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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

FAIR AWAY.

"The land that is very far off."—Isa. 33:17.

Upon the shore
Of Evermore,
We sport like children at their play;
And gather shells
Where sinks and swells
The mighty sea from far away.
Upon that beach,
Nor voice nor speech
Doth things intelligible say;
Both through our souls
A whisper rolls
That comes to us from far away.

Into our ears
The voice of years
Comes deeper, deeper, day by day;
We stoop to hear,
As it draws near
Its awfulness from far away.

At what it tells
We drop the shells
We were so full of yesterday,
And pick no more
Upon that shore,
But dream of brighter far away.

And o'er that tide,
Far out and wide,
The yearnings of our souls do stray;
We long to go,
We do not know
Where it may be, but far away.

The mighty deep
Doth slowly creep
Up on the shore where we did play;
The very sand
Where we did stand
A moment since, swept far away.

Our playmates all
Beyond our call,
Are passing hence, as we, too, may,
Unto that shore
Of Evermore,
Beyond the boundless far away.

We'll trust the wave,
And Him to save,
Beneath whose feet as marble lay
The rolling deep,
For He can keep
Our souls in that dim far away.

—Fraser's Magazine.

Religious.

THE PERSONAL CHRIST.

The object of Christian faith is not a doctrine, but a person. We are invited to believe in Christ, rather than in Christianity; true Christianity is the testimony of Christ. He is not merely the propitiator, but the propitiation; not merely the Redeemer, but the ransom; not merely the Reconciler, but the atonement. We are called to believe in truth; not however in any bare, abstract, theoretical truth spoken in words alone, no matter in how fit and impressive words it might be uttered, but truth embodied in a person. Jesus Christ is the truth. We are invited to the exercise of love, and to believe in truth; not however in any bare, abstract, theoretical truth, not even truth spoken in words alone, no matter in how fit and impressive words it might be uttered, but truth embodied in a person. Jesus Christ is the truth. We are invited to the exercise of love, and to believe in the love of God, as the kindling motive of our most sacred devotion. But "herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he first loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." It is the love of God incarnate in Christ, spoken in his gracious words, testified by all his acts and sufferings, and sealed with his dying blood, that melts the heart and renews the life of the soul. Truth, by itself, receives the assent of the understanding and the approval of the judgment. Moral truth has the sanction of conscience, and it interests the moral feelings. Duty, when addressed to us in the form of a precept, is recognized as binding upon us. The obligation is perceived and acknowledged. But how inadequate are all such sentiments and judgments and concessions to form human character and control hu-

man life! What multitudes there are who know their duty, but never think of doing it; who admit the truth of God's Word, but never yield obedience to it; who confess that they are doing wrong but never summon resolution to cease to do evil and learn to do well! A great source of the power which the gospel has over those who believe, is the fact that faith, love, hope and duty, all centre on a Person who attracts supreme love and trust, who is able to inspire a firm and unflinching hope, who can feel for us because he is able to feel with us, and whose authority is absolute because it is enthroned in the heart's tenderest and strongest affections. The love of Christ constraineth us. The obligation of duty becomes the free, glad offering of love.

As the Object of faith is a personal Being, the act of faith constitutes a personal relation. It is more than to know or acknowledge, to contemplate, or even admire. It is to become His; it is to claim Him as the soul's portion. To one he says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." He will say to others, "I never knew you"—not, surely, implying a denial of omniscience, but of that attachment and fellowship which characterize the life of faith. The believer knows whom he had believed. His faith is true heart-knowledge. He is not content to speak of the Saviour, it must be my, our Saviour. An absence or decline of faith has no surer sign than a tendency to slide into the use of the more abstract and impersonal designations of the Divine—to speak of God as "the Deity," "the Supreme Being," "Providence," and of Christ as "the Founder of Christianity," "the Author of our religion," or to forget Him altogether, and know nothing but a dogmatic or didactic "Christianity." The only "Christianity" that is capable of any vital force, which can sanctify or console, can support in death or be a joy beyond the grave, is the experience of Christ in us—the hope of Glory.—*Examiner.*

FILL YOUR OWN PLACE.

It takes all sorts of characters, says the late Professor Wilson, to complete this great world-drama, and somebody must act them. In other words, I believe that every man has his place in the world, and that he was made specially for that place. It is only by earnestly filling that place that he fulfils his destiny, and answers the end for which God created him. Confusion and disappointment only arise from our efforts to get into some other place than the one for which we are intended. The change of our choice is limited by the character God has given to us, and the circumstances by which he hath surrounded us, and which have modified that character, and developed those faculties. Each man is created with certain possibilities which determine the direction he must go, and the height to which he may rise. We need not, therefore, remain in doubt. Our path is so plainly marked out for us, that we need not seek long for it, if we have willing hearts and willing hands to do it.

"No man is born into the world whose work is not born with him; there is always work and tools to work withal, for those who will."

The same power that created you, and trained you for your work, has brought that work for you. Do not go out of your way to seek for something grand and impressive to do, but take up at once the simplest and plainest duty that lies before you, and you will not go wrong. Do not stand waiting for signs and wonders to reveal to you what God would have you do, but listen to the voices within you and around you calling you to work. Trust those voices, have faith in humble things; then God will seek you, and light and strength be given to you as your path opens wider and higher before your advancing footsteps. I believe God calls men to humble duties as well as great ones, for to Him all duty is equally great; and woe be to him who disregards that call. We are willing to recognize this call to the ministry; then why not in the other pursuits of life? Is preaching the gospel the only duty thought recognizes? Is it because we wait for God to manifest himself in the lightning and thunder, that we fail to hear his voice in our hearts, and in the indications of circumstances about us, and thus go astray, groping our

way blindly and stumbling on our way in darkness and doubt. No man ever accomplished much who had not this idea of vocation, who did not feel that he was called of God to do that very thing.

My first going to Prayer meeting.

Connected with the church where my mother worshipped was a female prayer meeting, held alternately at the houses of its different members. One warm summer afternoon my mother passed through the garden where I was playing, and asked me if I would like to go too. I said yes, because I liked to walk with my mother any where; so we sauntered along the grassy path under the trees till we came to a small wooden house, half hidden by a tall hedge of lilacs. Then my mother led me through the low door-way, and up a pair of clean wooden stairs, into an old-fashioned, raftered chamber, through whose open window the bees were humming in and out, and the scent of flowers and song of birds came pleasantly enough to my childish senses. Taking off my sun-bonnet, and brushing back my curls, she seated me on a low stool at her feet, while one of the old ladies commenced reading the Bible aloud. All this time I was looking around curiously, as a child will, at the old-fashioned paper on the wall, with its pink shepherdesses and green dogs; at the old-fashioned fire-place, with its pitcher of asparagus branches, dotted with little red berries; at the high post bedstead, with its rainbow-colored patchwork quilt, of all conceivable shapes and sizes; at its high-backed, stiff-looking chairs, with straw seats; at its china parrot on the mantle, and its framed sampler on the wall, with the inevitable tombstone, and weeping willow, and afflicted female, handkerchief in hand.

After the tremulous old lady had done reading, they asked my mother to pray. I knelt with the rest; gradually my thoughts wandered from the china parrot, and patchwork quilt, and sampler, to the words my mother was speaking. Her voice was low, and sweet, and pleading as if God was very near, instead of on the great white throne, far away from human reach, where so many good people are fond of placing Him. It seemed to me as if her head were lying, like the beloved John's upon His bosom, and He were not too great, or good, or wise to listen, well-pleased, to her full heart's outpourings. Of course, these thoughts did not then, even to myself, find voice as now, but that was my vague, unexpressed feeling. Every musical word fell distinctly on my ear; and I listened as one listens to the sweet, soothing murmurs of a brook in the fragrant summer-time. I had loved my mother before—now I revered her; and it was with a new, delicious feeling I slid my hand within hers as we passed through the low doorway and back by the pleasant, grassy paths to our home. How little she knew what was passing under the little sunbunnet at her side, or how near heaven she had brought me in that old raftered chamber!—*Mrs. Parton.*

CONVERSION OF D'AUBIGNE.

The distinguished historian of the Reformation gives the following account of his conversion:

When M. Monod and I attended the University of Geneva there was a professor of divinity who confined himself to lecturing on the immortality of the soul, the existence of God, and similar topics. As to the Trinity, he did not believe it. Instead of the Bible, he gave us quotations from Seneca and Plato: Saint Seneca and Saint Plato were the two saints whose writings he held up to admiration.

But the Lord sent one of His servants to Geneva, and I well remember the visit of Robert Haldane. I heard of him first as an English or Scotch gentleman, who spoke much about the Bible, which seemed a very strange thing to me and the other students, to whom it was a shut book. I afterwards met Mr. Haldane at a private house, along with some other friends, and heard him read from an English Bible a chapter from Romans, about the natural corruption of man, a doctrine of which I had never before heard.

In fact I was quite astonished to hear of men being corrupt by nature.

I remember saying to Mr. Haldane, "Now I see that doctrine in the Bible." "Yes," he replied, "but do you see it in your heart?" "That was a simple question, but it came home to my conscience." It was the sword of the Spirit; and from that time I saw that my heart was corrupted, and knew from the Word of God that I can be saved by grace alone.

In the presence of Death.

There sit we, with a grave before us. It is a bulwark cast up between time and eternity. Our eyes may not pierce it. Below works corruption, and the form which once contained a beloved spirit is crumbling into earth. Has that alone died? No; we also are following after. Soon our dust will rest by the side of his; the dust of our children and of our children's children will soon be added; generations bloom, generations fade; ever more and more of those who enter upon the surface of the earth are sinking again below it. The world is nothing more than one single, great, continuous grave. As it swings around the sun in its accustomed orbit, like a true mother, it carries the dust of her children in her bosom. Ye heavenly hosts, ye look down upon it from above, and we are almost among you. Thither flies the spirit at the moment when it parts from its earthly shell. There shall we be ever united with all who have gone before us and those who follow after us; and often shall we direct our glances of sympathy and sorrow toward our early home. Finally comes the hour; the seed is ripe for the harvest; the human race is ripe for judgment. The Lord descends with His angels; the graves open upon the heaving earth; and the glorified dust is united with the soul's spiritual body. This we see in spirit—herein are we absorbed—for this conviction we thank the Saviour, whose grave quaked in the hour of His resurrection; and more mighty, more powerful grows in us the life of that faith which does not doubt of what it has not yet seen.—*Theremin.*

Industry in a Preacher.

Industriousness lies at the base of pulpit power. We use it here as equivalent to hard study. Ordination does not bring omniscience. The pulpit has no magic to infuse wisdom, and previous culture is not a stock for a lifetime. One may have a transient popularity without study, but the cistern soon runs out, and the people soon get tired of driving sentiment. It is too late now to talk of God's helping those who do not help themselves. Though he made the beast of Balaam to speak, he will not countenance men in laziness. If he does not need our wisdom, he certainly does not our stupidity. It is an insult to God to go idly up and down all the week (or all but Saturday), and then on Sabbath bring an offering to the Lord "which costs nothing." "The blind, the lame, the sick," "a corrupt thing for sacrifice," and ask God's blessing on it. How can such preaching have power? "Give attention to reading; study to show thyself approved," says Paul. Without this, a Samson in native talent will soon lose his locks. A strong preacher must keep his mental powers in working order. He must be a man of rigid, unremitted diligence. He must plough, and cross-plough, and subsoil his own mind, that it may yield nourishment to other minds.

THE PUZZLE EXPLAINED.—"It puzzles me," said a gentleman to his friend, who was a member of the same congregation, "How you manage to give away so much as you do. You have not so large an income as I have; and yet, although I think that I give as much as I can, I frequently find that you give sovereigns where I give half-crowns, and five-pound notes where I give sovereigns. Tell me, how is it, for it puzzles me?" "Come with me and I'll show you," was the reply. They walked into the dining-room, and opening a closet door, the friend pointed to the rows of empty bottles and decanters, and said, "I save it from the bottle."—*British Workman.*