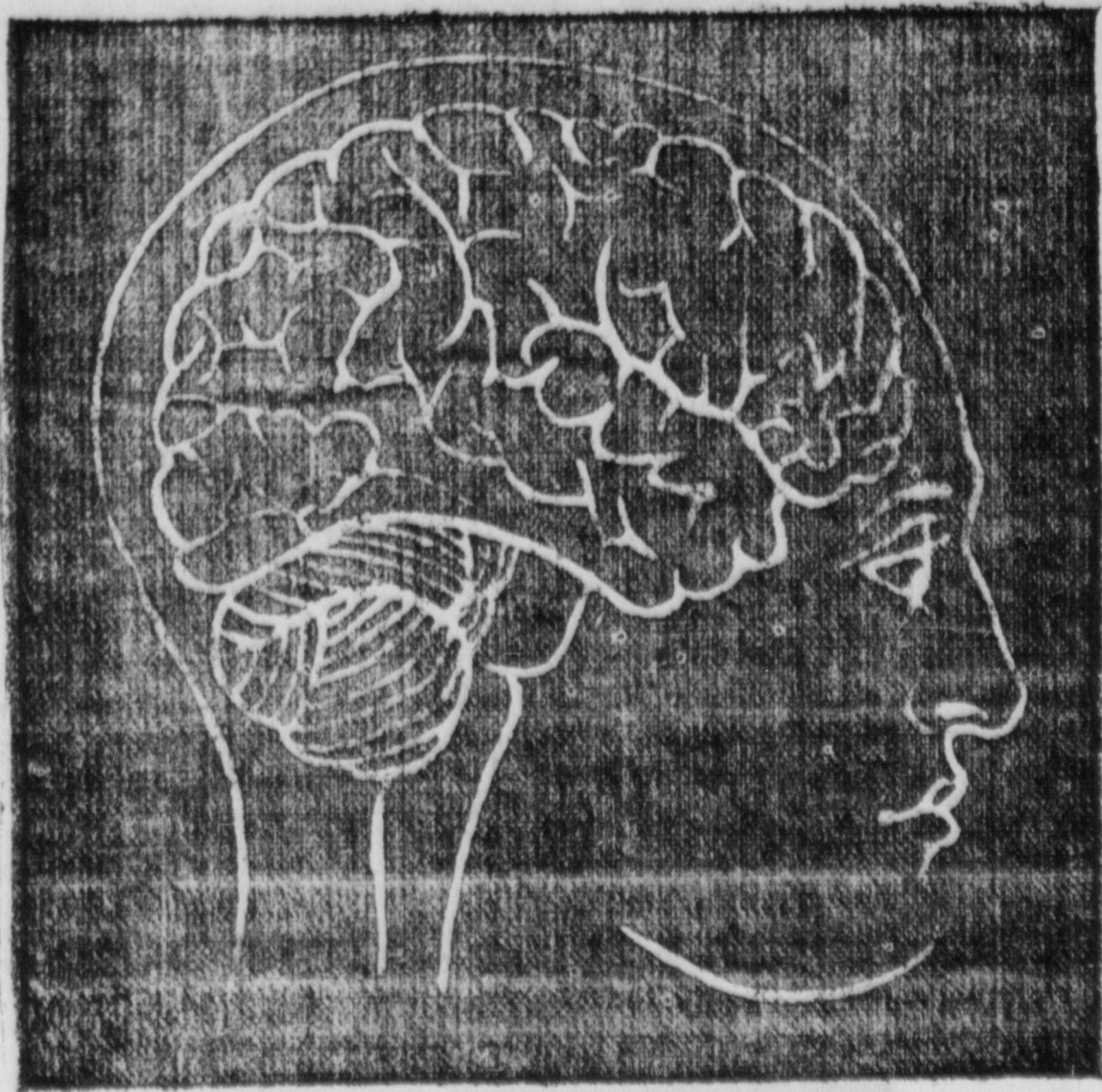


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All Communications to this Column should be Addressed to Mrs. J. Stevenson, Secretary W. C. T. U., Richibucto.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."—John, 12, 32.

#### LIGHT IN DARK PLACES.

A Midnight Curbstone Meeting—A City Missionary's Story.

By Helen Campbell.

Late one night I was pleading with a drunken man on the Bowery while two friends stood waiting for me not far off. Suddenly I noticed one of a gang of thieves who were lounging around the door of a concert-hall, leave his companions, approach my friends, and enter into conversation. I left my man and joined them. Seeing that I was the leader of the party, he addressed himself to me, suggesting that we try our hands at a "game." "My friend," I said, "I know you and your confidence game. I should think a man like you would want to be in some better business than swindling people. It's mighty mean business—that of a thief—don't you think so?" At first he was too much astonished to do anything but glare savagely at me; then, recovering himself, he acted as though he was about to spring upon me. I laid my hand on his arm and gently said: "You ought to be a Christian?"

He started back as though struck, but quickly recovered, and said with a sneer and in a loud voice: "Me a Christian? Will Christ pay my rent? Will Christ feed me?"

"Well," I said, "I have seen a good many begin serving Christ without a cent or even a place to lay their heads, and I never knew any one He let go down who was really in earnest."

"But, see here, did you ever see Christ?"

"No, but I expect to see him; I have His word that I shall."

Turning to his companions he shouted: "Come here, fellows, and see a clump who's got a promise of seein' Christ."

We were standing under an electric light, it being long past midnight. Quite a number who were passing stopped, the thief's companions gathered around, and I soon found myself in centre of a typical Bowery crowd—Jew and Gentile, a number of sporting men and thieves, several drunken men, and others attracted by the noise, eager to see what was going on.

Again turning to his companions the thief said in loud and jeering tones: "Here's a fellow as is goin' to see Christ."

"Yes," I said, opening the Bible, "I have his word for it; I will read it to you: 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.'"

"Oh, you're a son of God, are you?" he exclaimed, contemptuously.

"Yes, and I have his word for that," reading the Bible again; "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." I was once far away from God, a great sinner, but I believed and received, and became His child."

"Well, brother, here's my hand; I'm a child of God, too," he said, winking at his companions.

"Oh, no," I said, "don't call me brother; you don't belong to the Lord's family. 'Ye are of your father, the devil.'" And I read from Romans: "Know ye not to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; your regular business is to serve the devil, and you can't palm yourself off on me as one of God's family. But you may be adopted into his family if you will."

Then I read John iii. 16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

A man who had one of his ears nearly torn off in a fight, and whose head was bandaged so that only his eyes and mouth could be seen, said: "You had better take a back seat, Bill; he's too many for you."

Bill quickly turned with an angry oath, and said: "You'd better get out of this, or maybe you'll get a swipe across 't'other ear; there's nothin' here for the likes of you—a man with only one ear."

At this the crowd laughed and gazed at the man with the bandaged head, who was quickly making his way out of the crowd, when I reached over and caught him by the shoulder, and said: "Hold on, my friend, there is something for you" and turning to Revelation I read: "He that hath an ear, let him hear. To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life."

The crowd laughed boisterously at this quotation, and I saw that I had their sympathy, so I gave them an invitation to attend the meetings at the missions, and after a few more words I closed by saying: "We shall never all meet on earth again, but we shall each have to give an account of this curbstone meeting. May God bless every one of you."

One rough fellow stepped forward with tears in his eyes, and shook my hand heartily, saying: "Stick to it, I wish I had; I was brought up right, in Sunday School and all, and if I had stuck to it I wouldn't be what I am to-night."

### Be Ready.

As a people we believe and teach that the coming of the Lord is nigh; that very soon, we know not how soon, the heavens will be lit up and aglow with the glory of God and the face of our God will be revealed and those who have waited so long to see the Savior, and dwell in his presence shall have their desires gratified and their hopes fulfilled. Nor can this be called a superstitious faith, for, however much men may scoff at the idea, the truth is clearly revealed in God's word, that Christ is to come again as literally as he came the first time; that his glorious presence will again grace this earth as literally as he walked the streets of Nazareth and Jerusalem nearly nineteen hundred years ago. Not, however in the same condition, for then he came as the Lamb of God, to be rejected of men and slain by wicked hands. Then he was in poverty and affliction, having no abiding place, or, as he himself expressed it, "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Not so will be his second coming.

Now, he is to come as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah." The Psalmist says: "Our God shall come and shall not keep silence: a fire shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above and to the earth, that he may judge his people."—Psalms 50: 3, 4.

John the Revelator declares: "For behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they who pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."—Rev. 1: 7

The Apostle Paul says: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."—1 Thess. 4: 15.

Jesus told his disciples plainly that he would come again. He says: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."—Matt. 16: 27. Even at his departure, when in the presence of a large number of a large number of his disciples he ascended up into heaven and a cloud received him out of their sight. Two bright angels testified, "Ye men of Galilee, who stand ye gazing up unto heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Here is employed an object lesson, so to speak, to tell the very manner of his coming. In the face of such plain statements, why should men spiritualize the word of God away by interpreting the coming of Christ to mean the death of individuals? It only shows the darkened condition of the mind when such a rendering is accepted as true. But Jesus not only assures us that he is coming again, but also furnishes us with the signs of his coming so that none need be deceived if they will accept the evidence furnished. He declares that when he comes it will be in a time of trouble. It will be preceded by famine and pestilence, earthquakes, wind storms, the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds, distress of nations with perplexity. Signs in the heavens and signs in the earth. Many false Christs shall rise as well as false prophets and false teachers, and deceive many. Men will scoff and ask, Where is the promise of his coming? And yet the old original gospel will be upon earth, for Jesus declared, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness, and then shall the end come." By these signs he declared his people shall know that the end is nigh, as clearly as they know that summer is nigh when they see the leaves forming on the trees in the spring time. For this generation in which these things take place, he says, will not pass away till all is fulfilled. Surely then the end is not far off.

Oh, that his people might discern the signs of the times and be ready. That many will not be ready is clearly foretold, for even his church, the kingdom, will consist of both wise and foolish virgins. (Matt. 25). How necessary then for all to examine themselves and see whether they are in the faith as well as in the church; whether they have oil in their vessels with their lamps, or in other words living so as to retain the Holy Ghost for their guide, otherwise, instead of being active and diligent, a spirit of indifference and carelessness will take possession of them and they will be like one asleep. Therefore, the Master commands us to "watch," not others, but ourselves, to see that we are fully engaged, just as a man watches his goods when they are liable to be stolen. Every minister for Christ, including priest, teacher and deacon ought to be fully awakened to the responsibilities of his office and see that he is prepared to feed the flock.

In answer to the question: "Who is that faithful and wise servant?" the Lord said: "It is that servant who watcheth to impart his portion of meat in due season," and adds, "Blessed be that servant whom his Lord shall find when he cometh so doing." If there was ever a time when these words ought to arouse the careless ones it is now when the evidence of the near approach of our Lord are so clearly manifest. Nor are the words of warning directed to these servants only, but all are commanded to cast away their idle thoughts and excessive laughter, to pray and fast, and purify themselves so that the Lord may own them as his. See Doctrine and Covenants, page 238.

Let no one be deceived with the thought that the Lord's coming is yet a long way off, and that there is plenty of time; for a careful study of God's word, the indications of the signs of the times, also the intimations of God's Spirit, all indicate that Christ's coming is near, evidently much nearer than some suppose. The Lord says even to his own people, not withstanding that they are the children of the light, and that that day ought not to overtake them as a thief, yet he says to them, "In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." It certainly seems by this that Jesus will surprise many of his own people when he comes. Let us then prepare, and be ready, now, to welcome him.—Ed.

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