

INTO THE DARK TUNNEL.

A few days ago I had occasion to travel on one of the great American railroads, and was reminded of an incident that occurred some years before, when for the first time I made the same journey. While seated in the waiting-room, waiting for the starting of the train, I observed a party consisting of a gentleman and lady, two little girls, and a nurse. They were evidently a family, well-dressed and of such appearance and manners as denoted cultured, well-to-do people.

When we had taken our places in the car, the nurse and the children were seated directly behind the parents. Very soon after starting, the mother turned round, took hold of the younger child, and gently lifted her on her lap, with her face to her own, raised the little girl's arms, and brought them round her neck, and placed her own around the child's body, holding her close in her embrace. Not knowing what was before us, I was kept in wonder as to what these movements all meant, but soon darkness covered us, then light flashed out of darkness, and I understood. The dear mother feared that the child would be frightened, and so she took her in her arms; nor did the child by a sound or a movement show that she felt alarm. That warm, protecting embrace killed all fear of evil; how could any harm reach her?

How could the thought of God hiding some beloved soul, in time of trouble, in his pavilion, in the secret of his presence, be kept from one's reflections? Has not one of our old English devotional writers, Baxter or Doddridge, said that "when God foresees great trials for the believer, he takes care to prepare that one by gracious manifestations?" — *Canadian Churchman.*

CONSTANT GOOD COMPANY.

The most charming companion I ever met was a plain little woman, whose life for years had been entirely given up to the care of an invalid demented father, an old man who demanded her constant presence in his darkened room during his waking hours, in the few spare moments she had while going through the usual routine of household duties.

Poor, living in the backwoods, where she never saw anybody, she gained a depth of mind and power of expression far superior to many of her old schoolmates, who had shown greater promise, and had possessed every advantage. Indeed, she was neither "smart" nor particularly studious at school, but excessively fond of fun, excitement and company.

One day I asked her the secret of the change.

She laughed. "I have been enjoying constant, pleasant company for the last few years."

I started, mystified. She drew from her pocket a little quotation book, and, pointing to two quotations, "My own thoughts are my companions," and "They are never alone that are accompanied with noble thoughts." There were several other quotations written on the margin, and the pages were well-thumbed.

She said earnestly: "Looking back over my girlhood, I know that there is a fatal defect in the training of our girls; our words, our actions, receive attention; we are given advice and instruction in every point but in our thinking. I did not even have a conception of entertaining myself by my

own thoughts; I wanted all the time to be amused by something or somebody outside of myself. Then came that plunge into poverty, sadness and loneliness; at first, I believed I should become insane, then God must have directed me to this little book, too worthless to be sold when our library went. One other quotation chained my mind, 'Our thoughts are heard in heaven,' and I began recalling my thoughts. How disgusted I was with them! Round and round, in the weary rut of repining they had traveled, or, even if not repining, how stupid, how unelevating they had been. From that hour I determined my thoughts should be inspiring companions. When sewing up a seam they should be, 'So long and tiresome; wonder how long before I am done?' and so on, and so on, over and over again. Why, I would take a little trip while sewing up that seam!

"When washing the dishes, I discuss with myself different national questions; when picking beans, I decide whether optimism or pessimism is winning the day; sweeping the room, I review the last book I read, or, perhaps, a book read years ago; every duty not requiring concentration is enlivened in this way.

"Not more than an hour a day can I ever read. Our books scarcely number a dozen, but since I began to think, one verse of the Bible will unfold and unfold, until it blossoms into a wonder-revelation, and I hope bears fruit. Before, I did not take time for the unfolding and fruit-bearing."

"But I cannot control my thoughts," I objected; "they will dwell on any trouble or worry I have."

"Paul tells us that in our warfare our weapons are 'mighty to cast down our imagination; 'bringing into captivity every thought; 'that promise is a great help when I feel despairing over my wrong thoughts. To keep down the disagreeable ones, to shake myself free from the servitude of daily fretting tasks, I drill myself into meditating on pleasant subjects, just as I would drill my tongue in company to make pleasant speeches.

"Tell the girls you teach and write to how true it is that 'The pleasant things in the world are pleasant thoughts, and the great art in life is to have as many as possible; 'also, that this art cannot be learned when the feebleness of age has weakened the control of the mind."

When she had left me, I remembered she was the only person who had not made inane remarks about the weather. Do you suppose it was because thoughts had occupied her mind, not empty turning of the mental wheels?

If the mill grinds not grist, it will grind itself; if the mind feeds not on thoughts, it preys upon itself, and is its own destroyer.—*Christian Work.*

SYMPATHY'S LIFTING POWER.

A world without sympathy would be a cruel abiding-place. Those who have suffered and received expressions of true sympathy from friends would hardly dare think what their suffering would have been without a spoken word of comfort from a living soul. We are often tempted to feel that any word of sympathy we may speak or write to another at a time of special trial is not worth the doing; that so many such words will be spoken to that one that our own will count for nothing. The prompting to keep silent in another's time of sorrow is a false one. Spoken sympathy is a matter of love; it comforts, strengthens, and inspires. Our

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Lord Jesus Christ longed for sympathy. There is no more affecting passage in the record of his life than that which tells of the failure of his chosen and dearest friends to watch and sympathize with him in the hour when his soul was "exceeding sorrowful" There has never been a word too much of sympathy spoken to a sorrowing one. Sympathy's very cumulation forms a great force that uplifts and strengthens. It is needed by the weak; it is still more needed by the strong. It is within every one's power to give it; and God, who is love, will bless it always.—*Sunday-school Times.*

YOUR DUTY AND A LITTLE MORE.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie, in an address before a graduating class in New York, gave some excellent advice to the young men on how to attain success in life. Among other good things, he said:

"There are several classes of young men. There are those who do not do all their duty; there are those who profess to do their duty; and there is a third class, far better than the other two, that do their duty and a little more.

"There are many great pianists, but Paderewski is at the head because he does a little more than the others. There are hundreds of race horses, but it is those who go a few seconds faster than the others that acquire renown. So it is in the sailing of yachts. It is the little more that wins. So it is with the young and old men who do a little more than their duty.

"No one can cheat a young man out of success in life. You young lads have begun well. Keep on. Don't bother about the future. Do your duty and a little more, and the future will take care of itself."

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