

Sunday Reading.

THE MINISTRY OF FLOWERS.

The Things that the Christian "Seeth in Himself and in the Flowers."

"And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, [whose seed was in itself after his kind: and God saw that it was good.]"

And so the flowers came of God's planting and have flourished and multiplied through the ages. My subject is a wide one—world wide—no country nor clime under the broad heavens but grows a flower. They twinkle on Alpine heights, and cover the valleys with a matchless beauty; they grow in varied hues and tints, in the land of the bond as of the free.

But we are perhaps all agreed as to the breadth of my subject—it is also deep. Some have called it a "flower of life," some have called it a "flower of heaven," some have called it a "flower of God." Do we dare to pass them by, as we study "The Word and Works of God?" It was never intended that any man, be he theologian or merchant prince, should be ignorant of the speech of flowers, and yet there are men whose souls have never opened to the beauty of a flower. Some one has said, "All Nature speaks, it men had but ears to hear."

Is there anything more suggestive of God's truth and purity, more capable of imparting rest and cheer, than a flower? A worshipper in one of our city churches once said, "Yes, flowers are splendid in churches; they keep one's eyes from spring bonnets."

A primrose by a river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

And yet he was feeling something of that subtle persuasive influence that draws our thoughts from sordid things, to the sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green;
and to

The land where everlasting spring abides
And never-withering flowers

We ask then if this be so, if through this avenue come rest, joy, and heavenly thoughts, how is it that the house of God so often goes unadorned, and the people unrefreshed? God planted a garden for Adam, "and out of the ground made the Lord God to grow, every tree that is pleasant to the sight." Can it be thought that the things God esteemed essential to the happiness and good of man should be disregarded by us?

How would some of our churches, with their shabby carpets and fading frescoes, tally with the one Solomon delighted to rear at the command of our God? "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious." Is it that in this century of effulgent, noon-day light, we are unwilling "to make the place of his feet glorious?" Is it that we lavish expenditures on our houses and persons, to the neglect of the church? Can it be that our houses are full of bloom, while the house of God lacks a blossom?

Do you say, it takes money? Truly, consistency, thou art a jewel." Dollars, and many of them, for the church's weekly supply of poisonous, air-tainting tobacco, while we begrudge thirty, forty, fifty cents a Sunday for a few of "God's fragrant sauls." If a full-toned organ can allure a soul within the Gospel sound, does it not pay? If a daisy preaches Christ, is it wasting money?

But some one is still doubting—do flowers preach? Is it not a mere pleasing of the senses? Let me tell of a New Hampshire rose. A lady, a King's Daughter, habitually visited the State prison once a week to read and talk with the inmates. She asked one day, if she had seen all the prisoners. "All but one," was the reply, "he is so hardened, he does not wish to see you." She went home, prayed about him, and then started out again, this time with a rose in her hand. He did not see me, she thought, I will send him the flower. She was refused as before, a flower was placed in his cell. He did not see the rose at first, but its perfume reached him; he turned quickly and took it—yes, it was the same rose that used to bloom in his mother's garden—such a rapt tender thought and feelings he had known since he was a boy. He contrived his position then, with his condition found a resolution was formed that was the beginning of many earnest, sober years.

Is an exception a case? We answer, no—no uplifting, upholding influence of a flower's yet unfinished. In closing, we would emphasize the attractive, drawing power of flowers, in the house of God. We feel that all people do not feel an equal appreciation of flowers. There are theologians, who would sigh for "Kun's Homiletics" in the garden of Eden; and speculators who would be unhappily about a Wall Street, both failing to see the things that the Christian "seeth in himself and in the flowers."

Charles Dickens wrote the following simple, touching prayer for his children, and the repeated light and morning: "Pray, O God, bless my dear papa, mamma, brothers and sisters, and auntie, and all my friends and friends. Make me a good little girl. Let me never be naughty or selfish, which is a man and shameful thing. Make me kind to my nurse and servants and to all poor people. Let me

never be cruel to any dumb creature; for if I am cruel to anything, even to a poor little fly, thou, who art so good, wilt never love me. Pray God to bless and preserve us this night and for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

BRIBERY AND ITS CORRUPTION.

Showing How the Devil Often Makes High Bids in High Places.

There is no sentiment more untrue or more dangerous than the oft repeated one, "Every man has his price." I do not believe it. Even heathenism and the dark ages have furnished specimens of incorruptibility. A cad of Smyrna had a case brought before him on trial. A man gave him five hundred ducats in bribery. The case came on. The briber had many witnesses. The poor man, on the other side, had no witnesses. At the close of the case the cad said: "This poor man has no witnesses, he thinks. I shall produce in his behalf five hundred witnesses against the other side." And then, pulling out the bag of ducats from under the ottoman, he dashed it down at the feet of the briber, saying: "I give my decision against you." Epaminondas when offered a bribe said: "I will do this thing if it be right, and if it be wrong all your goods cannot persuade me." Fabricius, of the Roman Senate, was offered a bribe by Pyrrhus, of Macedonia. Fabricius answered: "What an example this would be to Roman people! You keep your riches and I will keep my poverty and reputation." The President of the American Congress during the American Revolution, John Reed, was offered ten thousand guineas by foreign commissioners if he would betray his country. He replied: "Gentlemen, I am a very poor man, but tell your king he is not rich enough to buy me."

But why go so far when you and I, if we move in honorable society, know men and women who by all the concentrated forces of earth and hell could not be bribed. They would no more be bribed than you would think of tempting an angel of light to exchange heaven for the pit. To offer a bribe is villainy, but it is a very poor compliment to the man to whom it is offered. I have not much faith in those people who go about bragging how much they could get if they only would sell themselves. Those women who complain that they are often insulted need to understand that there is something in their carriage to invite insult. There are men in Washington, Albany and New York who would no more be approached by bribers than a pirate boat with a few cutlasses would dare to approach an American man-of-war with two banks of guns on each side loaded to the touch-hole. They are incorruptible men, and they are to be saved, and save the land. So that I scout the sentiment I often hear uttered, that "every man has his price." Much is said about "old-fashioned honesty," as though the past had a monopoly of righteousness and in our day everything were on the down grade. But my reading of history makes me think that old-fashioned honesty among public men was not much to boast of. This crime of bribery which, in one shape or another, is now being charged upon capitalists and officials, had its mightiest reign in the past. Sir Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor of England, founder of our modern philosophy, and author of "Novum Organum" and a whole library of books, the leading thinker of his century, so precocious that when a little child he was asked by Queen Elizabeth: "How old are you?" he responded: "I am two years younger than your Majesty's happy reign;" of whose oratory Ben Jonson wrote: "The tear of every man who heard him was lest that he should make an end"—having an income which you would suppose would have put him beyond temptation of bribery—\$36,000 a year—and Twickenham Court as a gift and princely estates of Hertfordshire and Cornbury, yet under this temptation of bribery falling into ruin and, on his confession of taking bribes, giving as an excuse that all his predecessors took them; he was fined \$200,000 and imprisoned in London Tower. So also Lord Chancellor Macclesfield fell. So also Lord Chancellor Waterbury perished. The first chapters in English, Irish, French, German and American politics were chapters of bribery. Instead of longing for the days of old-fashioned honesty, which were dishonest, let us long for a new and more consummate honesty than the world has ever yet seen. It is high time that the world have a court house, or a city hall, or a jail, or a post-office, or a hospital, or a railroad, that in its building has not involved a political job. The machinery of bad American politics is made up of five hundred wheels, and the cogs of these wheels play into a greater wheel, and this great centre wheel has a fire of railroad iron, and also a crank on which is the hand of Satan, and he turns the great wheel and that turns all the other five hundred smaller wheels in the machinery, while as a consequence of partial legislation and favoritism, the great masses of people find it harder and harder work to make a living.

In all departments of life steer clear of bribery. Every man or woman at some time will be tempted to do wrong for compensation. The bribe may not be offered in money; it may be offered in position. Let us remember that there is a day coming when the most secret transactions of private life and of public life will come up for public reprobation. The bribe is an everlasting possession. You take it for time. You take it for eternity.

PALEY'S CONVERSION.

It sometimes happens that the impulse to a change of life comes to us from an unexpected quarter. It was said that when Paley, who afterwards became distinguished as a philosopher and theologian, was a young man at Cambridge, he was for his first two years considerably given to society, and neglectful of the studies of the University. He was induced to change his course of life by a somewhat singular circumstance. One morning, which had succeeded an unprofitably spent evening, he was awakened at a very early hour by one of his idle companions, who addressed him somewhat in the following terms: "Paley, I have been thinking how foolish

you are. I could do nothing, probably were I to try; and can afford the life I lead: you could do everything; and cannot afford the life you lead. I have had no sleep during the whole night on account of these reflections, and am now come solemnly to inform you that, if you persist in your indolence, I must renounce your society." The remonstrance produced a wonderful effect. The appeal to Paley's pride, the prudential considerations urged, the unexpectedness of a rebuke from such a quarter, the time and circumstances of the visit, combined to rouse the young votary of pleasure. The greater part of that day he passed in meditating on the occurrence, and in forming plans for the future. The next saw his life change, and in due time he became a successful student and an earnest Christian.

REDEEMING THE CRIMINALS.

An Ex-Convict's Noble Work in Several American Cities.

There is a large class of criminals who pass their lives in a constant change between prison and the expectation of a new incarceration, with brief intervals of freedom. For such persons the greatest danger is at the moment of release. Their frequent resolves to lead "a new life" when once liberated, are, in a very large proportion of cases, bound to be well-nigh impossible of execution, since they cannot get work whereby they may earn an honest living. No one trusts them; the law-abiding world rigidly shuts them out while their own comrades alone receive them and claim them as their own, offering them food and clothing, shelter and money, as the price of a return to old associations and practices. The man very soon surrenders and becomes worse than before; more daring and more hopeless; thirsting for revenge on that society which rejected his true repentance.

Thousands of the worst criminals of modern times were Michael Dunn, a native of Manchester, England, who passed thirty-five years of his life in prison, in England and America. The son of criminal parents, he drifted naturally, as he says, into crime and was first arrested in 1834, when eight years old. He went from one prison to another, always hoping to reform, but always overcome by the fascination of stealing. He was converted in 1878, and since that time he has bent all his energies toward the rescue of ex-convicts. On January 13, 1879, he was reduced to the sum of two dollars. He pawned his watch and some clothing, and by that means raised fifteen dollars with which he rented the premises, No. 311 Water Street, for one month. Next day he called on three Christian gentlemen, and each gave him a five-dollar bill which helped to furnish his rooms. He made a fire, bought bread, tea, sugar, and scraps of meat, and cooked a pot of soup; then he went out and brought in six poor men—ex-convicts like himself—and spread his homely meal before them. He offered thanks to God and asked Him to bless their new "Home," and he has blessed it ever since. He did not know at that time what work to put the men to, for work they must; but he made a vow to God that no man should eat a second meal in the "Home" unless he worked for it, and he kept the vow.

The "Home" prospered wonderfully. In two years it afforded shelter and aid to 634 men. It was then transferred to No. 39 Bleeker street, and afterward to No. 40 East Houston street, where it was incorporated under the laws of the state of New York, in February, 1882. The work to which the men are put in the "Home" is the manufacture of brooms. They are afterward sent out to sell them.

Mr. Dunn has established similar homes in Philadelphia, San Francisco, Chicago and Detroit and was recently engaged to do a similar work for Brooklyn by Dr. LeLashur, superintendent and secretary of the city mission. No. 201 Livingston street was temporarily rented for the purpose and was opened on January 4, 1893.

The work has awakened the interest of the Christian congregations of that city. The city mission was established in 1832, and now employs eight city missionaries, a medical missionary whose whole time is given to the work, besides a chaplain for the jail and penitentiary, a missionary at the county building (where there are five thousand inmates) and another laboring among the sailors, ladies' auxiliaries and longshoremen. Its Ladies' Auxiliary has three missionaries doing special work, two more among the factory girls, and others visiting the police courts, to rescue young girls brought before the magistrates for the first time. The Society has eighteen missionary stations and one result of their work has been the establishment of eleven churches of different denominations, all now self-supporting. The City Mission has now crowned its work by opening the Industrial Home for ex-convicts. The plan is to obtain a building large enough to serve as a lodging-house for 150 men, a restaurant and work rooms, where at least 100 men can be employed in various capacities; also a mission hall to seat 200. The permanent location has not yet been settled but it will be in the neighborhood of City Hall. It will combine the work of the several stations in which the mission at present carries on its labors, viz.: the Home of Industry, at 261 Livingstone Street, the Lodging House for Men, at 246 Jay Street, the Helping Hand Night Mission, 283 Washington Street, and the Dispensary at the same place.

Those convicts who really show a desire to reform, are put to work, the men in Mr. Dunn's Home, and the women in the lodging-rooms of the Women's Home where they are taught to sew and cook, and after some weeks are sent out to private houses. The demand for such help is greater than the supply and the missionaries assert that of all they have received last year, not more than five have returned to the old life of sin and crime. This work of rescue will be continued in the new Home of the Mission. The work for the men will be the same as Mr. Dunn has now for his charges, the broom factory being in larger proportion than the demand and the means will allow. Besides this, other industries are planned, than the making of "jumpers," book-binding, shoe-making, all of course, of the simplest and cheapest kind.

For Deranged Nervous System USE HORSFORD'S ACID PHOSPHATE. Dr. Chas. Woodhouse, Rutland, Vt., says: "I have used it considerably, and can testify to its great value in functional derangements of the nervous system."

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At this season baby's security and salvation depends upon a daily diet of Lactated Food, the only prepared food that can take the place of mother's milk.

Lactated Food is the only infant nutriment that fully promotes baby's growth and healthy development; our best physicians are prescribing it daily, and sound its praises to every mother.

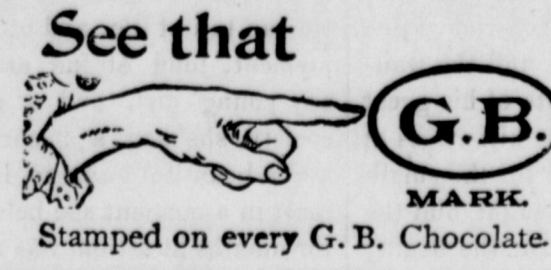
Mr. Geo. B. Thomson, of Fort Erie, Ont., tells how his infant son was saved by Lactated Food. He writes as follows: "When our baby Willie was two months old my wife was unable to nurse it owing to illness. Baby declined in health, and although attended to by our doctor, it grew weaker and seemed to pine away. After trying everything we could think of, we heard of Lactated Food, and gave it a trial. Before half a 25 cent tin was used baby was quite improved. Willie is now one year old, and has used a great deal of Lactated Food. He cut ten teeth during the hottest part of the summer, and we hardly knew he was cutting them; he has had no dysentery and is very fat and plump; all these good results we ascribe to Lactated Food. We wish you much prosperity in your work."

Messages of Help for the Week. "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified. But I am poor and needy; make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord make no tarrying." Psalm 70: 4, 5. "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." Micah, 7: 8. "O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy . . . and the Lord answered . . . me with good words and comfortable words. . . I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy, and I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease. . . Cry yet, saying . . . my cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion." Zechariah 1: 12-17.

"Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them . . . that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke 24: 45-46. "Let him that is taught of the word communicate." Galatians 6: 6. "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not of the law." Galatians 5: 18. "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." Ephesians 3: 14-19.

BUY

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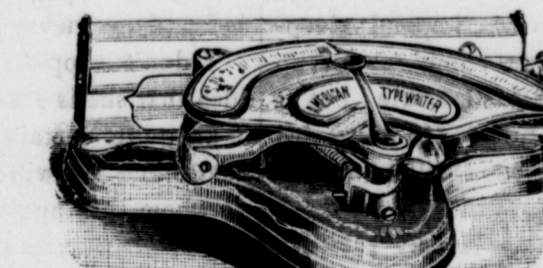
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