

Sunday Reading.

Forward.

[The color-herald of a Highland regiment (engaged in action during the Crimean war) carried the colors far in advance of his regiment to a height occupied by the foe. "Bring back the colors!" was the call to him. His ringing answer was this: "Bring up your men to the colors!"]

"Bring back the colors! All too bold the venture,

While gallant spirits guard not the advance;

On yonder height the foe will swift surround thee,

Bring back the colors from the sword and lance!"

This to the standard bearer. He, with ringing answer,

Flashes new courage into gallant souls!

"Bring up your soldiers to the flying colors!"

And on the tide of victory proudly rolls.

"Bring back the colors!" So we cry distrustful,

While the promises are ringing in advance.

Are we sworn liegemen of the Cross of Jesus,

And can we give one backward, faithless glance?

The promise far outstrips Faith's fleetest footsteps,

Though fleet it be of foot as mountain roe,

And sings a clarion voice to bid us follow

Where we may win the land from hostile foe.

Sin is usurper over Christ's dominion!

This fair earth is the Lord's and we may wave

Our glorious banner over wild and prairie

And alien tribes shall hear the tidings brave.

Could we but view our witnesses, our watchers,

The chariots and squadrons of the sky,

The angel host which speed to do us service,

Encompassing our path, with succor nigh,—

But that were sight—not faith! And oft, awary,

We dream we fight, and suffer, all alone;

While angels hold their breath to see us conquer

Our Master yearns to utter, "Bravely done!"

Are long our brief, bright service will be over,

And hymns victorious around us roll;

What gracious guard shall reward the venture—

The noble venture of a noble soul!

CLARA THWAITES.

The Intercession of the Spirit.

BY REV. S. GRAVES, D. D.

Praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.—Eph. vi. 18.

Paul speaks of this as the great help in our praying. "We know not what to pray for as we ought—or how to pray; but the Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."

These intercessions are made not so much "for us" as in us, and these groanings are in our own souls, they are our own experience, awakened and sustained within us by the presence and promptings of the Divine Spirit, speaking in us, through the deep, unuttered yearnings of our own spirit.

Like all the workings of the Spirit, what are his within us we cannot discriminate from what are our own; so does he insinuate himself into our souls, so enter in and pervade and possess whatever is deepest and most personal within us, and moving along the lines of thought and feeling, and become so identical with our own desires and hopes and longings, that the two, if they be two, melt into and become one.

And here we come into the central region of prayer; here we penetrate to the inner spirit and soul of prayer; here come into sympathy with God and all holy beings in our desires for the same things that they desire. This, when offered, is "prevailing prayer," the kind that never fails to be answered, though expressed in the most simple and artless and broken words, or only in the cries and groans of a soul so burdened that it can find no words of utterance; and which many a cold, formal, professing Christian might criticize as "unbecoming," but which when so inspired is, nevertheless, the highest type of prayer.

How serious a blessing then is prayer! It is "deep calling unto deep." It comes from what is deepest within us. It is God's Spirit calling to our spirits—crying in our spirits. It takes hold of the strongest faculties and powers of the soul. It carries with it all there is of feeling, faith, purpose, will, into this one great act of the soul.

This intercession of the Spirit is especially marked by the weight of desire, the burden of anxiety which it implies, and suggests—"groanings" unuttered, "unutterable."

Are we Christians of to-day called into such an experience as this—called to offer such prayer as this? Or was this altogether an ancient and Apostolic experience, which is out of date and out of demand upon us of to-day?

If we are called to pray at all it is, I believe, after this fashion; and here, more than all elsewhere, I believe we fail—fail in prayer, and so fail all around, in the power and fruits of Christian life.

The cause of God is spiritual. The kingdom of heaven is spiritual. It is not to be advanced or built up by carnal agencies or worldly measures. These things it needs and uses as builders do scaffolding, which is no part of the structure that is going up. The kingdom of God is righteousness. It is saving souls; winning men to Christ and training them in all Christly ways of living, in purity and virtue and charity; in all ways helpful to men and pleasing to God, and fitting them for the great hereafter of God and glory.

And this is our work as Christian men and women; this is what we are called to; and everything else is to be held subordinate to this—or Christianity is itself a farce and a fraud! This is spiritual work; and only spiritual men can do it. And we fail in spirituality just in proportion as we fail in prayer; as we fail to reach and realize this type of praying, which puts us under pressures and burdens.

On our part, this work is to be done in the use of the same means that men employ to accomplish the great purposes of this life; namely, wise planning, personal devotion, earnestness, zeal, sacrifices, taking burdens, carrying weights, facing difficulties, assuming responsibilities, loading the soul down with anxieties which sometimes crush the life out of us. This is the way in which all great enterprises among men are carried up to success. So discoveries are made, inventions perfected, so nations are built and the great freedoms of mankind are won—by men of martyr souls and martyr lives. And it is by just such a spirit and through such lives that God works in building up his kingdom of grace in the earth; by the union of God's Spirit with such spirits—God's life in such lives, that this is to be done.

Look back through the ages from Noah to Adoniram Judson and you will see it has been so. And so too it must be up the ages to come; and so it must be with us to-day, in linking the two ages together. So fields are won; so souls are won; so every step of real spiritual progress in this world is taken and held.

See now, in this view of the case, the need we have for this kind of praying! The intercession of the Spirit for us—in us—awakening and sustaining in our souls those deep and strong desires which are denoted by groans.

God can do nothing in his cause with a lukewarm man, unconsecrated men. Such men are out of all fitness and harmony with the work they are set to do. Men of firm resolve, men of purpose, of nerve, of cool heads and hot hearts—these are the true crusaders, the cross-bearers.

And such prayer is necessary to make such men—to rid us of besetting sins, to get the heel on them and tread them out—prayer that is downright wrestling against self and sin, the weak indulgences, the old habits and temptations that unnerve the soul and cut the sinews of spiritual strength. The tonic that will give us the nerve of men to conquer them is this sort of praying.

The call to-day, all along the line, is for a more consecrated membership in our churches; holier men and women; for spiritual power that the world shall feel and give way to; fall before! Our help is in the helping Spirit, who makes intercession for us, and calls into exercise these qualities of soul, these exercises of heart. So far, indeed, is the Christian worker from being exempt from these experiences, because he is to rely upon the Holy Spirit, that for this very reason they are needful. These must all be worked out in Christian experience and life, because it is God who works in us.

The Soul of Work.

Enduring work, whether in literature or in any other kind of labor, is work that comes from a direct and definite purpose, and a purpose at one with the generous welfare of man. If its defects and failures are those of occasional error and sin, its ultimate is not destroyed, however it be diminished. But if it is born of a wish to be deliberately bad, or even if it ignores the canons of right actions, it can bear within itself no elements of long lasting. We believe it to be strictly true that no great book, or picture, or statue, or war, or social scheme, or work of any kind has ever retained a lasting place in the world's esteem, without bearing clear signs of a right purpose and a definite acceptance of the principles of truth and rectitude. It is true, as Keats said in his most famous line, that a thing of beauty is a joy forever; but by a thing of beauty the world means something in close union with the innocence of inanimate nature or the best and truest in man. Power may, indeed, be shown in the most nefarious ways, and a poet or painter may bring to his basest work the charms of consummate art; but his work does not live unless it is deliberately good, so to speak, or, at least not consciously evil. Purpose and character must ultimately succeed and the absence of them leaves room for nothing but ultimate failure.

And the soul of work in every line of labor must be marked by these five things—integrity, sincerity, purity, charity, faith. Such virtues as these must always follow in the path of that soul which alone can look for immortality of life, or even for a perpetuity of earthly memory and love. Those of us who believe God's word to be true can find nowhere in the Bible any statement that art for art's sake is good, or that a thing is praiseworthy because it is externally beautiful, precious, utter, or intense. Over and over again we are told that God's mode of judgment is a moral rule, and never are we given to understand that mere ability or external achievements is the measure of triumph. Work which has a soul has no life. Work which has a soul, and that remark applies to the honest carrier or the canal-boy as truly as to the architect or the painter—bears within it the promise of life and of approval both by God, who notes all, and by man, whose eyes are not always so blind that he cannot mark the difference between work that must live and work that must die, sooner or later.

—The Sunday School Times.

For our Good Always.

In Deut. vi. 24, are these very important words: "And the Lord, commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is, at this day." How difficult it is for the natural heart to realize, or believe, that it is for its own good always to obey God in everything? We are strongly inclined to think that obedience to our own conceptions of what is right and proper is good for us—indeed, is really best for us. There are some things which God commands us to do that we readily assent to us being for our good. We incline to pursue an eclectic course. We choose that which seems to promise us good, and those things which appear inconvenient and unnecessary we discard. Obedience to some of God's commands appears to involve too much trouble to be for our certain good. It may lead us to heavy cross-bearing and painful peril and deep disappointment and immense personal discomfort; and so we demur and debate the chances of possible good to ourselves. But our thoughts and ways are always wrong, and, therefore, productive of harm to us if they do not strictly conform to the thoughts and ways of God. There is no safety outside of following the commands of God. Human expediency is not to usurp the place of the Divine counsel and command. Whatever God tells us to do, and we do it in the spirit and manner which he requires, will result in our good always. It may not always seem so to us at first. Indeed, it may appear to be for our ill, instead of good but God, who sees the end from the beginning, knows what is for our good, and commands nothing which is not for

our good. All of his commands to the Israelites were for their good, and always for their good, though they often virtually denied it. Let us profit by their example, by shunning their sins and errors, and cultivating the spirit and practice of complete obedience in all things, evermore.—The Standard.

Moody and Sankey in Wales.

These evangelists have been making a tour through some of the largest towns of South Wales. In every place vast crowds attend their services, and many profess to be converted through their instrumentality. Swansea and Cardiff have been greatly blessed by their visit. They commenced operations in Newport, Mon., in the Victoria Hall, the largest building in Newport. At eight o'clock on Lord's Day morning the building was nearly crowded with Christian workers to hear an address from Mr. Moody.

In the afternoon a service for women only was held, and about three thousand were present. In the evening, he addressed a meeting for men only. The building was crowded to its utmost capacity, and at least one thousand thronged the doors unable to obtain admission.

On Monday, at three o'clock, the building was quite full. The address was to parents, in reference to the religious training of their children. The crowds that assembled to the evening meeting was so great that the Stow Hill Baptist Chapel had to be opened. Rev. Dr. Wrenford, vicar of St. Paul's, addressed the overflow audience in this chapel, assisted by Mr. Baker and others. The notorious Mr. Bradlaugh had been brought to Newport and held forth in the Albert Hall, right opposite the Baptist Chapel in which Dr. Wrenford was speaking; but the Lord's work went on successfully, many at the evangelistic meetings professing to have found peace and salvation through faith in the blood of Christ.

Uncle John's Soliloquy.

"Why didn't I see this thing before? Ten dollars for Foreign Missions, and one year ago I only gave fifty cents. And that half dollar hurt me so much, and came so reluctantly! And the ten dollars—why it is a real pleasure to hand it over to the Lord! And this comes from keeping an account with the Lord. I am so glad that Bro. Smith preached that sermon. He said we would all find it a good thing to have a treasury in the house from which to draw when our contributions are solicited. He asked us to try the experiment for one year—to set apart a certain portion of our income for the Lord's work."

"The more I thought, the wider I opened my eyes. Said I, I am not quite ready for the one-tenth, but I will try the one-twentieth and see how it works. I got a big envelope, and put it down in the bottom of my trunk, and as soon as I could I put \$60 in it. Said I, here goes for the Lord. It cost me a little something to say it at first, but when it was done how good I felt over it! When this appeal came for Foreign Missions, all I had to do was just to run to my treasury and get the money. And this all comes from keeping an account with the Lord. How he blessed me this year! I never had better crops. Now I am going to try another plan. I am going to give the Lord the profits from one acre, one of my best yearlings, and one-tenth of the profits of my orchard. This will surely carry the Lord's fund up to seventy-five dollars; and if it doesn't, I will make it up from something else."

—Christian Standard.

Quiet Work.

Quiet work is likely to be undervalued. People have hardly yet learned that it is the lightning, and not the thunder, that strikes. A brass band in the street attracts more attention than all the choirs in the churches. Christ said that the Christian should let his light shine; he did not say that he should let his own boasting, or that of his friends, be heard. It by no means follows that the Sunday-school which has the loudest trumpet makes the best music for heaven only ears. Your own Sunday-school may not be talked about in conventions, and visited by crowds of strangers; but this is not a necessary proof that it is not doing good work for the Master. The inspired writer of Ecclesiastes says that "The words of wise men are heard in quiet," and Paul exhorts, "That ye study to be quiet." The loudest voices do not speak the wisest words. Be anxious rather that your work should be approved in heaven, than talked about on earth.—S. S. World.

He who waits to do a great deal of good at once will never do any.

Temperance.

Why she never drank Wine.

"Of course we must have wine. Just think how perfectly shabby it would look!"

The remark was made by a beautiful girl as she danced out of the conservatory with a spray of pink blossoms in her hand. "It is my first party, and I want everything splendid. And Auntie," turning to a sweet faced woman, with large, love-gleaming eyes, and an almost alabaster purity of complexion, "you must wear that rose-colored brocade. It is just the rage now, and your hair will trim beautifully. I am so glad we are to have plenty of flowers."

Helen Brayton was just from school, where she had been since she was ten years old. Of course, she knew little of life; but her father was a wealthy man, and her dream of "everything splendid" was about to be realized. Aunt Agatha was her mother's sister, a scholarly woman of whom she knew little, save that she was a trifle eccentric, giving away nearly all her income, and never so much as touching wine.

Mrs. Brayton leaned back in her luxurious chair, and rested her eyes with a mother's delight on Helen's face.

"If we have wine, Aunt Agatha cannot come," she said slowly.

"Cannot? Why so?" with a long shrug of her pretty shoulders. "She will not be obliged to taste it."

Mrs. Brayton beat her satin-slipped foot against the Persian carpet. It was a question she could not decide. Mrs. Brayton had given her *carte blanche*. He had not time to attend to it, he said in calling in Agatha she had not thought of wine. With exquisite taste and wonderful tact in arrangement, her services would be invaluable. All the morning, she had been trying to persuade the really elegant woman to consider this an exceptional case. Not that she herself cared for it; neither did Mr. Brayton. But what would people say? Mrs. Brayton was not one with the moral courage to oppose Madame Grundy. She could not endure to be called shabby, especially when the money in hand would enable her to be profuse.

All the while Helen stood at the back of Aunt Agatha's chair, talking of the pink and silver brocade. "Nobody will know it was ever worn. I am sure it never would show a seam."

A servant entered bearing a silver waiter, and on it a small card. Helen colored, and Mrs. Brayton excused herself and went down to the parlor.

"Do say that you will not mind this time, Auntie," pleaded Helen.

"And thus break my promise?"

"Did you promise, Auntie, never so much as to drink a drop?"

"I promised never so much as to drink a drop; neither would I stand by and see another drink."

"That is going a little too far, Auntie. If another drinks, it will not hurt us."

"I am not so sure," returned Aunt Agatha. "Whose card was that Dick brought in?"

"Henry Fargo's," answered Helen, with a vivid blush.

"If Henry Fargo should drink wine to excess, would it not hurt you?"

"O Auntie! he never could," with a face from which all color had fled.

"If I have been rightly informed, one of his brothers died a drunkard," persisted Agatha Fleming.

"That was Will. He was always a little wild. Went to San Francisco, spent a good deal, and drank to drown his trouble," was Helen's answer.

The Fargoes lived in the same square. In the vacations, Helen had seen a good deal of Henry, and learned through him of Will's wanderings. But she did not connect it with wine; the latter was a mere accident. He drank to drown his trouble.

The expression of Agatha Fleming's face grew tender; tears filled her eyes. It was a favorable moment to say to Helen all there was in her heart to say; why she should not touch wine.

"You have heard your mother speak of Herbert Weyburn?" turning her gaze full upon the young girl.

"Your old friend or flame, I don't know which?" returned Helen, with all her usual vivacity. "Yes."

"My friend, as Henry Fargo is yours. We lived in the same square, and we loved each other with a love that grew stronger as we grew older. Herbert went to college. He was greatly gifted. But he learned to take wine; it made him brilliant. The head of his class, he was likewise the master of oratory. But he could not speak without his glass; then it required more; one, two, three at a time. When he returned he brought the habit with him. His manner was no longer the same; at one time wild and capricious, at another gloomy and

morose. I expostulated. He was angry and unbridled me. The next hour, he was ready to beg my pardon, and I forgave him. Of course, he would never again give way. Thus it went on, until he was ready to establish himself in business, and I was looking forward to become a happy bride. One night there was a quarrel in which Herbert struck a brother lawyer, and himself received a fatal stab, in return. They had been drinking to excess, but when I reached Herbert he was rational. Never shall I forget his face as he said: "The doctor says I must die. If I had never tasted wine, Agatha, this would not have been."

"They had not told me that the wound was fatal. I buried my face in the pillow and sobbed outright. In that moment, I would gladly have given my own life could I by that means save Herbert. My agony made him worse. They took me from him, and only permitted me to return when I promised to command myself. When I entered the room, Herbert was lying with his eyes shut. As I approached, I saw that his lips moved. Was he praying? I tried to think so, for I had been brought up to think it was a dreadful thing to die without an interest in Christ. As I knelt by his bedside, he put out his hand. 'I have asked God to make it easy for you, Agatha. You warned me against drink; but I did not see the danger. Now I must die. But you will think of me sometimes, and thinking of me, you will not fail to warn others against wine.' I had promised to be calm, and to be calm I tried to point him to Christ. I cannot tell just how it was, but in death there was a smile on his face, as though at last he had caught the gleam of celestial wings. The thief on the cross received assurance: 'This day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.' I trust it was so with Herbert."

Silence brooded over the room. Helen did not lift her head. Agatha was the first to speak.

"Now you know the reason why I do not drink wine; the reason why I do not go where wine is made a temptation to some poor soul who has not the strength to resist it. You will not now ask me to go to your party?"

Slowly the brown head was lifted, while through her tears, Helen answered: "I do not want to go."

"I shall not have wine at my party, Agatha. It's too dreadful; I cannot think of it. Will Fargo drank wine, and drank to excess. Henry takes a social glass. No; with more emphasis, 'I shall not have it. It shall never be said that I helped to make a young man a drunkard.'"

When Mrs. Brayton returned, Helen hastened to explain.

"We will not have wine, mother. I could never hold up my head again, if I knew that one person was led to drink to excess through my offering him a social glass."

"What I have to say will be unnecessary in this case," smiled Mrs. Brayton. "I have just seen Henry Fargo. He hopes we will not have wine. Since Will perished miserably as he did, he cannot go where wine is used freely. As this is the first party of the season, he trusts that we will set the example that many, very many, will gladly follow."

"I could never have done it, but for Aunt Agatha," Helen answered, with her old, bright look. "Henry Fargo shall never have it to say that I tempted him with wine."

This is why I know it.

"How is your father getting on now?" I said to a little daughter of a man, formerly a drunkard, but whom, some months ago, I had persuaded to sign the pledge.

"He is getting along very well," was her reply.

"Has he kept his pledge?"

"O, yes," she joyfully replied.

"Are you sure he has?"

"Yes sir, I am quite sure."

"How is it you are so positive on this point?" I asked.

"Why," said she, and her face was radiant with joy, "he never abuses mother any more; we have always plenty to eat; and he never takes my shoes off to pawn them for drink now. This is why I know it, sir."

William Taylor tells of a young preacher who took his audience on this wonderful flight of fancy:

"Yes, my friends, the mind of man is so expansive that it can soar from star to star, from satchel to satchel, and from seraph to seraph, and from cherry beam to cherry beam, and from thence to the center of the doom of heaven."

The young man's mind was considered too expansive for the practical work of the ministry.