them, and made me as comfortable as possible. Soon the whistle sounded, the iron horse snorted, and away we went.

The rattle of the engine, and constant duties of the men, prevented much conversation; but every now and then my companions pointed out a place of interest, or offered me a sandwich and a drink of tea. It was quite a novel experience for me. The driver certainly spoke the truth when he said, "We don't get Mr. Spurgeon's son aboard our engine every day"; for I had never journeyed on one before. I, too, was a privileged party; for passengers are expected to confine themselves to the carriages. The name of Spurgeon works wonders in many circles, and especially with those who, like this engineer, have "been to the Tabernacle and heard him." The night soon set in, for there is very little twilight in these latitudes; but a crescent moon made the daylight linger, and when Diana went to rest I wished my mates "Good night, and many thanks," and retired to the saloon carriage to have a nap till we reached our destination at 10.30. I have been thinking since that the pleasure I derived from my ride on an unaccustomed steed might possibly be turned to profit for others if I wrote out some of the lessons which I myself have tried to learn.

I notice, first,—the difference between climbing up hill and running down. As soon as we commenced to ascend the real work began. There was extra poking, and stoking, and puffing. How the locomotive seemed to pant to be going faster, and groaning because of the load behind. At times we scarcely moved, then a sudden spurt carried us over a stiff pinch, and yard by yard we scaled the hills. "Perseverance" would have been a very good name for the engine, and "Excelsior" its motto. They should certainly be ours. Christians ought never to despair or to say "die." I understand that the word *difficult* occurs only once in the Bible, and then in the margin (Zech. viii. 6). Christian enterprise and the glorious gospel are not to be hindered by hills of difficulty. We must clamber over them, or wind round them, saying, "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." Still we shall need to strive and struggle, and stoke the fire, or we shall, at least, come to a stand-still. But what a different thing it was when he had topped the range. The highest altitude was in the middle of the tunnel. The driver turned to me and said, "This is the highest point." With that he shut off the steam, and made his machine snug for its downward course. How smoothly we went, to be sure, on and on, round the corners, and through the tunnels without puffing or straining, carried on by the impetus gained in the gradual descent. One cannot help liking a season of easy travelling and little exertion; but it must be remembered that without the uphill work we could not have rushed so swiftly down. If you, dear reader, are at present climbing the hill, and struggling with a load of care, press joyfully onward, for you will turn the brow shortly, and your rest and peace will then be all the sweeter for the former toil. Thank God for the ups and downs of life. The one fits us for the other, and both for heaven. A smooth sea and a level railway would both be unbearably monotonous, and doubtless our life is all the better for its hills and vales—more picturesque and more profitable.

Note, next, with me, the benefit of brake-power. Going down the steep incline the whole train would have rushed to ruin but for the brake which the guard applied. In our frequent twistings we could see a line of fire, like a comet's tail, flying from the wheels of the brake van. In our times of prosperity there is little wonder that our heavenly "Guard" needs to put on the brake. Our impetuosity and heedlessness would often plunge us into danger but for his restraining grace and timely checks. We may have been saved from much evil by a stroke of sickness, or a loss in business, which clogged our wheels and pulled us up. Down-hill travelling may be delightful, but it is none the less dangerous. However, we are safe in the charge of an all-wise and equally powerful God, and if he sees fit to curb our pace at any time it is ours to say, "He doeth all things well."

I learned, too, the necessity of keeping the fire up. The stoker was always at it. The white heat and fierce flame were continually visible through the open furnace door. There was first the raking of the burning coals, and then the addition of fresh fuel. Did not everything depend upon the fire? Let that get low and we should have remained in the plains, or stuck half way up the range. The furnace and the boiler are the very heart of the machine, and from them the hot life pours into its veins and arteries, and works its mighty limbs. Let the fire or the water fail, and the passengers might as well get out and walk. It is even so in Christian life. We cannot expect to progress in divine things unless the fire burns brightly. And what is the fire but love to Jesus? If once our affection for him flags, our service fails and growth ceases. What better poker can we use to stir this fire than a remembrance of what he has done for us? and the love which lit the fire must always form the fuel. Disturb the sleeping embers of your devotion, lest they die. Think on the shortness of time, the lack of knowledge, and the power of evil. Stir your zeal, and bestir yourselves to do doughty deeds for Jesus.

By poking the fire, and going to the well-head often for living water, you cannot fail to get the steam up. Perhaps my iron horse may help "to stir you up by putting you in remembrance." Draw hence another hint. *Be always watchful.* Only very occasionally could either of my companions turn to talk with me. Lives of many passengers, valuable goods, and precious letters demanded every caution. Can we be too careful and guarded? I trow not. Our cargo is a precious one—an immortal soul, and one careless moment may bring wreck and ruin. There is a possibility of temptation coming from most unexpected quarters and at quite unlikely times. This railway with all its twists and turns, any one of which might have concealed a danger till we were well-nigh on to it, is very like our life-way. As we cannot tell what a day may bring forth, let us watch and pray lest we "enter into temptation." If Satan published a time-table and let us know when we might next expect him, we could afford to be careless in the interim; but since he goes "to and fro" irregularly we must be always ready.

One more lesson from our locomotive shall be the advantage of having a track laid. The darkness set in so suddenly, the peaks towered so high, and the precipices yawned so deep, what should we have done but that the way was made and the rails placed. In the darkness one could not help wondering which way the next turn would take us; there seemed to be an impenetrable barrier before us. But on we went curving, twisting, and piercing the darkness and the hills. The engineer had but to "drive on," and look out, his course being marked for him. Is there not a parallel in our histories? Woe worth the day if we had to cut our own track, plan our course, and clear the road. Thank God that an unerring Providence has determined all. We have heard the voice which says, "Go for-

ward," and we do not fear to obey, knowing that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. The long winding course will prove the best, and we shall safely travel over dangerous places and through dark tunnels.

"Since all the downward tracks of time God's watchful eye surveys,
Oh! who so wise to choose our lot,
And regulate our ways?"

So much for my iron horse. I must now put on the brake, and come to the terminus, hoping that my readers have been profited by the train of thought.

Sorrow is our John the Baptist, clad in grim garments, with rough arms, a son of the wilderness, baptising us in bitter tears, preaching repentance; and behind him comes the gracious healing Lord, gathering the wheat into the garner.—*Bishop Huntingdon.*

The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

The Annual Session of this body commenced in Bloomsbury Chapel, London, on Monday 25th ult. It was preceded by a devotional service; at the close of which the President of the past year introduced the new President, Rev. Henry Dowson, who had been the Vice-President of the past year. Mr. Dowson belongs to the "Strict"—or Close Communion—portion of the denomination:

Dr. Trestrail said I have the great honor and pleasure to resign these duties, Mr. Dowson, into your hands. You and I have been friends throughout our public life; indeed, I believe an unbroken affection has existed between us. You have served churches with which you have been connected right honourably and well. I deeply sympathise with you in the duties devolving on you, and hope they may be discharged with satisfaction to yourself and advantage to the Union. May all the organisations connected with the latter be flourishing and prosperous throughout the year of your office. One thing I thank God for. I have seen during my connection with the Union an increase every year we come together of love, the crown of virtue which adorns the Christian character. "And now abideth faith, hope and charity, but the greatest of these is charity." May you be blessed throughout your year of office, and at the end of that time, if spared to see it, may we be able to mingle our thanks to the eternal God that all our organisations may receive the most effectual blessing.

Mr. Dowson said: I have to thank my friend Dr. Trestrail for the kindly words which have fallen from him in introducing me to this chair, and it would be very strange now if anything but kindly words could have fallen from the lips of our friend. Then I have to thank you for this mark of your confidence in placing me in such a position of honour and responsibility and service. I have only to say at this moment that I will endeavour to discharge the duties connected with this office with all the fidelity of earnestness, looking up to God for His wisdom profitably to direct, and for His blessing on all our endeavours; and may I be permitted to add that our deliberations will be useful, and our connections will be valuable, and our meetings will be profitable, just in proportion as we have the presence of our Divine Lord and the gracious influence of His Spirit directing our operations.

Rev. G. Short, next moved a vote of thanks to the retiring president, as follows:

That the warmest thanks of the Baptist Union are due, and are hereby given, to Rev. Frederick Trestrail, D.D., F.R.G.S., for the manner in which he has presided over its affairs, occupying as he has done for so many years the different prominent positions in the denomination; and having won the cordial affection of his brethren by his kindness and loving sympathy, he has now deepened their regard for him by the devoted assiduity he has shown to the business of the Union during his

year of office, and by the wise counsel he was prompted to give in his addresses from the chair, counsel which the fact of its coming from one verging on fourscore years of age made them all the more weighty and valuable. His brethren rejoice with him that his ripe old age is still spent so happily in the service of the Master he knew and loved in youth; and while thankful for the testimony which his life bears to the Divine grace by which he has been sustained, earnestly commend him to the loving care of his great Father in heaven, and beg that his remaining years may be pre-eminently happy and blessed.

Rev. Dr. Stock with great pleasure seconded the resolution. It has been said of us, he remarked, by some very stern critics, that the meetings of our Baptist Union all resolve themselves into meetings of mutual compliment—(Hear, hear)—and perhaps on some occasions that criticism has been appropriate. However, one thing is certain, we must have a president to keep an assembly of liberty-loving Baptists in order, and it is certain also that when a brother has done good service for us, it is only common Christian courtesy to say, "Brother, we thank you." (Hear, hear.) It is quite certain we honour Dr. Trestrail by the fact that we have put him in the chair, and it is equally certain he has honoured the chair by the way in which he has filled it. Now, I have known our good friend going on for fifty years. Our good brother Dr. Trestrail commenced his ministry as an ordained Baptist minister in the year 1831, so he has reached his fiftieth anniversary in the ministry, and we are here passing this vote to him for his year of office in the honoured and responsible position as chairman of the Baptist Union, just as he is celebrating half a century of work in the body. A beautiful co-incident.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

The President: I have great pleasure in presenting this resolution to you, Dr. Trestrail.

Dr. Trestrail (speaking with emotion) I have no words to express to you what I feel, and, after a public life of fifty years, when coming near its close, I receive such a resolution as that at your hands, next to the approval of my own conscience and the conscious Divine approval of the Master whom I have endeavoured to serve, I shall prize it as a precious gem up to the last hour of my life. Thanking you for all your compliments and kindness, I beseech you to accept this brief expression of my deep thankfulness, for I can say no more.

A deputation from the Baptist Union of Scotland, consisting of Rev. W. Grant, of Edinburgh, and Mr. Howard Bowser was next introduced, and cordially welcomed by the President. Mr. Grant said, I certainly come from a cold country, for I hail from the Grampian Hills. I am not only, therefore, a Scotchman but a hillman. We wish you to know that we are deeply interested in all the circumstances which agitate you. We rejoice in your victories, and when the spiritual love is running with you we feel it. I am pleased to be here, and especially under your presidency, sir. I heard, to day, for the first time, that they grow men in the north and trees in the south; but I rejoice to think that God rears trees of righteousness in all lands, in all climes, and in all churches. In Scotland we have three large wealthy bodies. As Baptists we feel that we have a sort of Presbyterian class to contend with, and have responsibility towards the churches and denominations with which we are identified of maintaining our views intelligently and firmly, and yet in the spirit of charity and love. We ask to have an interest in your prayers, coming as we do from a cold country, but one having loving, warm hearts, and praying God may bless you.

After Mr. Bowser had spoken, the President said: We are glad to receive our brethren, and to wish them all prosperity in their northern churches, especially in their efforts to evangelise the people.