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Poetry.

Peaceable Fruit.

"Nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness."—HEB. 12: 11.

What shall thine "afterward" be, O Lord,
For this dark and suffering night?
Father, what shall thine "afterwards" be?
Hast thou a morning of joy for me,
And a new and joyous light?

What shall thine "afterward" be, O Lord,
For the moan that I cannot stay?
Shall I issue in some new song of praise,
Sweeter than sorrowless heart could
raise,
When the night hath passed away?

What shall thine "afterward" be, Lord,
For this helplessness of pain?
A clearer view of my home above,
Of my Father's strength and my Father's
love—
Shall this be my lasting gain?

What shall thine "afterward" be, O Lord,
How long must thy child endure?
Thou knowest! 'Tis well that I know it
not!
Thine "afterward" cometh—I cannot
tell what,
But I know that thy word is sure.

What shall thine "afterward" be, O Lord
I wonder and wait to see,
(While to thy chastening I bow,)
What "peaceable fruit" may be ripen-
ing now—
Ripening fast for me!
—Francis Ridley Havergal.

A little while.

A little while, O hands,
Of labor weary;
The days of toil are short,
Though dark and dreary;
The coming time is glad, and blest
With full and perfect peace and rest,
After a little while.

A little while, O feet,
All torn and bleeding!
This way will bring thee home,
And Christ is leading;
Soon thou shalt find cool waters sweet,
And pleasant pathways for thy feet,
After a little while.

A little while, O eyes,
Thy love-watch keeping;
A few more bitter tears,
Then no more weeping;
Beyond the reach of grief and pain
Thy loved ones thou shalt see again,
After a little while.

A little while, O brow,
With fever burning;
These hours of noonday heat
Have no returning;
Life's later hours are full of calm,
And eventide shall bring thee balm,
After a little while.

A little while, O heart,
With sorrow breaking,
A few more hours of night,
And then comes waking;
And lasting comfort shall be given
When breaks the golden day of heaven,
After a little while.

Religious.

Symbols of the Gospel in Nature.

BY REV. W. R. PATTON.

When the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament passed away, Christ authorized a symbolism which is solemn and significant. In the first act of his public life, and in the last, preceding his death, he established, respectively the two symbols which will be the ordinances of his church until the end of time. In them are revealed the truths (1) that death precedes life and (2) that the purpose of this new life is the exaltation of Himself as the crucified Saviour. Baptism presents the first of these in symbol, and communion presents the second. In baptism is represented the burial or the symbol of death as preceding resurrection or the symbol of life, so that in baptism the believer buries or puts away his past carnal life and raises up or "puts on" Christ his new spiritual life. In communion, the baptized believer is represented as exalting Christ (with this new life) as slain for sinners, as adoring and so

communing with him as his Redeemer. Baptism is the solemn symbol exhibiting the beginning of the wondrous work of grace wherein the believer comes "into Christ;" communion is the appropriate symbol showing the continuance of grace until this life of earthly praise culminates in the life of heavenly glorification, "for as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come." Baptism represents the beginning of spiritual life, and occurs but once in the experience of the believer; communion shows its continuance, and is, therefore, frequently administered. Thus, we see the wisdom of our Lord in entrusting the church with these appropriate symbols, and, also, in designating the order in which they come. Will it not be very comforting to us if we can now look upon natural things and upon the silent face of nature, and read an expression of the same truths, in the same order, which we have just read in the symbols of the Gospel?

Revelation interprets nature. We never could learn in nature the truths which the ordinances of the New Testament teach us, were it not for the Inspired Word, but with it, I venture to say, that the symbolism of the gospel is seen in nature.

1. It is seen in *creation*. When the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, this bright and beautiful world came forth from its grave to a new life. We now study its history and contemplate its future, and the conclusion is that all that has been created, animate or inanimate, will combine to praise Christ as the Redeemer of the world. Even the wrath of man shall praise Him. This world will fulfil the Divine purpose in exalting its Creator when he was nailed to the cross.

2. It is seen in *preservation*. When God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, he condemned its inhabitants to destruction; afterwards, for the second time, it came forth from the "watery grave." Is this immersion of the earth in water to be compared to baptism? Revelation answers, "The like figure wherunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him." Here we see the symbolizing of the truth that death precedes life, and that the purpose of the life is that angels, authorities and powers may praise Christ. In like manner does the Word of God speak of the preservation of the Israelites, when they were in the Red Sea; they "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." They then came forth from their burial to sing the song of praise, the glorious song which exalts our Lord, "The song of Moses and the song of the Lamb." How plainly does God point out to us that the symbolism of the New Testament is revealed in natural things.

3. It is seen in the *changes* in nature. When Paul was presenting his argument to prove the resurrection of the body, he found his illustrations in these changes. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." The waving harvest, the fruitful orchards, and the beautiful gardens around us, teach the lesson that the death of the seed preceded all this growing life. Also in the light of God's Word, we look upon these millions of witnesses, these blades of grass, forest foliage, and fragrant flowers, and behold them silently praising him who created all things and then gave his life to redeem men. "The little hills on every side, the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing."

Thus, we see the central, vital and everlasting truths of the gospel presented in nature. God's two great books, Revelation and Nature, alike reveal a symbolism, beautiful in its simplicity, harmonious in its order, and glorious in its significance. The more we study, the more we wonder and adore.

But there is another solemn thought which thrusts itself upon us. The symbolism will have a perfect exemplification in our mortal bodies. The hand that writes these words and the eye that reads them will pass under the power of death, and we shall enter the dark portals. With Christ we shall be buried, but, thank God with Christ we rise again. Death precedes life. The symbols of the gospel shall pass away, but the truths which are symbolized will abide forever. "Then shall I be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

The daily Duty.

In the most carefully managed business there are always chances of disaster. The best laid plans may miscarry, the most sagacious foresight miscalculates. In the professions, in literature, in art, on the farm and in the workshop there is the same possibility of failure. Integrity, energy, perseverance, as a rule, bear the fruit of success, but it is always possible that a sudden storm may strike the tree in the moment of its great promise and destroy the harvest. If the same thing were true in the spiritual life then the spiritual life would be a failure; for there at least must be the certainty of success, else it is the salvation of the few and fortunate and not of the many which is absurd. If special gifts were required to secure the eternal rewards of righteous living, if extraordinary talents or dazzling opportunities were the necessary conditions of spiritual achievement, then, as in the world of business struggle, the few would succeed and the many fail. Men believe, as a rule, the promise which the spiritual life holds out, of universal success in developing its graces and winning its heavenly prizes if the conditions of success are fulfilled, but they act as if they had no faith in it, for they daily disregard its simplest, fundamental precept. They wait for the great opportunities; they are idle until the great crisis arrives.

As a matter of fact most great opportunities come unawares. From the very beginning great thoughts and great men and great possibilities have come into the world disguised in humble garb, and have passed before the gaze of men as did Christ Himself, clothed in such garments of humility that few recognized their royalty. In the old poets the days are always clad in homely, repellent garments as they approach us; but as they recede, and we have lost them for ever, we see that they were Divine messengers bearing the most precious gifts which we in our blindness rejected. It is the simple trait of fidelity, possible in all positions of life, and to men and women of every degree of culture, which wins success in the spiritual life. "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life" is a command which applies as well to the earthly as to the heavenly pursuit. He and he only who does his best with each day's work, who is equal to each day's opportunities as they come, will ever find the great opportunity, or be capable of understanding and filling it. The school-boy slurs his lesson to-day because it seems a small matter to him, not knowing that in that very act he is sowing the seeds of a life-long failure. The lesson stands not only for the few facts which may be in it to be memorised, but for a habit of character which may have for him eternal significance. The young man in a profession neglects the dry and irksome details of his work, purposing when the great opportunity comes to thoroughly equip himself for it by a special and brilliant preparation, but the great opportunity comes so unexpectedly that there is no time for special preparation.

We forget that there are no small things; that life is a school in which every work, every duty, every opportunity, however insignificant it may seem to us at the moment, is a lesson, the learning or the neglect of which means just so much loss or gain in character. The man who is faithful in

each day's work stores up in himself each day that reserved force of habit and character which makes him equal to those unexpected emergencies which any hour or moment may bring. Small opportunities faithfully used are rounds by which we mount to greater ones; and the true way to broaden life is not by idly gazing around the horizon in search of some larger field, but by doing with all one's heart and soul the things that lie next one.

For What was I Converted.

BY REV. WILLIAM LAMSON.

"I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."—PHIL. 3: 12.

It is a most animated picture, full of life, quivering with vitality, which Paul here draws of his Christian course; following after, reaching forth, pressing forward, his eye fixed on the mark of the prize,—such are the strokes of the pencil by which he aims to put the picture on the canvas. And though eighteen centuries have passed since the drawing and the colors were put on that canvas, it is a living picture to-day, fresh and vivid as though it were executed yesterday. These are colors that know no fading.

But the special thought I would note is this: Paul thought Jesus had a distinct, specific purpose in his conversion, and he felt it his one duty to discover and accomplish that purpose. And we know that before his conversion, when he was a cruel persecutor, even then he was a chosen vessel to do a mighty Christian work. To Ananias the Lord said of Saul of Tarsus, "he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." The eye of God saw in that bold, fierce enemy of Christ one who was to be the chief apostle and leader of the Christian hosts. In his conversion, therefore, the Lord had a definite purpose. He had a work for the converted Saul to do, and Saul recognized this, and aimed to find out what that work was, and then to do it. That I may apprehend, seize upon, that specific thing for which I was apprehended, arrested, seized upon, by Christ Jesus. He was not converted for the same end for which Peter was converted, or John, or James, but for a specific purpose. The Lord had one end in view when He converted him.

Now if this is true of Saul of Tarsus, is it not just as true of every Christian, of the believer of to-day? Each genuine Christian has been apprehended of Christ Jesus, and it should be the aim of his life to discover and accomplish that for which he has been converted, to apprehend that for which he has been apprehended of Christ Jesus. A successful Christian life is just one that meets the design of the Master.

How long will Sin continue?

Answer that question, and I will answer the other—how long will its punishment continue? The query for us to raise in the first place is not how long the punishment of sin may endure, but how long sin may endure. We are agreed that if sin be eternal, its punishment will be so. Dean Alford says, "From the fact that one sin hath never forgiveness, it is a fair inference that the sin itself is eternal." Another writer calls this phrase, "eternal sin," one of the most deep-reaching that the whole Scriptures contain. Alford says, "It is to the critical treatment of the Holy Word in the original tongue that we owe the restoration to popular use of such deep phrases as these." Eternal sin. This terrific Scriptural phrase was not in the translation; it is in the new. The doctrine is here taught, as it is taught in the famous passage in the close of Revelation—that the time will come when it will be proclaimed that he who is filthy shall be filthy still, and that he who is holy shall be holy still; and that thus character, under the fixed natural laws by which its final perman-

ence is attained, will drift into eternal sin, or eternal righteousness, with their consequences.—Joseph Cook.

For the Christian Messenger.

Lying a man down.

One of the oldest instrumentalities of evil in the world is a lie. Satan entered into the garden of Eden with a lie in his mouth, and through that lie brought ruin to our race. Following the example of their father, who was a liar from the beginning, the children of the devil have from that time dealt largely in lies.

As Satan lied to introduce sin into the world, so Cain, the first murderer, lied to conceal his bloody crime; and when asked, where is thy brother; replied, I know not; am I my brother's keeper. From that time, lies have been favorite instruments in the hands of the devil and his children. Men have gone astray from the womb speaking lies. Instances of falsehood are abundant, and whether we consider the backslidden prophet lying to God's messenger to induce him to disobey the divine commandment; or Gehazi, lying to Naaman, to obtain silver and raiment; or Jezebel, concocting lies to accomplish the death of Naboth, that her husband might have his vineyard for a kitchen garden, or the Jews seeking false witness to lie against Christ and accomplish his overthrow; or the priests and rulers who hired the soldiers to lie, and deny his resurrection; or the false apostles, who slanderously reported that Paul was willing to do evil that good might come of it; or ecclesiastical dignitaries of later days, who have slandered and maligned those who have refused to yield to their sway; or tricky traitors who seek by slanders to hinder others and advance themselves; or investigating committees who whitewash their own partisans and blackwash everybody else; or rabid sectarians who slander those who will not follow in their lead; or secret cliques and combinations, that assail honest and open-hearted men with sly insinuations, until the air is thick with whispered falsehood; or gossips who seek to make their neighbours as disreputable as themselves; or coquettes, who lie and deceive, to spite and injure those who may rival them; or false brethren in the Church who whisper what they dare not speak, and insinuate what they dare not assert; all these seem to proceed upon the understanding that falsehood is a legitimate weapon, and that the easiest way to get rid of persons whom they dislike is to lie them down.

Such persons do greatly err. It is one of the hardest things in the world to lie a man down. Man is the workmanship of the Almighty; a lie is the workmanship of the devil. A lie is but a breath and it has nothing behind it but a liar whose breath is in his nostrils, and who, unless he repent, is doomed. A man who has laid hold upon eternal life is not to be killed by a lie, no matter how smoothly or plausibly it may be told, whether by one man or by ten men. It may be whispered in private, or proclaimed in public; it may be uttered by a gossip; reported by a committee; published by a society, adopted by a conference, and scattered all over the world; it may be promulgated where no reply is permitted, it may be voted to be true by forty men who know nothing about it, and who refuse to hear the testimony of faithful witnesses, who are ready to affirm that it is false—it may be scattered where it cannot be followed and contradicted; and what of it? It is simply a lie. It has no life in it, it may do much harm, in creating strife and divisions among men but can have no permanent power or effect, a lie is doomed. Man fights it, God fights it, Heaven and earth fight it, time and eternity fight it, and the judgment day will doom it. It is difficult to lie a man down. A man who is lied up must fall; a man who is lied down is very likely to rise at last.

VERI AMATOR.