

The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

REV. E. McLEOD.

"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.]

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THE SAVING WIFE.

By J. De Liefde, of Amsterdam.

CHAPTER II.

(Continued.)

THE SHOEMAKER AND HIS OBJECTIONABLE LIBRARY.

In one of the main thoroughfares of the Hague—thus the minister commenced his story—there lived some ten years ago a shoemaker of the name of R., who was much liked by his customers for his strong and neat boots, as by his friends for his frank and jovial conversation. His wife, a very clever, tidy, and active woman, was very much of the same temper as himself, and always showed a face as smiling and glossy as the brightly scoured leather of her kitchen. In as far as regarded their outward circumstances, they had ample reason to keep up this appearance of contentment and joyousness, for it would seem as if Mr. R.—understood the secret of coining fortune out of a calf's skin—nothing was more likely to help you to the most sanguine hopes than Mrs. R.'s pleasant stories illustrating the foolishness of holding up the umbrella before the rain has begun to fall.

Yet, notwithstanding all this appearance of happiness, the true peace that passeth all understanding was a stranger in the family. It is true, Mr. and Mrs. R.—with their children regularly attended service every Sunday morning, but they were as regularly to be found every Sunday evening at the theatre, or in the dancing saloon, or in the wood to enjoy the concert. Often, too, they would engage a fly for the whole of the Sunday afternoon, to take an excursion to Scheveningen, or to some other village in the neighbourhood, where they were sure to meet gay company. Now, I need not tell you that they could allow their Sabbath to come to a close so contradictorily to its beginning, without any feeling of inconsistency—what nearly everybody in our unhappy country is accustomed to do. Besides, they seldom heard anything in the morning sermon that could rouse their conscience during their evening pleasures. They always attended the service of such preachers as were most congenial to their taste, and you know enough of the state of our Church to be able to perceive that they always had plenty of choice. So after having drunk their "water and milk" in the morning, they could freely take to their wine in the evening. They knew no better than that they, all of them, would go to heaven, provided they did not commit a murder or pick their neighbour's pockets; and since Mrs. R. was not conscious of being guilty of any such outrages, she trusted that she would arrive at heaven's gate, even if a sudden death should compel her to take a starting-point from the theatre on Sunday evening. The conception which she had of "the goodness of God" was quite boundless, so much so, that she gladly believed that God had provided plenty of forgiving grace—of course through Christ in some way or other—if there should be anything amiss in her conduct; for that she was not quite perfect she fully admitted, and she went to bed with the thought, "Eight hundred years ago, had attained such an over-abundance of perfection as to enable him to make a full weight for her shortcomings. But that there was such a thing as a hell or burning furnace, as some Methodists were pleased to cry, she never could or would believe. God, she thought, was too good, too kind towards his creature, to permit the existence of such a terrible place in his glorious creation.

Yet, notwithstanding the smooth theory about God, heaven, and eternity, there was a worm gnawing at the bottom of Mrs. R.'s heart. She sometimes would feel the painful bites when death showed itself to her at a distance, by taking away one of her nearest relatives or friends, or when some sudden indisposition reminded her of her own mortality. She then experienced that the tranquillizing system of theology she used to advocate in her sunny days was not sufficient to quiet her mind when the king of terrors threatened to spread his dark wings overhead. We know by experience, madam, how sadly man gropes round in the dark as long as he has no other light to talk by but the lamp of his own reason. By this fascinating glow she thinks, a smooth path before him leading through delectable grounds to paradise. The slightest breeze, however, that whispers from the grave blows it out, and he finds himself in an awful perplexity. Then the torch of conscience, no longer outdone by the dazzling glittering of proud reason, begins to illuminate the scenery around about, and the frightened wanderer discovers deserts and abysses instead of gardens and pleasure-grounds. No sooner, however, has he succeeded in lighting his lamp again than he again proceeds cheerfully, persuading himself that what he saw just now was only the effect of a deranged imagination. Mrs. R.—kind-hearted and good-natured as she was, shared the awful self-deception which is common to our fallen race. Thinking that her heart was full of love to all men—for she declared she wished everybody to be as happy as herself—she did not know that that same heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. She perceived not that what she called love was only an amiable form of self-love, which was so counteracted in its desires or humbled in its pride. She was not aware that that same love of hers to all men was connected with a sad indifference with regard to God, who, during the week scarcely found a place in her thoughts, because they were wholly engaged in the cares and pleasures of her daily life. All this

was hid from her notice behind the deceitful veil of her self-satisfaction and self-complacency. But self-deception, however skillful, can never fold that veil so tightly as to leave no hole for truth to peep through. Mrs. R.—confidently as she expressed herself about the future glory of all men, yet could not help secretly acknowledging that there might be something wrong at the bottom; and this might account for the strange inconsistency which was often manifest in her profession. For that same person who thought so highly of the love of God, and asserted that there could not possibly be such a place as hell, yet never had the courage to declare that she was sure of her future happiness after death.

Now, her husband had, from the time of their marriage, during a series of some twenty years, invariably shared her opinions; so that religion, while kept up merely as an out-door performance, had never disturbed their domestic peace within. Once upon a time, however, a change was observed in Mr. R.'s ideas and conduct, which gradually became more conspicuous. His wife, who was bent upon the household regularly going to church every Sunday forenoon (for, she said, it is a becoming habit, and the minister always tells us that we should be better than we are), became a little alarmed when observing that he now and then would tell them to go without him, till at length he got into the habit of staying away from the church altogether, and keeping at home to amuse himself with reading a novel or a play, or with trying his flute, to which he had taken a fancy. The fact was that Mr. R.—being a little more of a philosopher and a logical thinker than his wife, had some time ago turned his attention to the absurdity of that inconsistency which, as I told you, characterized his and his wife's profession. He acknowledged that if there was no hell, or no future punishment of transgressions at all, he ought to be perfectly at ease, and know no such thing as fear or uneasiness when thinking of his future state after death. He felt, however, that there was such a thing in his heart, and he determined to get rid of it, now that he observed that he was growing older, and was to perform the "great journey" ere long. On examining the origin of that feeling of anxiety with regard to his future condition, he discovered that it was closely connected with his belief in a personal God. He concluded that if God was a person—a rational, self-willed, and self-acting being—he must be a Judge, rewarding his friends and punishing his enemies. So he turned to inquiring whether his belief in a personal God was well founded. Now, there was amongst his customers a gentleman whom he always had thought a great deal of on account of his sagacity, learning, and calmness of temper. From some of his expressions uttered in the course of their conversation, he had observed that the Baron von T.—did not believe that God was a person, but only an all-moving power. This had led him to entertain more detailed intercourse with the Baron on that subject. The arguments which the Baron advanced, and the syllogisms he drew, seemed so overpowering that the bootmaker could say nothing against them. He was not aware, poor man! that the power of persuasion lay not in the Baron's eloquence, but in the inclination of his own God-slumbering heart. He did not keep in mind that our deceitful hearts are prone to believe what we are prone to desire; and his heart desired that there should be no personal God, in order to get rid of the Judge as soon as possible. The Baron then provided him with a great many books which, all of them, breathed the same pantheistic doctrine. He was not then in a new coat on a shelf along the wall of his countinghouse, and soon had studied them so thoroughly that he became fully initiated in that God-dismounting and soul-destroying system. He now thought himself at peace. He now had found "his own way," as he would express himself. And this way was that above the entrance of which the inscription was to be read: "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die." There was room left on his shelf still for the Baron's books, though numerous, were not sufficient to occupy the whole of it; but Mr. R.—filled up the empty space with a new coat of arms, and henceforth scarcely an evening elapsed which he did not spend either at the opera or in the club-house.

Now, Mrs. R.—was not quite at her ease when noticing this change in her husband's opinions and conduct. Though herself an advocate of what she called "liberal and large-hearted principles," yet she thought that now he was going too far. She was from her childhood accustomed to saying grace silently at every meal, and though she mostly performed this ceremony as a mere matter of course, yet she sometimes would connect some edifying notion with it; at least, she would often appeal to it to persuade herself that she was a Christian, and not a heathen. When she observed that her husband began to say "this comely habit," she found that either she must be a fool in her eyes, or that he was a profane person in hers. When she on Sunday morning, returning home from church, her little Bible with gold clasps in her hand, found him comforted seated in his arm-chair playing his flute or reading a novel, she could not but conclude that either he or she had spent their time wrongly. So she became aware that a serious discrepancy had arisen between them, which, of course, could not fail to affect their domestic life and the education of their family. For some time she dreaded frankly to require of him an explanation of his altered behaviour, but at last some opportunity turned up, which led her fully to enter upon the matter. She quite alarmed to find that he boldly rejected everything she had reverenced hitherto as sacred and true. Much of what she said seemed to her to be most extraordinary, but much too, she felt, unable to refute. Of course, her stock of Christian knowledge was so poor that she was quite perplexed by the sophistical reasonings, many of which her husband read to her from the book he took from his library. Still some instinctive better feeling made her shrink back from the whole of it. She told him most decidedly that she never could go so far as that. "We must have somebody to pray to," she said, "and we must, have somebody to rely upon when we are in trouble. I shall never be able to disengage myself from the expectation of being absorbed by some universal power, as a drop flows away into the ocean. My good father was such a worthy person when alive. I hope to see him again in a better world. But according to your notion, he is no person at all now, but merely a particle of a great general power. No, never! I shall never believe such a thing of my good father. He was too amiable a

person for that, and he trained me up too well to allow me to think so unbecomingly of him and of our good Lord in heaven. You yourself are a person now; but for that I should not have married you. But if you are to turn a mere power, I don't know what to make of you; I never married you in that expectation."

Such were Mrs. R.'s arguments, and her husband would reply to them by a silent smile or by taking his flute and playing a tune. She, however, felt very sad about this state of things. She perceived that they had entered a critical period in their matrimonial life; that she either was to abandon all she had believed, revered, and adored hitherto, or to put herself in a decided opposition to her husband. Her consciousness of this alternative set her thinking seriously about her own condition as to religion. She felt that she knew too little of it to be able to encounter her husband's attacks upon the Bible. "He has a strong power in his books," she said to herself. "I must read the Bible to know a little more about it. I wish he never had got those books. I am sure the whole mischief lies with his library. But will he read the Bible now, and I shall soon find out."

So Mrs. R.—began reading her Bible for the first time in her life, and for the first time she set up a silent ejaculation to God to give her some light in a dark matter.

(To be Continued.)

TRUE PRAYERS NEVER LOST.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

It is hard to believe that the fervent prayer of the righteous man is ever lost. The answer may be long delayed. It may come in a manner wholly unlooked for. The return of the prayer may be such that it may not be recognized by the devout soul who uttered it. But it is not lost.

For example, there are some prayers which we cannot expect to see answered immediately. I was at a monthly concert last evening, where God's people were pleading with him for the conversion of the world. None of that praying community had any expectation of living to see the day when the last heathen nation should surrender to the victorious Jesus. Yet their petitions will never be forgotten. Those pleading disciples will yet behold the glorious fulfillment of their desires from the battlements of heaven. For in our own experience we have seen many a prayer was manifestly answered long after the saint who breathed it into the ear of the Saviour has gone to lay his weary head on that Saviour's breast.

A dying mother commits her beloved boy to a covenant-keeping God. She has often borne that child on the arms of faith to the mercy seat. He has been the child of many prayers; and in the feeble utterances of her passing spirit another and last petition is breathed forth that Christ would have mercy on his soul. Years roll away. The soil had grown green, and the rank grass has long waved over that mother's tomb. In some distant land—mayhap hundreds of miles from that spot—a full-grown man, who has long been ripening in sin, is seen bowed in prayer. He is crying out of an agonized heart, *God be merciful to me a sinner!* Behold his prayer, and *his prayer is the answer* of the fervent petitions which his dying mother uttered many long years before. Her requests were recorded in God's book of remembrance; and but for them we know not that the prayer of that penitent son would have ever ascended there. Let praying fathers and mothers never grow faint of heart. Let desponding Churches—long unvisited by revival blessings—only close their ranks more compactly about the mercy-seat, and beseege heaven with new importunity. For above the dark cloud of their discouragement is written, as in the clear, upper sky, "He that seeketh righteousness, and he that seeketh fineth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

2. Other prayers are answered at the time of their utterance, but in a way so unlooked for that the who offered them is inclined to think that the very opposite of what he asked for has befallen him. One individual prays, for instance, that he may be enabled to glorify God. Ere he is aware, some tremendous calamity comes crashing down upon him, prostrating him to the dust. His fortune is swept away. Or his scheme of promotion are blasted. A favorite child is missed from the cradle or the hearthstone. His hopes are withered like grass. God has answered his prayer, but by terrible things. From under the overwhelming pressure of affliction he flees to Jesus his divine comforter, and oh, how love is kindled by the contact! How his latent faith is called forth. How he glorifies God in the furnace of trial which is purging away the dross of selfishness and worldliness, and making his pure gold to shine with tenfold brightness!

We once saw an earnest inquirer who was praying most importunately for faith in Christ, and for peace to his troubled soul. But while he prayed a cloud of darkness gathered across his horizon. And against that cloud, which swung like a funeral pall before his vision, played the sharp lightning of the Almighty's wrath. The thunders of God's law roared against him. Instead of peace came only the sword. Instead of the calm he sought came the fearful tempest; and, under the stress of its terrors the poor, baffled soul betakes himself to the "covert" which Christ had raised on Calvary. There he finds the peace he so earnestly prayed for. Thence the long-sought confidence in Jesus pours its fulness through the soul. His prayer was answered—first by terrible things, but at last by the very blessings which he desired. And without that storm the true calm would have never come. Had the sinner not been led to that frightful view of his own guilt and condemnation, he might never have gone to Christ, and thus could not have known true abiding place. As he looks back over the dark valley of sorrow through which the divine hand has wondrously led him, and sees that no other way would so surely bring him to the cross, he feels a renewed assurance that no true prayer is ever lost; he now knows that he that seeketh right will always receive, and he that seeketh will surely find. His experience is worth all it cost him.

3. Once more, let us remark that the petitions of believers are often answered according to their intention, and not according to the strict letter of the request. The utterer of the prayer sought only the glory of God, but, in his ignorance, asked for wrong things. God hears and answers him; but the blessing granted is something very different from what the believer expected. The case of Paul is a beautiful illustration of this. He is sorely afflicted by a "thorn in the flesh." What the precise nature of that affliction was, we know not. Perhaps it was a severe malady; perhaps a

settling sin; perhaps a mortifying deformity of body or of character. He beseeches God in three earnest petitions that this "thorn" might depart from him. His prayers are heard. They are answered. But, instead of the removal of the thorn comes the cheering assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee." The Lord does not take away the trial, but gives him all that is needed to make it endurable; thus the divine glory and Paul's spiritual well-being were more certainly advanced than if the prayer had been answered strictly according to its letter.

The prayer was not lost. That God hears every sincere prayer, who can doubt? The sceptic must seal his vision, lest, coming to the light, he shall be persuaded against himself. He must mutilate or destroy the shining record of God's providential dealings with the children of faith. He must cease from the Bible the animating narrative of Jacob's midnight struggles, the thrilling scenes of Elijah's wrestlings at Carmel and at Zaphar, the "evening oblations" of Daniel, and the angelic deliverance of Peter from the prison cell. He must destroy many a leaf from the Christian's diary, on which devout gratitude has written, "This day I learned anew that my heavenly Father hears and answers prayer." He must give him to be oblivious of love, which has uttered in the ear of all the needy, sorrowing, guilty household of humanity, "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you." And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

HENRY HAVELOCK.

Few men have appeared more unexpectedly in the drama of life, and gained a world-wide fame more suddenly than the late Sir Henry Havelock. It was the writer's privilege to be intimately acquainted with him for twenty years. I first met him in 1836. He was then Lieutenant Havelock of Her Majesty's 13th regiment, and stationed at Kurnal, Northern India. He had formed a temperance society in his regiment, and invited Dr. Campbell and myself to address the society. We were on a missionary tour, and remained in his house several days. His wife was a daughter of the celebrated Dr. Marshman, missionary at Serampore, from whom we had a letter of introduction to the Havelocks. This circumstance made us feel at home with them. He was then in the prime of life, and active in doing good. In person he was very small, not more than five feet eight inches in height, and of a very slight figure. When his sword was buckled by his side he could not swing it, but had to support it in his hand when he walked. He was, however, erect, and "every inch a man." His head was a model of intelligence; his eyes were small, grey, piercing, overhung by shaggy brows, and separated by a huge nose of the Roman order; his mouth indicated much firmness of purpose, and his smile was fascinating. Like most men of genius, he had no claim to beauty. His disposition he was stern and earnest, but he was not without a sense of humour; his eyes were small, grey, piercing, overhung by shaggy brows, and separated by a huge nose of the Roman order; his mouth indicated much firmness of purpose, and his smile was fascinating. Like most men of genius, he had no claim to beauty. 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