

The Christian Life.

THE SHEPHERD'S CARE.

He calleth His own sheep by name,
and leadeth them out.

How large a flock the Shepherd tends!
So large that He alone can count,
A multitude that never ends
Which He leads on from vale to
mount;
And though the host be numberless
He does not fail one lamb to bless.

Out where the happy pastures grow,
And flashing streams their welcome
sing,
Where softly falls the summer snow,
After the trees' sweet blossoming;
O'er luscious grass, through dewy
meads,
There the good Shepherd gently leads.

Sometimes it seems it would be well
If He could keep His flock within
The meadow and the flowery dell,
Out of the haunts of war and sin;
They might be safe in such retreat,
But how to pass the dangerous street?

For where Christ's flocks are hurrying
through,
Great traffic fills the noisy days,
And sin insults, and foes pursue,
But yet He leads them in safe ways;
Nor can they wander anywhere
Out of the clasp of His great care.

No noise shuts out the Shepherd's
voice,
And each one hears it speak his name;
Then, comforted, he has no choice,
But, turning back from sin and
shame,
Follows, with swifter feet the call,
And trusts the Shepherd's care through
all.

And I, though often I have strayed,
Come back to Thee, O Shepherd true,
Weary, discouraged and afraid,
Thy love will yet my faith renew;
Thy fold has still an open door,
And still my Shepherd goes before.
—Marianne Farningham.

CONDITIONS OF GOD'S PROMISES.

BY REV. GEO. HAWS FELTUS.

Every promise of God is under a condition. So far as I have been able to observe there is not one recorded which has not attached to it some form of condition upon which the blessing will be granted. It is not always expressed in a hypothesis beginning with the conditional particle "if" or its correlatives, it is expressed by the state in which it is declared the prospective recipient must. For example, in the promise, "To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the tree of life," the condition is implied in "overcometh." In other cases the condition lies in the imperative which precludes the promise, thus: "Knock and it shall be opened unto you," the condition of opening being the knocking. In this manner it will doubtless be found that every blessing has its condition.

These conditions are not limitations. When Christ says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out," he does not mean thereby that only they shall be received who come, although that is true. No one is prevented from coming; therefore no one is prevented from being accepted. The force of this hypothesis is rather that coming is an

assurance of not being cast out. The condition is the guarantee that the blessing will be rendered. I am assured by my act of coming that I will be received. By this view the condition of the promise becomes to me a signet ring, upon the presentation of which the King will acknowledge my right to enter. By meeting the condition I am placing myself in a position where God cannot, for the honor of his name, refuse to receive me. "If" is the key to the storehouse of blessing.

The reason for imposing conditions is to test for us the reality of our desire. God knows whether we are sincere, but he applies a test which makes it patent to our own understanding. If we are ready to meet the conditions we know that our desire is sufficient to be gratified. For the real test of a wish is not in accepting. Anyone is ready to receive, whether he wants or not. Readiness to accept is not a proof of desire. The person who really wishes an object will be willing to meet all reasonable requirements to procure it; and the stronger the desire, the greater conditions will he be willing to meet. I cannot be sure that I am sincere until I am ready to fulfil the requirements. The test by imposing conditions is not for the instruction of God, but it is for our own that we may know whether we really wish God to bless us.

Every promise has its appropriate stipulation. The condition marks the fitness of the blessing. For instance, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." In the condition of famine there can be no more acceptable gift than food and drink. God suits his blessing with such precision that they fill the very need for which given. Not only are they adapted to the state indicated in the condition, but they are not suitable for any other. Righteousness palliates the taste of one who has no desire for it, and therefore God satisfies only those whose heart yearns to be holy. When we fulfil a condition we are given the blessing that is most suitable.

On the other hand, this very circumstance stimulates an appreciation of the particular gifts. When we meet the requirements we bring ourselves into the state in which alone we are capable of estimating and cherishing the value of endowment. Can the divine presence gratify a disobedient and unaffectionate heart? Only a loyal and loving soul can cherish the residence of God. Therefore the promise "my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him," is made upon one condition which will inspire an appreciation namely: "If a man love me and (if) he will keep my words." No other attitude of the heart can render us appreciative of the Father's dwelling as can love and obedience.

Just the Thing That's Wanted.—A pill that acts upon the stomach and yet is so compounded that certain ingredients of it preserve their power to act upon the intestinal canals, so as to clear them of excreta, the retention of which cannot but be hurtful, was long looked for by the medical profession. It was found in *Parmelee's Vegetable Pills*, which are the result of much expert study, and are scientifically prepared as a laxative and an alternative in one.

THE BLESSED BURDEN.

BY REV. O. P. GIFFORD, D. D.

Glancing out of the window the other day, I saw an express wagon drive up and stop, the driver stepped down, walked to the back of his wagon, looked in to make sure the trunk was handy, turned, stepped toward the door to see the number, slipped in the snow, fell headlong and struck his hand hard against the stepping stone. He rose to his feet rubbing his hand, looked at the stone, at the snow, and probably (man-like) blamed everything but the man who had slipped. After seeing the number he stepped back, shouldered the trunk (weighing one hundred and thirty-five pounds), and walked across the snow without slipping, minding his steps, looking down—he must be careful with such a load on his back.

Blessed burden! it held him up by holding him down, compelling care for fear of consequences. Have you noticed that most men who slip are the men who bear light loads; who are careless, because there is nothing to care for?

Crushing sacrifices the skin but saves the wine. The burden of soil on the seed compels a struggle that comes out in a body. The weight of water on the turbine wheel is the condition of electric power.

John Spreull, of Glasgow, was imprisoned by Claverhouse because he defended religious liberty. His crest was a palm tree, with two weights hanging on each side of it from its fronds, and the motto, "Sub pondere cresco—"I grow under a weight. This is true of all life. The weight of the soil on the buried seed, the weight of the air on the growing plant are conditions of growth; when the weight is lifted the life escapes. Paul says, "Let us lay aside every weight," but if we should, every weight, the weight of the body, we should leave the track, leap like the flame toward the sun and disappear.

Art stood one day by a child's grave; the hand of love had set a basket of offerings on the grave covered it with a wire to protect from the birds; the basket stood upon the root of an acanthus plant, the plant growing under pressure wove its life into a crown of beauty.

The burden of the basket laden with an offering, weighted with the tile, compelled the acanthus to struggle for expression; the struggle gave the world, through art, the capital of the Corinthian pillar, the most beautiful capital in the world. Blessed burden!

Simon the Cyrenian attained an earthly immortality by bearing the cross a few rods, lifting for a little the tree that lifted the Son of Man for the world's redemption.

Iron ore comes from the mine, but steel comes from the furnace of fire. The baptism of fire must be accepted if the soul is to be tempered to great enterprises.

"For life is not an idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the shocks of doom
To shape and use."

The Son of Man was "made perfect through suffering." He bids the world take His burden and His yoke.

Look about you; the men who come to least in the world carry least; these who sit in slippered ease get no muscles thereby. The careless soul slips and bruises itself, the burdened soul steps carefully, the burden is the angel that bears thee up lest at any time thou dash

thy foot against a stone. The boat that will not bear the burden of the oarsman, drifts; the soul that shuns burdens, finds slips and bruises. Blessed by burdens!—*The Watchman.*

THE INNER LIFE.

This inner life is a tremendous reality. Its very invisibility emphasizes the realness of the reality. It is one of the richest heritages of the child of God. The outer life is only the scaffolding of the building; it is only the husk or shell. The inner life is the real building; it is the germ-hiding kernel.

All moral and spiritual defeats are due to a vitiation of the inner life. The withering, blasting, and uprooting of the soul's choice plants are never accomplished through the forces of the outer life; the work begins within.

No man or woman with a sweet, healthy inner life can fail of success. Storms may howl and the earth may quake, but there is something within which preserves the calm eternal, and holds every whirling star of experience within its proper orbit.

The inner life is fed by the waters of the Infinite, and warmed by the beams of the Son of Righteousness.

How can we possess the rich, powerful inner life when body, mind, and soul are constantly exercising their energies upon the vain, perishing things of earth? We must take them to cultivate the unseen fields of the soul. We must constantly stand face to face with God, drink in the strength of His nature and the inspiration of His presence. If we do not, the inner life must perish. Prayer, meditation, reading—these are channels through which God pours His golden, vitalizing streams into the inner life.

The saddest moment in life to a man or woman is when there is a discovery that the inner life is gone, and only the outer shell is left. Yet the inner life goes gradually and secretly. No one has ever been robbed of this priceless possession.

Let us be watchful. Let us remember that as long as God is in this inner life there is security there, and that no thief has ever yet been able to break the lock of prayer and trust and divine wisdom.—*Advocate.*

Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup stands at the head of the list for all diseases of the throat and lungs. It acts like magic in breaking up a cold. A cough is soon subdued, tightness of the chest is relieved, even the worst case of consumption is relieved, while in recent cases it may be said never to fail. It is a medicine prepared from the active principles or virtue of several medicinal herbs, and can be depended upon for all pulmonary complaints.

Development of character, perfection in the Christian life, final victory, comes through opposition, encountering and surmounting difficulties, and persistent plodding in ways of righteousness.

Pains Disappear before It.—No one need suffer pain when they have available Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil. If not in the house when required it can be procured at the nearest store, as all merchants keep it for sale. Rheumatism and all bodily pains disappear when it is applied and should they at any time return, experience teaches the user of the Oil how to deal with them.