

Walking in the Dark.

In his first epistle John speaks of our "walking in the light," but in his gospel, the ninth chapter, if we read carefully the miracle of the healing of the blind man as recorded there, a single clause in the seventh verse must impress us with a strange yet beautiful significance when it affirms that "he went on his way, therefore."

For him it was "walking in the dark." This man who had never seen the light of day, who could scarcely imagine what the light could be like, who could not tell how the world in all its beauty of color and form might seem to him could he look upon it; who as yet had not understood, evidently, that any man can be possessed of power sufficient to open blind eyes, and who had doubtless listened with keenest interest to the conversation carried on between Christ and the disciples concerning him, how little could he have comprehended it all!

Undoubtedly the blind man was thinking to himself something as follows: "Who is this man, a stranger, who has thus interested himself in me? Why should I go to Siloam? Does he think it will do any good to wash there rather than elsewhere? Can there be any virtue in this clay, or has he any special power? He has not even told me why I should go to Siloam. Can it be that anything will come of washing in the pool? Is it possible that what I am doing shall affect my eyes in any way? I will, at least, keep on the way." And so he goes on, and while he reasons and queries about it all it remains just as dark as when he began. How many perplexities he must have met. How strange that one so blind should be sent, while still blind, to a certain place to prove the efficacy of healing power! Must it not have dawned upon his spiritual vision during the journey that certain means are frequently required to secure certain results? It was not dark for him all the way to Siloam.

It was all changed, however, upon his return, for he came seeing. Then he understood why he had been asked to go. By his willingness, his effort and his obedience his vision came. It had been necessary for him to walk a while in the darkness before he could walk in the light.

Even so it is with us at times. In our difficulty and need we find that Christ is near, and though we feel the touch of the divine hand in the providences of life, we are yet left to walk a while in the dark as we go to our duties and trials, only to realize as we return from them that we are walking in the light of new joys and blessings. We, too, come "seeing."—Standard.

That's What I'm Here For.

It was the uniformed young porter who said it, as he smiled pleasantly on the woman whose bundles he had started to carry for her. The station was full of travelers, hurrying to and from their trains, but the porter was not in the least hurried. He was quiet, ready, helpful; and he found a seat for the woman in the right car, and repeated, as she thanked him for his trouble, "That's what I'm here for, madam, all day long; just to see the people get aboard all right." Then he went back to the gate, and promptly helped somebody else to another train. Cheerful and pleasant, he carried babies, lifted heavy bags, reassured nervous people who were afraid the train would start without them, and made himself generally helpful hour after hour.

"That's what I'm here for." The cheerful words carried an unconscious message. The porter's lot was not a very pleasant one. Perhaps, he, too, longed to travel away from the hot city to the sea or the woods, yet all the year round he was shut within the crowded station, with its tracks and platforms. Few thanked him for helping them, and he could hardly have been blamed if he has been a trifle cross over his work. But he had no such thought; he was there to be helpful, and his heart was in his work.

The woman who had been helped to her seat by him thought it over as the train rolled away. She was one who had carried many burdens for other people, and had had few thanks. She seemed to herself to have spent her life in starting other people off where they wanted to go, and staying behind herself; and, lately, she had felt rebellious about it. But the young porter's words started a new line of thought. "That's what I'm here for," she said to herself, "and it isn't my business to complain or to question. If he can do his day's work in that hearty spirit, I guess I can, too," and she felt her heart lighter than for many a day. The porter did not know it, but he had preached a whole sermon in five words that afternoon.—The Lutheran World.

The Students' Missionary Convention.

The program of the Fourth International Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, which will be held in Toronto, Canada, February 26 to March 2, promises to be very strong. The meetings will be held in Massey Music Hall, the largest meeting place in the city. Some of the ablest missionary speakers of North America and from the mission field will address the Convention at the five evening sessions. These addresses will deal largely with the obligations of promoting the missionary enterprise and the means which are essential to its success. A part of each day will be devoted to the consideration of the relation

of students to missions, the promotion of missionary interest in the colleges, the financial problem of missions, the extension and development of the Student Volunteer Movement, and the responsibility resting upon clergymen and laymen in view of the consecration of students to world wide evangelization. Among the speakers who will address the Convention are Rt. Rev. M. S. Baldwin, D. D., Bishop of Huron; Rt. Rev. A. Sweatman, D. D., R. C. L., Bishop of Toronto; Mr. Robert E. Speer of New York; Hon. S. B. Capen, LL. D., President of the American Board for Foreign Missions; Bishop Charles B. Galloway of Jackson, Miss.; Bishop J. M. Th. burn of India; Rev. J. Ross Stevenson, D. D. of McCormick Theological Seminary; Dr. and Mrs. F. Howard Taylor of the China Inland Mission; and Prof. Ganewell and Dr. Ament, who are so well known in connection with the siege of Peking.

Three afternoons of the Convention will be devoted to section meetings. The first of these will be given to simultaneous conferences on the great mission fields and will be addressed by missionaries. On the second afternoon denominational conferences will be held. The fact that the Conference of Secretaries and Officers of Boards of Missions will be held in Toronto just preceding the Convention will assure the attendance of these and will thus give opportunities for helpful contact between the students of the different denominations and their missionary leaders. One afternoon will be devoted to conferences and to consider different phases of work on the mission field. At the same time there will be a meeting of professors and instructors and a conference of editors of religious and missionary papers and magazines to consider the relation of the press to the cause of missions. Mr. John R. Mott, the Chairman of the Student Volunteer Movement, who has been visiting Japan, China and India to hold conferences and conduct evangelistic meetings for students, will return in time to preside at the Convention.

In the Eddy.

I stood on Niagara's bank below the Falls some time ago, and I could have believed that the river was not going down, but going up again towards the Falls. I threw a little bit of wood in, and instead of Niagara's waters taking that wood from the Falls, they took it up towards them. I did not rush to the Canadian papers with my discovery. I simply thought for a few minutes, and then said, "Thou deceiving wood, I can explain thee. Thou art in what they call an eddy; and though thou circlest seemingly up to the Falls again, the great current of the river will soon take thee down, down, down." Sometimes those that stand by a poor soul that, for the moment, seems to be going the other way are deceived. Some, if they had heard Peter denying his Master, would have said, "Peter going to glory? I could swear he is not." I heard him use language that should never fall from a Christian's lips. I heard him deny his Master. Do not tell me that Peter is going to glory." But he was going; and one skillful in the ways of God would have greeted Peter, and said, "It is only a temporary eddy." He who said, "Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee," is certainly bound for glory. He has within him the Spirit of God—he is bound for heaven. Never by a rash statement predict, because of an eddy, that the current is going the other way. Take this to a poor soul that falls, and gets sad and disheartened, and gives way for a time to the forces of the Evil One. To such a one I say, "Cheer up, poor soul. At a certain stage the eddy will turn." I watched the little bit of wood that I had thrown in. Certainly, for a little time, up and up it went; but at last it whirled round and got into the current and was away with the rest of the waters to the sea below. It is so with the soul. It will turn yet. Repenting backslider, who for the moment has given way to sin, oh, hear me this day; we shall meet in the heaven of God. You will get home. Turn, turn; get out of the eddy, for Paul says that they which have the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body shall live. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body."—John Robertson.

Your Care.

"Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." Casting it away; not hugging it up to a heart already sore with the burden. Hurling it off, not to rebound upon you with new force; but to be caught by almighty hands. How much of it? All. Not just the great tons of care that crush you to the earth, but the little ounces that fret you because they are so small. And it is your care that is considered, not someone else's, for our Bible is a personal Bible, and our God is a personal God. It is your care that you are to give to him, and that is just what you would most gladly part with. Perhaps it is too small to share with your dearest friend; no matter, it will not seem small to a God so used to working with atoms in the material world. Perhaps it is so large that no one understands its magnitude; then all the more reason why you should put it into the hands

that can take up the isles as a very little thing, and can uphold the universe.

"Casting all your care upon him." Do not carry it yourself, and become a walking tombstone; don't throw it as a pall over those you meet, but cast it upon him, "the Creator of the ends of the earth, who fainteth not, neither is weary." And, best of all, "he careth for you"—he, the loving Father, with pity like the depths, with mercy like the heights, with forgiveness like the immeasurable distance between the fleeing and the retreating west. It is he that careth for you. Careth? Yes, for one little world, that in the unmeasured universe is only a floating drop in the seething ocean. There is all space to demand his attention; all heaven, and even all hell. Yet he careth not simply for this drop in the ocean, but for one living atom among the millions. In the drop; for you, just as if you were the only one in all worlds; the one for whom alone Christ paid a price never to be computed in earth's currency.—Herald and Presbyter.

Is It Hard to be a Christian?

Yes, and no. It is hard to be a Christian for the same reason that it is hard to walk up hill or row up stream. With the world and the flesh and the devil to move against anyone who really purposes to be a Christian will have his hands more than full. He will often need God's answer, "My strength is made perfect in weakness," to cheer him on, lest he faint and grow weary. But his difficulty in being a Christian will always be in proportion to the correctness of his conception of what it is to be a Christian, and to the zeal with which he presses forward. There is an easy-going Christianity which even worldly people can measure up to, and there is a perfection of holy living which dull desire or feeble zeal never attains—it is up hill work because of mammon is stronger than love of righteousness. Nothing is harder than to try to be a Christian with half-hearted desire. But to one in whom the love of Christ is fully formed who panteth after righteousness as the hart panteth after the water brook, nothing can be more easy and natural than to be a child of God—especially if this love was formed in the heart before the love of the world had an opportunity to choke it. It is then as easy to be a Christian as it is to repose in a loving father's arms, or to run his errands. When the love of Christ once constrains us, his precepts are easy and his pathway a delight.—The Lutheran.

New Books.

THE TEMPLE BIBLE—GENESIS.

This work published by the J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, is edited by Prof. A. H. Sayce, D. D., LL. D. It is uniform in size with the celebrated "Temple Classics" and contains 170 pages.

The "Temple Bible," is a treatment of the Scriptures as literature. It is the intention of the publishers to issue the whole Bible in twenty-four of these handy little volumes. The names of Profs. Sayce, Davidson, Bartlett, Warfield, of Dean Stubbs of Ely, and Bishop H. C. G. Monte of Durham, as editors, is evidence that the ripest and most reverent biblical scholarship is to be drawn upon for this work. It is equally evident that "The Temple Bible" will represent no one school of biblical criticism.

The text of the work is that of the authorized version. It is to be regretted that biblical scholarship is not to be given a version in the language of to-day. The volume before me, Genesis, contains a twenty page introduction by the editor. The great oriental erudition of Prof. Sayce entitles him to speak with authority. He holds that Genesis is substantially a work of the period of the Exodus. He, however, finds in it Babylonian and Egyptian elements. But whatever earlier sources the author used he has so moulded all as to constitute philosophical history. Fourteen pages of critical and explanatory notes follow the text. A table of Hebrew weights, measures and money is given. A synchronism of Ancient History and maps illustrative of the Geography of Genesis increase the value of the work. Five pages of references to English Literature speak of the large influence Genesis has exerted upon literature. Altogether we have here in very small compass an admirable handbook for the study of Genesis. I would strongly recommend it to all students of the Word. If the succeeding volumes equal the first, "The Temple Bible" will greatly enrich the Word to devout scholarship. Prices 40 and 60 cents per volume. R. O. M.

Canadian Crystals; Poems. By Thomas Watson.

The author of this book of 160 pages, which appears in an attractive binding, possesses in a marked degree the ability to express his thoughts in rhymes. The verses are grouped under eight heads: Patriotic; Imperial; Domestic; Educational; Matrimonial; Thanksgiving; Christmas, New Year; In Memoriam; Evangelical. We should hesitate to call these effusions poems, but they are at least for the most part smoothly running rhymes which it has given the author much pleasure to write, and many readers will, we hope, find pleasure in perusing.

—Published by William Briggs, Toronto.

Better Lives for Common People, or Studies of the Way of Peace. By John McLean, Ph. D., Author of "The Making of a Christian," etc.

In the 120 pages of this book we have eleven short talks or studies. The book seems to us to be very appropriately named. The studies are concerned with the way of peace, they are adapted to the use of common people, and a careful perusal of these pages ought to result in stronger faith and better lives. Wherever we have dipped into it we have found it replete with wholesome doctrine and good advice. Those who heed its admonitions and open their hearts to its inspirations will doubtless go from strength to strength. The publisher has done his part with characteristic excellence, making a very neat and attractive volume.

—Published by William Briggs, Toronto.