

**"Covered with His Feathers."**

BY REV. FREDERICK T. SNELL.

One of the most trying times in the history of our beloved Fatherland may be said to have been that period that marked the close of the Russian War and the commencement of the Mutiny in India. With industry paralyzed, bread one shilling a four pound loaf, reducing thousands all over the country to a state of semi-starvation, there was added yet another horror to the already over-burdened nation in a terrible visitation of Asiatic Cholera.

Just about this time there came from the county of Cornwall to London a young carpenter, bringing with him a wife and five young children, the oldest only about seven or eight years, the youngest an infant in arms.

The first few days in the Metropolis were spent in the home of a friend, then employment having been found, housekeeping was commenced on their own account in three rooms that had been rented in a large tenement house. The apartments had been taken by our hero in the early morning, while on his way to work. He had either not noticed, or if noticed, was ignorant of the meaning, a large black flag hanging suspended above the roadway, at the further end of the street, this was put there by the local authorities to warn people from travelling that way, for wherever that flag was hung meant "Cholera here!" When our hero returned from work that night he hastily gathered his trunks and other things together, and accompanied by wife and children took possession of their rooms—in other words literally walked into a death trap.

His Irish landlady welcomed the family, but herself seemed nervous and ill at ease, and she explained that that morning the upstairs lodger, Patrick Maloney had left home for Blackwell, there to embark on an emigrant ship timed to go out with the tide that evening, bound for Australia.

A few hours after this a message came to the heart-broken wife, summoning her to the side of her husband who had been stricken down with cholera shortly after his arrival at the Docks.

Tired after a hard day's work the man fell into a sound sleep only to be awakened from the same about 10 o'clock that night by a child's voice saying between her sobs:

"Oh please do come up stairs, Mamma has gone to Papa and Anne is so ill, and I don't know what to do."

Hastily dressing himself the man hurried up-stairs, where he found one of the children dying of cholera, and the rest looking sick and frightened.

He at once aroused the landlady who refused to do as much as enter the room—then he summoned a physician who said, "Nothing could be done for her, she was beyond human help," he would acquaint the Local Authorities, who would doubtless remove them all to the hospital in the morning—and with that he left.

Going down stairs to his wife he explained the terrible situation, said he—"I can't leave them to die like dogs. I expect my remaining there will mean that you and my self and my children will all be taken—but if it must be, it must be—better to die, Mary, than to live in after years with the knowledge that I left those poor children, to fight the battle of death alone. "Do you go to bed, pray to the Almighty for protection," and back to his post he went.

One o'clock and the child died. Four o'clock came and yet another of the children passed away. Six o'clock and the woman returned with the news that her husband was dead before she arrived at the Docks. By eight o'clock two more passed away and before ten o'clock that night the other two were taken, but the man bravely stood by his post laid out the dead for burial, for no one now would come near the house, and then at midnight after a ceaseless vigil of twentyfour hours, during which he had scarcely broken his fast or slept—he knelt beside this poor woman to implore the help and blessing of God upon her, who, the night before had husband and six children to call her own, but who now stood alone in the world bereft of all.

But how wondrously true in its application to the hero of the story are the words of the ninety first Psalm, for neither he, his wife, or their children suffered during the cholera visitation. God had covered them with His feathers and though the pestilence had come up into this man's dwelling yet had the Lord delivered them from the "snare of the fowler," and although the hero of this true story never imagined for a moment that he had done anything worthy of commendation, yet after events proved that the Lord thought otherwise, for before this man had been in the metropolis five years he had by the blessing of God risen from journeyman carpenter to be one of London's largest contractors.

**Thy Will be Done.**

How often as we travel along the journey of life, meeting with the trials and disappointments, we who are Christians try to say "Thy will be done". We say it feeling that we must. Christ has taught us this, there-

fore we must follow his example. But how many can say with the Psalmist, "I delight to do Thy will, Oh my God?" It is quite easy for our lips to frame the words but it seems hard to go about with a cheerful countenance in the midst of trials and afflictions. Christ said to his disciples—"In the world ye shall have tribulations; but be of good cheer I have overcome the world." And again—"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Here we learn if we would be meek and lowly followers of Jesus we must wear the yoke, and we have also the assurance that is easily borne. God's word is full of precious promises for those who are called to pass through the furnace. In fact it is one of the surest evidences that we are His children. Every branch which beareth fruit He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. So then these light afflictions are only blessings in disguise, that are daily drawing us nearer to Him; nor will this work of refining be complete until Christ's own image be stamped upon our brow; and the world will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. To the young Christian I would say; do not expect to get through life without meeting with disappointments for they will be many. We must first "bear the cross" if we would "wear the crown." No loyal soldier sits idly down hoping the sound of battle may never reach his ears; but rather he longs for the time to come when he may fight valiantly for his king and country. We have enlisted as soldiers of Jesus Christ; and he has provided an armour for us. Set us wear it and go forth conquering in His name. Every battle gained makes us stronger. Let us closely follow our captain if it should lead us to Calvary's summit and say with him "Thy will be done." MAGGIE BOYER. Woodstock, N. B.

**The Faith of Saint Ahaz.**

BY LEONARD WOOLSEY BACON, D. D.

The most unappreciated saint is this King Ahaz at Jerusalem. We nowhere find him spoken of as a "Father of believers;" there is no verse in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews beginning, "by faith Ahaz;" neither are we anywhere assured that "Ahaz believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." In fact, he is distinctly rated as no saint at all, but quite the opposite. He did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord," but "walked in the ways of the kings of Israel;" and "in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord: this is that King Ahaz." This is the figure that he makes in history—a feeble, hesitating character, whiffling in the wind, the Scripture witnessing that he had not that faith without which it is impossible to please God.

And yet does it not seem as if the faith of Ahaz was worthy of some kinder judgment? The respectable church-members in the days of Christ and of Paul claimed that they must have a sign, and a sign from heaven; and they were sharply rebuked for it. The godly Hezekiah, son and successor of Ahaz, when the divine promise came to him that he should be raised up from his sickness, asked, "What is the sign that the Lord will heal me?" and received a gracious token in return. But here is Ahaz, who not only does not clamor for a sign when he does not need it, not only does not seek for one when he is in reasonable doubt, but actually does not want one, and will not accept one when it is offered to him. He does not want any proof. Such delightful promises as these of Isaiah, that the allied enemies who are just ready to pounce upon him will be swept out of his way, are good enough to believe without evidence. Beautiful spirit of faith! Well may the prophet be delighted, and exclaim, O Ahaz, great is thy faith!

But the prophet is not delighted at all; he is disgusted. Is it not enough, he asks, to have made the world sick and tired of you long ago, but now you must tire out the patience of God. You might have had a sign to illuminate and confirm your trust.

The person who holds a certain belief simply because it is agreeable, is a fool. Ahaz was such an one. When his poor whiffling soul was shaking like the leaves of the wood at the news of a confederacy, there came to him a man whom he had not been in the habit of treating with any great respect to tell him not to be afraid, for the confederacy would be defeated. "Delightful!" says Ahaz. "I believe that." "But don't you want some evidence of what I say—some proof that I am authorized to say it?" "Oh, no; I do not want proof for this news; this is good enough to believe without; I am going to believe this whether it is true or not." A large percentage of our people are ready today to believe any sanguine swaggerer that will make splendid predictions of a steady run of victories in our new war, and a short and triumphant conflict at small cost of life and treasure; and the man who studies the facts and probabilities with care and gives a faithful estimate of them, will pass for a pessimist and no patriot.

We are just such fools in spiritual matters. None of us

who has been parted from a near friend by death has failed to feel how dear and happy it would be to be assured of communication between the departed and us who remain behind. How many there are to say, "Let us go right on and believe it, it is so pleasant, and not pay much attention to lack of proof or evidence of fraud." The same spirit shows itself often in relation to the most sacred teaching of the Gospel; and whenever it appears, the Gospel is not honored thereby, but discredited. There is comfort unspeakable to bereaved hearts in the hope of resurrection and eternal life. But when men say to us as sometimes they do, Go to, let us cling to this hope because it is so beautiful—then we are invited to practice the faith of Ahaz. "This prospect of a world of rest and joy and reunion, with the blessed dead, even were it an illusion, would be an illusion worth cherishing; think of Paul lifted up by this hope high above the power of earthly things to disturb his peace." Have we not heard this sort of argument even from good men? Hear how Paul himself scorns and scouts such hopes as this: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we Christians are the most pitiable of men." He does not envy the lunatic his "illusions of grandeur."

Our Saviour's invitation to faith is a reasonable one. "Believe in God; believe also in me." It was addressed to those who had some acquaintance with him and with his Father, and might know whether it was safe to trust. It is addressed to us. From such opportunities as we have had for knowing God in his written Word, and in his providence, and in the face of Jesus Christ, does he seem like one to be trusted? Is he faithful and true? Is he full of tender love and compassion? As we look into "those deep pathetic eyes that closed in death to save us," do we find any ground for doubt or misgiving in committing ourselves to his sure mercies?—Evangelist.

**The Test of Friendship.**

He who has reached that place from which he can find it possible to say to us lovingly and without dogmatism that we are wrong, and without irritation or argument calmly discuss the pros and cons of a doubtful step, has come very near a right to be called "a perfect man;" and he who has attained that beatific condition in which this advice and suggestion are welcome and listened to with rational and grateful respect has to fear nothing from the attacks of evil spirit incarnate or immaterial. If ever we find a sure test of the depth and strength of the bond of friendship, this surely should be its basis: "Can I bear that my friend should tell me I was wrong?" Yet what could be a more natural and vital outcome of strong and loving regard than the suggestion of coming danger to those who are threatened? Let two friends pass through this experience together and remain unruffled, and they need never fear other rupture of their uniting love.

Especially do women lack the gift of bearing what they are only too ready to call "interference." That they are over-indulgent to their children, or mistaken in their discipline or regimen; that they even fail to have chosen the most becoming dress for their daughter or the best school for their son makes them not unhappy, but angry and indignant. The merest intimation that some change might benefit the development of a child, or that he has a fault, will often obliterate the remembrance of years of steadfast kindness, and end a friendship of great value.

Although when we talk of this peculiar expression of human nature it sounds exaggerated and in a way incredible, it is of such easy proof and so daily in evidence that there is no gainsaying it. What we desire of our friends is that they should always agree with us, constantly approve and admire us, and let us adhere to our worst follies without the remonstrance.—Watchman.

The Funk & Wagnalls Company announce: "The Funk & Wagnalls Standard Encyclopedia" which will be a companion work to "The Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary." The same general principles that have made "The Standard Dictionary" so satisfactory will be followed in the making of this Encyclopedia, each class of subjects will be in charge of a recognized expert specialist—in all over two hundred expert scholars will be engaged in the preparation of the work; all treatment of terms will be condensed to the last degree consistent with completeness and clearness; and every available device will be used to make the work easy of consultation. The aim will be to make it accurate, simple, complete, to cover "things" as completely and satisfactorily as "The Standard Dictionary" covers "words," so that the two works will supplement each other and both together make a most complete and convenient library for reference.

In searching for truth, as in working to achieve anything else, people must have a "method." By this is meant some definite way of going to work—the determination of certain starting points and concluding points—a terminus a quo and a terminus ad quem and a code of recognized principles in accordance with which investigation shall be carried on—a modus operandi.—Wm Ashmore.