

Sunday Reading

THE RESERVED CHRISTIAN.

A dignified, benignant looking old gentleman, with one of the sweetest and most winning faces I ever saw, entered a church where I was worshipping with a friend one Sunday morning, and I mentally remarked that there, if outward evidences were to be trusted, was one of the saints who impregnate the earth with saving virtue. After the service I spoke to my friend about him, and he replied, 'Yes, that is Deacon K—, our senior deacon; as fine a character as you will find anywhere; upright, godly, noble minded, with a spotless reputation, but so reserved that no one of us has ever been able to get into real spiritual touch with him. I do not believe his reserve springs from spiritual pride, however, or from a sense of moral or intellectual superiority—in fact, I know it doesn't. There isn't a particle of egotism or arrogance in his make up. The fault is entirely a bad habit, rooted in natural timidity, and fostered by the foolish aloofness of those who stand in awe of the man's dignified and saintly presence. It is an almost ridiculous situation, when you come to think of it. He is afraid to approach us, and we are afraid to approach him, and yet both parties long to come into closer spiritual touch with one another. Haven't you observed altogether too much of this reactionary shyness among Christians? It floats around in every church like a big lump of ice. I was never in my life connected with a religious organization where there wasn't some of it.'

My friend's remark found corroboration in my own experience, and I at once recognized in Deacon K—the type of a class of men and women who are to be found in almost every church in the land.

The reserved Christian is a pathetic figure, more to be pitied than blamed, and yet not outside the province, or the reach of legitimate criticism and correction. He is indeed like a lump of ice, floating around in any religious body with which he may be connected. Godly though his life may be, upright, blameless, serene, and worthy the highest official honours the Church can bestow, his presence in a religious body is, nevertheless, chilling, dispiriting and sterilizing. His example and influence are potent in destroying the one thing that makes the Church vital and aggressive, its homogenous, organic character, its family relationship, its cor unum oneness of sympathy and purpose. A corps of men cannot move forward determinedly and spiritedly unless every man has some point of perceptible contact with his neighbour—the touch of the shoulder or of the hand, the feeling of perfect oneness, sympathy, mutual support. The reserved Christian creates a gap in the ranks of the Church Militant. He breaks the continuity of touch. On either side of him there is a weak place in the line. His comrades are dispirited, and there is left an unprotected and vulnerable point, where the enemy may easily break through.

But the reserved Christian is the easiest of all offenders to be won over, because his heart is ready and yearning for the opportunity. All that is needed to thaw this lump of ice is sufficient warmth in the surrounding medium. As I have said the environment of religious reserve is largely responsible for it. If a person is naturally shy and withdrawing in temperament, and if those about him encourage his aloofness, from a foolish fear of trespassing upon or offending his feeling, his personality, the blame of a confirmed bad habit rests largely with them. The timid, introspective, hermit-like Christian recoils, because he sees, or fancies he sees, a disposition in others to recoil from him. It is like two nervous persons, meeting in the street, and uncertain upon which side to pass one another. If one begins to dodge, the other is immediately thrown into a sort of vibratory panic, and so they start back and forth, with ever increasing demoralization of nerve and judgement, until, perhaps, an embarrassing collision is the result. The same kind of contagious revulsion seizes Christians when they give way too sensitively to each other's crochets and temperamental peculiarities. The only right and safe course is to be firmly and confidently, and, if need be, aggressively sympathetic. Make some positive and decided advance in the way of brotherliness and cordiality. That is the way to

win over your reserved Christian, and all other Christians who, for any reason, have backslidden or fallen into the background.

If the true Christian spirit is in one, he will always be responsive to Christian brotherliness. Should he resent the sympathy and cordiality that are the natural outgrowths of a loving communistic spirit, then he is plainly not of Christ's fold, but still unregenerate and in need of true conversion. Genuine, sincere love always responds to love. This reserved habit of life, this spiritual aloofness and withdrawing into oneself, are only awaiting to be approached and entreated by true brotherliness and sympathy, in order to give way to the deeper and sweeter and more congenial feelings of the heart. The stamp of wistfulness and longing is on every face like good old Deacon K's, and he who reads that yearning look might well not doubt that the warmth of true Christian sympathy can at any time melt the reserve of the most retiring soul.—James Buchanan.

The Impotent Man of Bethesda.

Jerusalem was plentifully supplied with baths and pools of all sizes, the remains of which had been discovered in modern times. The pool of Bethesda appears to have been formed by a mineral spring, the waters of which contained curative properties considered good for diseases of the rheumatic order: and therefore a crowd of such patients were to be seen in its five porches. What the aspect of the crowd was can easily be imagined by anyone who had seen those gathered to take advantage of the mineral waters at places like Harrogate and Strathpeffer. Apparently, however, the virtues of Bethesda were intermittent, dependent on a moving of the waters which took place at intervals. Such a phenomenon is one unknown in mineral springs at the present day. Professor Tholuck mentions a place or resort visited by him in Germany, where the water bubbled up at a certain hour owing to a strong escape of the gas with which it was impregnated, and the hour when this took place was considered the favorable one for bathing. It was in accordance with the notions of the time that this motion should be attributed to an angel who came down at a certain hour and troubled the water. But the sentences of St. John in which it is ascribed to this cause are an interpolation not found in the best manuscripts and omitted in the Revised Version.

This resort of the miserable was a natural place for Christ to be found in; and he addressed himself to what was probably the most desperate case in the whole crowd—that of a man who had been for thirty-eight years in the grasp of disease. It is not said that he had been all that time frequenting the pool; but he had been at least a long time there. He received, however, no benefit, because he was too prostrate to step quickly in at a favorable moment, and he had no friends to put him in; so that another stepped in before him. This complaint seems to show that the paralysis extended to his mind as well as his body. Prolonged suffering had reduced him to despair, and he had no hope of betterment. It was to stir the smoking flask of hope within him that Jesus asked: 'Wilt thou be made whole?' Some have suggested that it might be to test the reality of his suffering. He might be a confirmed beggar, who did not even want to be restored to a condition in which he would have to work. This, however, is unlikely. The question of Jesus was his kind way of commencing the transaction which was to follow, and contained no insinuation against the patient's honesty. It must, however, be confessed that, when applied spiritually, this question does contain a suggestion that the patient may be unwilling. 'Wilt thou be made whole?' Jesus says to every sinner; but, though it is an infinitely greater mercy he is offering than that which he proposed to the impotent man, there are multitudes who are unwilling. They are unwilling to be delivered from the habits of their sinful life and the enjoyment of their lusts; and they are unwilling to take up the cross daily and follow Christ. Is this not also the great difficulty of sanctification? The Saviour asks everyone who is to any extent under the domination of Sin, 'Wilt thou be made whole?' If we were thoroughly willing, there would be difficulty in the thing being done. But Jesus is sadly saying, 'Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.'

This man was willing. Whereupon he heard from the lips of Christ the three commands: 'Arise—take up thy bed—and walk.' Have not these words an imperial sound? They are the commands of Omnipotence. Not one of these things could the man do before then: he could not rise; still less could he carry a burden; and least of all could he walk thus encumbered. But the command of Jesus had creative force, and he who heard it could do all

Lost flesh lately?
Does your brain tire?
Losing control over your nerves?

Are your muscles becoming exhausted?
You certainly know the remedy. It is nothing new; just the same remedy that has been curing these cases of thinness and paleness for twenty-five years. Scott's Emulsion. The cod-liver oil in it is the food that makes the flesh, and the hypophosphites give tone to the nerves.

Soc. and \$1.00, all druggists.
SCOTT & BOWNE, Chemists, Toronto.

things through Christ strengthening him. This is a lively parable of faith. An unsaved sinner is just as impotent to believe or do anything that is good, but, when he listens to the voice of Christ, everything becomes possible.

The man now knew who Jesus was, and he went straight and told the authorities. In what light are we to look upon this act? Was it done in the innocence of simplicity, or was it due to pride in Jesus, or was the motive malicious? At all events, the result was to bring down on the head of Jesus the bitter opposition of the Jews, who charged him with being a Sabbath-breaker. His reply on this occasion is perhaps the finest of the many noble answers he gave on various occasions to this charge: 'My father worketh hitherto, and I work,' he said. This gives us, like many of his sayings, a glance into the deep workings of his mind with the Old Testament Scriptures, in which he saw profound and subtle meanings which had never been seen before. Evidently he had been thinking of the creation narrative in the first chapter of Genesis, where, after six days' work, God rests the seventh day. The rabbi thought that, when the six days' work was done, the Creator's rest meant idleness, the world being allowed to go for the future by itself.

But Jesus saw deeper. Even the rest of the Creator is a kind of work. It includes the sustaining of the world in being and the direction of all the natural forces which minister to its well-being. Jesus felt his own works, and especially his miracles, to be in harmony with this beneficent presence and providence of God in his own creation. God does not suspend his providence on the Sabbath day, and neither did Jesus need to interrupt his course of beneficence. But his enemies saw in this magnificent apology only a daring act of blasphemy. It seemed to them that he was making himself equal with God. Shall we say that they understood or misunderstood him? If we read the discourse which follows, we must say that in one sense they were right enough. As St. Augustine remarks, the Jews understood better than the Arians. They were right in interpreting his claim, though they woefully failed to comprehend with what justice he made the claim.

The morning in the gate of the day, and should be well guarded with prayer. It is one end of the thread on which the day's actions are strung and should be well knotted with devotion. If we felt more the majesty of life we should be more careful of its mornings. He who rushes from his bed to his business and waiteth not to worship is as foolish as though he had not put on his clothes, or cleansed his face, and as unwise as though he dashed into battle without arms or armor. Be it ours to bathe in the softly flowing river of communion with God, before the heat of the wilderness and the burden of the way begin to oppress us.—Spurgeon.

Precious Memories.

The sweetest and happiest homes—homes to which men in weary life look back with yearnings too deep for tears; homes whose recollections linger round our manhood like light and the sunshine and the sweet air, into which no base things can intrude—are homes where brethren dwell together in unity; where, because all love God, all love their brothers also; where, because all are very dear to all, each is dearer to each than to himself.

A clergyman tells a good story in which he had a hand. It is his rule, he says, to use the plainest words possible in his sermons—a habit which might, by way of contrast, strike some congregations very forcibly. Once, after preaching in a strange church, he received a heartfelt eulogium, for the next day a sweep had been in church was asked what he thought of the visiting clergyman. 'I like him,' he replied; 'he don't use no grammatical words.'

Very Polite, Indeed.

The people of Dresden are very polite, so over polite that they not infrequently bring down ridicule upon themselves. It used to be told in that city that a stranger one day was crossing the great bridge that spans the Elbe, and asked a native to direct him to a certain church which he wished to find.

'Really, my dear sir,' said the Dresden bowing low, 'I grieve greatly to say it, but I cannot tell you.'

The stranger passed on, a little surprised at this voluble answer to a simple question. He had proceeded but a short distance when he heard hurried footsteps behind him, and turning round, saw the same man running to catch up with him. In a moment his pursuer was at his side, his breath nearly gone, but enough left to say, hurriedly: 'My dear sir, you asked me how you could find the church, and it pained me to have to say that I did not know. Just now I met my brother, but I grieve to say that he did not know either.'

Not the Kind of Chest he Thought.

An Irish judge was trying a case in which a man was indicted for robbery, and the first witness was the young son of the man whose house had been entered by burglars. He identified the prisoner, and stated that he saw him enter the house and smash his father's chest.

'Do you say that the prisoner at the bar broke your father's chest?' said the judge, in astonishment.

'He did, my lord,' answered the boy. 'He jumped on it till he smashed it entirely.'

The judge turned to the Crown counsel and said: 'How is this? Why is not the prisoner indicted for murder? If he smashed this poor man's chest in the way the witness has described, he must surely have killed him.'

'But,' said the counsel, 'it was a wooden chest.'

HER LIFE WAS SAVED

Sent Home From the Hospital To Die.

YET DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS SAVED EDNA RATHBURN—HER CASE WAS ONE IN A THOUSAND—TORTURED BY DIABETES—A REMARKABLE CURE.

HAMPSHIRE, N. B. Mar. 27.—If ever any remedy for human ills was put to a stringent test, in practical experience, that medicine is Dodd's Kidney Pills. The test was the case of little Edna Rathburn, of this place.

The case is still fresh in the memory of the inhabitants of York County, for it was the principal topic of discussion throughout the country, for weeks.

Six years ago, Edna, who was then only two years old, met with a terrible accident, two of her ribs being torn from her spine. The fractured ends refused to 'knit.' The child could not straighten her body, but was bent almost double, and could walk only with the greatest pain and difficulty.

Diabetes set in, and her sufferings were terrible to witness. Night and day she was in the most awful agony. The doctors could do nothing to relieve her, and advised that she be sent to the St. John Hospital. The surgeons there said the case was hopeless. They sent her home again, with the advice to give her the greatest care as that was all that could be done for her.

In despair, Mrs. Rathburn one day decided to try Dodd's Kidney Pills which would help the child. They did. Day by day she improved under their influence, till after a time came perfect health. Not a vestige of Diabetes was left.

Now, Mrs. Rathburn says: 'Our child's life was saved solely by Dodd's Kidney Pills.'

Sufferers from Diabetes who read of this case can rest assured that they will find a cure just as surely as did little Edna Rathburn, in Dodd's Kidney Pills.

To Rival the Great Wheel.

The Sherman umbrella, devised for the Paris Exposition in 1900 as a rival of the Great Wheel, consists of a gigantic steel structure three hundred and fifty feet high, built on the principle of an umbrella. To the steel beams which act as ribs are fastened ten cars, carrying three hundred and fifty passengers, and, as the umbrella is opened by hydraulic pressure, the cars are carried up. When the top is reached the umbrella will revolve. The spread of the ribs will be two hundred and fifty feet.

An Easter Greeting.

For those who have thought that catarrh is incurable and to whom the constant use of snuffs and ointments was almost unbearable. Catarrh comes as a sure and delightful cure. No need for fetid breath, broken voice, and drooping in the throat. Send for Catarrh and be convinced. Outfit, \$1.00. Sample bottle and inhaler, 10 cents.

N. C. POLSON & Co.,
Kingston, Ont.

Varies in Weight.

Milk is a deceptive article so far as weight is concerned. In a herd of fifty cows samples of milk can be taken from individual animals that show extraordinary variations when placed upon the scales. The milk from one cow will weigh two pounds to one and one-half quarts, while her neighbor produces milk which weighs two pounds to one and one-half pints. It does not seem to make much difference what the breed is or how much milk they

Take B.B.B. This Spring.

'Twill purify the system—Give you strength and energy.'

Very few people escape the enervating influence of spring weather.

There is a dullness, drowsiness and inaptitude for work on account of the whole system being clogged up with impurities accumulated during the winter months.

The liver is sluggish, the bowels inclined to be constipated, the blood impure, and the entire organism is in need of a thorough cleansing.

Of all 'Spring Medicines,' Burdock Blood Bitters is the best.

It stimulates the sluggish liver to activity, improves the appetite, acts on the bowels and kidneys, purifies and enriches the blood, removes all poisonous products, and imparts new life and vigor to those who are weak and debilitated.

7 Big Boils. Mr. Wm. J. Hepburn writes from Centuria, Ont.: 'I can sincerely say that Burdock Blood Bitters is the best spring medicine on the market. Last spring my blood got out of order, and I had seven or eight good sized boils come out on my body, and the one on my leg was much larger than an egg. I got a bottle of Burdock Blood Bitters, and inside of six days, when only half the bottle was taken, there wasn't a boil to be seen. I have recommended B.B.B. to different people in our village, and all derived benefit from it. I wish B.B.B. every success, as it is indeed a great medicine for the blood.'

B.B.B. is a highly concentrated vegetable compound—teaspoonful doses—add water yourself.

produce. The milk is a little higher in summer than in winter. It is hardly possible to find a dozen cows whose milk will weigh alike, but when mixed, if there are not too many in the lot that give very heavy milk it will weigh two pounds to a good full quart every time.

'Bread and Cheese.'

Some years ago a football match was being played between teams representing Great Willey and Ombersley, on the ground of the former, which club, as a nickname, was called 'The Bread and Cheese Club.'

For a time play ruled very even, but at last the visitors began to gain the upper hand, and were penning the homesters in, when one of the crowd shouted, 'Play up, Bread and Cheese!'

One of the visitors' half-backs, whom they were calling Woggon, not knowing what it meant, turned to his comrades, and, amid roars of laughter, said:—

'Knock off, you chaps; don't play any more. That fellow over there's been looking in my pockets in the dressing room.'

In Which List are you?

Of 1,000 women at the age of 20 940 live ten years more, thus making the chance at the age of 20 of a woman living to the age of 30 about 16 to 1 in favor of living. Similarly, of 1,000 women living at the age of 30, 806 live twenty years more; the chance at the age of 30 of a woman living to the age of 50 being, therefore, about 5 to 1 in favor of living. Again, of 1,000 women at the age of 50, 250 live twenty years more—i. e. 25 in 100 live to the age of 70, and 75 in 100 do not; the chance at the age of 60 of a woman living to 80 being 1 in 4.

Just a Theory.

The bootless atrocity of the crime was what fascinated us.

'Why,' we asked ourselves, again and again, 'should a man whose only purpose was robbery, go out of his way to murder the entire family, thus?'

It was the haggard person with the thin chest who had a theory.

'Possibly,' he suggested, in a fearsome whisper, 'The fellow had barked his shins against bicycles in the front hall!'

Built of Zinc.

Beiar, the mushroom city of Portuguese East Africa, may be called a city of zinc. All the houses, all the hotels and public building, barracks and warehouses, are built of zinc. So great has been the speculation in building and so urgent the need for supplying the inhabitants with cheap and speedily erected dwellings that a city has been built up in six months. Thousands of tons of zinc from France, England and America supplied the material.

The Largest Standing Army.

Russia possesses the largest standing army on earth. Every year some 280,000 conscripts join the Russian forces, which in time of peace number 1,000,000 men. On a war-footing this rises to 2,500,000 and calling out the reserves would increase it to 6,947,000 well-trained soldiers. Should necessity arise, the militia would be called out, bringing the Czar's forces up to 9,000,000 men.

Captain (to belated passenger who has suddenly appeared on the deck of the abandoned ship): 'Jump, man! Jump, quick! Don't you see she is going down?'

Passenger: 'Is my wife saved?'

Captain: 'Yes.'

Passenger: 'Well, good-bye. I can't spend the rest of my life explaining why I let her take this steamer.'

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