

Always a River to Cross.

There's always a river to cross;
Always an effort to make
If there's anything good to win,
Any rich prize to take.
Yonder the fruit we crave,
Yonder the charming scene;
But deep and wide with a troubled tide,
Is the river that lies between.

For the treasures of precious worth
We must patiently dig and dive;
For the places we long to fill
We must push and struggle and strive;
And always and everywhere
We'll find in our onward course
Thorns for the feet and trials to meet,
And a difficult river to cross.

The rougher the way that we take,
The stouter the heart and the nerve;
The stones in our path we break,
Nor e'er from our impulse swerve;
For the glory we hope to win
Our labors we count no loss;
Tis folly to pause and murmur, because
Of the river we have to cross.

So, ready to do and to dare,
Should we in our places stand,
Fulfilling the Master's will,
Fulfilling the soul's demand;
For though as the mountains high
The billows may roar and toss,
They'll not overwhelm if the Lord's at the helm
When the difficult river we cross.
—Josephine Pollard in *Congregationalist*.

A Few Thoughts about the Prayer Meeting.

1. What it should be. Primarily, the convening of those who love our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for his worship. It should be pre-eminently a meeting for prayer and praise; not a social gathering of Christians for converse upon religious topics or for the purpose of becoming better acquainted with each other—these are very likely to grow out of it as a necessary or natural annex—but they should never come to be considered as the chief object. To meet the Lord, seek his presence and his blessing, and the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit should be the one dominant motive when God's children go up to this mount of privilege and blessing on prayer-meeting night.

2. By whom conducted and how. Generally by the pastor or elders as leaders and not as monopolists. No prayer-meeting can long continue to be serviceable and useful in the best and highest sense that is monopolized by any one, whether pastor, elder, deacon, high private, or some dear sister whose gift of tongue has never been punctuated with a stop. It is often better for both pastor and people that different persons take the leadership of the prayer-meeting now and then. Such a plan tends to develop the laity and make them stronger, broader, and more thoughtful members of the church, and more ready and useful in Christian work. It also helps to relieve the pastor in his work and give him an opportunity to observe what may be done to make the prayer meeting a greater power and blessing to his people. It should be so conducted as to bring out and develop the entire membership, therefore removed in all its exercises as far as possible from stiffness, routine and formality. It should take on all the freedom, sociability and cheerfulness consistent with the place and the main purpose of the meeting. Everyone would be made to feel his or her individual responsibility for its highest profit, and then labor to secure it. The too forward gently restrained, the naturally timid and diffident kindly brought out and encouraged to be helpful.

Having the subject announced a week before hand and inviting each member to have a passage of Scripture relating to it, or a word of remark, brief and pointed, or a pointed extract from the thoughts of another to read, will be found helpful in creating an interest on the part of those who so take part and so add much to the general good. Where the subject admits of division, as many do, let the one who is to lead, or perhaps better, the pastor, assign to different persons different branches of the topic to be briefly and clearly presented by them. Let this plan be pursued now and then till all have been assigned some part who are willing or can be prevailed upon to take part. Let nothing like favoritism find a place in the prayer-meeting. If any seem to need special care and putting forward let them be the humble, the timid, the "hidden ones" of the Lord. Encourage the fullest freedom of thought and expression. Where there are divergent thoughts and views bring all to the test of "thus saith the Lord." Let "the Book" settle all.

Shut down on all long-winded, rambling remarks no matter by whom indulged in. They have no place in the prayer-meeting and will take the life and soul out of it. It is no place for lectures or sermons, or tedious sleep-provoking talks. Do the same with those cold formal cut and dried prayers which everybody in the prayer meeting know by heart. Let the prayers be short,

fervent and as much as possible relate to the subject under consideration.

Interperse all with songs of praise a verse or two at a time, of such hymns and psalms as all can join in. Let there be no dullness, no solemn waiting for some one to fill up the time. If possible have some one who is ready in singing and well up in the music and hymns that are best adapted to social meetings, who has a good, clear, strong voice, and not afraid to use it, lead the singing and then encourage all to help.

3. How long should the prayer-meeting be. An hour as a general rule is long enough. If that is all occupied as it should be it will be found more profitable than a longer time half filled. Always close when there seems to be no one ready to do more that is profitable. Never drag along and wait and wait for the sake of filling out a fixed period. Better a half hour crammed full of life and soul and heart than an hour and a half of stupid waiting and dullness. Far better close when everybody is anxious for longer tarrying at the throne of Grace, than draw out the exercises till every one is yawning and half asleep wishing for the end. Many prayer-meetings are shorn of best results by being too long. Brevity, point, life and soul make the profitable prayer-meeting.—*Free Baptist*.

How She Was Converted.

When somebody asked her under whose preaching she was converted she smiled and said: "Under nobody's preaching; it was under Aunt Mary's practicing."

She had gone to live with her aunt when she was a self-willed, thoughtless, head-strong young girl, leaving the house of her parents because they opposed her marriage to a young man who proved, as she soon found, entirely unworthy of her love. And her Aunt, who believed the Word of God with all her heart and acted it out in all her life, received her lovingly, and with patient and gentle kindness and good sense, gradually led her to see the error of her course and to receive in love the lesson she endeavored to impress, till in the end they brought forth fruit an hundred-fold, and the niece became a warm-hearted and faithful Christian. And when, as already said, some one asked, "under whose preaching she was converted," with a smile she replied, "Under nobody's preaching; it was under Aunt Mary's practicing."

And there is a world of meaning in the answer, for example is ever more powerful than precepts, and a holy life is the mightiest of all arguments for religion. "It wasn't master's sermons, but it was master's life that did it," said a servant—who had been awakened to think of her sin—of her master, who was a clergyman. Christian reader can it be said of us that our home life is a daily sermon which every one in the house can read? Of two of the disciples of old we read that men "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus," and the command of Christ to all his disciples is, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." He does not say "let your professions be loud," or "let your doctrines be correct," important as the last may be, "but let your light shine."

And this is what is everywhere needed; not only those who profess, but those who practice; not so much better preaching as better living; not the mere assent to the gospel, but carrying out its principles and spirits in the daily life. The Christian looks to the Bible as the great standard of truth and duty, but the world's Bible is the Christian himself, and to him they look to see what religion is, and if every day his life is preaching the gospel they will see and be impressed by it. For a holy life is the best kind of preaching, and by it every one may preach, in the family, in the workshop, on the journey, by the wayside, just as truly as the minister can in the pulpit, and as effectually too. In fact, we are always preaching—every one of us—for good or evil, to win men to Christ, or tempt them to evil. Our looks, our words and actions and business habits and our daily and hourly unconscious influence—it is all preaching, and we should see to it that it is preaching not only the letter but the spirit of the gospel. To every one let the question come home, Am I doing this? Every day am I living Christ? Do I obey his commands and exemplify his spirit, and so live as to win others to him? Readers, are you doing this?—*The Presbyterian*.

Moravian Customs.

The Moravians have settlements not only in Germany but also in England, Switzerland and America. They hold nearly all the doctrines of Luther. Their largest settlement, Herrnhut, is in Saxony, and the Moravians in many parts of Germany bear the name of Herrnhuters. In each community there are two

houses set apart—one for the unmarried men, called the "Brothers, House," and the other for all unmarried sisters or widows who wish to enter it.

The Moravians cannot marry without the consent of the elders of their church, and in some cases the bridegroom has been chosen for the bride. They seldom marry outside of the community, and their engagements are nearly as solemn as the marriage. The weddings are very simple, the sister wearing but a black dress with a white lace handkerchief, and her pretty cap with its pale pink ribbon, which is changed afterward for a pale blue ribbon when the ceremony is finished. There are always two rings at a wedding in Germany, as there a married man always wears one which he receives from his bride in exchange for his.

The Moravians wear no crape or mourning for their dead, and they speak of them as blessed, and of the dying as "going home." They call the graveyard "God's acre," and they take the greatest care of the graves. But there also is the division as in the church, for the men are buried on one side of the cemetery and the women on the other.

The Moravians are all well educated, and the poorer brethren among them enjoy the same privileges in their excellent schools as do the richer brethren. Life among the United Brethren is simple and unartificial, love to God and man being their first principle; and many who have lived among them bear in their hearts a loving memory of their goodness and of the pretty little village of Neudietendorf.

A Child Hero.

We are apt to think that a hero must be somebody who has been in the front ranks on a battlefield, and has fought bravely for his country. There are heroes of that kind, but there are heroes, too, who know nothing about war.

A week or two since I heard of a seven-year-old hero, and I have known many real heroes who were not much older. But let me tell you about this one. His home is in Newark, N. J., and he and his brother were playing on the inclined plane up and down which canal boats are run by means of a large cable. The five-year-old brother of our little hero in his play sat down on the cable. At that moment the machinery was put in motion, and the heavy iron rope began to move. In trying to get off from his danger seat he got his hand caught between the cable and one of the wheels on which the cable runs. Quick as a flash his brother ran to the rescue, and succeeded in saving the younger child, but in doing so his own hand was caught and terrible pain. Forgetting his own pain, he guided his brother off the dangerous plane, and then, seeing his bleeding hand, grasped him by the well one and marched him to the hospital for treatment. The doctors there quickly cared for both boys, and in doing so found the older boy's injuries to be much more serious than the other's. The younger one was sent home, but the hero was kept at the hospital, where the doctors hope to save his hand, but it is a question whether they will be able to do so.

Newark ought to be proud of that boy, not only for his heroism, but for his rare common-sense. He knew enough after saving his brother's life to take him to the hospital, and was unselfish, brave, and thoughtful. Is he not a real hero?

RANDOM READINGS.

Modest apparel means a righteous people. Immodest apparel always means a contaminated and depraved society.—*Talmage*.

If our religion is not true, we are bound to change it; if it is true, we are bound to propagate it.—*Archbishop Whately*.

The word of God will not avail to salvation without the Spirit of God. A compass is of no use to the mariner unless he has light to see it by.—*Toplady*.

The passions act as winds to propel our vessel. Our reason is the pilot that steers her. Without the winds she would not move; without the pilot she would be lost.

A tiny speck held close to the eye will blot out all the glory of the world, and leave only a margin by which we see the blot. I know no speck so troublesome as selfishness.—*George Eliot*.

We are never more subject to attack from our spiritual enemies than when in the garden of ease. There is less danger for us when out in the conflict of life than when we sit down to rest.

In the moment that I shall waver, strengthen me; restrain me when the malignant thought arises; and while the yet unuttered words are ready to issue from my lips, set Thou thy bridle there, and govern my rebellious faculty.

Sorrow is only one of the lower notes in the oratorio of our blessedness.—*A. J. Gordon*.

The best sort of bravery—the courage to do right.

It takes two to quarrel—when one won't, the other can't.

You can learn to be patient and cheerful, in spite of pain and no play.—*Louisa M. Alcott*.

Beloved, let us love so well, Our work shall still be better for our love, And still our love be sweeter for our work.

—*Mrs. Browning*.

Holiness consists of two things, two endeavors: the endeavor to know God's will, and the endeavor to do it when we know it.

A devout Arab woman was asked in her last illness how she endured such suffering, and replied, "They who look upon God's face do not feel His hand."

To rebel against bereavements, misfortunes and disease is like scourging one's self with thorns; but submission to the will of God, as expressed through such afflictions, is like bathing one's wounds with balm.

Do to-day's duty, fight to-day's temptation, and do not weaken and distract yourself by looking forward to things which you cannot see, and could not understand if you saw them.—*Charles Kingsley*.

Encourage Men To Own Homes.

A man's first duties are to his family and to himself. The State should not make those primary duties more difficult by taking any of the necessities of life. The necessity for the major portion of the enormous revenue needed by government arises from vice and folly in their various forms. The causes of taxation should bear the burden of taxation. All public revenues should be drawn from indirect taxes upon conduct and conditions more or less inimical to the general welfare. Luxuries, vices, follies, excessive wealth, and all conduct, either of citizens or foreigners, which tends to generate evil and injustice, should be taxed as far as practicable. Such a system of taxation would necessarily have a correlative effect; namely, the encouragement of virtuous acts by freeing them from public burdens.

Instead of a policy which would make it impossible for any individual to ever become the absolute owner of a homestead—that would make mankind more nomadic and lessen their interest in and their affection for their homes—the State should encourage every man to get a piece of ground and a home of his own. To this end, all homesteads to a limited value should be exempt from taxation and from attachment for debt. The tendency of such a measure would be silently to prevent and cure the evil of monopoly of land by a comparatively few, as well as the evil of a tenant population with little interest in the soil upon which their toil and lives are spent.—*The American Magazine*.

Home Hints.

GINGER COOKIES.—One cup of molasses, one cup of sugar, one cup of butter, one teaspoonful salt, two dessert-spoonfuls ginger, one teaspoonful soda, one-half cup warm water poured on soda, then put in molasses and stir well before putting in the other ingredients.

FRENCH ROLLS.—Of light bread dough, take as much as will make one loaf. Work into this one egg, one heaping teaspoonful of lard, two of white sugar. Set in a warm place to rise. When light, work down, knead again; when very light and puffy, roll out. Cut with biscuit cutter. When raised bake twenty minutes in a quick oven.

SAGO PUDDING.—Take half a cupful of sago, put in a stew-pan with a pint of milk and the yolks of two beaten eggs; keep stirring until the grains are transparent, then they are done; take from the stove and flavor with a teaspoonful of vanilla or lemon. For frosting beat the two whites of the eggs with a cupful of powdered sugar; flavor with vanilla or lemon.

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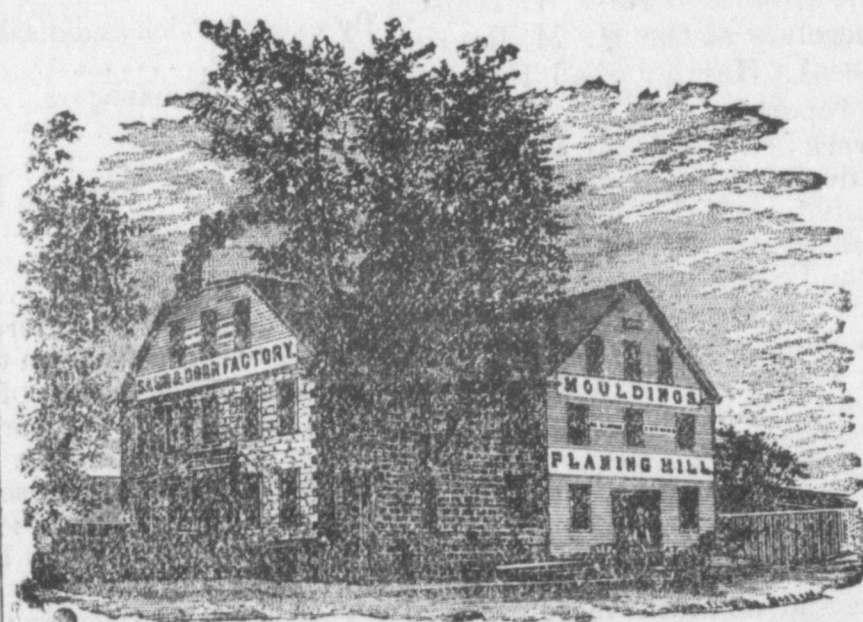
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