

"He Satisfieth."

PSALMS cvii. 9.

The restless child upon the mother's knee
Shows but the state of every longing
mind;
The luscious fruit from earth's forbidden
tree,
Though sweet to taste, leaves discontent
behind.

The tantalizing streams of life do flow,
And whisper wooing words to court our
stay;
While rainbow colors all their beauties
show,
As gurgling waters rise in melting spray.

All nature joins, with her ten thousand
wiles,
To wrest the course of him who onward
speeds
To yonder heavenly port—her charming
smiles
Invite. With simple beauty thus she
pleads.

This world is but a means—'tis not an end;
Nor should we pause at any rippling
brook
To quench our thirst; nor even idly bend
To see our faces there—that tempting
look.

Why then the wish for all that God hath
made
If beauty satisfieth not, nor fills the
heart?
Stay not, O soul, at this expanse arrayed,
But through it see "Who doth all good
impart."

The heavens and earth point to the hand
Divine;
But only as His glory they declare
Should we behold the wonders they en
shrine;
We feast on Him—we see His image
there.

More of Good than Evil.

BY THE REV. J. HARRIS.

It is true, though cynics doubt it,
There is more of light than gloom;
More of sunshine than of shadows
On our pathway to the tomb.

But we take the glorious sunlight
As our heritage or right,
Heeding not the real blessings
Coming in the quiet night.

When "Our Father," in His mercy,
Soothes the tired heart and brain;
Weaves His curtain round our spirits,
Shutting out earth's care and strain.

All along the verdant hedge rows
Flowers in varied beauty lie,
But the tear-dropt, caused by sharp thorn,
Mars the scene to childhood's eye.

So with us no note is taken
Of those blessings blooming still,
All because our sight is darkened
By the tears of transient ill.

Israel found, amid her wanderings,
Ere her weary march was done,
Elin's wells were sweet and many,
Marah's pool was only one.

—Ch. Advocate.

A Live Church.

It may be profitable to consider what are the elements of a live church. I remark, in the first place, that one characteristic of such a church is, *punctuality in meeting its engagements.* All ecclesiastical institutions have financial relations, and they ought to meet their obligations just as certainly as men meet their obligations at the bank. When a church of God is not as faithful in its promises as the bank of England, it ceases to be a church of God. It ought to be understood that prayers can not paint a church, and prayers can not pay the winter's coal bill, and prayers can not meet the insurance; and that, while prayers can do a thousand things, there are a thousand things that prayers can not do. Prayer for any particular church will never reach heaven-high unless it goes down pocket-deep.

Let us say, also, that there must be punctuality in attendance on the house of the Lord. If the service begins at half-past ten in the morning, the regular congregation of a live church will not come at a quarter to eleven. If the service is to begin at half-past seven in the evening, the regular congregation of a live church will not come at a quarter to eight. In some churches I have noticed the people are always tardy. There are some people who are always late. They were born too late, and the probability is they will die too late. The rustling of dresses up the aisle, the slapping of doors, and the treading of heavy feet, is poor inspiration for a minister. It requires great abstraction in a pastor's mind to proceed with the preliminary exercises of the church, when one-half of the audience seated are looking around to see the other half come in. Such a difference of attendance upon the house of God may be a difference of time-peace; but the live church of which I am speaking ought to go by railroad time, and that is pretty well understood in all our communities. There is one hymn that ought to be sung in many Christian families on Sunday morning:—

"Early, my God, without delay,
I haste to seek thy face."

Another characteristic of a live church is, that all the people participate in the exercises. A stranger can tell by the way the first tune starts, whether there is any life there. A church that does not sing is a dead church. It is awful to find a cold drizzle of music coming down from the organ-loft, while all the people beneath sit in silence. When a tune wanders around, lonely and unaccompanied, and is finally lost amid the arches, because the people do not join in it, there is not much melody made unto the Lord. In heaven they can sing, though some there can not sing half as well as others.

Another characteristic of a live church is a flourishing Sunday-school. It is too late in the history of the Christian Church to argue the benefit of such an institution. The Sunday-school is not a supplement to the church; it is its right arm. But, you say, there are dead churches that have Sunday-schools. Yes, but the Sunday-schools are dead, too. It is a dead mother holding in her arms a dead child. But when superintendent and teachers and scholars come on Sunday afternoons together, their faces glowing with interest and enthusiasm, and their songs are heard all through the exercises, and at the close they go away feeling they have been on the Mount of Transfiguration,—that is a live school, and it is characteristic of a live church.

There is only one thing I have against the Sunday-schools of this country, and that is, they are too respectable. We gather into our schools the children of the refined, and the cultured, and the educated; but, alas, for the great multitude of the children of the abandoned and the lost! A few of them are gathered into our Sunday-schools; but what about the 70,000 destitute children of New York, and the score of thousands of destitute children of Brooklyn, around whom are thrown no benign and heavenly and Christian influences? It is a tremendous question. What is to become of the destitute children of these cities? We must either act on them, or they will act on us. We will either Christianize them, or they will heathenize us. It is a question not more for the Christian than for the philanthropist and the statesman. Oh, if we could have all these suffering little ones gathered together, what a scene of hunger and wretchedness and rags and sin and trouble and darkness! If we could see those little feet on the broad road to death, which through Christian charity ought to be pressing the narrow path of life; if we could hear those voices in blasphemy, which ought to be singing the praises of God; if we could see those little hearts, which at that age ought not to be soiled with one unclean thought, becoming the sewers of every abomination; if we could see those suffering little ones sacrificed on the altar of every iniquitous passion, and baptized with fire from the lava of the pit, —we would recoil, crying out, "Avaunt, thou dream of hell!"

They are not always going to be children. They are coming up to be the men and women of this country. That spark of iniquity that might now be put out with one drop of the water of life, will become the conflagration of every green thing that God ever planted in the soul. That which ought to have been a temple of the Holy Ghost will become a scarred and blistered ruin,—every light quenched, and every altar in the dust. That petty thief, who slips into your store and takes a yard of cloth from your counter, will become the highwayman of the forest, or the burglar at midnight, picking the lock of your safe, and blowing up your store to hide the villainy. A great army, with staggering step and bloodshot eye and drunken hoot, they are coming on,—gathering recruits from every grog-shop and den of infamy in the land,—to take the ballot-box and hurrah at the elections. The hard-knuckled fist of ruffianism will have more power than the gentle hand of intelligence and sobriety. Men, bloated, and with the signature of sin burned in from the top of the forehead to the bottom of the chin, will look honest men out of countenance. Moral corpses, which ought to be buried a hundred feet deep, to keep them from poisoning the air, will rot in the face of the sun at noonday. Industry, in her plain frock, will be unappreciated; while thousands of men will wander around in idleness, with their hands on their hips, saying, "The world owes us a living."

Oh, what a tremendous power there is in iniquity, when uneducated and unrestrained and unblinded, it goes on concentrating and deepening and widening, and gathering momentum, until it swines ahead with a very triumph of desolation, drowning like surges, scorching like flames, crushing like rocks! What are you going to

do with this abandoned population of the streets? Will you gather them in your churches? It is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish. If you have ten respectable children in your class, gather in ten that are not respectable. If in your Bible-class there be twenty young men who have come from Christian homes and elegant surroundings, let those twenty young men go out and gather in twenty more of the young men of the city who are lost to God and lost to society. This outside population, unless educated and restrained, will work terror in ages that are to come.

Another characteristic of a live church is appropriate architecture. In the far West and amid destitute population, a log church is very appropriate,—the people living in log-houses. But, in communities where people live in comfortable abodes, a church uncommensurate or lacking in beauty is a moral nuisance. *Because Christ was born in a manger, is no reason why we should worship him in a barn.* Let the churches of Jesus Christ be not only comfortable, but ornate. Years ago, we resolved to have a comfortable church. We resolved that it should be amphitheatrical in shape. The prominent architects of the country, after figuring on the matter a good while, said that such a church would not be churchly, and they would have nothing to do with the enterprise. But after awhile we found an architect willing to risk his reputation. He put up for us the first tabernacle, in amphitheatrical style. We liked it. All who came liked it. This building followed in the same style. We believe it is appropriate and adapted. An angular church will have an angular theology. The church of Jesus Christ ought to be a great family circle, the pulpit only the fireplace, around which they are gathered in sweet and domestic communion. But when our first tabernacle went up, oh, the caricature and the scoffing! They said, "It's a hippodrome! It's a holy circus! It's Talmage's theater!" But the Lord came down with power upon that old building, and made it the gate of heaven to a great many. And this building followed. That we were right in persisting in the style of architecture, is proved by the fact that now there are sixty or seventy churches in the United States in the same style. Indeed, our tabernacle has revolutionized church architecture in this country. A live church must have a commodious, a comfortable, an adapted building. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Again, the characteristic of a live church must be that it is a soul-saving church. It must be the old Gospel of Christ. "Oh," say some people, "the Gospel of Christ allows but small swing for a man's faculties, and some men have left the ministry with that idea." One such said to Rowland Hill, "I have left the ministry, because I don't want to hide my talents any longer." "Well," replied Hill, "I think the more you hide your talents the better."

Why, there is no field on earth so grand as that which is open before the Gospel ministry. Have you powers of analysis? exhaust them here. Have you unconquerable logic? let it grapple with Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Have you strong imagination? let it discourse on the Psalms of David, or John's apocalyptic vision. Have you great powers of pathos? exhaust it in telling the story of a Saviour's love. Have you a bold style of thinking? then follow Ezekiel's wheel, full of eyes, and hear through his chapters the rush of the wings of the seraphim. All ye who want a grand field in which to work for God, come into the Gospel ministry. At any rate, come into Christian circles, and, somewhere and somehow, declare the grace of God. Pardon for all sin. Comfort for all trouble. Eternal life for all the dead. Oh, my soul, preach it forever!—Rev. Dr. Talmage.

The Blessings of a Thorn.

There is nothing wrong in our praying for the removal of that which is a thorn to us, yet very likely it will not be taken away. It is probably something that we really need, the removal of which would be a loss to us. Paul's thorn was a double blessing to him. It was the antidote to his spiritual pride. But for this torturing trial his wonderful experience would have "turned his head." He would have grown self-righteous, or vain of his superior saintliness, or boastful of his high honor as an apostle. The taking away of thorn would thus have been a misfortune to him. May it not be the same with our "thorns"? May we not need them to keep us humble? When

we try to help in trouble we suppose the kindest thing to be the lifting away of the trouble. We move the pain-weary sufferer into a position of greater ease. We smooth the pillow. We draw out the thorns. We try to make life easier for our struggling friend. But usually that is not God's way. His love is not of that indulgent sort which cannot let men suffer when suffering is the truest kindness. So oftentimes he does not remove the thorns, though we ask Him earnestly and repeatedly to do so.

Paul's thorn was a blessing in another way. He received more divine strength because he had the thorn. His human impairment of power was filled with Christ-power. Thus the thorn became a blessing. He looked at it after Christ's assurance, and it was no longer ugly and revolting, but was blossoming in rich beauty, full of sweet roses. It was transformed into a rod of grace and strength like the wondrous ancient rod of Moses. It would stay with him through all his life, but its staying would be a pledge of more of the help of Christ. Thus his very weakness became his strength because Christ-power took the place of the lacking human-power.

In like manner our "thorns" may be transformed for us into blossoming branches of the tree of life. They make us weak as to our own strength, but the emptiness Christ fills with his rich grace. It was when Jacob was broken and defeated that he prevailed with God. He went away from Jacob limping and disfigured, but his lameness was the very mark of his new power. Our thorns bring us new endowments of power. When we think closely most of us will see that we get our spiritual strength through our human weakness. The sorrow that seems to destroy us leaves a wound, as when a branch is cut from a vine, but there is new fruitfulness in all parts of our life as a result. The ill health which breaks up all a man's cherished plans and ambitions turns his life toward God, and a saved soul is the compensation for a wrecked worldly career. By an accident he is unfitted for the ambitious achievements he had marked out for himself, and all his hopes are thwarted, but his life is thereby turned into new channels where his work glorifies God far more than could have been possible in his chosen paths.

So we should learn to put our thorns into the hands of Christ that he may change the "messenger of Satan" into a minister of good. This is the glory of our Christian faith that there is absolutely nothing in the life of a believer that may not be transmuted by the divine power into a true means of grace. Even ugly thorns become roses under the touch of Christ's hand.—The Westminster Teacher.

"What Profit?"

"What is the value of this estate?" said a gentleman to another with whom he was riding, as they passed a fine mansion surrounded by fair and fertile fields.

"I don't know what it is valued; I know what it cost its late possessor."

"How much?"

"His soul."

A solemn pause followed this brief answer; for the inquirer had not sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

The person referred to was the son of a pious laboring man. Early in life he professed faith in Christ, and he soon obtained a subordinate position in a mercantile establishment in this city. He continued to maintain a reputable religious profession till he became a partner in the firm. Labor then increased. He gave less attention to religion and more to his business, and the cares of the world choked the Word. Ere he became old he was exceedingly rich in money, but so poor and miserly in soul that none who knew him would have suspected that he had ever borne the sacred name of Him who said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." At length he purchased the landed estate referred to, built him a costly mansion, sickened and died. Just before he died he remarked:

"My prosperity has been my ruin."

What a price for which to barter away immortal joy and everlasting life yet how many do it!

Faith And Fanaticism.

Faith listens to God's voice, and follows where Scripture leads it by the hand.

Fanaticism has inward lights and mysterious voices and new revelations, and scorns the sober ways, the good old paths of the written record.

Faith compares scripture with scripture, and with docile patience gathers from its sundry places the entire mind of the Spirit. Fanaticism, when it deigns to consult the Word at all, is proud and precipitate, and pouncing on the text which serves its turn, has

no tolerance for any other which would restrict or expand its meaning.

Faith has a creed of many articles, and the decalogue has ten commands. Fanaticism resolves morality into a solitary virtue, and its orthodoxy is summed up in a single tenet! Such a fanatic, had he heard on the temple-roof a whisper in his ear, 'Cast thyself down hence,' would scarcely have hesitated to ascertain whether the voice came from a good spirit or a demon; or had he paused for a moment, and then been reminded of the promise, 'For he shall give his angels charge concerning thee,' he would have felt it a crime to hesitate. But he that believeth will not make such haste; and after hearing both the suggestion and the scripture proof, that great Believer to whom it was addressed, held up to the proposal the torch of truth, and declared it presumptuous and heaven-provoking.

Reader, try the spirits. Error is often plausible, and the most ensnaring errors are those which have an obvious resemblance to truth. Even though the outside coating is not brass but real gold, the leaden coin is none the less a counterfeit; and like the devil's temptation, wrap up in a scripture saying. Many false doctrines come now-a-days with a sacred or a spiritual glamor round them, quoting texts and uttering Bible phrases. But the question is not, Who has got a text on his side? but, Who has got the Bible?—not, who can produce certain sentences torn from their connection, and rest of the purport which that connection gives them? but, looking at scripture in its integrity—having regard to its general drift, as well as to the bearing of these special passages—who is it that makes the fairest appeal to the statue book of heaven?—Dr. James Hamilton.

Shall They Cease?

Some ministers who have been active and useful are doing little, are rusting more than working. What is the matter? Lack of education? Others with quite a little are doing a great work. Lack of talent? They are fairly endowed with this. Has the world passed beyond their reach? If it has, they are at fault. They should change their methods, as the world changes its habits. The real trouble is, loss of enthusiasm. They generally charge the fault to others; they should take it to themselves. Are the Churches and sinners in the wrong? Of course they are; that is the very reason why we are sent. We are sin-hunters. Our business is to deal with crooked things, and make them straight. We have no right to sit down and growl over the faults of others. We are sent to correct them, to save, to lead the wayward and contrary to Christ.

The proof of capacity is success. Enthusiasm develops capacity. Men who are in dead earnest to do a given work will always find ways and means. Providence helps them. They are wide awake, detect every chance of success, are ingenious to use circumstances and conquer difficulties. They never sit down and whine, or lay on others the blame of failure. Rusting ministers need enthusiasm for souls; that will set them in motion. Stupid, sleepy souls learn nothing and do nothing. Earnest ones learn and do constantly. Some of the wisest men we ever saw got all their wisdom through earnest work. Their eyes were open, because their hearts were warm.—Selected.

What Are You Doing?

Did you ever tell what the Lord has done for your soul?

How does the world know you are a Christian?

Did you ever make a personal appeal to an unconverted soul?

Do your religious engagements take precedence over all others?

Have you tried to induce any one to attend your church meetings?

Have you welcomed any stranger in church?

Do you visit the poor, the sick, the strangers?

Have you sought to know our new members?

Do you "go into the world and preach the Gospel," by giving as the Lord has prospered you?

Is secret prayer your daily habit?

Do you observe daily worship?—Thought and Work.

"I suppose, said a quack, while feeling a patient's pulse, "that you consider me a humbug?" "How odd it is," responded the patient, "that you can so accurately tell a man's thoughts by the feeling of his pulse."

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Ayer's Sarsaparilla has effected, in our city, many most remarkable cures, a number of which baffled the efforts of the most experienced physicians. Were it necessary, I could give the names of many individuals who have been cured by taking this medicine. In my own case it has certainly worked wonders, relieving me of

Rheumatism,

after being troubled with it for years. In this, and all other diseases arising from impure blood, there is no remedy with which I am acquainted, that affords such relief as Ayer's Sarsaparilla.—R. H. Lawrence, M. D., Baltimore, Md.

Ayer's Sarsaparilla cured me of Gout and Rheumatism, when nothing else would. It has eradicated every trace of disease from my system.—R. H. Short, Manager Hotel Belmont, Lowell, Mass.

I was, during many months, a sufferer from chronic Rheumatism. The disease afflicted me grievously, in spite of all the remedies I could find, until I commenced using Ayer's Sarsaparilla. I took several bottles of this preparation, and was speedily restored to health.—J. Freeman, Independence, Va.

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