6

CHRISTIAN THEFT MESSENGER.

Reading. Lamily

The Portals of the Hereafter,

I sat by the wayside watching The motley, moving throng, As with eager and burried movement. They pressed their way along.

Unlike were their thoughts as their faces But each with some intent Close followed the one just before him, On his own purpose bent.

Away, far away in the distance, The long procession passed. Through an ancient and time-worn portal Where ended his journey at last.

"With curious, questioning motive, I walked toward the gateway old. To learn of these travellers' future, If aught of it there was told.

Then close by the wide, wide entrance, I watched as each went through, But whither so quickly they vanished, No watcher ever knew.

The gates of the great hereafter Stand open evermore, But no one may see aught beyond them Till he reaches the other shore. -Newon Centre.



startle you, but have patience, dear one, hour over it, and the words seem to have afternoon, but do as you like about till you grow used to it. I confess lost" all sense, so that I don't know that when first the thought came to me whether they are right or wrong. -which was not till after I left Milan Please, would you mind reading it, -I too was startled, was distressed, and telling me if you think it will do? lest it should be anything of a slight to She placed another sheet in his hand the memory of my dearest Katie. But and he read again obediently, a certain I have since viewed the matter differmist creeping over his eyes.

ently. My love for Mary Dodson does " MY OWN DARLING PAPA, not detract from that love-nay, it

'Your letter has just come, and must send you a few lines directly, that you may not be kept in suspense. 'It is quite a new thought to me. dearest papa, and just at first I an

startled. You do not expect me not to be surprised, and you tell me I need not say I am glad.

'But, indeed, I will try hard not to mind, and I am praying to be made to feel rightly about it. And you know, dear papa, I love you so much, that whatever makes you happy must please me. could not bear to stand in the way of your happiness. I could not bear that Mrs. Dodson should say 'no' to you, only because of me. It would be a dreadful feeling, and I should never

' You do not know Mrs. Dodson as forgive myself. Please tell her so from I do. You are a little prejudiced, my me. I will try to be what I ought to darling, and you have not quite seen her. She is so good and kind that I am the full beauty of her character. She sure I shall learn to love her, if she will is one of a thousand-one whom to know have just a little patience with me.] is to love. I must tell you the truth. never forgot how good she was to me on My life's happiness is bound up in her. the St. Gothard Pass. If I do not have her, I shall never be

'Please do not mind a short note today, dearest papa. I would say more, but I want to be in time for the next post, and my head is aching so much that I can scarcely think what to write. 'I am ever your loving child,

admitting her. She will understand. 'I should like her to come in; only please tell her all first, Dr. Ritchie. 'Yes, I understand. Poor child ! he said compassionately.

That almost undid the effect of his calming manner before. She gave him one despairing look, and hid her face in the sofa-cushion.

Dr. Ritchie waited for a few seconds, and then said, 'Now, Kathleen !' She stood up immediately, thrilling all over like a wounded bird, but otherwise composed.

keep quiet, and not think more than you can help.' 'I'll try,' she said gently. ' And the

letter, Dr. Ritchie.' 'I will post it for you.'

* Thank you very, very much. I am so sorry to have troubled you, and taken up your time."

·Good-bye. Don't look forward too much,' he said. 'Troubles weigh heaviest beforehand, as a rule." And Dr. Ritchie went downstairs, a

good deal moved to give his orders. 'Well,' said Miss Thorpe, when he

was gone. 'I wash my hands of it. If things go wrong, it isn't my fault.' Things certainly did go wrong in the

on of that thin voice, with a marvelous witchery of apt and melodious words. but through them " the end of all things" people rose, stretching forward. Many of those who rose first, as if they felt theology. some strange power upon them, they knew not what, got up and stood upon their seats until, when the great master ceased, closing his passionate and pathetic accents, the whole audience was upon his feet, intensely alive with 'You are to be a good child now, interest, as if each one had heard in the distance the presages and preludes of the coming end, and felt that it was

time to prepare. My friend used to speak of that never forgotten moment, that summer evening in the old chapel, as one of the most memorable in his life. -Pulpit Treasury.

Hymns of an Upward Flight.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

'Oh! that I had wings like a dove; for then would I fly away and be at rest." This longing of the Psalmist's soul for a homeward flight toward land of rest has found utterance in school-room that day, to the cost of the many of our favorite hymns. Since poor children. When Miss Thorpe the time when Isaac Watts, the father was annoyed, her pupils commonly had of English hymnology, wrote, ' Give me the wings of faith to rise,' many others of our spiritual songs have been pitched to the same key of aspiration. Let me make a hurried note of some ct these hymns and their authors. No one has attained to more success in this strain than that Cowper of the 19th century, James Montgomery. He was born at Irvine, in Ayrshire, flight not far from the birthplace of Robert Burns. Two others of the foremost hymn-writers of this age, Henry Lyte and Horatius Bonar, are also Scotchmen. Montgomery was the son of Moravain minister, who died as missionary in the West Indies. The poet spent most of his life in Sheffield, on a hill just out of the smoke of the iron and steel furnaces. During my earliest visit to England, I spent several weeks close by the delightful old man, and met him often. He was small and slight in figure, with snowwhite hair, and in manner was genial and sunny, reminding me somewhat of Washington Irving. He then attended an Episcopal church, whose rector was intensely evangelical, and the old patriarch of poetry was always in his seat, and often joined with the congregation in singing his own delightful hymns. Of all these the finest is the one commencing with the line, 'Forever with the Lord !' The second verse one of the sweetest in all the range of sacred poetry :

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their seats, and stood stretching forward will be remembered by one single gem with a kind of fright and wonder. Still of sacred melody ; for Bishop Heber, there was no action, only the following Charlotte Elliot, Perounet, and Mrs. Sarah F. Adams, the author of ' Nearer my God, to thee,' belong to the same category. I had rather have written sounded like some warning bell. More any one of their immortal hymns than to have prepared a folio treatise on

Another of these singers of a single song of praise was Robert Seagrave. Very little is known of him except that he was a minister of the Established Church of England, and went of among the Dissenters. About the year 1748 he caught a blessed inspiration, and poured forth a hymn which has carried many a congregation of worshipers up as in a chariot of fire. "Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings, Thy better portion trace; Rise from transitory things

Toward heaven, thy native place." That is a bold expression for a pilgrim of earth, to call himself a native of heaven; but every one who is born of God in regeneration may rightfully make this claim. Seagrave had the same longings that Paul had, when he penned this glorious aspiration to view God's face and to 'rest in his embrace.' Many of us will be glad to seek out the author of these thrilling lines when we get home to our Father's house. America has produced several tons of religious verse; but thus far very few hymns that come up to the highest standard, and are born for immortality. Among these are two that sprang from the big, loving heart of that beautiful old apostle, Dr. William A. Muhlenberg. He came nearest to my idea of the beloved John of any man I ever knew. Both of his two great hymns breathe this longing for a heavenward "Oh, cease my wandering soul, On restless wing to roam." The other is his world-known 'I would not live alway.' As he originally wrote it, the hymn ended with these holy yearnings : "Oh! give me, oh! give me the wings of a dove! To adore him, be near him, enwrapt with his love: I but wait for the summons, I list for the word. Hallelujah ! Amen ! Evermore with the Lord." Before he went home to heaven, the dear old man wrote to me-' Paul's 'for me to live is Christ' is far better to me now than Job's 'I would not live always.' '- Christian at Work.

THE STORY OF A HOME.

BY AGNES GIBERNE.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WHAT TO SAY.

when he had had to tell Kathleen of her less degree, what I feel for her. mother's danger-only now he had come to hear, not to tell. She had taken a seat mechanically on his entrance motioning him to another, forgetting to shake hands or say a word of welcome. Then she sat motionless, her hands wrung together, her breath in quick, short pantings, as if some heavy weight lay upon her.

'Miss Thorpe could not think what was the matter,' said Dr. Ritchie. "She tried to get in, but you did not answer.'

'Did she? I did not hear.'

'You did not want her, perhaps ?' 'Oh no-but I did not hear her at the door." Kathleen lifted her eyes drearily. 'I don't know how long I

have been here." Since breakfast. twelve now.'

'Only that. I thought it was nearly evening-no, I remember.'

Kathleen, what have you heard from your father? Is it something that you may not tell me ?'

There was a touch of authority in the tone. Kathleen looked up again, this time bitterly, almost wildly. 'Dr. Ritchie, I have fought so hard, cannot, cannot conquer !' she and I cried. 'I don't know how to bear it. Oh, mamma-my own dear mother !'

Did the Doctor guess? He might have done so. He only laid a quieting hand on her arm, and said, ' Hush, you will make yourself ill. Is it something which you cannot tell me?"

'I must tell somebody-not Miss Thorpe and the children. I think

happy again. I shall come home to Rocklands a broken-hearted man. If have her, I shall be the happiest man living.

'I have spoken to her, my darling, and to my joy she is not unwilling. It reminded Dr. Ritchie of the day She feels for me, I believe, though in

seems rather to draw me closer to her.

I cannot explain how darling, but so it is.

' I feel sincerely in this matter that

I am doing the best thing which could

possibly be for you all. You are young,

my Kathleen, and not up to the cares

of a large household, and you are not

strong. And some day you will want

to marry-and what should I do then?

not have induced me to sct, had I not

found myself with those feelings towards

her which alone can justify a man in

proposing for a woman. As I tell you,

I resisted for a while-tried to believe

myself mistaken. But this could not

continue.

· But these considerations alone would

· She has one daughter, a lively pretty girl, whom you cannot fail to like.

'But Mary Dodson's consent is conditional. She believes-rightly or wrongly-that you do not like her, and she says she cannot force herself where she would be unwelcome, nor can she bear the thought of making you unhappy -for if my Leena does not love her, she loves my Leena.

'So, darling, this momentous decision rests in a manner with you. Your father's life-happiness depends upon you. I do not ask you to say you are glad. I do not press you to say what is not true. But I do beg of you, my child, to write me a few kind and cordial words which I can show to her, of such a kind as to remove her scruples. If you do It is nearly not, I may in time overcome those

scruples, and I shall stay on at Rome in the hope of doing so. They remain here through the winter-unless this takes place-and so should I. But if you do what I ask-though I doubt not that just at first the idea will trouble you-still you will earn the undying gratitude of.

'Your most loving father, 'A. JOLIFFE.

'P. S.-I shall await with intense anxiety my darling's reply."

Dr. Ritchie reached the end, and said nothing. He wanted a few minutes in which to weigh the matter, and to consider the bearings of what he might say: and he had them. But when Kathleen sat up, and said, ' What do you think ?' in a gentle tone, his face was not quite so well-controlled as he had wished it to be. She read displeasure there. 'I doubt if your father would have wished me to read his letter, Kathleen. 'I do not think he would mind,' she said. 'I have thought it over, and I must ask some one, and it can be nobody here except you or Lady Catherine. could not make it all clear to you by only telling what he says. What do you think-please ?'

'KATHLEEN.'

"Will it do, Dr. Ritchie?' the soft voice asked.

'He ought to be satisfied,' said Dr. **Ritchie**

Kathleen took the letter back, and read a few lines, but she soon put it down, with a dazzled look.

"I can't take in the sense of it,' she said wearily. 'You are sure it will do? I want to say enough-and yet I can't pretend to feel what is not true. Do you think all that is true?

'Yes, I think it is. It would not be so for everybody in your place.' 'Ob, don't praise me, please,' she said piteously. 'If you knew what

wicked thoughts I have had -----' She sobbed again, and he said, 'Then the victory is the greater.'

'It isn't victory. I am very, very unhappy. I don't love God's will. But I can't write in any other way to him____

' No,' said Dr. Ritchie, 'You are wise, even taking the matter from the lower point of view. Your father has the right to choose for himself, and the responsibility of doing anything to check this would be a heavy one for you.'

'Yes, that is it-so I thought,' she said. 'I should not dare-and I am so glad you think the same. It seems to help me. I was afraid of doing wrongly. And you think my letter says enough ?'

"I hardly know what more you could truthfully say. You are not bound to press the matter forward, but simply to avoid being a barrier in the way.' 'Then it can be posted. I want to have it safely off. I am so atraid of waiting - till - perhaps-for fear should not be able to send it----' Dr. Ritchie repeated the words, Not able ?'

to pay the penalty.

The Sin of Fretting.

There is one sin which, it seems to me, is everywhere and by everybody under-estimated, and quite too much overlooked in valuation of character. It is the sin of fretting. It is common as air, as speech, so common that unless it rises above its usual monotone, we do not even observe it. Watch any ordinary coming together of people and see how many minutes it will be before somebody frets-that is, makes more or less complaining, that statement of some thing or other, which most probably every one in the room, or on the stage, or the car, or the street corner, as it may be, knew before, and which most probably nobody can help. Why say anything about it? It is cold, it is hot it is wet, it is dry; somebody has broken an appointment, ill cooked meal; stupidity or bad faith somewhere has resulted in discomfort-There are always plenty of things to fret about. It is simply astonishing how much annoyance and discomfort may be found in the course of every day's living, even at the simplest, if one only keeps a sharp eye out on that side of things. Even Holy Writ says we were born to trouble as sparks fly upward But even to the sparks flying upwards, in the blackest of smoke there is blue sky above, and the less time they waste on the road the sooner they will reach

We remember having heard a dear departed friend tell how, when a boy he was taken by his father one still summer evening across the Northamptonshire fields-I believe it was to the little village of Thrapestone-to hear Robert Hall. The place was crowded 'I might feel differently. It is so with plain farmer folk and a sprinkling of intelligent ministers and gentry from the neighborhood. The minister came in, a simple, heavy, but still im-

"Here in the body pent. Absent from him I roam Yet nightly pitch my moving tent,

A day's march nearer home." To the same strain is pitched that

other production of Montgommery' which is so often sung in our churches

"Oh ! where shall rest be found, Rest for the weary soul ?"

Copying my Lord's Likeness.

Leaving my desk and books early one forenoon, in Florence, I wandered out into the Piazza, which was glowing in the morning sun, and making my way across the Arno, landed at length in the gallery of the Pitti Palace, so justly celebrated for the wondrous gems of art that adorn its walls. Having been a familiar visitor to the palace, and feeling somewhat in a passive listless mood my eye caught sight of an artist in an inner room whose quiet, earnest occupation immediately fixed my attention. She had planted herself before a picture which, by some strange oversight, I had carcely ever previously noticed. It was rather small in size and quiet in coloring, and represented ideally the countenance of our blessed Lord. A look of deep, unspeakable sadness sat on the features, but the eye glistened with intensest yearning and compassion. After gazing for a while at this most moving picture, I began to watch the artist who was copying chapter of the Revelations, beginning it. I could not but admire the care and patience she displayed in adding touch to touch with such a watchful, earnest, What a difference between a hymn loving purpose, ever turning her eyes to the original, and absorbed in the task of endeavoring to reproduce, as faithfully as in her lay, a likeness of its loveliness. the sensuous and mawkish doggerals A train of thought was awaked in me as I watched her. Not in this manner, but in another and nobler way, am I too called on to labor to produce a likeness of my blessed Lord. Not in lines and colors on a canvas, but in the lineaments and features of my character, is my own soul to be conformed to the reality of my Saviour's living self. Shall I ever succeed unless animated by a spirit of deepest love and admiration? Can I become like him unless I be much with him, gazing on his glory and beauty who is the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely? Should I not ever compare myself with his bright example, and strive earnestly to be in all things as he was? The copy this artist will produce will, after all, be valueless compared with the priceless original; but to those who cannot see that original it will convey some faint idea of what its beauty is. So to the world that sees not Christ, knows him not, and cares not for him- to that world am I called upon to be a revelation of him, so that in me they may see a witness, faint and far off though it be, to the glory of the only begotten Son of the Father full of grace and truth. Fill me with Thy love, O Christ! May I ever dwell in heart with thee, till, when thou shalt appear, I shall be altogether like thee when I shall see thee as thou art. -Evangelical Christendom.

it. Fretting is all time wasted on the

Powerful Preaching,

BY REV. E. PAXTON HOOD, LONDON

road.

may tell you.'

"What is it?"

She gave a quick turn in his direction, put a letter into his hand, said, · Read it, please,' and buried her tace in the sofa-cushion.

Dr. Ritchie read as follows :

" MY DARLING LITTLE LEENA, "I have something to say to you,

which perhaps at the first moment may trouble your little heart, though I think it will not do so long. I am quite sure, however, my sweet one, that you will not only rejoice with and for me, but will in time learn to see that, apart 'He must-of course-he must judge from any considerations of my happiness, it is by far the best thing that could possibly happen to you all. Even if you did not, you would still be glad for me-for you are trained in unselfishness so like your precious mother.

" I do not know, my darling, whether the possibility has ever even occurred to you, that I could or might marry again. You do not yet know much of life, and you are very young and simple, but such an idea may have struck you as a bare possibility, and may even have struck you in connection with our but it is a very, very difficult letter to dear friend, Mrs. Dodson.

. Your father must decide for himself. You and I cannot judge for him.'

' No-oh, I don't mean exactly in that way,' she said, rather hurriedly. for himself-and he does it as kindly and tenderly-as-as can be.'

She broke into two short sobs. Dr. Ritchie had not often been nearer saying words which he would have bad to regret afterwards. Neither by nature nor training was he given to hasty speech ; but he could not trust himself at this moment, and he kept silence. "I did not mean in that way,' she repeated, more calmly again. 'I meant -about my answer. Papa seems so anxious, I must not keep him waiting,

hard to keep down the wrong thoughts.' "But they have to be kept down," Dr. Ritchie said.

'Yes-they have to be,'she repeated. It must be-I must conquer. But sometimes it all comes over me in one moment, like a great wave, and I don't "The end of all things is at hand; be know how to bear it, and I feel then as if I could not send the letter. I don't know which is the real feeling, that or There was no action at all, or only a the other. I do want him to be happy. If only it need not have been in this way ! Shall I go on feeling always so? 'No-not always, Leena. But I am afraid you have a little battling to go incessant pain. As he went on, through.'

'It is always battling,' said Kathleen. falling through the window of the old 'As soon as one fight is over another begins. I am so tired of it all.'

charmed and fascinated his hearers one 'I shall send Hardwicke to you after another; the whole place seemed

with a cup of coffee,' said Dr. Ritchie ; as if beneath a great spell. As he 'and you are to see no one else until talked about "the end," the spell upon you teel better. I will give orders to the people seemed to begin to work write. I almost thought at first that I that effect. Lady Catherine will itself out into an awful fearful restless-'If not, the thought will at first could not, only I must. I was a whole possibly call to ask how you are in the ness; first one, than another, rose from

pressive looking man, one whose presence compelled you to look at him In due course he announced his text sober and watch," etc. His voice was not shattering, but thin and weak.

kind of nervous twitching of the fingers; more especially as the hand moved and rested upon the lower part of the back, where the speaker was suffering almost beneath the deepening evening shades chapel, his voice first chained and then

A more jubilant spirit breaks out in that glorious paraphrase of the seventh with' ' Who are these in bright array?' like this, so redolent of the spirit and language of God's Word, and many of that are flooding our Sunday-Schools and prayer-meetings ! Montgomery's rich and devout melodies will be sung with delight when much of the pious tra-h of the present day has gone the way of 'Shoo-fly' and Pinafore.'

Richard Baxter attained to such heights of seraphic feeling in his Saints' Everlasting Rest' (a book too much neglected now), that I have often wondered that he has left us only one hymn. It is the one which he entitled . The Covenant and Confidence of Faith;' in our modern books it commences with the words, 'Lord, it belongs not to my care.' The closing verse often occurs to me when I am puzzling myself over the, mystery which clothes all the scriptural descriptions of heaven.

,' My knowledge of that life is small, The eye of faith is dim ; But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,

And I shall be like him." Baxter is not the only hymnist who