

## The Hermit.

BY JOSEPH A. TORREY.

A hermit, as the legends say,  
For years had stood, nor ceased to pray;  
Until at length there came a day  
When at his door a sick man lay.

The saint, anon, the sufferer sees,  
Has pity on the sore disease,  
Would give him drink, his thirst to ease  
But could not stoop, so stiff his knees.

O friend, who dost not cease to pray,  
But never yet hath found a way,  
Love's debt to suffering men to pay,  
Art thou that stiff-kneed hermit? Say!

## The Edoms of Life.

There are scenes through which many a Christian pilgrim passes which make his pilgrimage seem long and discouraging; scenes of delayed realizations; scenes of declensions; scenes of depression. The experience to which not a few of those pursuing a heavenly way are thus introduced is as the lengthening of Israel's way in the wilderness, which was their great discouragement. They were forty years in going from the passage of the Red Sea to the passage of Jordan, when the whole distance could ordinarily have been accomplished in a few days, or weeks at most. And when they had almost reached the borders of Canaan, they were turned back, and led far around Edom, adding years to a journey they had hoped to finish in a few hours.

This but too well describes the advancement which many persons make religiously. They are years in going the distance they ought to go in days; and sometimes forty years finds them only a little removed from their starting-place, so far as knowledge and faith and practice are concerned. They are but a slightly perceptible degree improved, either doctrinally or practically, as Christians. Hardly can they be said to know more about religious truths, or do more in the performance of religious duty. And then, it is not unfrequently the case that those who did go forward in the right way for a season, pressing "toward the mark for the prize," so that their salvation seemed nearer than when they believed, are turned aside from the straight way, and for a long time get no nearer to being made "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

It cannot be denied that there is a great deal of hindered progress in religion. Advanced positions of knowledge and obedience, enjoyment and usefulness, are often but slowly reached in the Christian course. Many persons are long delayed in "leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ" and going "on unto perfection." At the beginning of their new life they could hardly have believed that departed years would find them no better Christians, in their readiness to be or to do or to suffer, according to the will of God. Not a few of these hindered ones have been much longer, in becoming such Christians as they meant to be, than they ever dreamed of at the moment they chose the way of life. Many a young convert has formed purposes which embrace no such number of months or years as actually pass away before this or that intended step of Christian duty is taken.

Some who have a Christian hope could hardly have been made to believe that they should be so long in making a profession of religion by uniting with a Christian church, and that the way the Jordan of baptism or a place among acknowledged Christians would be so lengthened. They would not have deemed it possible that they could so long defer engagement in such duties as maintaining family worship and taking a part in meetings for social worship. Strange as it is, they have thus been all the while going around Edom, and getting much less near the Canaan of the higher Christian life to which they should aspire than could be desired. Too many beginners in a heavenly direction are hindered in the way of godliness, by going around the Edom of neglected duty and declining piety. They get but little, if any, nearer to "heavenly places in Christ Jesus," for years, while they are going around the Edom of unfaithfulness and unfruitfulness. This failure may well be cause for lamentation.

It is related of a young man who had commenced the Christian course, but, like too many in similar circumstances, had become seriously hindered therein by relapsing into worldliness and waywardness while conforming to a fashionable and unholy course of life, and absenting himself from the ordinances and institutions of the Lord's house, that he was reclaimed by a question proposed to him by a deacon of the church to which he belonged, who was a watch-repairer, upon whom he had called for the purpose of having his watch put in order. "What is the difficulty with your

watch?" said the deacon. "It has lost time lately," said the young man. The deacon looked up to him significantly, and said, "Haven't you lost time lately?" These were words in season, which resulted in a closer walk with God on the part of this wanderer from the right way. He who had been going around the Edom of spiritual declension was thenceforth found going forward in the path of duty, and no longer losing time as he had done.—*The Watchman.*

## "My Saviour Was Baptized,"

We never hear these words from the lips of a candidate for the ordinance of baptism, but with emotions of peculiar interest. Whether as indicating the warm impulse of a newly regenerated heart, yearning to be found walking in the Saviour's steps, or the changed views of one who has become convinced that though once nominally baptized, he had never really received that ordinance, they seem equally appropriate and touching. Nor can we think of any form more suitable in which a Christian can give a reason for the public profession thus made of the name of Christ. It indicates at once an all-sufficient motive for observing the ordinance, and for observing it in this particular way. All the circumstances of the narrative to which allusion is thus made show that in his baptism the Saviour was baptized. It was the act signified by the word in every language where it has been adopted, and which is still suggested in even those figurative uses of it which are so common. In only one connection is its meaning perverted; and that the very one in which we would suppose all Christians would be more anxious to preserve it. A baptism is always overwhelming when figuratively used. It is only as applied to a sacred and solemn Christian ordinance, that men pervert it to the denoting of a trivial, insignificant act not implied, even the most remotely, in the proper meaning of the word.

And then, it does seem that the manner of our Saviour's baptism, ought to settle all differences of opinion on the point we have raised. If we were called to explain the action implied in Christian baptism, we would just open the New Testament to the third chapter of Matthew, and point to it as "the end of all controversy." If that picture—the flowing river, the crowd lining its shores, silent and expectant, the hush of the wilderness around as if nature herself were attentive to the scene, while as the Messiah and his forerunner came up out of the water, God's voice from heaven acknowledged his Son—if that most pleasing, most instructive picture be once carefully studied, its testimony will be found conclusive. Why does the baptizer resort to a large river if the sprinkling of a few drops is baptism? Would John and Jesus come up out of the water, unless the object were immersion? In short, taking the whole scene together, what other fair and rational construction can be placed upon it than that Jesus was really and actually baptized?

The point, however, is so plain and clear that it is only now and then that even a Pædobaptist author has the hardihood to question it. The wonder is that admitting it, any one can thenceforth doubt as to the way in which the ordinance should in any case be administered. How does it look for any one to set over against the Saviour's example—sealed as it is with the declaration, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness"—considerations of convenience, the authority of the church to change ordinances, preferences of taste, or squeamish notions of propriety? If the Saviour was baptized, can a professed Christian, who really means to make him an example and a pattern, be content with anything less? If his example is of such partial authority in this case, surely it must be equally so in all others, and those words, "If any man would come after me, let him take up his cross daily and follow me," have a claim upon us only as it is convenient, or as it suits our tastes, or our preferences to observe them. Better and safer, Christian, is it to make our every act, above all those in which we profess to obey Christ, a fulfillment of that which is really the pledge and covenant we have assumed—"Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest."—*Western Recorder.*

## The Strength Of Magnanimity,

No trait of character invests a man with greater power than magnanimity. Without the slightest compromise of opinion, or the least deviation from the line of duty, but governed by a supreme desire to advance the truth and do good, it is always noble to yield mere preferences in the interest of essential principles. This was the

uniform policy of the great apostle to the Gentiles, and was one of the chief elements to his success, both as a preacher and a leader. Naturally self-willed, his noble Christian magnanimity led him to the adoption of this rule of self-surrender:

"Though I be free from all, yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more. . . . I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the Gospel's sake."

Some one says of Paul: "He is always ready to yield, when it is only his own personal pleasure or ease that is concerned; he is immovable as a rock when the interests of truth or justice are at stake."

There is marvellous strength in magnanimity, and the cultivation of this virtue is one of the duties too generally neglected. A willingness to yield a point or a preference, where no principle is involved, for the sake of harmony or the well-being of another, not only reveals character but contributes to the development of real moral greatness. What men sometimes count weak and compromising, God regards as heroic.—*Baptist Weekly.*

## The End of Life.

I wish that we all could get into our minds one other little principle. What is the end of life? The end of life is, not to do good, although many of us think so. It is not to win souls, although I once thought so. The end of life is to do the will of God. That may be in the line of doing good or winning souls, or it may not. For the individuals, the answer to the question, "What is the end of my life?" is to do the will of God, whatever that may be. Spurgeon replied to a committee inviting him to preach to an exceptionally large audience, "I have no wish to preach to 10,000 people, but to do the will of God," and he declined. If we could have no ambition past the will of God, our lives would be successful. If we could say, "I have no ambition to win souls, my ambition is to do the will of God, whatever that may be; that makes all lives equally great or equally small, because the only great thing in life is what of God's will there is in it. The maximum achievement of an man's life after it is all over is to have done the will of God. No man or woman can have done any more with a life; no Luther, no Spurgeon, no Wesley, no Melancthon can have done any more with their lives; and a dairy maid or a scavenger can do as much. Therefore the supreme principle upon which we have to run our lives is to adhere, through good report and ill, through temptation and prosperity and adversity to the will of God, wherever it may lead. It may take you away to China, or you who are going to Africa may have to stay where you are, you who are going to be an evangelist may have to go into business, and you who are going into business may have to become an evangelist. But there is no happiness or success in any life till that principle is taken possession of.—*Prof. Drummond.*

## Love.

Love makes drudgery delightful. It forgets self, and lives for others. Love outruns law and leaves it far behind. Not to be able and permitted to serve is a penalty. The question is not, What must I do? but "What may I do?" To give pleasure is its joy. To grieve its object is to grieve itself. Love is the secret spring of the believer's life; and this makes him often pass in the world for an enthusiast. It stops at nothing. Mountains of difficulty are no more to it than plains. It clasps the cross and kisses it. Love strengthened Mary, when the soldiers quaked with fear. Love kept her hovering round the sepulchre when all the disciples were scattered to their own homes. Love has a joy of its own, which a stranger cannot understand. It is fed by the unseen spirit of God, while reposing on an unseen Saviour. To lose life for him is to gain it. To suffer martyrdom for Jesus is to see him standing at the right hand of God waiting to welcome his servant to glory.—*Selected.*

## Heroism in Young Christians.

There is a great deal more heroism in the average young Christian than the world gives him credit for. For the most part, he (and particularly she) is considered rather giddy and frivolous, with a decided partiality for picnics and 'Russian teas' and 'donkey sociables,' rather than for earnest, aggressive Christian work. We do not think this impression is borne out by the facts. Our own experience is directly the reverse; The efforts of the young Christian are frequently confined to such pious frivolities as those above enumerated, because by pastor and deacon his devotion is un-

derestimated. The young Christian is not usually very inventive. He is not apt at devising methods of work, nor is it to be expected that he will be. The natural modesty of a beginner would prevent him from blazing his own path. But he is always ready to be set at work, if his heart has been fired with the Christlike flame. He is willing to do hard things. He wishes to be sent on long errands and over rough roads for Christ's dear sake. The Spirit of Stephen and Paul and of the 'Forty Martyrs' and of all the confessors lives in every true young Christian. It may lie dormant, but it is there and can be appealed to and called forth. His heroism is insulted when he is expected to expend all his energies on ice-cream and strawberries and oyster stews. Think of Paul going into Damascus after his vision on the highway, and buying himself in getting up a 'pink tea' in aid of the persecuted disciples! 'Pink teas' are not enough to satisfy the newly converted soul that always asks, with something of the heroic fervor of his great predecessor, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?'—*The Golden Rule.*

## Family Prayers.

There is one mark of a household in which God is known and loved, which is too often wanting in our day—I mean the practice of family prayer. Depend upon it, the worth of a practice of that kind can only be measured by its effects during a long period of time, and family prayers, though occupying only a few minutes, do make a great difference to any household at the end of the year. How, indeed, can it be otherwise, when each morning, and, perhaps, each evening, too, all the members of the family, the old and the young, the parents and the children, the master and the servants, meet on a footing of perfect equality before the Eternal, in whose presence each is as nothing, or less than nothing, yet to whom each is so infinitely dear that he has redeemed by his blood each and all of them? How must the bad spirits that are the enemies of pure and bright family life flee away—the spirits of envy; and pride, and untruthfulness, and sloth, and the whole tribe of evil thoughts, and make way for his gracious presence in the hearts of old and young alike, who, as he brings us one by one nearer to the true end of our existence, so does he, and he alone, make us to be "of one mind in a house" here within the narrow presence of each home circle, and hereafter in that countless family of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, which shall dwell with him, the universal Parent of all eternity.—*Canon Liddon.*

## The Young Dutchman.

Sitting the other day to see enquirers, a young Dutchman came into the room. He had crossed from Flushing, and desired to tell Mr. Spurgeon his difficulties of soul. He began: "Sir, I cannot trust in Christ." Our answer was, "Why not? What has he done that you should speak so ill of him? I have trusted everything in his hands, and I believe him to be quite trustworthy. What do you know against his character?" "Indeed, sir, I know nothing against him, and I am ashamed that I have so spoken, for I believe the Lord Jesus to be worthy of all confidence. That was not what I meant. May I trust him to save me?"

"Of course you may, for you are commanded to do so by the gospel, which says, 'believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' You are warned against not believing by the words, 'He that believeth not shall be damned.'"

"I may, then, trust Christ; but does he promise to save all who trust him?"

"Certainly. I have quoted to you the promise of the gospel. It is also written, 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' If Jesus does not save you upon your trusting him, you will be the first that he ever cast out."

"Ah, sir, I see it! Why did I not see it before? I trust, and Jesus saves me. I am well repaid for coming from Flushing."

We prayed, and he went his way trembling for joy. Reader, if you are in his case, may the like light come to you!—*Spurgeon.*

## Cheerful Religion.

Now the bearing of this thought is exceedingly wide. We are watched by those around us, Our words are interpreted by our deeds. And our behavior is much more influential than our speech. When poor working men and women hear us talk about God's faithful providence, and see how absurdly we deny it by our croaking and brooding over the future, then our hold

on them for good is utterly broken. The world continually knows how eloquent Christians are, when, in the conference meetings, they talk about the ways of wisdom as being the ways of pleasantness and the paths of peace. But what must people think of our consistency, if they notice slow steps and flagging zeal? How many souls by the year are won to the cross by solemn dignity, straight manners, stiff garments, long faces, downcast mien, and lachrymose tones of voice? To be sober-minded is one thing; to be morose-minded is another. And I have no hesitation in declaring that much injury can be done by the mere example of a Christian who caricatures piety by carping at divine Providence, and by a score of others whose very countenances shine with the blessedness of God. For men welcome all excuses for hardening their hearts.—*Dr. C. S. Robinson.*

## Look for the Bright Side.

By all means let it be a cheerful meeting. Times of despondency come to us all, but let us look for our mercies. Last summer a lady was sailing up one of the fords of Norway. The sea sparkled in the sunlight, the green mountains came down to the sea, and the Land of the Midnight Sun was in the full glory of its midsummer radiance.

"It is a beautiful country," said the lady, turning to the captain, who stood by her side; "it is beautiful now, but what do you do in the winter? The long, dark winter days must be very gloomy."

"Gloomy?" answered the cheerful sailor; "oh, no, the winters are fine. Why, in the winter we have the Aurora Borealis."

Said the lady, "I stood rebuked. Ever since when I have found myself anticipating trouble, I think of the Norwegian captain, and drop my gloomy forebodings and look for something bright."—*Golden Rule.*

## The Fireside Saint.

Doubtless the memory of each one of us will furnish the picture of some member of a family, whose very presence seemed to shed happiness; a daughter, perhaps, whose light step even in the distance irradiated every one's countenance. What was the secret of such a one's power? What had she done? Absolutely nothing but radiant smiles, beaming good humor, the tact of doing what every one wanted, told that she had gotten out of self and learned to think for others; so that, at one time, it showed itself in deprecating the quarrel which lowered brows and raised tones already showed to be impending by sweet words; at another, by smoothing an invalid's pillow; at another, by humoring and softening a father who had returned weary and ill-tempered from the irritating cares of business. None but she saw those things; none but a loving heart could see. That was the secret of her heavenly power.—*The Rev. Frederick Robertson.*

## Money for Christ.

A young man in business, who had just been converted to Christ, called on his pastor to tell him of his strong desire to labor for the Master, with the vague notion that this feeling was, somehow, a call to the ministry.

"Have you ever thought," asked the pastor, "that some men are called to make money for Christ, precisely as some others are called to preach for Christ?"

It was a new way of looking upon a business career; and the young man went back to his store to ponder over the duty of making money for Christ. But, why not?—*D. W. Faunce, D. D.*

## Gain by Loss.

Was it not a pretty thought, that of the gay young Southern girl, dancing with a sort of ecstasy among the falling leaves, whose brilliancy she had never seen in her sea-coast home? To one near her, saddening over her fall she said: "Just think how much more room it gives you to see the beautiful blue sky beyond!" Is it not true that as our little joys and pleasures and earth's many lovely things fade and pass away, they open spaces for us in which to see God's heaven beyond?—*"Manners Maketh Man."*

## RELIABLE REMEDY FOR RHEUMATISM.

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I find no medicine so effective, for Croup and Whooping Cough, as Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. It was the means of saving the life of my little boy, only six months old, carrying him safely through the worst case of Whooping Cough I ever saw.—Jane Malone, Piney Flats, Tenn.

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