

## Sunday Reading

A STUDY OF THE PARABLES.

Topics for Last Sunday 'Prayer That Obtains.'

'Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.'

'Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will do justice by her lest she wear me out by her continual coming.'

Importunity is realistic faith in the case on trial. The word has gotten into disrepute by keeping bad company, but deserves the most respectful treatment at the hands of students of these parables.

In social life, not all, but very much, depends upon one's own faith in his own proposition. The commercial traveler who believes in his goods, sells many. The mechanic who believes in his trade gets work. The engineer who believes in his track and his engine and his train despatcher makes time. The lawyer who believes in his opinion makes the most of it. The doctor who believes in his drug gives it other potency. The preacher who believes in his message makes converts.

We are dealing wholly with conduct. The goods may be inferior; the trade poor; the track unsafe; the opinion unsound; the drug worthless; the message ridiculous; but in any given race the actual believer, however humble, distances the mere experimenter in the doctrine, however great. 'According to your faith be it unto you.'

Herein lies the difference between the Anti-Saloon league and the Prohibition party. One is a beggar, the other a soldier. One opportunizes the other importunes. One goes to the twins of corruption in politics and says; 'The liquor traffic is tearing down our homes, putting our sons in the galleys and ravishing our girls. Rise and help for Jesus' sake!' The twins answer: 'We are in bed and our gang is resting. Go away!' And it goes, muttering cheap threats about 'the best man,' while meditating new surrenders of manhood in order to 'keep in' with the crowd that ignores or despises it. The other breaks the windows and will break in the door. In theory the two are quite alike in purpose, but one shows importunity, the other whimpertunity.

The cases of the unwilling lender and the unjust judge are not good illustrations for today. They are too complicated in both motive and action. But doubtless they were very familiar matters to those who listened and were used for that reason. Those who heard could instantly recall a borrowing or a lawsuit and see the point that Jesus was making, without any of the confusion one feels in an analysis of the incidents, second-hand.

They will be clearer to us if we approach the mirror from the obverse side and in the first person. I am in bed and asleep with my children, and ought to be for I am very tired and the children have been troublesome. There is a sharp rap on the door. I start up confused and annoyed, and see through the window, by the stars that it is after midnight. My children are all in. This call is not for my benefit. It is a pretty time of night to be called up! I shall not answer, and the man will pass on. But even while this thought is thinking the noise has left the door. The window rattles as if it had an ague, and my name is called. The voice sounds familiar. At any rate I shall have to answer, but I shall let the fellow know that he has taken the wrong way to get a favor from me. I call sternly, 'Who is there?' The man answers: 'Friend lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine, in his journey has come to me and I have nothing to set before him. Now, this is an imposition. I know the voice. The man is my friend, but I don't feel called upon for that reason, to turn out at midnight and furnish him bread. But I know Bottenweiser. He is an honest man, and very set. He would not have come if he had not felt that he had a right to expect the favor, and he will stay till morning if I don't give him the bread or explain why not. I open the door and say: 'All right, old man, how many? Three? Better take four, hadn't you?' Because of his importunity I will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Or, I am an oriental justice of the peace. I am solid with the viceroys. I neither fear God nor regard man. A widow brings her suit. She is poor and her matter something small, but pitiful. I have no time for her. I will ignore her pleading and let her go away. She returns the second day and stays all day. I tell

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her to clear out, but when court closes she is there. It is so every day. I have no fear of God. I care nothing for man or woman. Justice is nothing to me. But I will take up this case, lest by her continual coming she wear me out.'

When you go to borrow, don't beg! When you go to court, don't whine! When you pray, believe in your case. If you doubt your right, don't ask. If you think you ought to obtain, stand by your right too, and don't go wheezing and fiddling and giving the thing up before you get it asked for. Try your case for all there is in it. 'Come boldly to the throne of the heavenly grace.' 'Come now and let us reason together.' If you have the right you are entitled to the victory. A right desire is the prescience of supply already coming. Whatever you want, on the basis of Jesus Christ, you want, because God has provided it for you from the foundation of the world. 'For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.'

Then what is the use of praying? Precisely the same use there is of a leaf keeping on the right side of its bough to get the most sunlight.

A maple leaf the size of a squirrel's ear looks upward out of a wilderness of gray trunks and branches, and in the chlorophyll language prays: 'O, Sun, Thou art my Creator, my preserver, my benefactor, my father, my God. Hear my prayer! I am afraid, speak to me! I am alone; draw near to me! There is no other green thing in this icy forest, make other leaves to grow! I am so weak, give me thy strength I try to grow, but there is no sap in this bough; feed me! I am cold, send the south wind! This bough is rough, give me a longer stem! I am lonely, send birds to sing to me of the joy of liberty and mates and love! For time is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.' But the sun says not a word, nor pauses, but itself founders in a black, flying storm. It grows darker, colder, lonelier. The wind keeps in the East. The leaf drinks the last drop of sap. It has not grown at all, preceptibly. Away down at the west edge of the earth the sun crawls out of the clouds, bloody and wounded unto death, and falls from the sky. It is night. Where is the leaf? Right where it was before, IMPORTUNING. And so, the next day, and the next. If the sun were asleep in bed with all his stars the call of the leaf would waken him. If the sun were dead to justice the face of the leaf would wear him out. He is not asleep. He is not dead. But the leaf has got no answer to its prayer—it thinks it has not.

Meanwhile, away down in the bowels of the earth rivers of sweet sap are rising in filament and root, ready presently to flow a supernatural cataract of ambrosia up to the tree top. The wind has shifted south. Two red-breasted birds are building a nest so close that the leaf can touch it. The stem is longer, surely. And while the leaf wonders, behold, summer! The prayer is answered above all that any leaf could ask or think—'according to the power that worketh in leaves.'

Praying is simply opening up toward God, day by day. There is no question of getting an answer. The answer has been written in you and worketh. Work it out! Stand up for your rights before God. If he would not hear you for love or for justice, he must hear you and do right by you to save Himself.

Moody No Faith Curiat.

Dr. Dwight L. Moody, who died last week offered a gratifying contrast to many of his cloth, especially revivalists, in his appreciation of regular medicine and his antipathy to quacks. In speaking of a prominent Christian Scientist, or faith heal-

er, or what-not, in Chicago, whose offences against humanity and common sense are many and notorious, he praised medicine as the noblest of professions after that of the ministry. 'Never yet,' he said, 'in all my years of work have I called upon an able doctor, telling him of the sickness and need of some poor friendless person, that he did not at once go to the rescue, without money and without price. Some of the noblest men I ever knew have gone out as medical missionaries, devoting their lives to doing good with the skill and healing medicines the Lord has conferred upon them.' 'These are the men,' he continued 'who are called devils by the faith healers,' but he prayed God to forgive those guilty of such slander.

'God heals,' he said, 'through doctors and through medicines. Do not be carried away through ravings of fanaticism. We have a new 'ism' in America about every year—beware of the 'isms'! What would I do if I fell sick? Get the best doctor in Chicago, trust to him and trust to the Lord to work through him. The doctors have done wonders as their knowledge has grown; they have reduced the dangers of death from diseases that once slew all they touched; and the doctors, if God helps them, will yet find a way to stop the ravages of other terrors.'

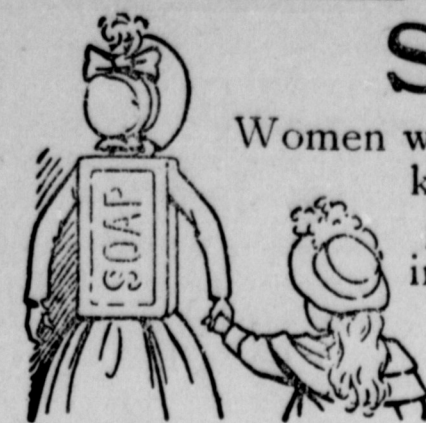
### A YANKEE PRIVATEER'S LOG

Capt. Nicoll's Cruise in the North Sea in 1813.

In the Sun of Dec. 10 there were printed two letters, relating to events of the past, from a collection of unpublished family papers. Contained in the same collection is the log or journal of the Captain of the privateer Scourge during part of the War of 1812, also the letter of marque or commission of the vessel, issued by James Madison, President of the United States, and countersigned by James Monroe, Secretary of State. This document informs us that the schooner Scourge was of 248 38 95 tons burden, owned by Peter Schenck and Frederick Jenkins of the city of New York mounting fifteen carriage guns and navigated by 100 men. It authorizes Capt. Samuel G. Nicoll, her Commander, John Doane Lieutenant and the other officers and crew thereof, to subdue or seize any armed or unarmed British vessel, public or private, when found within the jurisdictional limits of the United States, or elsewhere, or within the waters of the British dominions.

Capt. Nicoll interpreted this paper in the broadest sense, for without consideration of the peril that his audacity might involve, he proceeded to the North Sea and made English waters the theatre of his harassment of British commerce. That he was not destroyed or captured may be attributed either to superior seamanship or to luck. Apparent recklessness invited his capture for he showed no diffidence in opening fire on everything within his legal right to attack, from an armed merchantman to a fifty-gun frigate. His zeal in this direction led him to engage the United States frigate President, commanded by Commodore Rodgers, upon which he came unexpectedly in a fog and which he mistook for an English man-of-war.

The log of the Scourge, as becomes a document of the sea, has a weather-beaten appearance. Many of its pages are stained with salt water and mildew. Some of the entries are almost undecipherable, an indication that there were times when impending events unsteadied the hand of even peerless Capt. Nicoll. On May 26, 1813, the Scourge was anchored in Long Island Sound in company with the United States ships United States, Macedonian and Hornet. These vessels were collected awaiting information concerning some English men-of-war reported between Block Island and Montauk Point. At 1 p. m. the



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sloop Bearer from the Vineyard was hailed and reported that three English ships composed the cruising squadron. There upon the scourge and the American war ships got under way and proceeded toward the eastern entrance of the Sound. On the way a sloop from Block Island and a revenue cutter were spoken. They stated that the enemy's vessels consisted of two 74's and a frigate. On the morning of May 27 the four Americans sailed to the eastward in a stiff east-north-east gale, the Scourge, as the log says, beating 'the States ships, hull down.' With small regard to the proximity of the British men-of-war, on the evening of May 28, in a fresh gale from northeast, a favorable wind for the enemy to intercept craft passing out at sea between Block Island and Montauk Point, Capt. Nicoll's log makes this record:

'At 6 p. m. landed the sound pilot on Fisher's Island. Spoke the Ranger from the Vineyard. No information of the English ships. At 7 p. m. passed Race Rock and stood out to sea. At 9 p. m. Montauk Point bore southwest distant two miles. At 10 30 a. m. 29th, discovered a sail about one point on the weather bow. In square sail and hauled our wind; at 12 made her a brig standing to the eastward. Eads stiff gales and a high sea, nothing in sight but the brig.'

On June 5 the Scourge was in chase of a schooner discover the day before. When within long gunshot the crew were called to quarters, it being discovered that the stranger was armed. When within pistol shot the vessel was hailed and proved to be an American from Philadelphia seven days out, having evaded the vigilance of the Delaware blocking squadron, and bound for France. On Monday, June 28 the Scourge was off the coast of Norway, where the first capture was made, an English bark in ballast from London for Archangel. A prize crew was put on board with orders to proceed to Drontheim. On July 14, an English ship mounting eight guns was taken after a short action in which no one was injured.

By Sunday, July 18, the Scourge had worked well to the southward and was on the cruising ground of English ships of war. At 9 A. M. she sighted a vessel to the northeast, with a brig nearby. It being foggy Capt. Nicoll determined to venture within gunshot of the stranger to establish her identity. The more easily to discover it he opened fire, when he was promptly disilluminated, for he found that he was engaging a ship of war, which hove about and stood for him. The Scourge managed to elude the warship and work well to the windward. Certain indications impressed Capt. Nicoll that his supposed enemy was an American frigate. He signalled with the private code with which all privateers and national vessels are supplied. The reply being favorable the Scourge ran down under the stranger's lee when he was hailed by Commodore Rodgers, who informed him that the supposed enemy he had engaged was the United States frigate President. Capt. Nicoll was ordered to come aboard and explain what led him to think he could successfully cope with a fifty gun frigate. Capt. Nicoll's explanations were evidently satisfactory, for after sinking an English brig one of several that the President had treated in the same way, both ships started in company on a cruise.

On July 20 they discovered two sails to the southward. Chase was made with crews at quarters. When almost within gunshot, the weather being hazy, the strangers were discovered to be an English line-of-battle ship and a frigate. This was more than Commodore Rodgers looked for and the Americans promptly hauled their wind and the chasers became the chased. The Americans, however, had the advantage of their enemies, for at 9 a. m. on July 21 the President was out of sight to the leeward, and at 9.30 the two Englishmen had disappeared.

On August 2 the Scourge had a narrow escape from capture. The log records the incident in these words: 'Saw a sail bearing south southeast, which gave chase to us. Out boats and pulled away with our sweeps, but she bringing up the wind with her neared us fast. Wet our sails; started

twenty five casks of water; hove overboard most of our ballast and cut away the small bower and kedge from the bows. Discovered the chase to be a two-decker man-of-war. She keeping up well to windward nearly becalmed our sails. The chaser fired several shot that fell short. At 11 a. m. she showed English colors and gave us a gun. Kept the sweeps going and encouraged the men. At 10 p. m. got the weather gauge of the ship; gave her long Tom—the forward gun—and its contents, when a thick fog came on and a fresh breeze with it. In sweeps at 11 p. m. Squared the yards; made all possible sail and stood for the land.'

In the meantime the Scourge had been joined by the privateer brig Rattlesnake. These two made their station on the coast of Norway, at Drontheim, cruising thence to the southward to the mouth of the Elbe, in order to intercept British shipping trading between England and Baltic ports. This field of operations yielded a considerable harvest of prizes. On Aug 19 the privateers sighted two vessels. The Rattlesnake started in pursuit of one, an unarmed bark, while the scourge chased a brig, which proved to be armed and capable of putting up a stiff fight. The enemy did not seek to escape, but hove up into the wind and awaited the coming of the Scourge. The engagement that followed was another example of the conditions that have invariably contributed to American success in naval actions—superior seamanship, a more speedy and more easily handled vessel, guns of greater range and more accurate marksmanship. These qualities dominated on the present occasion. Capt. Nicoll held the weather-gauge, where, beyond the reach of the enemy's guns, he pounded him with his bow-chaser until, unable to make effective reply or to escape through superior speed, the Englishman struck his colors and surrendered. The capture proved to be the armed brig Burton on a cruise. With six vessels the result of their joint operations, the two privateers proceeded to Drontheim, where one of the captured brigs was turned into a prison ship for the detention of the crews of the prizes.

From Drontheim the two privateers sailed to the southward to endeavor to cut off stragglers from the English convoys bound in and out of the Baltic. Foul weather separated the Rattlesnake and scourge. The latter arrived first at the cruising ground, just in season to cut off a brig that had fallen off to leeward of a convoy bound south. An English frigate that was bringing up at the rear of the merchant fleet, detected the object of the Scourge and started in pursuit. Captain Nichols, however, followed his prey until after dark, under cover of night and almost within gunshot of the frigate, he captured the vessel, which proved to be the brig Economy loaded with tar, bound from Archangel to Chatham. With three more prizes to their credit, the Rattlesnake and the Scourge sailed for Drontheim, where they arrived safely on Sept. 16, 1813.

The log of the Scourge ends abruptly with the entry of Sept. 18, 1813. The fragment of a diary kept by an American who evidently acted as an agent for the Scourge at Drontheim indicates that serious dissensions arose between the officers and the crew of that vessel and those of the Rattlesnake. Some of the former appear to have met with a violent end. For there is a hint of duels and fierce fights between the crews of the two vessels. What was the ultimate fate of either of them there is no record. Enough, however has been extracted from the log of the Scourge to show the fearlessness and resourceful character of American seamen in the early years of the century. Recent events prove that those qualities have undergone no deterioration.

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Mr. Thomas Ash, an old resident of Renfrew, Ont., spoke as follows:

'I am 72 years of age, and have been troubled for a number of years with pains across my back. When I would stoop over it gave agonizing pain to straighten up. I was so bad that I could scarcely walk. I have taken many kinds of medicines, but got nothing to help me. Being recommended to try Doan's Kidney Pills I got a box. After taking three doses I noticed a great change for the better, and I can now get around as smart as a cricket. I can split my own wood and am, in fact, just like a new man.'