

THE PATH OF LIFE.

There is a very narrow path,  
That throws a rugged way;  
Within this path a light doth shine,  
That leads to perfect day.  
This path is called the Path of Life,  
Therein no death is found;  
But perfect health and buoyant life,  
And happiness abound.  
By some 'tis called a lonely path;  
For men are not inclined  
To choose this strait and narrow path,  
And leave the world behind.  
For all who walk this Path of Life,  
Must also bear the cross;  
And estimate all carnal good,  
As only worthless dross.  
But pilgrims, as they journey on,  
Are oft refreshed and blest;  
And though it seem a weary way,  
They find a perfect rest.  
This is indeed a precious path,  
Pressed by the Master's feet;  
So that the very dust is rich  
With fragrance pure and sweet.  
—A. B. SNIFF, Columbus.

THE ALTAR SERVICE.

S. L. Brengle, Lieutenant Colonel.

When during their mighty four years soul saving campaign in Europe, Dr. and Mrs. Palmer came to Glasgow, Scotland, and after speaking in the Wesleyan Chapel, found three hundred convicted people before them, but no altar to which to invite them, they concluded that they were in the presence of a great dilemma. She writes, "I earnestly sought unto the Captain of the hosts of Israel for wisdom," and the only light she got was that at all costs and at once an altar must be arranged, and she argued those hard headed Scotchmen to her way of thinking before she left the church that night. Then the revival swept on with such power as Methodism had never known in Scotland. The altar is the best known supplement to the pulpit, and its service following the preaching of the word, is to that of the pulpit, what the assault on fortress walls is to the cannonading which has preceded. Some of its advantages are:

1. It helps to discover those who have been wounded by the truth, and with whom the Holy Spirit is striving.
2. It presents an invaluable opportunity of dealing with such convicted souls personally.
3. It breaks the ice for the seeker, aids him to immediate decision, and when he kneels there it is a kind of public testimony and confession of his sins, his needs his purpose, and puts him on record before all his friends and acquaintances as a seeker and servant of the Lord.

The successful conduct of an altar service requires wisdom from above, knowledge of the word, and of God's ways of dealing with the soul, sympathy, patience, courage, faith and quick understanding of the leadings of the Holy Spirit; in short, it requires a deep, rich, living, intelligent experience.

Its character will depend largely upon the preaching which has preceded. If the preaching has been clear, scriptural, convincing and warm and tender, the altar service will often almost run itself; the seekers will need but little help. If it has consisted principally of exhortation and touching stories, they will probably need much deep, probing and plain faithful instruction before they can intelligently grasp God's plan of salvation.

Wise altar workers will seek to find out where and how the Holy Spirit is at work and then they will work together with him. Their efforts will be directed to removing the hindrances that prevent him having his way. Sometimes the seeker is ignorant and needs instruction; sometimes it may be that there is sin covered up that must be uncovered and confessed; or maybe restitution for some wrong must be made; or an enemy must be forgiven; or some pet sin must be surrendered; or some bad habit broken off, or some cross taken up; the wise worker will seek to discover the difficulty, whatever it may be, and kindly but firmly aid the seeker at that point.

Sometimes seekers are so deeply convicted that they, like the publican, dare not look up, but are consumed with their own anguish; they must be affectionately helped to take their eyes off themselves and fix them on Jesus, who was made sin

for them. The sinner must be pushed up to the point of complete renunciation of all sin and an affectionate, unconditional and eternal surrender to an acceptance of the will of God and a child-like faith in the promises and assurances of God in Jesus Christ. The seeker after holiness must be led to an utter abandonment of himself and a hearty, loving, glad consecration of himself and all he has or ever hopes to have to the Lord Jesus Christ, in simple faith that the blood does now cleanse and that the Holy Spirit will at once come in and take possession of his temple thus yielded to him.

For such a work as this upon which hinges the destiny of souls for eternity, picked men and women should be chosen, men and women wise in the ways of God, and full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. Young converts and newly sanctified souls are often very effective in helping their friends at the altar, but inexperienced and irresponsible people should generally be guarded against most carefully at this service.

The altar service must not be allowed to languish and die for want of fervent prayer, earnest exhortation and hearty singing on the one hand; nor be allowed to run itself into wild, incoherent, hysterical confusion for want of wise, firm, calm direction on the other hand. It must be kept in the middle of the way and out of the ditch on either side.

The object is to get seekers to Jesus for pardon and purity, and they must not be allowed to lose interest and go to sleep for want of attention and help, nor be distracted by injudicious talk and meaningless noise.

For a seeker to have a self-constituted helper on either side pouring well-meant but fruitless and often contradictory advice into each ear, someone behind pounding him on the back, another in front praying at the top of his voice, and a number of others singing a song that is not suited to his case, is, to say the least, confusing.

Some time ago I slipped into an early morning meeting and found the altar filled with seekers, while behind them was a great number of earnest praying people, and in front, within the altar rail, was a score or more of workers. The din was awful. Seekers were groaning, some almost screaming, while indiscreet friends and advisers were shouting instructions at them. The leader called on dear old comrade Smith to pray, and by dint of much straining of my ears I managed to hear prayer, and O, what a prayer it was! just calculated, it seemed to me, to bear every seeking soul right into the presence of the Father and to help them into the blessing sought, but I don't think one at that altar heard it, for the noisy, ineffectual instruction that thundered and boomed right on. When such a soul-winner as Amanda Smith prays during an altar service, others should keep quiet and let her voice tell the needs and desires of the seeking souls before her. "Let all things be done decently and in order." On the other hand, the altar service may be conducted with such decorum and formality and utter lack of the spirit as to destroy conviction, quench thirst and send the seeker away worse than when he came.

A wisely selected verse or chorus will often help the seeker more than all the advice that can be given.

"Was it for crimes that I had done,  
He groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity, grace unknown,  
And love beyond degree."

sung in the spirit will turn the seeker's eyes to Jesus, and then  
"Nay but I yield, I yield,  
I can hold out no more,  
I sink by dying love compelled,  
And own thee conqueror."  
will help him to the point of decision; and then,  
"I do believe, I now believe,  
That Jesus died for me,  
That on the cross he shed his blood,  
From sin to set me free."

will help to bear him over the bar of unbelief into the ocean of love and perfect assurance.

Finally, there should not be too much haste to "get seekers through," and "clear up the altar" on the one hand, nor too much delay and feeble, nerveless dealing on the other.

One of my own altar services was almost ruined on one occasion, while I was dealing with a seeker, by a zealous work-

er rushing the seekers into an expression of faith and then on to their feet before one of them had really grasped the blessing sought. I turned around just in time to see the situation, pointed out to them their mistake, got them down on their knees again, and soon their was the shout of a King in our midst and a number of souls swept into glorious victory that morning.

But on the other hand, many a soul is allowed to keep coming to the altar, dragging along in unbelief, that ought to be dealt with so vigorously and firmly and yet affectionately as to compel him to believe.

Truly, "he that winneth souls is wise."

YOUNG MAN, DON'T DRINK.

Under the above caption, the following appears in the editorial columns of the Kansas City World. Like Temperance matter has of late frequently found place in the New York Journal, and other great dailies owned by Mr. Hearst, as well as in various other secular papers, east and west.

This is most cheering. With glad hearts grateful to God we welcome such allies in this fight.

The young man who drinks strong liquor is like the commander of a fortified city who deliberately admits a known enemy within its walls.

Drink is more deadly and hostile than an army. It has sent more men to destruction and death than have all the armies of the World.

There is nothing in it. You cannot gain by it; you may lose everything—health, position, reputation, self respect, manhood, soul.

The first drink admits a demon that every successive drink strengthens, until some day it may be strong enough to dominate and glut its ravenous appetite with your brain and blood.

Don't deceive yourself about your strength. You know nothing about that until the test comes, and then it often is too late. You may never be sure you have the strength to resist until you have asserted that strength by resistance.

To resist once, or twice, or a dozen times, does not prove strength to resist always. It can be proved only by constant and unflinching resistance. Any man can resist sometimes. The only man who can have absolute confidence in his power to resist is he who never drinks at all. If you have the strength, use it. Assert it now. One drink more is too much. Be strong right now. It is your best chance.

Strong young man! If you can today mock at the assertion that one drink is too much, some day you may think the same of ten drinks, and later of twenty. And when that day comes, the strength that could not resist one drink, before appetite was formed, will be but as straw in a whirlwind.

If you have not the strength and sense to stop drinking right now, when will you have it? Will continued yielding give you added strength or better sense?

When the raveled nerves of a disordered stomach and the flaccid tissues of a softening brain demand whisky, will you, who could not resist when strength and sense were whole and craving was unknown—will you be better able to resist then?

It is not an abstruse question of piety, or ethics, or morality; it is simple question of common sense and health.

One does not need to become a drunkard in the gutter to be injured by whisky. It is poison even in small quantities.

Few physicians prescribe it any longer for any purpose, except in hopeless cases to dull the senses at the approach of death. No physician of learning and honor administers it to the young in any case.

When impure, as most of the commercial whisky is, it is full of unknown dangers. When pure it is more dangerous still.

It is sometimes given to pups to stunt their growth and turn them into "freaks." The young man hoping for the highest possible mental and physical development should think seriously of this when tempted to put himself in the place of the pup.

Young man, don't drink!

Refuse the first drink, or, if you have taken that and more, assert your strength now and refuse to take another, and the spirits of all dearest to you on earth or in heaven will learn and listen and smile.

Take it, and devils will laugh and leer and mock.—Exchange.

GRAINS OF WHEAT.

"No one ever reached heaven by living a careless, listless life. As Oliver Wendell Holmes once said: 'To reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it, but we must sail and not drift nor lie at anchor.'"

Whatever of success I have attained is due to my unflinching custom of reading my Bible and of praying every morning before I leave my room. No difficulties nor stress of business keep me from thus preparing myself for the day.—Booker T. Washington.

To be misunderstood by those one loves is the cross and bitterness of life. It is the cruelest trial of self devotion; it is what must oftenest have wrung the heart of the Son of Man and if God could suffer, it is the wound we would be forever inflicting on him.—Selected.

LONGING AND SATISFACTION.

As the astronomer, the more powerful his telescope, though it may resolve some of the nebulae that resisted feeble instruments, only has the bounds of creation enlarged as he looks through it, and sees yet other and mightier star-clouds lying mysterious beyond its ken—so each new influx and tidal wave of knowledge of the Father, which Christ gives to his waiting child, leads on to enlarged desires, to longings to press still further into the unexplored mysteries of that magnificent and boundless land, and to nestle still closer into the infinite heart of God. He declares to us the Father, and the answer of the child to the declaration of the Father is the cry, "Abba! Father! Show me yet more of thy heart." Thus aspiration and fruition, longing and satisfaction, in unsatiated and inexhaustible and unwearying alternation, are the two blessed poles between which the life of a Christian may revolve in smoothness and music.—Dr. McLaren

DR. LORENZ'S CUP OF TEA.

When the great Austrian surgeon, Dr. Lorenz, was in New York last December he was deluged with invitations to dinner. Everyone wanted to see the blonde giant who had become so famous for his success in operating without a knife. He had come to America to cure the little daughter of a Chicago millionaire of her terrible hip disease, and had then visited city after city performing the same operation free of charge for scores of children whose parents have nothing to pay. Wherever he appeared crowds gathered to see him. The newspapers were full of his pictures and of anecdotes about his appearance and his habits.

This story has got into print. Dr. Lorenz was present at a certain banquet given in his honor. Bottles were passed around, and many of the guests drank. The principal guest, however, pushed his wine away untouched and asked the waiter to bring him a cup of tea. German ideas of temperance are less strict than ours, and someone asked him if he was a teetotaler.

"I cannot say that I am a temperance agitator," said Dr. Lorenz, "but I am a surgeon. My success depends upon my brain being clear, my muscles firm, and my nerves steady. No man can take alcoholic liquor without blunting these physical powers which I must keep on edge. As a surgeon I must not drink."

Is there any occupation save that of a loafer in which we do not need the very best powers that God has given us? Surely, if this world-famous man dare not drink, how dare we, who have our living to earn and our reputation to make!—Pacific Christian Advocate.

There is no power on earth that can stand before the onward march of God's people when they are deal in earnest.—Sel.

There is in man a higher than love of happiness; he can do without happiness, and instead thereof find blessedness.—T. Carlyle.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN.

THE LITTLE LOAF.

In the time of the famine a rich man permitted the poorest children of the city to come to his house, and said to them: "There stands a crate full of bread. Each of you may take a loaf from it, and you may come every day until God sends better times."

The children at once surrounded the basket, striving and quarreling over the bread, because each desired to obtain the finest; and they finally went off without a word of thanks.

Only Franziska, a clean but poorly clad little girl, remained standing at a distance, then took the smallest of the loaves in the basket, kissed her hand gratefully to the man and went quietly and becomingly home.

On the next day the children were equally ill-mannered and Franziska this time had a loaf which was scarcely half as large as the others, but when she reached home and her mother broke the bread there fell out quite a number of silver pieces. The mother was frightened and said: "Take the money back at once, for it certainly got into the bread by accident."

Franziska did as she was bid, but the benevolent man said to her: "No, no; it was not an accident. I had the silver baked in the smallest loaf in order to reward thee, thou good child. Ever remain peace loving and satisfied."

He who would rather have a smaller loaf than quarrel about a greater will always bring a blessing to the home, even though no gold is baked in the bread.—Reformed Messenger.

WHY ELSIE KEPT SILENT.

Lionel, came rushing into the room, his eyes snapping fire, his cheeks flushed warm. "Elsie, Elsie! where are you?" he cried, adding the next moment as he caught sight of his sister standing near the window. "Why did you touch my kite when you could see that it was not dry? I just left it for a few moments on the dining-room table while I went into the barn, and when I came back I found it spoiled."

And then, without waiting for Elsie to speak he continued to reproach her with hasty, angry words for the mischief done.

Once, when he paused for breath, a brown-haired girl standing by Elsie helping to thread beads raised her head and said:

"Why dont you talk back, Elsie? The idea of his saying you have spoiled his kite when you have not been out of the room for an hour." But Elsie kept silent and Lionel having had his say vanished. "Why didn't you tell him you didn't do it?" Florence asked, gazing half-curiously at her companion.

"I didn't want to quarrel with Lionel," Elsie answered quietly.

A little later the boy entered the room again, this time a more subdued manner.

"I'm sorry I spoke as I did, Elsie," he remarked in apologetic tone as he advanced toward the window. "Mary says it was she who did the mischief. But I saw your hat on the chair close to the table and that made me think perhaps it was you who touched my kite as you passed through the dining room when you came indoors. Why didn't you tell me it wasn't you?"

"Because you didn't give me a chance. Besides you were so angry I thought if I spoke we might quarrel, so I concluded it best to keep silent and wait until you were calm."

Surely that was a wise decision. Elsie remembered the old saying: "It takes two to make a quarrel," and she resolved that she would not be one of the two. Many a heartache, many a bitter after-thought might be spared if boys and girls would learn to remember this saying, and, remembering it, follow Elsie's good example.—Happy Hours.

"Dead men tell no tales." Hence those who have reckoned themselves to be dead with Christ, ought not to be heard blabbing current gossip or scandal.

Perfect love can rest, and even create; but it cannot trifle nor be indolent.