

THE LIGHT THAT IS FELT.

A tender child of summers three,
Seeking her little bed at night,
Pained on the dark stairs timidly,
"Oh, mother, take my hand," said she,
And then the dark will all be light.

We older children grope our way
From dark behind to dark before;
And only when our hands we lay,
Dear Lord in thine, the night is day,
And there is darkness nevermore.

Reach downward to the sunless days,
Wherein our guides are blind as we,
And faith is small and hope delays;
Take thou the hands of prayer we raise,
And let us feel the light of thee.

—John G. Whittier.

Walter Thorburn's Visit To Boston.

Boston seems to have proved a source of considerable annoyance to him financially, because the methods of worship there didn't coincide with his own notions. Here are some pickings from his story of one Sunday passed in the city of "rational religionists": I arose before five o'clock, he says, resolving to examine the interior and exterior of their churches. Wherever I espied a steeple for my guide, thither I steered my course; and into most of them I found access, as the sextons were either dusting inside or sweeping outside. This may be rational enough, for aught I know, but I thought it was hardly consistent with pure religion; they ought to give a man 70 cents a week more, on condition that he beat the cushions and swept the gutters on Saturday afternoon.

At ten o'clock I entered a church which I had not before seen. The minister, after sitting awhile to breathe, got up and asked the congregation to join with him in singing to the praise and glory of God, etc., when upstared a string of lads and lasses, who sung out lustily to the praise and glory of themselves! I turned around to see how the minister brooked the affair, as no one joined with him, when lo! there he stood, as mute as a mummy, with his palm book shut and one hand upon each side of the pulpit, supporting his no ble frame, his face mantling with a complacent smile as he looked under the broad brims of the lasses' hats (at that time the ladies' hats measured three feet, brim, crown and border), and seemed absorbed in contemplating the sweetness of their warbling throats. I found it to be an old Scotch tune called "French" which they were singing, so I opened my hymn book, turned back to the minister, like the rest, and sung to the end of the hymn, keeping time with the lads upstairs. The people looked around, and some smiled, and some said, "He's a Yorker," and some that I was daft.

In the afternoon, continues this chronicler, I went to another church to see if I couldn't find something more orthodox. A woman, dressed pretty enough, but I thought her cheeks more ruddy than nature commonly paints in the month of June, got up and sang most sweetly, all alone by herself, praise and glory to the whole congregation. After the church was out I asked a gentleman who she was that sang for us, and he told me that she belonged to the theatre; that she sang till past twelve o'clock to the praise and glory of the devil; that the rational church paid her \$300, and the devil's church \$600 per annum. So that between the two she cuts a pretty bright figure. I said to myself, "If any of those stern old pilgrims who landed on Plymouth Rock that cold, stormy day, with their noses as red as a north west moon, were to enter now, how those pigmy degenerates would sneak into nice holes."

Continuing he says: I must observe that all the ministers I heard in this eastern country are readers, not preachers of the Gospel. Without a blush on his face he pulls from his pocket a roll of black leather, in form of a tobacco pouch; from this he unrolls about a sheet of paper, and, without even opening a Bible, reads a text from the head of the sheet, and so reads on till he comes to Amen at the end of the sheet. I wondered at the indecency (to call it no worse) of the man. (....) Everywhere they read their sermons, and sing praise by proxy. The minister, kept on reading his "dead language." Before this I was at loss for the meaning of "Professor of the Dead Languages" in Yale College, but I now thought it must mean those who learned those young Yankees to read sermons—*New York Times*.

WILD RELIGION.

Some persons think that if they love Jesus, they must enter a convent, retire to a cell, dress themselves queerly, or shave their heads. It has been the thought of some men, "If we love Christ we must strip ourselves of everything we possess, put on sackcloth, tie ropes around our waists, and pine in the desert." Others have thought it wise to make guys of themselves by oddity of dress and behavior. The Saviour does not say anything of the kind; but, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Even now and then

we find members of our churches who must needs leave their trades and callings to show their love for Jesus. Under this influence they rush into all kinds of foolery, and soon ruin their characters because they will not take the advice of sobriety, and cannot be satisfied with the grand test of love which our Lord himself herein lays down. The text does not condemn these light-headed projects in detail, but it does so in the gross by proposing a far more reasonable test: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Do not spin theories in your excited brains, and vow that you will do this desperate thing and the other. The probability is that you are not seeking the glory of the Lord, but you are wanting notoriety for yourself, and you are aiming at supreme devotion, that you may become a distinguished person, and that people may talk about your superior saintship. You may even go so far as to court persecution from selfish motives. The Saviour who was wise, and knew what was in men, and knew also what would be the surest test of true love to himself, says: "If ye love me keep my commandments." This is a much more difficult thing than to follow out the dictates of a crazy and disordered brain.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon*.

Take Part In The Contest.

Too many of our congregations, whether in the city or country, look upon their respected clergymen much as the ancient Romans did on the gladiators in the circus. They sit on the benches and sometimes shriek out their disapproval while he fights the lions.

If we do well, thumbs go up, but if the contrary, down they go, and the unfortunate minister, like the gladiator, must there and then die. Now, what I propose is that the congregation should leave the benches and come down and themselves help to fight the lions. In this age, as in every other that has preceded us, we need something more from our people than cheers and hisses; we need the co-operation of loyal hearts and true; the spontaneous action of those who in the day of danger will stand shoulder to shoulder with their appointed leaders, and by every effort in their power help to push the battle to the gate. Our clergy were certainly intended to be spiritual captains to lead on their people in the tremendous contest against sin and Satan; but by no means can they occupy all the subordinate positions in the army as well; they cannot be lieutenants and sergeants and corporals and rank and file at one and the same time; they cannot be the whole army in themselves. Now, in too many parishes, we have the officers, but from one fault and another, no army to give battle to the foe. While, however, saying this, I am confident that throughout the length and breadth of our land, we have hundreds and thousands of earnest men and women who only need proper organization and development to make them a tremendous power for good.—*Bishop Baldwin*.

Trust, Not Sight.

Psalm xci, 4.

"Under his wings shalt thou trust." Not, "shalt thou see?" If a little eaglet wanted to see for itself what was going on, and thought it could take care of itself for a little, and hopped from under the shadow of the wings, it would neither be safe nor warm. The sharp wind would chill it, and the cruel hand might seize it then. So you are to trust, rest quietly and peacefully, "under his wings," stay there, not be peeping out and wondering whether God is really taking care of you! You may always be safe and happy there. Safe, for "in the shadow of thy wings will I take my refuge." Happy, for "in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." Remember, too, that it is a command as well as a promise; it is what you are to do to-day, all day long. "Under his wings shalt thou trust!"—*Miss F. R. Haverhill*.

SOME time ago Mr. Bradlaugh went to lecture at Nottingham, where his thesis was—the Bible is an immoral book, and God, its reputed author, is consequently an immoral being. "I will prove this," said the lecturer, "from the Bible itself.—e. g., the Bible speaks thus: David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life." Now, (said Mr. Bradlaugh) you all know what sort of a man David was; that he was a murderer and an adulterer, and yet this Bible of yours says, he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life." Now what do you think of your Bible and its author? Are you not ashamed of it and Him? What have you to say for yourselves? Mr. Bradlaugh having flattered his audience in this way, there was silence for a

time, which was at last broken by a voice from the end of the hall, which said: "Finish the verse!" "I have no Bible," replied Mr. Bradlaugh: "finish it yourself." "Nor have I one," said the speaker, "yet I can finish it; and the conclusion which you omitted is this: 'Save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.'" The feeling against Mr. Bradlaugh, in consequence of this exposure of his "handling the Word of God deceitfully," was so strong that he hurriedly left the hall, and took himself out of Nottingham at his earliest convenience.

Sincere, But Wrong.

"If he is sincere in his belief, he has as good a chance of going to heaven as you or I have," said a church member to us the other day, when speaking of a certain person who held and taught all kinds of strange doctrines, contrary to God's word.

This idea, that provided a man is sincere in his belief, no matter what it may be, God will safely admit him to the eternal city, is one of Satan's delusions eminently prevalent at the present day. Men seem to forget that Saul was sincere in his belief when he shut up the saints in prison; yes, not only sincere but "exceedingly zealous" also. So were those who killed the Prince of Life: and though through ignorance they did it, God holds them responsible for their lack of knowledge, and that notwithstanding they were perfectly sincere in their conviction.

Had a bitten Israelite sincerely believed that he knew of a better way than a simple glance at the brazen serpent, he would have died where he lay; and in like manner will the sinner go down to an endless death, if trusting in a self appointed way, rather than in the one so plainly revealed, in God's written word. Man says, though I believe not, I shall be saved, provided I am sincere in my belief. God says, "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." From all this we learn, that it is of the utmost importance what we believe, or rather in whom we believe. And as the One who offers us eternal life is no other than God's dear Son, how can we escape if we neglect his great salvation?—*Evangelist*.

Pray More—Worry Less.

A lady correspondent inquires if this is not a good text, "Pray more—worry less." Yes, manifestly, and the text "preaches itself," scarcely needs an extended comedy for its illustrations and enforcement. Worry is the bane of the times. It is everywhere. It comes in thousand forms, and its inlets are wide open in the hearts of the multitude. People fret and fume and chafe themselves into disease and wretchedness, and finally to destruction and an untimely grave. The true antidote to excessive worry is more prayer.

There is a message in the divine word of which a burnt-out Chicago friend gave an impromptu and almost inspired analysis, as with his family he sat down in his fire residence on the evening after the fire—"Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God" (Phil. 4:6). "There," said he, "that means first this, that we must be care-burdened with nothing, that we must be thankful for anything. Let us pray," and he knelt down and poured out his heart in the spirit of that exegesis, and then went to his rest, calm and tranquil as a lake unstirred by a ripple. We commend the prescription to everybody—for these times and for all time.—*Presbyterian*.

Homes Without God.

One alarming evil of the nineteenth century is the number of irreligious homes found in every community. Not homes without culture, refinement and elegance; not homes wanting in social and worldly enjoyment; but irreligious homes; homes in which practically there is no prayer, no God, no Bible reading, no worship. Practically, God is as much excluded from many homes as he is from the marts of trade or the ball-room. Alas for such homes!—the father unsaved, bearing no testimony for Christ, placing before the children no Christian example. Sometimes both parents are unconverted, and as indifferent to the gospel or to a word like this as the most blasphemous infidel. Oh, what a calamity is this! If parents are irreligious, and can do dispense with God and his church, how are we to expect better of the children? Godly homes have done more for the peace of society and the spread of the gospel throughout the world than any other single agency. If this be true, who can speak the dreadful influence and results of irreligious homes?—many of them excellent in many things, but wholly un-Christian. God have mercy on such.—*Our Young People*.

A Remarkable Story.

Rev. C. H. Spurgeon relates the following which was told to him by one of the evangelists:

A woman in Scotland, who was determined, as far as possible, not to have anything to do with religion, threw her Bible and all the tracts she could find in her house into the fire. One of the tracts fell down out of the flames, so she picked it up and thrust it in again. A second time it slipped down, and once more she put it back. Again her evil intention was frustrated, but the next time she was more successful, though even then only half of it was consumed. Taking up the portion that fell out of the fire, she exclaimed, "Surely the devil is in that tract, for it won't burn."

Her curiosity was excited; she began to read it, and it was the means of her conversion. The tract was one of the sermons published in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*. Verily, that sermon, and the woman, too, "were saved, yet so as by fire." What wondrous ways the Lord has of bringing home the truth to the hearts and consciences of sinners!

Discipline Of Sorrow.

Those of us who have lost little children feel a prompting within us to speak a word of comfort to every parent who is passing through a similar experience. We cannot do good to others save at a cost to ourselves, and our own afflictions are the price we pay for our ability to sympathize. He who would be a helper must first be a sufferer: he who would be a saviour must somewhere and somehow have been hung upon a cross; and we cannot have the slightest happiness in life in succoring others without tasting the cup which Jesus drank, and submitting to the baptism wherewith he was baptised. Every real Barnabas (Son of Consolation) must pass to his vocation through seasons of personal sorrow, and so again we see that it is true that "by these things men live." The most comforting of David's psalms were pressed out of him by suffering, and if Paul had not had his thorn in the flesh we had missed much of that tenderness which quivers in so many of his letters.—*W. M. Taylor, D. D.*

Is Your Home Happy?

If your home is not happy, why, and who is or are responsible? are questions for every member of the family beyond childhood to consider. We should not be satisfied with anything less than positive happiness, in the tabernacle of home, made sacred by the altars of love. This can be had in spite of poverty and sickness, disappointment and sorrow, losses and crosses, age and loneliness. Her blessed presence will abide though all these things be against her, but will flee from anger and selfishness, indifference and fault-finding, hypocrisy and sin. One sweet spirit can keep her hovering about, but only by the invitation of the majority will she come in and by the courtesy of the controlling powers will she become a permanent guest.—*Selected*.

Temptations Of Ministers.

Besides those common to all men, ministers have their peculiar temptations. The ambition to be popular for popularity's own sake is one of the most common and fatal. It is a Delilah in whose lap many a strong man has been shorn of his strength. Akin to this is the ambition to say sharp things and smart things, and be amusing. But a minister of the Gospel is not a peddler nor a show man, to display wares and exhibit curiosities. Another, and not unlike the former, is envy and jealousy, on account of the popularity of others. "But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after love, patience, meekness; fight the good fight of faith wherunto thou art called."

Random Readings.

Whatis resignation? It is putting God between one's self and one's grief.—*Madame Swetchine*.

Our life is an apprenticeship to the truth that around every circle another can be drawn.—*Emerson*.

We are all parts of a beautiful garden, and may have rich harvests for our Master if we love him enough.—*Louisa M. Alcott*.

If we would bring holy life to Christ, we must mind our fireside duties as well as the duties of the sanctuary.—*Spurgeon*.

The truth cannot be burned, beheaded, or crucified. A lie on the throne is a lie still, and truth in a dungeon is truth still; and the lie on the throne is on the way to defeat, and the truth in the dungeon is on the way to victory.—*M. Kinley*.

"The Lord is thy keeper," but not thy jailer. His keeping is not confinement, it is protection. When you commit your ways to him, he does not abridge your liberty; he only defends you against the evil.—*L. M. Ludlow*.

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