

"At Even, or at the Cock-Crowing, or in the Morning."

If the Lord should come in the morning As I went about my work— The little things and the quiet things That a servant cannot shirk, Though nobody ever sees them, And only the dear Lord cares That they always are done in the light of the sun— Would he take me unawares? If my Lord should come at noonday, The time of the dust and heat, When the glare is white and the air is still, And the hoof-beats sound in the street; If my dear Lord came at noonday, And smiled in my tired eyes, Would it not be sweet his look to meet? Would he take me by surprise? If the Lord came hither at evening, In the fragrant dew and dusk, When the world drops off its mantle Of daylight like a husk, And flowers in wonderful beauty, And we fold our hands and rest, Would his touch of my hand, his low command, Bring me unhopd for zest? Why do I ask and question? He is ever coming to me Morning and noon and evening, If I have but eyes to see And the daily load grows lighter, The daily cares grow sweet; The Master is near, the Master is here, I have only to sit at his feet —The British Weekly.

The Great Battle.

These are times of war. Not the Cuban War; not the Spanish War; not the war in the Philippines; not the South African War. All these are only incidental.

The great battle between righteousness and iniquity is on now as never before. The powers of truth and right, under the leadership of King Emanuel, are assailing oppression and wrong. On the other hand, organized iniquity is making war upon all the strongholds of law, order, and personal piety with a seductiveness, persistency, and audacity that in many places bids fair to sweep everything before it. The home is invaded, the Sabbath is desecrated, the church is prostituted, laws enacted for the defense of the home and the protection of time-honored Christian institutions are trampled upon, courts are manipulated, witnesses are suborned, officers are bribed or browbeaten, and the souls loyal to truth and right are awed into silence or discouraged into comparative inaction.

Higher Criticism, so-called, has shaken the faith of many in the Bible. Unbelief is foisting its teachings upon a credulous public in the form of Christian Science, spiritualism, and Doweisim, thereby obscuring the spiritual vision of many who were once the vigorous defenders of the faith.

Truly "the God of this world hath blinded their eyes." Truly "Satan hath been loosed for a season." Seemingly, the more vigorous and determined the efforts of the Christian hosts to take the world for Christ, the more aggressive becomes the arch enemy who leads the powers of darkness. To-day through partisan strife in politics, through ambition for office, through the conflict between capital and labor, through the organization of trusts, through the monopoly of the necessities of life, through taking advantage of that thirst for wealth and power which leads many otherwise well-meaning, prominent church members into being stockholders in the great corporations which for the sake of "dividends" desecrate God's sacred day, and grind and oppress the laborer in his wages, through the saloon, the brothel, and the gambling den, through the Sunday newspaper, the bucket-shop, the novel, the dance, and the progressive euchre infatuation, through all these and many other devices, the devil seems to occupy every vantage position on the highway to eternal life, and disputes with Satanic tenacity the advance of the army that battles for spiritual emancipation and righteousness.

What is to be done? Ground arms and surrender to the powers of diabolus? Never! The Almighty God is on the throne of universal empire. His all-seeing eye serenely surveys the whole line of battle. His son, Jesus Christ, under the Father's direction, leads the hosts of the kingdom of heaven. The Holy Spirit inspires the individual hearts of the men and women who make up the army on whose blood-stained banner is emblazoned the words, "The world for Jesus." The advance of this army may be slow; at times there may seemingly be a halt; but from the day the angels said, "He is not here; he is risen," this army has never sounded a retreat. The darkest day it has ever seen was but a halt necessary to the bringing up of supplies, or the readjusting of the lines. Even to-day, aggressive and powerful as the hosts of darkness may seem, the army of the Lord is moving onward more triumphantly than ever before. Its lines

now span the continents and embrace the islands of the sea. When its division and corps commanders, under the mighty Captain of our salvation, recently met in a great council of war in New York City, they came from a quarter of the earth. And what was their unanimous report? The onward movement of every one of their commands. In spite of all opposition, Christianity is conquering the world. Courage, then, faint-hearted. The battle is on; the gospel's bugle-blast is heard throughout the world; perpetual victory perches upon the banners of the Most High all the time, whether we can see it or not.

For many of us the day of retirement from active service draws nigh. If faithful till then, the order to muster us out and give us an honorable discharge that will admit us into his everlasting kingdom on high will be issued by our great Commander. "And the ransom of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—The Telescope.

The Day of Small Things.

Is the good within thee small? Despise it not. God will not break the bruise I reed nor quench the smoking flax. The flickering jet of light within thee may be the beginning of everlasting life and glory. Is the voice within calling to a better life a still, small voice? Do not despise it. It is the voice of God. Is the inclination within thy heart toward God and holiness a feeble inclination, only a faint desire? Despise it not. It is the work of God.

Dr. Chalmers once invited all those who had no desire to become Christians during a certain revival of religion to come to his house for conversation. Several young men came, indicating by this act that they had no intention and no desire to be converted. But Dr. Chalmers knew that their coming indicated that they were not so utterly destitute of religious impressions and interest as they supposed. After a short conversation and an earnest prayer he dismissed them with words like these; "A slender thread of gold is now let down from heaven before every one of you. It is so small that you cannot see it, and so slender that you may brush it away with your hand if you will. But do not despise it, I beseech you. If you lay hold upon it and cling to it, it will grow stronger and stronger until it shall draw your souls to heaven."

Is the amount of good which you can do small? Have you but little strength? Do not despise it. Out of that feebleness great results may flow. A Christian gentleman once invited a young man whom he met on the street to go to prayer meeting. He went and became interested, and went again. He was soon converted, and then a desire to do good was born in him. He went to college, graduated, and passed through a theological seminary. He became a minister, and has now been preaching the Gospel for more than twenty years. The results of that simple invitation can never be calculated or tabulated. They are lasting as eternity. When Martin Luther began to proclaim his doctrines he had no thought of making a stir in the world. When John Wesley began to preach the doctrines of the spiritual life he had no expectation of becoming a power in the world. He felt that God had laid a truth on his heart, and it was his duty to tell it. In doing this little thing he was setting in motion a tremendous force, which has never ceased to operate. It is God that giveth the increase. Plant the seed, though it be small as a grain of mustard seed.

The more one exercises the gift of God which is in him, the more it will increase. It may be small at first, but it will be mighty at last. The grain of mustard seed will become a tree. Neglect not the gift which is in thee. God is able to do wonderful things with feeble instruments. From the smallest beginnings the greatest issues sometimes proceed.

"A little spring has lost its way Amid the grass and fern; A passing stranger scooped a well, Where weary men might turn; He walled it in, and hung with care A ladle at its brink. He thought not of the deed he did, But judged that toil might drink. He passed again, and lo, the well, By summer never dried, Had cooled ten thousand parched tongues, And saved a life beside." Christian Advocate.

The Man of God.

The man of God believes in God. He believes that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. This belief is a profound conviction which controls his entire life. His faith in God is so strong that he trusts in Him implicitly at all times. He is sure that God is near, that He cares for His people, that He

will never leave them nor forsake them, and this assurance is an anchor which holds his soul steadfast and unmovable. He belongs to God. He recognizes the sovereign right of Jehovah in all his talents, all his time, all his service. He is not his own master. He calls not man master. He serves no party. He is not subservient. He is an independent and free man. He has surrendered himself to Him to whom he rightfully belongs, and sealed that covenant by a solemn vow. His soul and body, his will and affections, his possessions and life are all the Lord's. He is a man of God.

He is the servant of God. He is not ashamed to bear the yoke and acknowledge that he is not his own master. Freedom does not consist in the absence of all sovereignty and dominion, but in cheerful submission to rightful authority. No man is capable of absolute self-mastery. No one could be safe in his own hands. Mr. D. L. Moody often declared that if the Almighty should offer him the privilege of having his own way, he would unhesitatingly decline it in favor of God's way; "for" said he, "His way is infinitely better than my way." One of the greatest of modern preachers once said, "It seems good to have one's own way; but there is one thing better still: that is, not to have one's own way." The man of God is the servant of God, not by constraint, but willingly. The song of his heart is: "Thy will delight Thy face to see, And serve the cause of such a Friend."

The man of God bears His image. He is like God. Born again by the Holy Ghost, he is a new creature. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." He is a spiritual man. His will, his conscience, his affections, his mental powers are no longer of the earth earthly. Love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, patience, godliness, and fidelity characterize his spirit. He not only seeks to know and do the will of God, but the Spirit of God dwells in him, moving him towards holy things. He walks with God, and whatever he does is done for the glory of God.

The man of God is a good man, a strong man, a happy man, a useful man. He is not less manly by being a man of God. His mental faculties lose none of their vigor and alertness, his courage is not diminished, his self-respect is not destroyed. He has more self respect, because he knows himself to be a nobler man. He has more courage, because he has nothing to fear. His faculties are more vigorous, because they are in contact with the infinite Mind. His life is more beautiful, because God dwells in him, and he in God.

The Standard of Measurement

Under the above caption, there appears an editorial in the Baltimore Christian Advocate that may be read with profit. The points are well taken, and the item is given, not that we know any one in particular that it will fit or fit, but because it abounds in good, practical suggestions. The concluding paragraph merits special consideration:

Often have we heard a brother on the conference floor speak, at least in the great, "we ling words of variety," in detailing the achievements of the year. The pious phrase, "To the Lord be all the glory," all conceals the underlying human conceit. The spirit of "what a great boy am I?" is not by any means confined to little Jack Horner. We have also heard some wonderful figures read to substantiate these glowing reports, and we knew at the time that hundreds of our laity would form their opinions of these figures. But the "statistic" estimate can by no means be relied on as the true one, for figures can be so juggled as to be false as Baron Munchausen's wildest tale. Five hundred additions may be reported which, in fact, may not be worth as much spiritually, and, indeed, in every other way, as five additions which some other brother may report with less noise. "Oat in full, bishop," may sound melodious as a financial report, but may also mean that the tone of the church has been decidedly lowered by the means reported to that such a report may be made. Some reports (to those who know) have a decided aroma of fried oysters, strawberries, and other edibles usually dispensed at a church festival, that "the kingdom may come." In the background of other reports there moves a fantastic procession of "poverty socials," "old maid auctions," "jiliputian weddings," "church theatricals," etc., ad nauseam.

An estimate based solely on number of members received or number of dollars raised is a wrong estimate. While numerical strength and a sound financial condition are important factors in church work, the true standard is the standard of "grace and knowledge." Has the preacher himself grown in the "grace of God" and

is the "knowledge of Christ" is the important question. Have the people committed to his pastoral care grown in the same "grace" and in the same "knowledge" is an equally important question. May the year now closing be a glorious year measured by this standard!

Are You Happy?

Old Mr. Rothschild, who was supposed to be the richest man in the world, was once asked this simple question: "Are you happy?" "Happy," he answered, "when just as you are going to dinner, you have a letter placed in your hand saying, 'If you don't lend me five hundred pounds, I will blow your brains out!' Happy, when you have to sleep with pillows under pillow? No, indeed! I am not happy!"

Mr. Astor, another very rich man, was once asked the same question. "Ah!" he answered. "I must leave it all when I die. It won't put off sickness; it won't buy off sorrow; it won't buy off death." And so, it was plain to see, he was not happy. But I went once to see a poor, lame and aged woman by the name of Lydia Jones. She lived in one small room, and earned a part of her scanty living by knitting; for the rest she had to depend upon the kindness of others. I asked her this same question: "Lydia, are you happy?" "Happy!" she answered with a beaming face; "I am just as full as I can be. I don't believe I could hold another drop of joy." "But why?" I asked. "You are sick and alone, and have almost nothing to live upon." "But have you never read," said she, pointing to the Bible, "all things are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's?" And again, "Ask and receive, that your joy may be full."—Selected.

Earnestness.

Give us such earnestness and enthusiasm, even though at times they overlap the bounds of a strict propriety, rather than the coldness of apathy and the rigidity of insensibility. In the House of Lords culture and self-control are supposed to demand reticence and restraint, so that it is deemed coarse and vulgar for strong feeling to find vent in speech. The church is coming to be too much pervaded with like notions, and strong emotions are repressed and suppressed as out of fashion. Every vital spiritual interest suffers thereby. We need emotion—overmastering feeling, and the cultivation of this philosophy of no feeling is fatal to even a holy vitality. Why should we be astounded to have or to show deep feeling? The Master "wept" and "being in great agony, sweat, as it were, great drops of blood!" "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." Men may sneer at it as fanaticism, but it is the only fit frame in which to think of, or to deal with, eternal interests and issues. Instead of avoiding we may well covet that passion for souls that beseeches God night and day with prayers, and entreats men night and day with tears—that bursts out in moving appeals—that cannot keep silence, mind rules of rhetoric, or be kept back by formal proprieties. Equity must not be lost in etiquette, nor Divine passion smothered by worldly fashion. Some men and some churches have so lost heat that they are frozen solid.—Dr. A. T. Pierson.

Good Giving.

Cornelius was one of the best givers the world has ever known. And how do we know? Because history has it that his alms came up "for a memorial before God." His gifts were like incense, and God was pleased to have their fragrance linger about the throne.

But we can make up our minds that the gift which is dropped so that it is sure to jingle, or folded so it will look like two, will never come up for a memorial before God. Spectacular giving lacks fragrance. And so does the sort which is preceded by the mental ejaculation, "I suppose I've got to!" or, "Like as not the treasurer will run off with it!" The modest, cheerful gift is the one which comes up as a memorial before God, and it is always big enough to look well alongside of the income.

Then Cornelius prayed while he gave. When he contributed a dollar to foreign missions he did not bid it a sorrowful farewell, but chased it with a helpful prayer into the jungle. He put his prayers and his alms into the same envelope—mixed 'em all up, so that the memorial which came up from Cornelius to bless heaven was made up of two parts—praying and giving.

Cornelius! Cornelius! Would that in this matter we were all like thee!—The Church Economist.

To Cure Low Spirits.

Take one ounce of the seeds of resolution, properly mixed with the oil of good conscience; infuse into it a large spoonful of the balsam of patience. Distil carefully a composing plant called "others' woes," which you will find in every part of the garden of life growing under the broad leaves of disguise Gather a handful of the blossoms of hope, weave them properly with a syrup made of the balm of providence; and if you can get any of the seeds of true friendship you will then have the most valuable medicine that can be administered. But you must be careful to get the seeds of true friendship, as there is a weed which resembles it, called self-interest, which will spoil the whole composition. These ingredients, well mixed and faithfully taken, soon complete the cure.—Selected.

A white rag retains the stains of the colored matters raised through it. So a mind, originally pure, may be permanently soiled by unsavory conversation, books "off color," and the like, the tone of which is almost unconsciously imparted to the soul by the thoughts which drip through it, even though we do not wish to retain them. I have observed that even matter which itself seems colorless will stain the saine. There is a subtle analin property in the fluid which the eye does not detect until it has come in contact with the fabric. Thus, some books are without any especially bad passages, and no praise of wrong. Yet the subtle character of the writer works through his words, and damages the pure white of the young reader's mind.—J. M. Ludlow.

One of the speakers at the great Missionary Conference told of a request which came from the natives for "preachers with hot hearts." Whether hot-hearted preachers are wanted everywhere or no, they are needed.

There is no policy like politeness, since a good manner often succeeds where the best tongue has failed.—Magool.

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