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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

An Invitation.

BY MILLIE COLCORD.

I have found me a wide shel'ring rock,
In whose cleft I may always abide.
And so safe is my soul in this rest,
That it asks for no shelter beside.
I can see from the rock where I lie,
That its shade reaches far o'er the land,—
Yet so closely it folds me, I know
'Tis the shadow of God's mighty hand.

I have found me a fountain of life,
To whose waters I freely may go;
There is health for my soul in their source,
There is comfort and strength in their flow.
Long I stay'd from this fountain apart,
Though they told me its waters were free;
But my soul quenched its thirst when I found
That the fountain was flowing for me.

I have found me a pardon for sin,
I am holding it close in my soul;
Oh the joy that it brings me is great,
For I know that it maketh me whole.
'Tis a pardon so wondrously free,
That the half I can never understand.—
But I know that 'twas sealed by my Lord,
And it came as the gift of his hand.

Would you come to this sheltering rock?
Would you rest in the cleft that I know?
Would you drink of the life giving stream,
Whose pure waters unceasingly flow?
Then why linger in doubting and fear?
For the rock standeth close by your side,—
It is Jesus who pleads with you now
In the shade of his love to abide.

It is Jesus, the fountain of life,
And he holdeth the water to thee:
Oh why stay when you hear his loved voice,
Calling tenderly, "Come unto me!"
Have you sins that are holding you back?
But his grace is sufficient for all
He is holding a pardon for you,
And it covers your sins, great and small.

Oh, then hasten your steps to the Lord,
I think no more of your burden of guilt,—
Take the pardon, he offers it still,
And 'tis sealed by the blood he hath spilt:
He shall give you sweet rest in his love,
He shall lead you where pure waters flow;
And the sins that have crimsoned your soul,
Through his grace, shall be whiter than snow.

Religious.

Substitutes for Christianity.

While a considerable number of gentlemen of the literary class and cultivators of science have apparently concluded that faith is obsolete, and that Christianity is to be dismissed to the lumber room of effete religions, there are not wanting those who crave a substitute. For, after all, without the gospel, a sad vacancy is found. Men may please themselves by idealizing Buddhism, as Mr. Edwin Arnold has done in his "Light of Asia," and receive for it such plaudits as Mr. Arnold has received from the King of Siam for "defending our religion;" they may persuade themselves that Buddhism is a good-enough religion for Asiatics, but will hardly accept it for themselves. And such cultured people being commonly more solicitous for other people's souls than their own, sometimes express very great concern for the "masses." What are common people to do, they ask, when the religious basis of morality is removed? We might ask, Why have you not waited to settle your own theory of the universe and of man's chief end before disturbing the faith of your neighbors? If, as you seem to be conscious, their religion has done for Christians something that is valuable, and that can be parted with only at a deplorable cost, would it not have been the part of wisdom to suffer its beneficial effects to be enjoyed until the illumination of the age should have revealed something to take its place and do its work? We put the question to our agnostic friends in no taunting spirit, but as one that deserves an answer, at least to themselves.

One class of substitutes for Christianity consists in attempts to resolve our religion into its most abstract elements and to express these in a different set of formulae. It has been said, for instance, that religion is essentially man's awe and wonder at the mystery

of the universe; or it is man's attempt to unravel the mystery; and it is suggested that these emotions and aspirations, together with admiration and imaginative sympathy, may be had without the religious beliefs. But we suspect that men who say such things are not more than half satisfied with their own solutions. When they come to consider again what Christianity has done for mankind, it seems highly probable that they will themselves admit the need of some more energetic principles to account for it. A somewhat celebrated definition of religion is that it is "morality touched with emotion." The apparent purpose is to suggest that there may be other ways than the Christian way to secure this emotionalized morality. But granting for a moment that this is a sufficient definition, where is the emotion to come from? We cannot produce emotion in ourselves or anybody else at will. It must arise from the perception or belief of something adapted to stir the heart. Agnosticism in all its forms is chilling. It may produce *ennui*; it is more likely to produce despair; but any nobler emotion would disown such parentage.

When Mr. Frothingham defined his position as recently reported, another of the small circle of free-religious teachers, Prof. Adler, suggested as the one thing needful to replace Christianity the culture of the moral and benevolent principles. Now all men are subject to moral and benevolent impulses, but in order to make them really principles, actuating forces in their lives, something else is needed. In themselves, they relied on as motives, they are weak. Their insufficiency has been a thousand times demonstrated.

The sceptics have persuaded themselves that the New Testament does not give a trustworthy account of the origin of Christianity. But Christianity exists, and must have had a beginning; and first Strauss, then Baur, then Renan, each in his own way, has undertaken to rewrite the history. But it requires extraordinary credulity to accept either. And Christianity has not only existed, but has exerted a beneficial influence. The good it has produced is acknowledged, and is too valuable to be lost without a struggle. But a substitute, if any is possible, is yet to be discovered. None is possible to be found. The fruits of the tree of life are borne by no earthly plant.—*Watchman.*

"As Christ Loved the Church."

It is one marked characteristic of the Word of God, that it sets before us such lofty ideals. It does not say to us: "Do about right;" it does not say to us: "Try to break off the more glaring of your faults;" it does not bid us: "Be better men and women;" it does not tell us: "Follow David or Samuel." It sets before us a perfect standard, a perfect ideal, a perfect example. "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Be ye perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. "Be followers of God."

And when Paul was speaking to men, each of whom in the days of heathenism had been wont to look on woman as

A little higher than his dog, a little better than his horse, he held up before them the faultless ideal of human husband-love: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." The love which is held up for the imitation of the husband has several characteristics.

It is an *unselfish* love. It seeks the good of the object that is loved, rather than its own good. It abhors that thing called love, that means merely a desire to possess another. It finds its happiness largely in ministering to the object of the love.

It is a *sheltering, protecting* love, seeking always to guard and defend the object loved from every ill.

It is a *self-sacrificing* love. Christ not only loved his church, but he gave

himself for it; who can fathom the meaning of these words? He gave himself, gave the whole of his being, for the welfare of his church. The ideal husband *lives* for the wife, puts her pleasure before his own, and puts her moral elevation before her pleasure or his own, as Christ gave himself for the church "that he might sanctify and cleanse it." He finds his highest pleasure in foregoing some delight that he may add to the happiness of the other. To many persons, to those who have not experienced it, this may seem incomprehensible and paradoxical. Truly says Paul: "This is a great mystery;" but to those who have truly loved, it is not incomprehensible.

We could wish that every husband might have before him this ideal. There is need enough of a high standard. Men are naturally more coarse-grained than women; and then, the circumstances of their lives tend to make them rough, callous, insensible, hard-headed, not to say hard-hearted; while on the other hand, the surroundings of the woman tend to make her almost preternaturally sensitive, as also her circumstances naturally make her life a series of acts of self-sacrifice. The man goes to his place of business, to his counting-room, to his office, to his work-bench, to his farm; he comes into collision with men; he holds his own, and a little better; he receives hard knocks, and repays them in kind; he becomes thick-skinned; and he does not realize but that everybody else is the same; he comes home at evening, tired, cross, rather exacting, disposed to grumble, not disposed to be very considerate. The wife through all the day has been shut up in the house with the children; her time has been filled with petty sacrifices; twenty times in the day, she has laid aside what she was doing in order to answer the need of the children; her back has ached and her head has ached and her arms have ached; she has been living for others, not in the way of great acts and great sacrifices, that have a sort of compensation in their own magnitude, and in the sense of mental enlargement and moral self-complacency which they awaken, but in the way of little petty self-sacrifices that bring no compensation, no gratitude, no praise, no complacency. Her nerves have all come to the surface; they are laid bare; a touch would inflame them; she needs to be soothed, rested; and he, with his rough, blundering ways, and his expectations and his exactions, is very apt to exasperate when he should soothe, to tax when he should give, to burden when he should lighten. "As Christ loved his church;" if this might be often in the heart of every husband! If it were so, then we could more easily bear the hour that is liable to come to every husband, the hour when the impatient, inconsiderate, selfish word or act or look, will be remembered with unutterable bitterness.—*Examiner.*

Misquotations of Scripture.

QUOTATIONS SAID TO BE FROM THE BIBLE, BUT NOT TO BE FOUND THERE.

These are numerous. In some cases, there is something in the Bible which has probably been the foundation for the saying; but in many others some well known sentence has been supposed to be from the Bible when it is really from some other source; sometimes to be traced, and at others unknown.

I have often been told that the Bible says: "The merciful man is merciful to his beast," but I have never found it there. The nearest approach to it is Prov. xii. 10, "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."

"Be not wise above what is written," is not a quotation from the Bible; but it is probably corrupted from 1 Cor. iv. 6, "That ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written."

"What we know not now, we shall

Preachers' Wives.

Preachers' wives are under no greater obligations to serve the church than are the wives of laymen. They are private persons; in no sense pastors or preachers, and the churches in which their husbands preach have no more claims upon them than they have upon other Christian women. Instead of being at the head of missionary societies and charitable organizations, it would generally be better that such positions should be filled by persons who are permanently identified with the charge. The preacher's home and family are not public property, any more than are the homes and families of others. Their privacy and domestic seclusion are entitled to respect and protection the same as others; and because preachers' families are continually subject to removal, and to be thrown among strangers, it would seem right that they should be guarded with peculiar delicacy and consideration. The demands made upon the pastor's

know hereafter," is not to be found in the Bible. It is probably twisted from 1 Cor. xiii. 12, "Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I am known."

I have often heard the statement made with reference to God, that "His favor is life, and His loving kindness is better than life." This makes the loving kindness of God more valuable than His favor. But the statement is not in the Bible. The expression is probably made up of two different texts, in which the word "life" is used in different senses. In Psalm xxx. 5, it is said of God, "In His favor is life." Here spiritual life and enjoyment are evidently meant. In Psalm lxiii. 3, it is written, "Because thy loving kindness is better than life." Here by "life" we are certainly to understand physical life and earthly enjoyment, which are not equal in value to the loving kindness of God.

It has been stated, I think on good authority, that a very celebrated Baptist minister in England arranged a funeral sermon from the text, "In the midst of life we are death." But in the end, he had to find another text, as the above is not in the Bible, but in the Church of England Prayer Book.

A few years ago, I heard of a minister in New England preaching an impressive sermon from the text, "Ye knew your duty; but ye did it not." This is not a Bible text, but a quotation from Pollok's "Course of Time."

I have often been told, that the Bible says that "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." But those who wish to know where it is to be found will look in vain in the Bible, and will have to go to the writings of Laurence Sterne, the author of "Tristram Shandy."

I have been told that the Bible says that "Jesus never laughed, but often wept," but in my reading of the Bible, I have never met this statement.

I have sometimes heard prayer offered in religious meetings that those present might be so blessed in connection with the exercises, that they might "go forth as giants refreshed with new wine." Now in addition to the fact that this expression is not in the Bible, as it is supposed to be, it seems to give an undue value to intoxicating drinks.

Prayer is sometimes offered for ministers, that they may have "seals to their ministry, and souls for their hire." In my early days, I supposed, like many others, that this was a quotation from the Bible; but I have never found anything like it in that book.

I have many a time heard persons in prayer-meetings pray that the Holy Spirit might "go from heart to heart, as oil goeth from vessel to vessel;" and some of these have been very much surprised when I have told them that there was no such expression as this in the Bible. And besides this, it conveys a very unworthy idea of the Holy Spirit, who is omnipresent, and needs not to go from one to another; but can bless all at the same time.—*Cor. Watchman.*

How He became Satisfied.

A great many boys mistake their calling, but all such are not fortunate enough to find out in as good season as did this one. It is said that Rufus Choate, the great lawyer, was once in New Hampshire making a plea, when a boy, the son of a farmer, resolved to leave the plough and become a lawyer like Rufus Choate. He accordingly went to Boston, called on Mr. Choate, and said to him: "I heard you plead in our town, and I have a desire to become a lawyer like you. Will you teach me how?"

"As well as I can," said the great lawyer. "Come and sit down." Taking down a copy of Blackstone, he said: "Read this until I come back, and I will see how you get on."

The poor boy began. An hour passed. His back ached, his head ached, his legs ached. He knew not how to study. Every moment became a torture. He wanted air. Another hour passed, and Mr. Choate came and asked:

"How do you get on?"

"Get on! Why, do you have to read such stuff as this?"

"Yes."

"How much of it?"

"All there is on these shelves, and more," looking about the great library.

"How long will it take?"

"Well, it has taken me more than twenty-five years."

"How much do you get?"

"My board and clothes."

"Is that all?"

"Well, that is about all that I have gained as yet."

"Then," said the boy, "I will go back to the ploughing. The work is not near as hard, and pays better."

wife in the way of visiting is often most unreasonable. Other wives have a limited number of visits to return, but the preacher's wife is expected to visit all the families of the church. This is almost impossible if home duties are properly attended to. Her own family and house-keeping are paramount. What shall she do? neglect her home, or incur reproach for slighting those well-meant courtesies she is not able wholly to reciprocate?

We suppose it cannot be helped altogether that preachers' wives should be regarded as the servants of the church, and as subjects of criticism, almost as much as the preachers themselves. And yet we strongly protest against the custom. We would plead for their right to be considered as private individuals, upon whom the church has no other claims than she has upon all Christian women.—*Christian Visitor.*

"Dem Supposes."

Those who are so anxious about the future as to be unhappy in the present, may learn a lesson from a poor colored woman. Her name was Nancy, and she earned a moderate living by washing. She was, however, always happy. One day one of those anxious Christians who were constantly "taking thought" about the morrow, said to her: Ah, Nancy, it is well enough to be happy now; but I should think your thoughts of the future would sober you. Suppose, for instance, that you should be taken sick and unable to work; or suppose your present employers should move away, and no one else should give you anything to do; or suppose—"Stop!" cried Nancy. "I never suppose. De Lord is my Shepherd, and I know I shall not want. And, honey, it is all dem supposes as is makin' you so miserable. You orter give dem all up, an' jes' trus' in de Lord."—*Presbyterian.*

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