

Sunday Reading.

For the Christian Messenger. The Storm.

FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT.

Dark night has come to chase away, The bright and glorious light of day, And rosy clouds to deepening gray, Are changing fast.

And then, in a few words, she told of the death of a son, a promising lad after an illness of only a few hours, and concluded by saying:

Oh, if I had only known he might die, how differently I would have trained him! He received no religious education. I have been so absorbed in gaining the meat that perisheth that I have neglected the more important eternal things. Oh, if I had only known!

This experience speaks for itself. We need add but a word of warning to all who have in their hands the training and welfare of young, immortal souls. Oh, see to it, dear friends, that your children are early taught the way of life through Jesus, the only Savior. Seek first the riches of that kingdom above for yourself and them, and God will provide for the meaner things of this earthly life.

The Pump at Cologne.

I was in Cologne on a rainy day, and I was looking out for similes and metaphors, as I generally am, but I had nothing on earth to look at in the square of the city but an old pump, and what kind of a simile I could make out of it I could not tell.

Approved Remedies for Everyday Maladies.

For a Fit of Passion: Walk out in the open air; you may speak your mind to the winds without hurting anyone or proclaiming yourself a simpleton. For a Fit of Idleness: Count the tickings of a clock; do this for one hour, and you will be glad to pull off your coat for the next, and work like a negro.

If I had known.

Not long since we met a lady whose sad face told the story of great mental suffering. Entering into conversation with her, we found her bowed down beneath the weight of a sorrow from which there seemed to be no relief. She said: The Lord has laid his hand heavily upon me. He has taken from me the light of my eyes and the staff of my old age.

Sermon.

The Resurrection of Christ.

A SERMON PREACHED IN LEINSTER STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, ST. JOHN, N. B., ON SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 25TH, 1883.

By Rev. J. F. Bartlett.

[Reported for the Christian Messenger.] "He is not here; for He is risen. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

Dark indeed were the hours immediately succeeding the tragedy enacted on Calvary. As when the cheerful sun is lost behind the tempest cloud, sending a thrill of gloom o'er all the land, so set the sun of Israel's hope behind the shadow of the malefactor's cross. As when the gentle twilight settles over the village, causing familiar objects to become less discernible, until the deepening shades of night envelope all things with a sable curtain, so, to the lingering gaze of those who watched the helpless agony of Him they loved, the little day of brightness and hope which had given to them the promise of speedy victory through the Messiah was fading away before the blackening clouds, and when the sufferer's dying utterance, "It is finished," declared, for the time at least Satan had conquered, then shut down the flood gates of night upon the devoted disciples, and with aching hearts and scattered spirits did they return to their now desolate homes.

They had waited at that cross of suffering as one watches by the dying bed of a loved one, knowing that the messenger will not long delay his coming, and yet upborne by that spirit of hope that will not die until the pulse has ceased its beating, and suspense becomes a certainty. They hoped, perchance, that God would interfere before the end would come, and thus the purposes of wicked men be brought to nought. They heard this lowly sufferer declare when led to trial, that only a word from Him would bring more than ten legions of the heavenly host to give release from their cruel hand; and, doubtless, up to the very end they dared to hope that Divine interposition would come to hinder the end that seemed now so near.

But when the Son of Man no longer breathed, when they beheld the closing eyes and drooping head, saw the sun hide his face, felt the quaking of the earth and heard the rending of the rocks, then their weak hearts, unequal to the strain, gave way, and hope with in them lay as dead as the form of Him they had left hanging upon the cross.

It has ever been the glory of woman that in the hour of deepest trial she is the last to forsake those she loves. Seating themselves at a convenient distance from the body of their Lord, after the multitude had forsaken the place, the two Marys remained to mark the place of the Saviour's burial. For they purposed, in their faithful hearts to return, after the Jewish Sabbath should end with spices for a further service of love upon the body of their benefactor, and when the grey light in the East heralded the speedy coming of the day, they are at the city gates waiting entrance upon their mission of love. Fancy, my brethren, the sight of this little band of devoted women groping their way through the uncertain light of that first Easter morning, wondering as they journeyed on who should roll away the ponderous stone from the door of the sepulchre. But when they reached the spot, early as they were, another presence had been before them; the stone was rolled away, the door was open, and before them, in white raiment, sat the messenger of God, who had waited for their coming, and before their wondering eyes can fully comprehend the scene, their ears are saluted with words that still their fears and fill their hearts with new-born life and hopes: "Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen. Come see the place where the Lord lay."

That was the happiest day, that the most glorious event this earth had ever seen. Upon it depended the fulfillment of Divine prophecy; out of it, it at all, must rise the sun whose beams should quicken into heavenly life and light the dead buried, spiritual peace of an apostate race. Had Christ not risen no humanly ought can picture the con-

sequence; no human tongue express the result of Calvary's tragedy upon the destiny of man. Heaven would have been lost, peace of soul sought in vain, and eternal night have been the undisputed heritage of every member of Adam's race. But what might have been, and what man deserved, God did not suffer to be, and we are met together this glad Easter morning to thank the Giver of all our joys that the jaws of death were not powerful enough to hold against His will, Him whom now we hail as the world's Redeemer.

I shall not attempt to say anything this morning which shall be especially worthy your hearing, for I am not in a condition of body or mind to give to this transcendent theme the thought which it deserves, but if I shall be able to speak any word, giving comfort to another's heart, or helping a fellow-pilgrim to love more tenderly the risen Saviour, the hour will not be spent in vain.

I have selected for your contemplation the words spoken by the angel to the women at the Saviour's empty tomb: "He is not here, for He is risen. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." I shall divide the Scripture into two parts, making each the basis of a separate thought, both practical and helpful.

1st. "He is not here, for He is risen." When, forty days after the resurrection, the Saviour was parted from the view of His disciples, the record declares that he was taken up, and that clouds received Him out of their sight, and they were not left in doubt as to the direction Jesus had taken. He had ascended into heaven, His former dwelling-place, and they were told by the heavenly visitants that from above, from the upper air, they might expect to see Him when he returned in the clouds of heaven. Whenever in after days these humble men thought of Him now absent in the flesh, instinctively they turned their faces upwards, and not far over the plains of Palestine, as they had been wont to do in the days of His earthly ministry.

And this is the truth I would urge every disciple of Christ to seek to realize. The days of his Judean and Galilean ministry are now long past; the hours of thankless toil, of hunger, thirst, prayer, ingratitude, have passed away. Gethsemane's struggles, Pilate's judgment hall, Calvary's agony, the sleep of death, will never more be repeated. Are you seeking for the living among the dead? "He is not here, for He is risen." The Christian of to-day must walk by faith, and not by fleshly sight. This Easter morning, my brethren, think not of a crucified, dead and buried Saviour, but of a risen Lord; and when we seek the strength and inspiration in the work committed to our hands, and for light in seasons of gloom, we shall find it not by viewing the earthly spots hallowed by the footsteps of Him we love, not even by journeying to the tomb of Joseph, but rather by looking toward the place of His ascension, and with the eye of an enlightened faith beholding the conqueror of death, and the holder of all our joys, not dead but living, glorified, administering the mighty affairs of the universe. True, he is here by His Spirit in the hearts of His disciples, and, in this sense, we know His blessed presence, but He who died and rose again, He, the God-man, He, in whose hands and feet may still be seen the marks of the cruel nails, He, whom those men of Galilee saw taken up into the clouds of heaven, is still up there at the right hand of the Father, preparing for such of us as watch for His appearing, a place among the many mansions of His Father.

Our lot for a time is cast among earthly scenes, the work of fitting the souls of men for another and an eternal state through the Spirit's power; and in the use of human instrumentalities is, so far as its visible activities are concerned, an earthly work, but do not forget, my brethren, that this work, though executed on the earth, is superintended from above, and only as the eye of the soul is steadily fixed on Him who sits upon the mercy seat in the new Jerusalem, can the power of sin be held in check, and the army of King Emmanuel hold its steady onward way. In your hours of perplexity, then, look not into the bowels of the earth, nor yet into the sin-clouded atmosphere of

earthly surroundings, but let your souls breathe another air, drawing its sustenance from the purity that surrounds the person of the risen Redeemer; then will the way seem plain again, and the soul filled with new life, and possessed of a clearer vision, is better fitted to help the feet of a blind brother into the ways whose path is narrow, but whose end is heaven.

"We need no change of sphere To view the heavenly sight, or hear The songs which angels sing. The hand Which gently pressed the sightless orbs while Giving them sight, a world of beauty, and the friendly smile Can cause our eyes to see the better land."

"We need no wings To soar aloft to realms of higher things, But only feet which walk in paths of peace Guided by Him, whose voice Greeted every ear, makes every heart rejoice, Saying arise and walk where sorrows cease."

"Our Saviour caught His Father's word, And men of old, dreaming and walking, heard The breathings of a world we cannot reach. They mounted to the skies, And read deep mysteries While yet on earth; they placed a ladder there Like Jacob's, that each road should lead The soul, by prayer outspoken, by word and deed To heights of clearer, purer air."

Let us rejoice this resurrection morning in one no longer held by the bands of death, but who, risen, glorified, loving, to-day is beckoning to His warmly beating heart all such as feel the need of an eternal Friend and Saviour. "He is not here, for He is risen." But there were other words spoken by the angel that Easter morning, words out of which I think may be extracted a truth, adding comfort and peace of mind. "He is not here, for He is risen," said the angelic visitor.

2nd. "Come see the place where the Lord lay." Before the light of Christianity came to shed its beneficent ray upon the tomb, man's greatest foe was death. Impenetrable, silent gloom surrounded the place into which thousands daily were hastening. "If a man die shall he live again?" was the mournful cry echoed and re-echoed wherever man was found; but no response was heard save the reverberation from the heart that asked the question. Men sought to catch some gleam of light amid the mysterious solemnities surrounding the moment when the heart ceased its motion, and the life was gone. But all in vain; and again, when standing by the open grave, peering into its gloomy depths, if haply they might read some sign to correspond to the soul's longing for another life, they were forced to turn away, not absolutely hopeless it is true, but haunted by that dim, gaunt phantom—uncertainty—whose daily presence extracted much of the sweet from human life, and made existence less a blessing than it was designed to be. Sayers and philosophers spent all their days, from early manhood to hoary age, in seeking to penetrate the veil that intervenes between the grave and that which lies beyond, and then, when the springs of life were dried up, and the golden chord was loosened, they laid down to rest, having no certain assurance of waking again to consciousness. It is not strange life was deemed a curse, and that men sought to extract from it all the sensual enjoyment that was possible. It is not strange that death was a dreaded foe, and the grave a place of rayless gloom. For if this poor life is all, if all of man were extinguished when the warm blood ceases to flow through its appointed channels, if the clouds of earth hid forever from view that which makes man higher than the brute, then indeed were death a foe to be beaten off and fought to the bitter end.

But, thank God! the mystery has been revealed, the question of the ages has been answered, and clear as noon-day light is the road that leads from the graves of earth into that which lies beyond. Come, my friends, come this Easter morning, while the birds are singing, and the sun shining, and the Christian world is rejoicing, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." And, if to you His name is precious, behold in that tomb not the extinguishment of all your hopes, but the burial place of your fears; not the end of all that makes you happy, but rather the depository for every earthly ill; not a prison-house for your impatient spirit, but the friendly gateway through whose narrow portals you shall enter into the regions of the blessed, into the companionship of Him who became the first fruits of them that slept. Death hath been robbed of its sting, and the

grave, through the might of the risen One, has been forever stripped of victory.

You who have followed the form of a loved one to its silent resting-place in the city of the dead, turn ever in fond remembrance to the narrow mound under which repose the ashes of the loved, and you sometimes think of the presence so sadly missed as sleeping in the embrace of mother earth. But it is not so, my brethren, for since that first blessed Easter morning the earth has not been strong enough to claim the immortal spirit. That which you loved, and which loved you, is not in yonder cemetery, but in a state of conscious life, waiting the hour when the trump of God shall unite the living soul to the resurrection of the body, calling such as look for His appearing into unalloyed and eternal satisfaction. When the spring flowers come forth from the melting snows of Winter, and you visit the place where you last saw the physical form of the departed one, fancy while you stand with bowed head and gently falling tears, that you hear from out the stillness the voice of God's unseen messenger saying in tones of authority and of comfort: "The loved one is not here, for He is risen; thou art looking upon the place where his body lay. The casket only is here; the precious gem is up above. Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

The grave can never be a bed of thorns to Him who glories in the story of the resurrection, and who has appropriated to himself, through repentance and faith, the life-giving waters which flow therefrom. Bethlehem, through Gethsemane and Calvary, and finally, after being hidden for a moment, burst forth from the door of Joseph's tomb.

Let songs of gratitude, swelling hearts of praise, and importunate prayers, for clearer light and greater faith, consume to-day the hours of those who glory in a risen Saviour.

And to you, my friends, who this morning can make no Easter music in your heart, may there come such a revelation of your great need of the risen Redeemer, that upon you also may be bestowed the eternal and inestimable blessings which cluster around the fact of Christ's resurrection from the dead. Amen.

Correspondence.

Luthardt's Apologetical Discourses.

Translated from the German by Prof. D. M. Welton.

NINTH DISCOURSE.

Christianity in History.

IV.

The course of Christianity in history is one of victory. The course of Christianity however is the course of Jesus Christ. When we speak of Christianity we mean Jesus Christ; for all depends on him. And so Christianity means that we bow before Christ and give him the honor as the one and eternal Saviour. But Christianity is a power, not only in an external sense, but in an internal sense as well. Not only the religions of the nations but the entire intellectual life of mankind is controlled and renewed by it. With Christianity began a new era for the human mind and for the entire moral and social life of mankind.

Christianity brought in the age of humanity. It is only since then that mankind have been regarded as one great family. Since then only has the right of human personality been acknowledged. What are called the rights of man is the fruit of Christianity. It has not changed the external arrangements of society, it has not disturbed rights and laws, customs and ranks, &c.; but to all these relations in life it has brought a new spirit. It has not immediately abolished slavery, but it has taught us to acknowledge in the slave a man, the Christian brother, and has hereby broken the inner power of this objectionable institution. It has raised woman from a position of contempt to one of dignity and influence. It has made love, which, at its entrance into the world, as Montesquieu says, only still existed in form, to be the noblest and tenderest power in the moral and spiritual life of man. It has created for the family a new Christian life, possessing a heartiness, sincerity and freedom such as was not previously known or thought to be possible. Only since Christianity does neighborly love exist in the true sense of the word. Christianity brought humanitarianism into the world and taught the virtue of