

Love's Guise

Oh wondrous strange is this life of mine
With its happiness, work and woe,
And I pause and wonder whence I came,
And whither do I go.

Life's pleasures is ever tempting me,
And I snatch the cup with haste,
But lo, as I drink in my selfishness,
It grows bitter to my taste.

Then Duty comes, and with grim gaunt hand,
He beckons me to his side,
And whispers so sternly "If right you seek,
You straight must become my bride"

And I tremblingly follow where he leads
Though the journey be rough and slow
Anon I fall, yet he leads the way,
And I dare not choose but go.

Then I cry aloud, "Whence ledest thou me"
He replies "To the land above,
I was sent by the Father to guide thee there,
And my name is not Duty but Love"
—FLOY.

Servant of All.

Most men are ambitious to be masters and rulers. They imagine that the chief aim in life should be to have a good time, to be served by others, to be free from obligations and duties. Jesus taught a different lesson. He corrected the error of His disciples who disputed about who should be greatest in His Kingdom by telling them that he is the greatest who serves the most, and by pointing to His own example. He said, "I am among you as one that serveth." He was not ashamed to take the place of a servant. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that He might serve His enemies.

None but atheists will deny that men should serve God. But the Bible teaches that the best service we can render to God is that which we bestow on His creatures. We may serve Him by doing good of every possible sort to all men, and especially to them who are of the household of faith. Paul declared to the Corinthians that he considered himself servant for Jesus' sake. We have been taught in the word of God to serve one another in love. But we may not limit our service to our brethren in the Church or our kindred according to the flesh, or to those who are worthy. He that will be chief must be servant of all. It is easy to serve our kindred, our brethren, and those who have placed us under obligation to them by service rendered unto us. But if we should stop here we are no better than heathen and publicans. We must serve the stranger whom we know not, the undeserving who have done nothing to indicate their worthiness, the poor who can make no return, and our enemies who have injured us. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him."

Only a willing and cheerful service can avail. Every true servant is a volunteer. He may be called, chosen and sent but however disagreeable or burdensome the task imposed he will perform it gladly. Slavish service is neither demanded nor accepted. The unprofitable servant in the parable, who was bound hand and foot and cast out into outer darkness, was no real servant. He complained that his Lord was a hard master, and excused himself from enjoying his talent on the ground that it was impossible to please such an unreasonable tyrant. Our Lord does not accept the service of such a wicked and stupid servant. If one is not content and satisfied with his position as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, he cannot serve at all. In the book of Exodus we find the law under which a Hebrew was permitted to accept the service of a fellow-man. The servant was allowed six years of probation, and if at the expiration of that time he should come forward of his own free will and declare that he loved his master and desired to continue in his service, he might receive the mark of his master and remain in the family forever. If however he was not content and willing, he might go his way, and none could hinder. So it is in the kingdom of God. The servant who comes forward of his own free will and declares that he loves his master and desires to remain His servant shall receive His seal and continue in His home forever. If he cannot do this cheerfully and without constraint, he may go his way and choose his own master.

True service is personal and practical. It is well to bestow charity through committees and institutions in some cases. But this does not cover the whole ground. Real service requires that the servant shall come into the presence of those whom he serves. He must be in contact with his work. He must be in touch with those who need his kind offices. The good Samaritan did not report the case of the wounded man whom he found to the authorities in Jerusalem, or to a

committee whose business it was to look after cases of distress. He put forth his own hand to the work. It may be necessary in some instances to perform service by proxy, but no one can know the luxury of service nor receive the highest benefit of doing good unless he shall minister in person to those who need.

When Jesus taught His disciples that the highest aim in life is to be servant of all He planted a seed of truth and righteousness which has brought forth abundant fruit, and shall yet bring forth more fruit. He showed the contrasts between His kingdom and the kingdoms of the world. The princes of the Gentiles lord it over their subjects, but in the kingdom of God it is not so. The greatest among the disciples of Christ are those who serve most. Too many Christians look to God to free them from labor, hardship, and sacrifice, when they should look to Him for opportunities to labor and endure hardship for the good of others. Prayer should not be so much taken up with calling on God to do something for us to make us happy, but rather with asking Him what we can do to make others happy. This holy principle which Jesus inculcated has changed the social relation of mankind. It has shown the dignity of labor, the majesty of service, the royalty of self-sacrificing love. It has set the seal of everlasting infamy on selfish ambition, and changed the world's first question, "What shall we gain?" into the Christian's first question, "What shall we give?"—Chris. Advocate.

The Amusement Question.

BY C. T. VOLANT.

What should be the Christian's attitude towards amusements? Every act of the Christian should be right. Some things are right or wrong in themselves others according to circumstances. When in doubt how shall we determine the circumstances which make a given course right and safe, and its opposite wrong and unsafe? Shall we ask, "What would Jesus do?" Some object that because Jesus was the Son of God one with the Father, and had a special mission on the earth, we cannot gauge our conduct by his.

In this statement of the case there is one condition—yes, two—left out. First his deity is not in the way. In healing the sick, casting out devils, stilling the tempest and raising the dead, he used his divine power; in reading men's thoughts, answering their cavils and teaching the way of life, he used his divine knowledge, but, being our substitute, in all things pertaining to his own person he put himself under the same limitations to which we are subject. Therefore, in all things concerning conduct, which are personal in their character, we may rightly ask, "What would Jesus do?"

Second, we have a special mission on the earth similar to that of Jesus. In John 17: 18 he says to the father: "As thou hast sent me into the world: even so also have I sent them into the world." And in John 20: 21 he said to the disciples, not to the apostles only, but to others as well, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." We are never for a moment free from the conditions imposed upon us by our mission. Therefore, in every act bearing upon our relation to our fellows, whether in the Kingdom or out, we may rightly ask, "What would Jesus do?"

Let us now apply the question. Jesus spent his time in work and rest, and if he took recreation it is safe to say that he took the kind and quantity needed. The same tests that determine the character of his work, rest and recreation should determine ours. He said: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many." So the Christian has come, not to be ministered unto, but to minister and devote his life to bringing others to Christ. "I came to seek and save that which was lost." "I came, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." These few sentences describe our work as they do his. He is one definite object for us to live to. Any deviation from this right line is "missing the mark"—it is sin.

As we are never for a moment free from the obligations of our mission, our rest and recreation, as well as our work, must be a part of it. They must aid in the accomplishment of it. A mechanic's care of his tools is an important part of his work. Time, effort or money spent for the gratification of self only has no place in the life of one who came not to be ministered unto. He who cannot be happy without something to amuse him has not yet put away childish things; he is still in the realm of the world.

Once in the world the road is short to the flesh and the devil. A young man once said to a lady of high standing in society, "I am a gambler, I re-

quent the gambling places of the city and I learned it at your house." He had attended her card parties. Dancing tends to relax the bonds of another commandment. These kinds of amusement are not recreation, but dissipation. He who indulges in them is unfitted, in every way, for doing earnest work. They have many roads, long and short, but they lead to misery. On the other hand, right recreation gives pleasure at the time, pleasure in the memory of it and leads to the other in the future. Let us, therefore, mark out our course something like this: As I am commissioned by Jesus Christ and sent into the world to minister to others and to seek and to save the lost, I will endeavor to spend every moment of my life in a way to further that end; I will devote as much time to earnest work as I can without injury to my powers; I will take the kind and amount of food that will best nourish my body and preserve my health; I will regulate my sleep in the same way, and I will try to take as much proper recreation as I need. In recreation I will not do anything which if followed up, would lead myself or others into sin, or will put my mind or heart into an unsuitable attitude for prayer or spiritual work; and I will ever ask the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to guide me in this way.

Going Forth Weeping

The work of salvation costs serious effort. It cost the Saviour tears and bloody sweat, prayers and groans and crucifixion. The path of the Church's progress leads by many a Christian's dungeon and many a martyr's stake and many a disciple's sepulcher. The world has not received kindly those who have come offering salvation in the name of Christ, and many a servant of Christ has had to share the cross of his Lord for being faithful to His testimony. One may be fearful if he and his message find popularity, lest he be departing from the way marked out for the early evangelists, to whom Christ said, warningly and yet comforting, "Marvel not if the world hate you."

But apart from all this, it is always true that spiritual work is serious work. It is a vital force. One cannot be the means of bringing souls to life in Christ by the mere repeating of Gospel truths, however exactly he may be able to repeat them. He must be ready and willing to expend his very life in being the medium through which the Holy Spirit shall work His regenerating processes in the hearts and souls of men.

Preaching is serious business. It is not a mere art of elevating entertainment. It is not simply the imparting of pleasing and profitable instruction. It is much more than rhetoric and oratory. It is the pleading of an earnest messenger as he urges men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. It is the outgoing of a soul in an earnest effort to win men to know and love Christ.

Prayer is a most serious, as it is a supremely exalted business. It is not a mere repetition of words of reverent sound and sense. It is an appeal of the very soul to the living God. No one knows what it is to pray in an indolent spirit of an idle moment. Prayer is the concentrating of all the spiritual strenuousness of the soul in fervent petition for the gifts and grace of God.

Seriousness does not mean severity. It may mean the deepest love and the sweetest and most solicitous tenderness. It was thus that Christ was characterized. No artist ever tried to paint the face of Christ without pouring into it all the serious and holy tenderness he was able to imagine and express. Christ was winning and full of love, but it was above that sorrowful over sin, wept over waywardness, and sought to win men to a holy life.

Merriment and laughter are all right in their way and their place, but they are not the moods in which we urge men to turn away from death to life from sin to salvation, from the dangers of eternal destruction to the joys and blessedness of everlasting life.

In some way or other the very act of sowing spiritual seed and endeavouring for spiritual results is one in which tears are apt to start. The tears in time of revival are not those of despair and bitterness, but holy hopefulness and tenderness of heart. They are the tears which are like the showers that water the earth and give promise of coming harvest. The sound of the spring shower is sweet and welcome. The tears which fall from the eyes of God's people in time of revival are expressions of tenderness of heart, and they shall be followed by the abounding joy of harvest.—Herald and Presbyterian.

He who preaches for gain doesn't gain much.

Watchfulness.

A native hunter passed a whole night within a few paces of a wounded tiger. The man's bare knees were pressed upon the hard gravel, but he dared not shift, even by a hair's breadth, his uneasy position. A bush was between him and the wild beast; ever and anon the tiger, as he lay with glaring eye fixed upon it, uttered his hoarse growl of anger; his hot breath actually blew upon the cheek of the wretched man, and still he moved not. The pain of that cramped position increasing every moment—suspense became almost intolerable; but the motion of a limb, the rustling of a leaf would have been death. He heard the gong of the village strike each hour of that fearful night, that seemed to him as an eternity, and yet he lived. The tormenting mosquitoes swarmed around his face, but he dared not brush them off. That fiend-like eye met his whenever he ventured a glance toward the horrid spell that bound him; and a hoarse growl grated on the stillness of the night, as a passing breeze stirred the leaves that sheltered him. Hours rolled on, and his powers of endurance were exhausted, when at length the welcome streaks of light shot up from the eastern horizon. On the approach of day the tiger rose, and stalked away with a sulky face to a thicket at some distance, and the stiff and wearied watcher felt that he was safe.

The Man of To-Day.

The man we listen to to-day is the man who makes us see things. The man who talks about himself is voted a bore. The man who uses words and pet phrases, out of which the life has been worn, taxes our patience and is not listened to long. We have no time to waste on men who have nothing to give us. Life is strenuous, work is exhausting, and we need food for the mind, heart and soul.

The man who has found strength and comfort for himself and shows us where to find them is a benefactor. The preacher who talks about realities of life, and opens to us the treasures of a better and higher life is welcomed to-day as cordially as ever and is blessed for his service. But when a man skims the surface, or paints word pictures, or dreams, or gives us empty formulas which the world has outgrown, he soon learns that the people know the difference between things and the appearance of things.—Reformed Church Messenger.

Are You Ready?

One of the best men I ever knew was for a long time a pastor, and then for a short time before his stepping over the threshold in Heaven, a theological professor. He was one of those rare men of whom one might think and say without any irreverence, "Ah, the Master must of been something like that!"

He was asked once what he would do and say if he met Jesus Himself suddenly, some day, on the street. Quietly and simply he said: "I'd like to say to Him, 'Dear Master, I greet Thee. Long have I been waiting for Thee. I love Thee. What can I do for Thee now?'" Greeting, watching, waiting, loving serving—are you ready just now if He come? Am I? "Let us not sleep—let us watch."

The more we are haunted by a sense of imperfection, the easier we find it to struggle toward perfection. When the cork is most oppressed by the weight of water, it pulls hardest to ascend to the surface.

Do you give weekly or weakly?

WHAT MAKES YOU COUGH.

Did you ever wonder just what it is that makes you cough? In a general way it is understood to be an involuntary effort of nature to eject something from the breath-pipe. As a matter of fact, merely a slight inflammation caused by a cold will cause a cough to start, and the more you cough the more you want to cough. If you allow the inflammation in the throat your cough will stop.

Can't lull the sensitiveness of the throat with medicine containing a narcotic, but give it soothing and healing treatment. This is difficult, because the inflamed parts are in the way of the passage of food and drink. The true cough remedy is something that will protect the throat from the ill effect of catarrhal discharges and also from the irritation of swallowing food. Such a remedy is Adamson's Botanic Cough Balsam, which for many years has been conquering the most obstinate coughs. It is a soothing compound prepared from barks and gums. Its beneficial effect is quickly felt and the work of healing promptly begun. If you once take Adamson's Balsam for cough, you will never be satisfied without some of it at hand for any new cough. A trial size is 25c. In asking for the Balsam, be sure you get the genuine, which has "F. W. Kinsman & Co." blown in the bottle.

Little Sins.

You need not break the glasses of a telescope or coat them over with paint, in order to prevent you from seeing through them. Just breathe upon them, and the dew of your breath will shut out all stars. So it does not require great crimes to hide the light of God's countenance. Little faults can do it just as well. Take a shield and cast a spear upon it, and it will leave in it one great dent. Prick it all over with a million little needle shafts and they will take the polish from it far more than the piercing of the spear. So it is not much the great sins which take the freshness from our conscience as the numberless petty faults which we are all the while committing.—Henry Ward Beecher.

Little Things For God.

A man was once asked why he took so much pains to oblige others in trifles.

His answer was in substance: I have neither the wealth, nor the intellect, nor the learning, nor the position to do big things for God or man, and so I take delight in doing any little thing to promote another's interest or enjoyment. In this way I may add to the sum of human happiness, and also recommend my Saviour to the attention of those who know him not.—Christian Intelligencer.

Christ never promises smooth water to His followers. Nor is His Church a vast assemblage of towed boats, pulled along by the sheer power of the Divine Will. Each Christian has his own oar or responsibility to pull, and his own rudder of conscience to steer with, and must "work his passage" as a free agent.—Rev. Dr. Cuyler.

There are numbers of men that are not willing to do anything for Christ because they cannot do some great thing. Now you will find that the men that have accomplished a great work in this world have always begun by doing some little thing; they have been willing to bring forth some little fruit.—D. L. Moody.

If Paul and Silas could sing and pray in prison, you and I ought to have enough religion to sing and pray in church.

We must take far more time to prayer than we have ever yet taken. I am certain that the secret of much mischief to our own souls and to the souls of others lies in the way we stint and starve and scamp our prayers by hurrying over them.—Alexander Whyte.

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