

Trusting.

Here on this neck of land
I stand.
The ocean breaks with sullen roar,
Its white-capped waves dash on the shore,
And parting, sink to rise no more.

A stormy, restless sea
Taunts me!
On either hand skies, waters meet,
Without one sail my eyes to greet,
While rising tides wash o'er my feet.

I walked with backward tread.
He led
Me through the stretch of fertile land,
Through barren wastes of rock and sand,
And here I wait; wait his command.

Waiting, His love I fully trust;
I must!
I know His hand will set me free,
And though the way I cannot see,
I know His love is guiding me.
—*Ethel Lamb Martin.*

Stray shots.

BY LAURENS.

Talking about the execution done by stray shots, is it not true that the preacher has to do most of his hitting by indirection? He cannot be personal, yet it is very difficult sometimes to preach the truth and not be accused of personality. Are there not members in most of the churches who think the verge of personality is reached when the pastor hotly assaults Satan and his works? But worse than that, if you begin to preach faithfully the duty and privilege of systematic giving to the Lord, how long before some of the tender-skinned will intimate that it would be better for the minister to preach the gospel, instead of seeming to be so fond of money?

This leads up to the shot I want to make direct at the pastors. How about pastoral responsibility for stingy church-members? I do not believe the whole blame should be put on the poor pastor, who has enough without this. But what do you say, brother, to a good share of it, provided you have never faithfully and patiently and persistently educated your people in this respect? I was impressed with the remark of a brother to me recently, when I asked him about the financial condition of the churches of a certain association. Nearly one-half of the churches were asking and getting help to support their pastors and did not half support them then. I learned that some of these churches accepting aid and paying from four to six hundred a year salary had a score of well-to-do members, among them farmers worth over fifty thousand dollars. One church in this list of beneficiaries represented not less than a quarter million of wealth. I confess I was staggered. What is the matter? asked I, and why is such a state of things allowed? He said the trouble was almost wholly with the pastors. Take that conspicuous church as an example. They had one pastor for seventeen years. He was an excellent man as to character and piety, but when he was settled he found that the leading members were very tender about having an appeal made that touched the pocket, and he fell in with prevalent sentiment that the best religion was that which could be secured and practiced most economically. So he preached and prayed and farmed it enough to piece out a scanty salary and for all those years never stirred the people to a sense of their duty to themselves, to the great missionary fields, to their community, above all to God. It was easier not to do it, and really the poor man was afraid to do it. So he educated a generation of incorrigibles. And when he resigned, his successor tried the true way only to be asked to resign, as they wanted a man more like the dear old pastor gone, who found the gospel sufficient to preach without trying to get all the money the people had. All the fault of that long and evil training, was my friend's conclusion.

He told me of another church, to show how much influence a pastor can exert. This church for years had received aid, to pay a pastor for half his time, had groaned much at that, and were in discouragement and debt a good share of the time. Pastor after pastor came and went, went as soon as possible most of them. Of seven men not one took hold of the financial problem, or taught the duty of giving as an essential element of Christianity. Then there came a vacancy, and a seminary student to fill it, because he could be had cheap. But he was not a cheap man, if he was a theologian. He studied the situation. He saw that the church was abundantly able to support a pastor for all the time without help, and pay him a decent salary. He saw that want of light and natural closeness were the causes of the existing state of things. Being a student, and not caring a straw as to whether anybody would like it or not, he began to preach truth that was thorns and thistles to tender flesh. He told the people plainly how low an estimate they had put upon themselves by taking outside

help to do what they could do as well as not. He characterized such conduct exactly as it deserved, and did not mince matters. Then he told them a change must be made, for the sake of the Master whom they were dishonoring, and he felt he was sent there to make it, and proposed to stay and do the work. He raised the price of his services and demanded an engagement for the summer vacation. The church, to his amazement and everybody else's, yielded to everything. He took the enemy's camp by storm. Then he began to work from house to house. The congregation doubled. Converts began to multiply. He held revival meetings in mid-summer and insisted that the farmers attend, and they did. And when his term was over they called him at a salary of a thousand dollars, without anybody's help. He accepted, on condition that they would agree to raise as much more for missions. And in a year that church has been revolutionized by this fearless and financial pastor.

Exceptional? Yes; but there is undoubtedly chance for a large number of exceptions of the same kind. Can a pastor be faithful if he does not instruct his people in the scriptural ideas of this grace of giving? Only when every member shall regularly give something to the church treasury shall the membership of our churches be clear and right. And the pastor must bear the brunt of the battle. The Lord's cause must have more money, or it cannot even hold its place, to say nothing of moving forward, in the life of the world.—*Standard.*

An Incident of Travel.

It was the early twilight of a rainy Saturday afternoon. The streets were slippery with mud, and both horse and steam cars were crowded with people eager to reach their homes, where they could exchange wet garments and dripping umbrellas for the warmth and shelter of the fireside. In one of the trains leading out of Boston sat a middle-aged woman and a little girl. As frequently happens on Saturday, the cars were full, and the conductor had all he could do to elbow his way down the aisle. He punched the tickets rapidly, wasting no time in words. On reaching the child, he said briefly, "We don't stop at Revere. Go on to Lynn, and take the next train back."

Only two or three people overheard the remark. These glanced carelessly at the little girl, saw that she had an older attendant, and busied themselves again in reading or conversation. The woman seemed to fidget somewhat, but asked no questions. She kept glancing around, apparently scanning the faces of her fellow-passengers. Presently the car grew very warm, and a young lady sitting in the seat behind unfastened her cloak and threw it partially off. As she did so the rays from a lamp overhead fell upon a tiny silver cross fastened to her dress. It caught the eye of the woman, who instantly exclaimed, "Oh, you are a King's Daughter! I recognize the badge. Now I feel easy, for I know you will help me."

Certainly, if I can, was the ready response. Thereupon she told her story. The child at her side was an entire stranger, returning to her home in Revere. An aunt who accompanied her to the station, heedlessly put her in the wrong train, merely saying to the other occupant of the seat, "Please see that Nellie gets off all right, when the signal for starting was given."

I am a stranger in these parts, continued the woman, and my destination is far from Boston. I know nothing about this road. It seems cruel to leave a child nine years old to find her way alone on a dark rainy night in a strange place. What if it were my little girl, and she smiled kindly upon Nellie, who with child-like confidence, was not at all disturbed by the state of affairs.

Fortunately the young lady was thoroughly familiar with the road, and was able to tell the hour of a return train to Revere. She knew, too, the location of the ticket office, and felt sure that there would be time to get off and buy a ticket—for the child had no money of her own. On reaching Lynn she hurried out with Nellie, who by this time was a little frightened at the crowd, the increasing darkness and the confusion before the conductor swung his lantern and cried, "All aboard!"

Dear little cross! thought the young lady, springing on the car just as it began to move, had it not been for you, I might have lost this opportunity for a little service to my King. Hereafter I will always keep it in sight when traveling, praying that it may open the way for other trifling acts of kindness done in His name.—*Selected.*

Theory and practice often differ widely; so what is beautiful and apparently perfect on paper may prove in practice to be utterly worthless.

Resigning The Rudder.

For those who are troubled about many things, these words from the Quiver are full of comfort:

It was a prayer of George Herbert's that he might wholly be led to resign the rudder of his life to the sacred will of God, to be moved "as Thy love shall sway." How much fretting, how much worry, it would spare us all, if we asked our Heavenly Father that He would cause us to lean utterly in perfect faith, in cheerful, unquestioning obedience, upon His will and wisdom, whether in life's trivial concerns or in those shades of darkness from which we recoil in fear! We can ask Him nothing beyond His power; some of us know the feeling, "In all but this, I could say *Thy will be done*"; but if we will only tell the story at His feet, pouring out our hearts before Him, we shall be able to trust our Father, even to rejoice in Him, through every changeable pathway. Not long ago a Christian visitor called upon a poor woman who had just been told by the matron of the hospital of the incurable nature of her complaint; the poor sufferer tearfully declared she accepted God's will patiently as far as her own pain and death were concerned, but she could not bear the thought of her motherless children; nobody could induce her, she said, as concerned the children, to feel patient and resigned. It was a painful scene; the visitor could not remonstrate with her upon her spirit of impatience and murmuring, but felt as though she must weep with her, as she said, "Yours is untold sorrow, beyond my understanding even, but God knows all about it—God understands. Will you not tell Him just how you feel—tell Him what you have told me—all your pain, anxiety and dread of leaving your little ones alone? I am going now to tell the leader of our prayer meeting about you; to-morrow from three to half-past, prayers will arise on your behalf; will you not at the same time be on your knees before God and tell Him all?" The sufferer promised; next day, relates the visitor, earnest, pleading supplications laid her case before God, and what was the result? The next interview found that woman as calm as she had been impatient; she had poured out her own heart in prayer, and others had prayed for her, and she told the visitor, "I am just leaving everything with God—not only whether I live or die, but each of my little children. Everything is safe with Him; I feel it—I know it." Verily our God is the same now as in past ages—payer-hearing, prayer-answering.

An Unknown Donor.

One morning a few years ago Rev. C. H. Spurgeon was presiding at a meeting of the Trustees of the Stockwell Orphanage, which he founded, and it was announced that there was only sufficient money in the bank to pay the bills then due. "Well," said he, "we're cleaned out. We must go to the Great Chancellor or the Exchequer; but before we pray, I want to know what you are going to give. I will give £25. Each of the Trustees present gave the same amount, and as there were five in addition to Mr. Spurgeon, £150 was raised at once. Then he prayed. It was a short and simple prayer, asking plainly for what he wanted. That day was Friday. On the Sunday following he saw the Trustees, and they came to him and said: "Well, sir, did you get the money?" In his answer, he was able to say that £850 came in that very Friday, and almost as much for other institutions.

A remarkable incident occurred on that same Friday. A gentleman came to the College and asked Mr. Spurgeon if he was in need of money. "Always in need of money here, sir," was the brisk reply. Then he mentioned the College, for which the stranger gave £100; and then the Collegeport Society, for which he gave another £100. "Ah! but," he said, "there is something for which you have greater need than these." Then the Orphanage was mentioned, and for it the stranger gave a very large sum. But," he said, "you must sit in your chair for five minutes after I am gone; you must not try to find out who I am. I promised God to do this some years ago, and I have never done it till now; and now my conscience is relieved." From that day to this Mr. Spurgeon never knew who his visitor was.—*Watchman.*

How fast we learn in a day of sorrow! Scripture shines out in illuminated splendor: things hard to be understood become in a moment plain.—*H. Bonar.*

SILENCE is sometimes a Christian's stronghold. When men assailed our Lord he "answered nothing." Though he spake as never man spake there were occasions when he maintained an inexorable silence. So, now, in many cases, silence is Christ-like, and at the same time it may be significant to self-poise and strength.

A Hindu Place Of Judgment.

When you hear of a place of judgment I suppose you will picture to yourself the court of a king, or at least a law court where the magistrate gives his decision on the case brought before him after hearing the evidence on both sides.

The judgment seat of which I write, however, is neither the throne of a king nor the bench of a judge. It is a large flat stone placed in the open air. No one is seen sitting upon it, yet the Hindu priest tells the people that it is occupied by the king of kings, their god.

Before it you will see two goats, which have been presented by the people who have had the dispute, and have brought the case into court for judgment. A crowd of people have gathered to see who will get the case.

There is breathless silence as the priest of the temple near by stands before the two goats, and then, holding some sand in each hand, sprinkles it upon their backs. The goats are now let loose and the people watch them eagerly.

By and-by one of them feeling the sand on his skin uncomfortably, begins to try to shake it off. As soon as the goat begins to shake himself the case is decided in favor of the person to whom that goat belongs.

You will think this a funny way of administering justice. Still the practice was, until recently, found in the hills of India. This is but one instance of many of the foolish superstitions in India.

Don't Worry.

Every movement of muscle, whether it accomplishes anything or not, whether voluntary or involuntary, costs an outlay of bodily strength. Every thought also involves an expenditure of strength. Therefore, all thought involving fret, worry, tear, or borrowed trouble, is so much strength unprofitably expended. It will waste you away, mind and body. You may always tell a man or woman whose existence has been a life-long fret, by their care-worn, hollow, emaciated faces. They are never healthy. Fret kills more people than the cholera. It leaks away strength constantly. At last the weakest organ or function gives way. This we call disease. The doctor comes and gives the disease a Latin name. The disease may attack heart, liver, lung, stomach, kidney; but the real and underlying cause has been at work for years in the patient's mind. You can't help fretting, worrying, borrowing trouble. That makes no difference as to result. Merciless nature takes no account of what you can't help. Possibly you cannot help it. Years of habit may have made worryin' "second nature" for you. It may be a habit as hard to break as the "joggle" of your heel while sitting at the desk. Both movements—the physical one of your foot, and the mental one of your mind—may have become involuntary. You might call it automatic mind or body action, or automatic exhaustion.—*New York Graphic.*

The Household Angel.

The glad, hearty, cheery woman who makes the best of everything is a treasure in any home. She may make mistakes, she may forget, she spoil a dish in mixing or in baking, but if, with the mishap, she sends in a gleam of sunshine, a smile, a laugh or some gay and kindly word, people forget their disappointments and make the best of what they cannot help.

And how much better this is than the unvarying precision of one who has no faults and no patience with those who have; who never makes mistakes nor makes allowances for others who do. Accuracy and precision are excellent. Punctuality and promptness are most valuable; but "love is the fulfilling of the law," and Christian charity is greater than faith, hope, faultless house-keeping, or anything else.

If you're born with sunshine in your heart, thank God for it, and let it shine out.

But if not, turn your gaze to the Son of Righteousness and catch the brightness that beams from His face. "They looked unto Him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed."—*Common People.*

They must keep close to the throne of grace who would win the throne of glory.

It is for life—not so much even for death—that we are to be ready, ready for God's call, that comes to us in an hour when we think not, and demands all the strength we should have grown to, to enable us to decide and act.

God's treasury where He keeps His children's gifts will be like many a mother's store of relics of her children, full of things of no value to others, but precious in his eyes for the love's sake that was in them.—*Penelon.*

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