

THE FRIEND THAT IS CLOSER THAN A BROTHER.

A shrewd but somewhat eccentric man says that he once "weeded out his friends" by hanging a scarlet flag with a notice of a selling out by auction from his front door. After this signal of apparent bankruptcy, he tells us that the number of his visitors fell off amazingly, and he had no need of any extra leaves of his dinner table for some time afterward. His fair-weather friends all deserted him; and by this shrewd device he found out who were the genuine article. When a granary is full of corn, there are plenty of mice; when the corn has gone, the mice disappear with it. Success and prosperity win friends in abundance; adversity tests them; and the net result is not very creditable to poor, selfish human nature. The summer swallows that chirp in my chimney all vanish at the first blast of winter.

It would be a wise thing to "weed out" a great many people from the list of intimates. Cut out all the smooth-tongued flatterers who always applaud everything you do, and who always tell you that you are about right. Solomon tells us that a flattering mouth worketh ruin, and that he who flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet. Honest old Paul accompanies his sharp rebukes to his Galatian brethren by the question: "Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" About the best evidence that any friend can give me of his stanch affection is to tell me to my face that I am wrong.

Weed out also unsparingly all that class of pliant, limber, mucilaginous friends who always leave you weaker in moral purposes after you have been with them. Sin is catching, like certain contagious diseases. The worst sort of malaria that we can contract is from the associates who weaken our consciences, lower our moral tone, and slyly infuse the poison of their lax views into our blood. Many a young man has been ruined by just such associates; they suck the very life out of him before he is aware, and he yields readily to temptation. "Save me from my friends" is a petition that should be offered much oftener than "save me from my enemies;" for a bad friend will mix poison with the honey he gives you, while your enemy may thrust a great deal of wholesome truth into you at the point of the bayonet.

The Revised Version of the Old Testament, among its many other rich improvements and corrections, gives entirely a new reading of the last verse of the twentieth chapter of Proverbs. The old rendering "a man that hath friends must show himself friendly" is very tame in meaning, and is a false translation of the original. It is taken from the Vulgate, and not from the Hebrew text. The right rendering is: "He that maketh many friends doeth it to his own destruction; but there is a lover that sticketh closer than a brother." The idea is that if you take up with every sort of friend, and try to be on good terms with everybody, you will pay dearly for it. One will corrupt you by his bad example; another will tempt you to extravagance; another will betray your confidence, and in trying not to offend your friends, you will offend against your own conscience and against God. A marvelous book is the Bible; it shoots its rays of light on every footstep in life.

This passage, when rightly read, is capable of a glorious spiritual rendering. It contains the essence of the Gospel as in a precious phial. For when our poor, weak, temptable hearts listen to the noisy criers of this world, and are drawn to purchase their wares and to taste their sinful pleasures, and to be on good terms with them, we do it to our own grievous injury. Whosoever will be a "friend of the world is the enemy of God." But there is a Lover who sticketh closer than a brother. "All lovers, blush when ye stand beside Christ," exclaims grand old Samuel Rutherford in one of his seraphic bursts: "Was upon all love but the love of Christ! Hunger forevermore be upon all Heaven but Christ; shame forevermore be upon all but Christ's glory. I cry death, death be upon all manner of life but the life of Christ. Let this world be the portion of fools. It is but a shadow; within less than fifty years when you look back to it, you will laugh at the vanishing vanities thereof as feathers flying in the air, and as the houses of sand within the sea mark which children are building."

Jesus Christ has every requisite which you and I need or should desire in a Friend. At the bottom of all His devotion to us lies His infinite love. Turn to that matchless story of pathos and sublimity which never loses its sweetness, and read how He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, how He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, how He bore our sins in His own bleeding body upon the cross, and then cry

out: Oh! the depth and the breadth and the height of such a love as that! It is very easy to love attractive people; but Jesus loved us on account of our very guilt and wretchedness. He loves us all the more, too, because He died for us. If you or I perish, the loss will be more to our divine Shepherd than even to ourselves.

One test of fidelity in a friend is that he shall not be blind to our faults, or fail to reprove us for our sins. Mark how faithfully our Lord dealt with His disciples in holding up the mirror before them that they might see just what manner of persons they were. His rebukes were never discouraging; when He showed them their sins He showed also how to mend them. Christ's words are divine words to me, because, as Coleridge said, "they always find me." They reveal what is in me without possibility of evasion or concealment. I never can be with Jesus an hour, over His Word, or in close communion prayer, but I feel as if His hand had been laid upon every evil thing in my nature. Infinite thanks for a Lover so true that He spares not my faults and will not let me alone in my wilfulness and waywardness. He constantly sendeth His Holy Spirit to reprove our sins, and to lead us in the right way. Faithful are the wounds of our loving Guardian, but the kisses of false friends are deceitful.

Closely does Jesus stick to us, with the constant assurance "Lo! I am with you always." In every perplexity we can call upon Him. In every time of sudden temptation He is within our reach to succor us. As a child walking over a slippery and dangerous path, cries out "father, I am falling!" and has but a moment to grasp his father's hand, so every believer sees hours when nothing but the hand of Jesus comes between him and the abyss of destruction. As we look back over the pathway of life we may well be startled to see how often we were on the dizzy edge of a precipice and we will adore and bless the Lover whose unseen presence hovered about us.

Another proof of Christ's fidelity is that He never deserts us in trouble. That was a noble tribute which the veteran apostle in his Roman prison paid to Onesiphorus who visited him in his confinement, and was not ashamed of his chains. Our Saviour only draws the closer to us when we are enduring hardness for His sake; and in the fourth watch of tempestuous nights, His form is seen and heard through the darkness: "It is I; be of good cheer; be not afraid." It is a glorious comfort to us that, when our earthly props are knocked away, we can feel underneath us the Everlasting arms.

Death, which sunders all other ties, does not break the tie which binds Jesus and His redeemed ones together. Beautifully has it been said that "the continuous persistence of the bond between Christ and His friend Lazarus was unbroken by the superficial accident of death. Whosoever Lazarus was, he heard and knew the voice, and whosoever Lazarus was, he obeyed the voice. And so we are taught that the relationship between Christ and all them that trust Him is one on which the tooth of death, which gnaws all other bonds in twain, has no power at all." Because Jesus lives, we who love Him and whom He loves shall live also.

Then, my dear reader, grapple your heart to Jesus, the lover, who sticketh closer than a brother. Faith is the rope that lashes you fast. Holding to Him, you will be held, and no man can pluck you out of His almighty hand. It is not faith in a system or a doctrine alone; it is the living union of you, the sinner, to Jesus the Saviour—hearts to Heart, person to Person; that will bring you through the conflict, and land you in glory.—*Dr. Cuyler in Independent.*

THE BROTHER BROUGHT TO JESUS.

We read in the gospel of John respecting the apostle Andrew, "He first findeth his own brother Simon, . . . and he brought him to Jesus." Many others were brought to Jesus by Andrew, but he sought in the outset for one who was most nearly related to him, who had personal claims upon his sympathy and affection, and over whom he had a powerful influence, arising from a common name and kindred blood. May all Christians not learn a valuable lesson from the example of this first convert to Christianity as to the direction in which their first efforts are to be made for Him whom they have recognized as "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world?" According to the closeness of relationship is the force of obligation, and where the Spirit of Christ predominates over a spirit of selfishness, will these opportunities be improved. Sin, whose essence is selfishness, is a severing principle. It allows a man's eyes to remain open only in the direction of immediate selfish advantage. It blinds

him to his own true good, in time and eternity, and to the abilities which he possesses to confer pleasure and inestimable benefits upon his fellow-men. Selfishness generates jealousy, hatred, revenge, divisions, and their sad consequences. So far from leading others to Jesus, the selfish man keeps away from Jesus himself, lest the liberal spirit of the gospel should require him to sacrifice something which he esteems, or to do something which would conflict with his temporal interests.

But the first outward evidence that a man has become a new creature in Christ Jesus, is manifested in his desire to benefit others. The mind of Christ is at work within him, and as Christ went about doing good, so he is inspired to imitate his Master. Instead of envying his erring brother, like the elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son, he will be the first to go out and search for him, and bring him home and present him to his father, and promote his welcome. Instead of hating his brother and slaying him, as Cain did, because God seems to accept his offering, he will rejoice in his brother's acceptance and blessing. Christ's spirit is a spirit of love and unity, and without partaking of his spirit there can be no real and lasting union even among kinsmen. So many and various are the causes of contention and ill-feeling in this world, so small a matter may kindle so great a fire, such diversities are there even in the same family, that without the Christian principle of brotherly love as a basis of action, there can be no security against strife, much less that earnest endeavor for the welfare of others which make men Christ-like.

Our Saviour's example in this relation is impressive. "He came unto his own and his own received him not," though they were the chosen people of God. Yet he did not leave them and teach the Gentiles. Not even when the Jews showed themselves enemies and persecutors did he depart, but still sought "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He preached mostly in the neighborhood where he was brought up, and performed his mightiest works at Capernaum and in the region of country near to Nazareth. He gathered his immediate disciples from that class with which he had the closest association in his early years. He instructed these disciples to follow the same course in the outset of their career as Christian evangelists, and after his ascension these instructions were followed until the Holy Spirit clearly directed the apostles no longer to confine their efforts to their Jewish brethren. Their efforts among the Jews were greatly blessed, and the nucleus of the Christian church was formed of converts from the Jews.

How can we most efficiently build up the church with which God has brought us into connection? is a question which comes to every Christian disciple. Certainly not by endeavoring to influence in the outset those upon whom we have no claims, with whom we have no connection and only a slight acquaintance. Certainly not by throwing the weight of influence where it will weigh the least, but by using with alacrity and zeal the occasions which God's providence offers, and improving the circumstances in which God has placed us to promote his glory and the good of man.

Thus did Andrew, and the result is notable. The man whom Andrew brought to Jesus became one of the most zealous, laborious, and useful among the apostles. Of Andrew's future work we know comparatively little; but how extended was the sphere of Simon Peter's labors, how lasting their results! The introduction of Peter to Christ by Andrew is the most influential act for the cause of Christ which is recorded of that apostle. He may have been widely useful in his Master's service; we are warranted in this incident in the outset of his discipleship in assuming that he was so, though history has not preserved his record. But we know what he did for Christ when he led Peter to him. Let us imitate his example, not only because of its great and beneficent results, but also because an account must one day be rendered as to the performance of the duties which relationship involve. When we stand before the bar of God all excuses for neglect of duty will be vain. How foolish will then appear that dread of wounding the sensibilities of those whom we love which now prevents many from urging the claims of salvation upon friends and kindred! God will say then to all, "What hast thou done," and the consciences of many will declare "we are verily guilty concerning our brother." "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."—*Augustus in Observer.*

Keep your conduct abreast of your conscience, and very soon your conscience will be illuminated by the radiance of God.—*W. M. Taylor.*

THE POWER OF SACRED SONG.

The story is told of a Grecian mother who saw her child on the brink of a precipice. To shout to it might only quicken its vagrant feet to wander closer to the edge, or startle it with fear, so as to cause it to topple over. She lifted her melodious voice to a favorite hymn, and lured the little one back to her side. So many a sinner has been led to Christ. In the Moody meetings at Dublin, a gentleman over seventy years of age fell on his knees weeping like a child, confessing that he came there utterly indifferent the evening before, but that he heard "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." "I cannot sleep. If not saved now I never shall be." In Philadelphia, Dr. Sheppard said that this song was the most eloquent sermon he ever heard. A prominent Chicago politician, who was a victim of drink, going from bad to worse, chanced to hear this hymn. It was the arrow chosen of God. He became a Christian. An aged sinner in Scotland was awakened by the same and said, "It went through me like an electric shock." Another white-haired man of dissipated habits heard Sankey sing, "Too late will be the cry, Jesus of Nazareth hath passed by," and was prostrated with fear and trembling. He, too, came to Jesus.

A missionary going to establish a mission in South Africa stopped in a Zulu hut by the way, and "the first thing I heard was 'Hold the Fort' sung in the Zulu tongue." The preaching of song had preceded the missionary. In an English theatre, during the Moody meetings, a humorist dared to ridicule the evangelists in a song and was hissed off the stage. In a Dublin theatre one clown asked the other, "How d'ye feel?" "Rather Moody," said one; "Rather Sankeysonian," said the other. This was met with hisses, and the audience of theatre-going people took up "Hold the Fort," and sung it with grand effect as a reproof. Even Satan rebukes sin sometimes. Lord Shaftesbury said that if the evangelists had done no more than to teach his countrymen that hymn, they had done an immeasurable good.

Moody once told the tale of a shipwreck at the mouth of Cleveland harbor. The pilot saw but one light, the lower lights having gone out. The vessel mistook the channel and crashed upon the rocks. Many a life was lost. P. P. Bliss took the hint and wrote the popular hymn and melody both, "Let the lower lights be burning." "Light in the darkness, sailor, day is at hand!" by the same, is the poetic version of a scene from real life where the rescued sailors said that their only alternative was to "Leave the old stranded wreck and pull for the shore." The burning of Chicago inspired this same song-writer to compose "Billow of Fire." The last melody he wrote was "Hold Fast till I Come," words by his wife, just before both of them were caught up in a billow of fire in the burning of the train at Ashtabula, December 29th, 1876. The last words he sung in public before that tragedy was preface by, "I don't know that I shall ever sing here again, but I want to sing, as the language of my heart:

"I know not the hour my Lord will come To take me away to his own dear home, But I know that his presence will lighten the gloom, And that will be glory for me."

In the darkness of a December night, in the midst of a blinding snow storm, the train plunged through a bridge seventy feet and burned up. When last seen before they reached that death-trap, Mr. Bliss sat with his Bible and a pencil in his hand, composing a hymn or music. It was his sacramental hymn. Only God knows the melody of that unsung sonnet.

Maggie Lindsay, a sweet Scotch lassie of seventeen, was converted at the Moody meetings, December 31st, 1873, and January 27th, 1874, met her fate in a railway wreck near Linlithgow. She was then reading Sankey's hymn, and had the leaf turned down to the lines, "There is a gate that stands ajar." Little did she dream that she was then to enter "through its portals gleaming," one of the king's daughters in white, having just received her wedding garment. The last hymns my dear class-mate, Dr. Goodell, at St. Louis, gave out in church the night that apoplexy closed his lips forever here below, were on the heavenly land. He seemed full of joy, yet little knowing that in a few hours he would be gladder yet, within the gates. Let us, therefore, make life a rehearsal of the songs of heaven. It will sweeten life's joys and soften its pains and sanctify our lips for the song of Moses and the Lamb.—*Prof. E. P. Thwing.*

"About the bounds to be set in the restraint of Christian liberty, the first is, that nothing be imposed as necessary but what is clearly revealed in the word of God."—*Stillingfleet's Irre-*

TAKING PLEASURE IN INFIRMITIES.

Paul enumerates a long list of perils, persecutions, reproaches and hardships, in 2 Cor. xi. 23-28; and after recounting the history of his "thorn in the flesh," he makes the wonderful statement, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak then I am strong." (2 Cor. xii. 10). In Rom. v. 3, he says, "We glory in tribulations also." In harmony with this view, James says, "Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into divers temptations," (i. 2).

Now we are assuredly not to understand that these servants of God took pleasure in such trials, sufferings, and persecutions, *per se*. They did not love to suffer for the sake of suffering. It was no spirit of stoicism that led them to submit uncomplainingly and even joyfully to the malignant persecutions of men and devils. There was something beyond all this suffering, that served as the ground of their joy. Paul gives us to understand the secret of his pleasure in such circumstances, when he says, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me," (2 Cor. xii. 9).

He glorified in tribulation, because it furnished occasion for God to manifest himself as his deliverer—because it was the precursor of a fresh bestowal of Christ's power within him, and a new inletting of the infinite love of God—because it furnished an opportunity for hiding himself deeper and deeper in the bosom of his Heavenly Father—and because every such suffering served as an occasion for him to glorify God. In this view of the matter we are able to understand how Paul could take pleasure in all the adversities that fell to his lot. His imprisonment, hunger, thirst, whippings, stonings, perils by land and sea—all these were so many steps in the ladder that led him nearer and nearer to God; and each in turn made the divine life more and more dominant in him; furnished the very best opportunities for preaching and illustrating the gospel of Christ before a sinful world; and presented an occasion for "the life of Christ to be manifested in his mortal body." (2 Cor. iv. 10-11).

If any one of the present day would be able to rejoice as did Paul, in adversity, he must be able also to say with Paul, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. vi. 14) and, I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." (ii. 20).—*A. S. W. in B. Weekly.*

A BLUNTED SENSE OF HONOR.

When Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt, it is said that he encountered a party entrenched in a mud fort. He was powerless in his efforts to reduce it, for his missiles stuck fast in the mud, as was the case with the cotton bales that once defended New Orleans. A granite fort may be blown up with shell and a wooden fort may be burned up by rocket, but mud can keep at bay even a Bonaparte. So, says Dr. Kiltredge, the lukewarmness of a church defies the artillery of grace. The world absorbs its energies, and it has no time or strength for Christ. Secular business or social pleasures first. God must wait on our convenience. If we are at leisure and "feel like it," we go to the weekly prayer-meeting. If the weather is pleasant we may go to the sanctuary once a week. The world has exhausted our energies. Our spiritual life is insipid, indefinite and joyless. The sense of honor in our dealings with God is blunted. We break our word with Him and violate sacramental vows without a blush of shame. We look with horror on the act of stealing from our fellow, yet rob God systematically without a twinge of conscience. The thief says he must live, and so robs. We use the same form of speech to excuse our taking what does not belong to us, but what is set apart for God as His, as truly as our neighbor's purse is his. Brethren, these things ought not so to be.—*Ch. Union.*

Frances Ridley Havergal speaks of her experience thus: "First I was shown that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanse us from all sin; it was then made plain to me that He who thus cleansed me, had the power to keep me clean; so I utterly yielded myself to Him, and trusted Him to keep me. As we may trust Him to cleanse us from the stain of past sins, so we may trust him to cleanse us from all present defilement."

If you cannot be great, be willing to serve God in things that are small.—*S. F. Small.*

LEMONT'S Variety Store.

(Established 1844.)

Boys and Girls supplied with all kinds of Knickknacks.

Sleds and Sleighs; Moccasins and Snowshoes, Blackboards, Cars, Blocks, Gunboats, Dolls, Chairs, Towers and Cottages, Zitherns, Telephones, Wooden Guns, Students' Book-racks, Frisky Cows, Combination Desks.

A NEW LINE OF Velvet, Brussels and Tapestry Folding Chairs.

A Beautiful Collection of COLORED GLASSWARE.

Large variety of Single Cups and Saucers and Mustache Cups.

DOLLS! DOLLS! In large numbers. INDIAN CURIOSITIES, (Latest). Our stock of Silver-Plated Ware is well assorted and consists of the usual kinds—CASTERS, 4, 5, 6 Bottles, large variety Cake Baskets.

Pickle Bottles, Butter Dishes, Card Receivers, Tea Setts, (Plated), Plated Knives and Forks, Spoons, etc.

The Perfection Iron Granite Tea and Coffee Pots; Fancy Austrian, German, French and English Glassware & China.

We have two upholsterers making up PARLOR SUITES, LOUNGES, EASY CHAIRS, SOFAS.

PATENT ROCKERS, &c. Buy a nice Parlor Suite, or a beautifully finished Bedroom Set.

EASY CHAIRS

Furniture of all Kinds

and qualities in large Warehouses. Feather, Mattresses and Spring Beds. Woven-wire Mattresses, Davenport and Book-cases, Lamps, Chandeliers, Hall and Side Lamps, Knives and Forks, (different handles), Looking-Glasses, (Low and High priced), White Stone and Colored Dinner, Breakfast and Tea Sets.

And Thousands of Crockeryware sold by the piece or dozen.

A magnificent stock of goods at very low prices. Don't forget, at

Lemont & Sons,

ESTABLISHED 1844.

Dr. John M. Howe's Inhalant Tube. To be carried in the Pocket, for breathing Pure Air. Used as a remedy for diseases of the Throat, Lungs and Digestive Organs, expands the Chest and Lungs from two to six inches in a few months use. Has been sold thirty years. Very best of testimonials. Price at store, \$2.25; by mail to any address in Canada, \$2.50.

LEMONT & SONS,

Agents for Dominion of Canada, Dec. 1, 1885.

1886. Spring & Summer, 1886.

NEW GOODS!

WM. JENNINGS,

Merchant Tailor,

Is now receiving a large selection of

English and Scotch Suitings,

In Checks and Plaids.

Irish Tweeds and Cheviots.

Also, a Choice Selection of

COATINGS,

In Plain and Fancy Colours.

WM. JENNINGS,

Cor. Queen St. & Wilmot's Alley,

FREDERICTON, N. B.

COMMENCING TO ARRIVE

—AT—

Thos. W. Smith's

FASHIONABLE

Tailoring and Clothing

Establishment,

EDGECOMBE'S BUILDING,

Queen Street, Fredericton, N. B.

ENGLISH, SCOTCH,

GERMAN & CANADIAN

TWEEDS,

Of the best quality and newest patterns.

GERMAN WORSTED SUITINGS,

AND FRENCH TROUSERINGS,

Of the latest Designs.

The latest styles of Gents' Fur Hats and

Gents' Furnishing Goods in

great variety.

Satisfaction guaranteed. All the latest

Fashion Plates to select styles from.

Call and examine. Will be pleased

to show our Goods.

T. W. SMITH.

dec14-4f

Watches

—AND—

JEWELRY.

WE beg to call the attention of intend-

ing purchasers of Watches and

Jewelry to our Large Stock of New Goods

in that line. It has always been our aim

to select the newest styles and from the

most reliable makers.

And in addition to above we have a

large stock of

Silver and Silver-Plated Goods,

French & American Clocks,

Spectacles, Gold & Silver

Head Cans, Etc.

Page, Smalley & Ferguson,

43 KING STREET.