

God's Way.

Our way had been to smooth her upward road. Easing the pressure of each heavy load; Never to let her white hand know a soil, Never her back to feel the ache of toil.

Baffled Saints.

BY REV. W. C. MARTIN.

The world, always selfish and superficial, lauds and glorifies the successful man. Its great poems are of him. Its laurel is for his brow, and its homage is at his feet.

But if a true list were made of the names of the real heroes of the countries, of the men and women whose deeds and words are most glorious in the light of events long subsequent to their lives, the list would contain the names of many more defeated than successful ones.

The first men born into the world were Cain and Abel. Cain killed Abel. Cain built cities, while Abel's body rotted in the first human grave.

Of the noblest and best men in Israel, God's chosen nation, among whom, of all people on earth, true worth might expect due honor, we read: "They were stoned, they were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth."

Never ("I speak as a man") was there a more pitiful failure, a life more utterly thrown away, a more lamentable spectacle of a baffled and fallen reformer than Jesus, as men viewed it. That bleeding, pain-convulsed form upon the central cross of Calvary, on that dark April day of so long ago, was all that was left of a "kingdom" that he had attempted to found.

Ah, how tragic, how shocking is the world's treatment of her noblest men and women! Bunyan was jailed; Cromwell's dead body was torn from the coffin and his head stuck upon a pole in derision; Huss was burned to death, as were Ridley and Latimer and Cranmer and Jerome of Prague, and many, many others.

The mingled feelings of gratification which stir their soul at our coming, abide to season with cheer the hours which apart from such ministry would be, indeed, hard to bear. Reverence for age is commendable, and yet this might not furnish motive for all the thoughtful and tender ministry which is certainly expected of us.

Honor and praise and glory to the baffled saints; to those whose great plans for society's betterment have died with them; to those whose sublime and beneficent ideas for the world's regeneration have been mill-stones about their necks in the restless sea of humanity; to those men who have become bankrupt and ruined rather than take dishonest advantage of others; to those women who have kept themselves pure while starvation shriveled their vitals, and have perished rather than fall; to all who have attempted large things for the world and failed, and to all who have maintained a firm stand for righteousness and truth and God, and have been borne down and carried away as with a flood—all honor to them, and praise and glory!

And let us give honor to the same class living among us to-day. Many of them are obscure and their martyrdom hardly known; but it is as real and pitiful as that of many in former days, whose stories we weep over. Let me describe a case in point.

A young woman of eighteen years was the daughter of a drinking man who had spent all he had. Her mother, a worthy and refined woman, had brought her up with noble ideals, but was now dead. This girl was of a very social nature, and had had many girl friends of good families, who loved her as she deserved. But now her wretched father had spent all, and the house was bare of furniture, and the young woman had only the meanness of clothes. She refused to forsake the miserable creature who should have been her protector, and had frequently to submit to the vilest insults from men brought to the house by him for the purpose of turning her over to their lust to get money for drink.

Ah, there are many such to-day in low life and in high—worthy successors of the long and glorious line of martyrs. All honor to them. "Mine eyes are upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me." "I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is; and thou holdest forth my name and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth."

Journal and Messenger.

Ministry to the Aged

There are many aged on the pilgrim way of life, who are waiting for the helpful ministries of to-day. Yesterday their companionship was complete, but the years have broken the charmed circle, and they face a new world, which too often looks askance with unfeeling eye. In retrospect they mark with emotions of sadness the comradeship lost by the way, and go forth with souls oppressed by smothered sighs, which they are timorous of liberating. We do not always rightly measure our share of responsibility in making their last days bright. New days to them are unlike the old ones; and their dimmed vision often precludes a glimpse of the beautiful which we of perfect eye take for granted each day.

Those dear souls have been ministering angels of yesterday, and with good records they pursue their homeward way, are entitled to a loving ministry through word, and act and smile.

We cannot conceive of their appreciation of an hour spent with them, or of a kind word, or deed, which is vocal of interest and love.

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The recollection of the times when these or others in like limitations, touched our own life in past days with tender and inspiring benedictions, will often arouse us to be considerate, for their sakes of those with whom we have a chance meeting.

In the home those who must tarry yet a while should receive our warmest smile, and rest without a disturbing care. No hasty word, spoken by any

one should ever fall upon their ears; or any spirit of listlessness infer a lack of interest, while perhaps the oft-told chapter of another day is being recalled again. We who are strong should be willing to bear with patience the infirmities of the weak. When they have left us, we wish them back again and censure ourselves keenly for any lack of loving consideration for them as they sojourned.

The aged who meet us on the street or call at our door, are entitled to the kindest of consideration. Listen to their story. Sympathize with them, and when the occasion bespeaks it, let sympathy be expressed in material ways. Pick stones from their path, and when the staff upon which they have long leaned is broken, provide another which is stronger. When they halt extend a helping hand; when the way is lost by reason of the mists of evening, you who see with clearer eye, deem it an honor to point the way; and if necessity should require it go with them as guide and support, even until home is reached.

Let every ministry to those of riper years be given with a grace that shall not offend. Your ministry of love shall return. The violets you plant in the garden of another's life will return their fragrance upon the evening breeze; and the consciousness of having become a blessing, just in your way, to any, who late in the afternoon of life needed you, will be a compensation far in excess of any sacrifice your ministry may have entailed.—The Presbyterian.

Ministering to Christ.

BY AMOS R. WELLS.

Many delightful legends represent poor travelers begging alms or other aid, and when it is given, or refused, the beggar suddenly flashes out into the beauty and majesty of Christ, the divine Rewarder or Punisher. These stories, however, add nothing to Christ's simple statement that in every ministration to the needy we are ministering to Him. In a passage of marvelous power over human hearts, in words that would be the height of impudent blasphemy were not Christ divine. He sets before men as their loftiest motive for clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, comforting the desolate, the truth that these good deeds are actually done to Him.

The pathos of the thought is irresistible, when once we understand it. To realize that the strong Saviour, who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, is Himself none the less in need of ministrations! That He is hungry wherever one of His children is starving, that He wanders lonely in the person of every outcast, that He languishes in every prison cell. What religion other than Christianity has given us such a conception of God; and does not every heart at once respond to it as true?

But it is very hard to realize. When Christians come to realize it, they will transform the world in one burst of love and sorrow and repentance. Alas, for our sense-becclouded vision! If we could see Christ walking into our house, as He passed over that threshold at Bethany, how we would lavish our best upon Him, and long to have it better! Yet in the form of many a beggar we have verily turned Him from our doors.

Why does He not manifest Himself unmistakably? Why does He not clothe every poor man, every prisoner, every son of sorrow, sin and suffering with His own transfigured garments of light? Because He wants us to believe Him, in our hearts and not merely with our eyes. Because He wants us to walk by faith and not by sight. Because He wants us to live in the spirit, and so prepare ourselves for the spiritual world to come. Should He cheat us of that indispensable training in order to spare our imaginations and our faith a little exercise?

Does this teaching mean that we are to give to every beggar, regardless of whether the gift would do him harm or good? Of course not. It simply means that Christ is in him, that we are to recognize Christ's claim through him, and that we owe to that unworthy beggar whatever time, strength, money, love, may develop the Christ-spirit within him, may make him a happy, prosperous, pure man again. That is what Christ would do, and that is what we must do, ministering to Him, and in His stead and power.

Do we not all need to pray Miss Havergal's prayer?

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak In love's echoes of Thy tone; As Thou hast sought, so let me seek Thy erring child en, lost and lone. O lead me, Lord, that I may lead The wandering and the wavering feet; O feed me, Lord, that I may feed My hung-ring ones with manna sweet. O strengthen me that while I stand Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee, I may stretch out a loving hand To wrestlers with the troubled sea. SABBATH READING

Known for His Goodness.

There was an ancient Mystic whose biography is condensed into a sentence. All that we know of him is that "he walked with God," and then he was lost in the embrace of God. The Bible is a wonderful book in that it says so much in a fragmentary sentence. The gift of characterization is not a common one; it belongs to few. Whosoever wrote the little biography of Enoch was a genius in this respect. There were many things that could have been said of him. If the legends of him are true, he was a man of mark in secular life, but the thing of supreme importance about him was his pre-eminent piety. It cannot be said of all Christians that their chief distinction is their Christianity. Some are called shrewd business men, others are called intellectual, or worldly or selfish in other things. It is a worthy ambition to be known for moral and spiritual worth. The Bible puts the wreath upon the brow of goodness: it elevates the spiritual. Sometimes goodness is disesteemed in the world. Many have not eyes to see it or hearts to appreciate when it is seen. There are many noble lives spent without recognition or praise. The best people are often unknown. The true Israelite is hidden under some fig tree, unseen by man, though known to the observing Christ.

We believe our churches contain many Enochs to-day. It may suit blue-eyed misanthropes to depreciate modern piety, and to magnify the sordidness and hypocrisy of the churches, but no one who has an eye to see the beauty of faith and charity, can fail to discover them in a thousand places. This is not a glorification of all who confess Christ—this is not a declaration of universal perfection, but rather a needed recognition of the genuine piety and rare characters that may be found among Christian people to-day. There are many rare flowers growing in the garden of the Lord, though there may be thistles and weeds among them. We find them among the lowly in worldly station. There is much high living and lofty purpose among the undistinguished. We are too prone to general depreciation. For instance, it is too common to say severe things of the young people of the churches. It is a pity to withhold honor and admiration from those who are true and noble, because some yield to the seduction of a trivial and pleasure-seeking life. There are splendid exceptions, multitudes of them. Childhood and youth are not universally degenerate. The impulse that led to the writing of these lines was begotten by learning of the sacrifice and love of some of the lesser-known Christians whose service in the home and the church are sufficient to make the eyes of angels glisten with joy and to light up the face of God with a smile.—Baptist Commonwealth.

Christ Will Conquer.

The extent to which the principles and spirit of Christianity are inherent in our civil institutions far exceeds what one might suppose, looking merely at the superficial and temporary phases of political life.

These institutions, indeed, came into existence very largely as an expression, however incomplete at present, of the inculcations of Christianity. The splendid creation of Roman citizenship was providentially preparatory to social Christianity. The Roman empire fell only because the forces working to that end prevented more than a dim preception, before it was too late, of the new life that was beginning to work in the world; but there had been a truly wonderful preparation for the idea of brotherhood and the principle of responsibility, which make times so much more full of heavenly light than were the best days of Greece and Rome. And we need not fear that the "gold, silver, and precious stones" that have been built into the structure of society are going to be burned as were the "hay, wood, and stubble" propaedeutic (if you do not want to get out your dictionary, you may substitute preliminary) institutions. Class selfishness, personal greed, a shoddy type of statemanship, may produce temporary ills as affecting both institutions and society in general, and we may fitly cry out against such things, but nevertheless the foundations of God stand fast, and the deep heart of man may be depended upon never to let go the best things that his hands have once gripped.

More than would ofttimes appear, the spirit of Christ, the world's Hope, works amid the clatter and clash of things, even the shadows of a base post still linger the thickest. The olden glorification of wickedness is now and forevermore out of fashion. When men do wrong nowadays, they are at pains to argue strenuously that it is an unhappy "necessity." They are

ashamed of the very greed that they practice. When, somehow, they cannot make the worse to appear the better reason, they are more willing than ever before to abandon it—however much they look back regretfully as they leave it. And the spirit of true reform, of high religious purpose, that demonstrates itself at the very forefront of all national questions, is at this very hour accomplishing more than can be at present fully apparent.

The cry of the stricken Apostate Emperor, "Galilee, thou hast conquered! will yet be repeated by every perverse spirit that strives against the laws and sanctions of the Redeemer's kingdom.—Morning Star.

OUR INNER LIFE.—There is a hidden life in all of us, and it makes us what we are. It is this hidden life that chisels the face, that puts the strange expression on it. The hidden life of sensuality marks the line on the outer life. The man may never have indulged in sensuality, he may have been held back from sensuality by fear; but if, deep down in his heart, there is the sensual nature the sensual nature shows itself in his face. You know that. You women know it, at all events. You have seen men whom you would not care to travel alone with in a car, and yet you know nothing against them save what is written in their faces. And, on the other hand, there are some faces that carry in their lines a benediction, a blessing, a peace. They do not know it. You cannot say their faces are beautiful—put them in marble and you do not care for them but the soul shines through.—Presbyterian Review.

FULL OF RELIGION.—On one of the Samoan Islands, John Williams found a small chapel and about fifty persons who called themselves Christians each one of whom wore a white cloth tied on his arm, to distinguish him from his neighbors. The leader among them said that he heard a little about the Christian religion from some people not far away, and that he used to go to them once in a while to bring home some religion. "And when that is gone, I take my canoe and fetch some more. Now won't you give us a man full of religion, so that I won't have to risk my life going after it; That is what is needed in all lands—a man full of religion." The Telescope.

Always on Hand.—M. Thomas H. Porter, L. L. M., writes: "My son, 18 months old, had cough so bad that nothing gave him relief until a neighbor brought me some of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil which I gave him, and in six hours he was cured. It is the best medicine I ever used, and I would not be without a bottle of it in my house."

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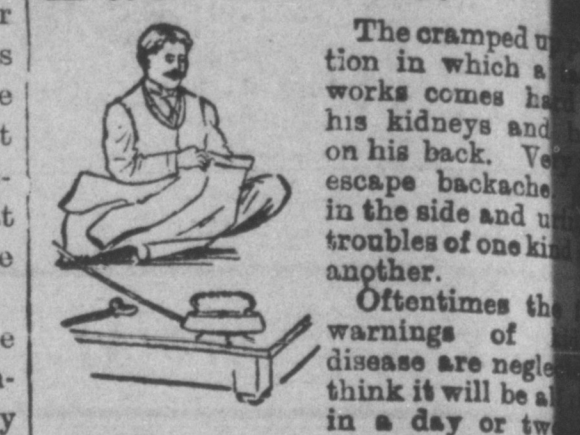
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