

Not Shut In.

[The following lines were written by a lady who laid upon a bed of extreme suffering for many years.]
"Shut in!" did you say, my sisters?
O no! Only led away
Out of the dust and turmoil,
The burden and heat of the day.

Earth's ministering ones come round me,
With faces kind and sweet,
And we sit and learn together
At the loving Saviour's feet;
And we talk of life's holy duties,
Of the crosses that lie in the way,
And they must go out and bear them,
While I lie still and pray.

I am not shut in, my sisters,
For the four walls fade away,
And my soul goes out in gladness,
To bask in the glorious day.
This wasting, suffering body,
With its weight of weary pain,
Can never dim my vision,
My spirit cannot restrain.

I wait the rapturous ending—
Or, rather, the entering in
Through the gates that stand wide open,
But admit no pain or sin.
I am only waiting, sisters,
Till the Father calls, "Come home!"
Waiting, with my lamp all burning,
Till the blessed Bridegroom come.

Sick Prayer Meetings.

That fine spiritual teacher and preacher, Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, communicates to the New York Evangelist an article with the above heading which is altogether too expressive to be withheld from the reader. We are sure readers of the Watchman, will welcome such a "word of exhortation" as the article unfolds, so suited as it is to every latitude and longitude of our broad land. We hence copy in full:

The best place to feel the spiritual pulse of a church is the prayer-meeting. If that is full of life, warmth and vigor, then the church is healthy; if the prayer-meeting declines, then the whole body is apt to suffer from this disease at the heart. The circulation of warm blood is impeded; devotion, which is the breath of the church, becomes feeble, and pretty soon the "extremities" grow cold, as in the case of a dying man.

Prayer meetings, like human bodies, are subject to a variety of diseases. Sometimes they suffer for want of a nourishing diet. No themes or topics are introduced to quicken thought, or arouse devotion, and the meeting is starved to a skeleton. But if some rousing practical topic is introduced; above all, if the vital truths of God's Word are presented, then the meeting has something to feed upon. The Holy Spirit honors the service that honors His precious Word. People run dry; even the best soon talk themselves out, (and talk other people out of the house too), unless their souls are replenished from God's inexhaustible storehouse of wisdom, knowledge and quickening power. Let the leader of the meeting choose some central truth or some enlivening practical passage of God's Word, and invite the people to come and talk about it and weave it into their prayers.

The weekly gathering of Christians should be instructive as well as devotional. The pastor is not supposed to be the only man who is well up in Bible knowledge; some private Christians get insight into the "deep things of God" that a minister has not yet discovered. On the evenings when special prayer is made for the evangelization of the world ("Monthly Concerts" they used to be called), the meeting ought to be fed with fresh information from the missionary fields. If nothing is carried into the meeting, very little will be carried out. I suspect that a large proportion of church-members saunter into their prayer rooms in a listless, hap-hazard fashion, trusting that somebody else will have brought "five loaves or a few small fishes" for the evening's repast. They do not even carry a felt want, a fervent desire, a spiritual hunger there; they are apt to bring nothing and carry nothing away. Scores of prayer-meetings starve to death. How can it be expected that unconverted persons or young people will ever be attracted to a meeting in which there is nothing to interest them or even keep them awake? A devotional meeting is no more a self-feeding apparatus than a human body is; its supplies must come from God's Word, and the presence of the Holy Spirit, and from the experience which the Spirit has awakened.

Many other prayer-meetings are suffering from what the doctors call "general debility." They have run down. The few people who do attend them, hear only the stereotyped prayers week after week. The blood has been slowly drained away from the meeting, until it has reached the last stages of

consumption. A is too busy to attend the meetings any more. B is too tired from his day's work. C has her round of social engagements. D goes to his club, and E to his political headquarters, and F cares more to stay at home and read his newspaper. And so from the whole alphabet of delinquents comes the same "I pray thee have me excused." The faithful few who need the meeting the least are at their posts; the unfaithful majority, who need to pray and be prayed for the most, are absent. The feeble prayer-meeting not only makes the pastor's heart sick, but it sends its slow paralysis through the whole church.

"What is the matter with us?" says one church-member. "Had we not better look for another minister?" says another. "People are attracted by fine music; let us get up a fine choir," suggests an æsthetic brother, who attends the opera generally on the prayer-meeting evening. Good friends, there is no mystery about the state of the church. You are drifting away from God! You are freezing to death, as people always freeze when they get too far from the source of all heat and life. That poor, sickly, declining prayer-meeting is not merely a symptom of a declining church; it is one great cause of your decline. Revival and recovery, if it comes at all, must come there, and had better begin there. The few who have stayed by the mercy-seat all along should direct their prayers "at a mark" and that is for the descent of the Holy Spirit as a fire from heaven. The deserters, who have brought themselves and the church also into its present diseased and enfeebled condition, must "face about," and go back to their deserted place of duty. Returning health cannot come from pulpit or music loft, from minister or evangelist; it can only come from the Lord Jesus Christ, and it will only come to those who penitently pray for the blessing, and are ready to work to secure it. Until that sick prayer-meeting begins to amend, there is not much hope for your declining church. Call for the Great Physician there!

The Lord will Provide.

"Be careful for nothing." Anxious care about what they shall eat or drink, about raiment and habitation, is forbidden to God's children, because it is inconsistent with the promise linked to the command. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; and he who looks through the long line of existence can give to his children such things as will best contribute to the great end he has in view—their eternal salvation. While journeying through this wilderness to the everlasting Canaan, God has said concerning the good man, "His bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." It is strange that some can trust God with his soul, but cannot trust him for the wants of the body. They think him competent to provide for them through eternity; but not for those few years which we call time. Can he who commands them to do justly, as well as love mercy, expect obedience when he denies the means? Will he imitate Pharaoh and his taskmasters in demanding the tale of bricks whilst withholding the straw? Of course not. Only let them take for their daily rule, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," and they may well leave the result to God. Let them honor the Lord with their substance, and he will furnish them with the means of doing so. He who supplied by his bounty from heaven what the earth denied by its barrenness, can still send the manna from the sky and the water from the rock. And if some, after using every lawful means to better their condition in life, remain in the humblest circumstances, it is perhaps because God cannot trust them with more of earthly good without putting their souls in great peril.—Rev. Daniel Maccabee.

Things Good to Keep.

Keep thee far from a false matter. Keep yourselves in the love of God. He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. My son, keep sound wisdom and discretion. My son, keep thy father's commandments. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently. Blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.

Palace-Car Piety.

Good old John Bunyan lived before the days of railroads, and he sent his pilgrim to the Celestial City on foot. Some pretty rough walking and hard climbing did Christian find before he had traversed the straight road from the City of God. His convictions of guilt were deep and pungent, his conversion was thorough, and when he reaches a dark and dangerous defile on the way, he bravely says, "I see not but that this is the way to the desired heaven," and on he goes without flinching. The piety of the pilgrim was stalwart, self-denying, sin-hating, and uncompromising; the man relished even the severities of the duty, and never coddled himself with confectionery. Is there not a strong tendency in our day to make a Christian life a great deal easier and more self-indulgent—and instead of a sturdy walk with God, to make it a comfortable ride to heaven in a palace car?

1. This tendency shows itself in quite too much of the preaching to the unconverted. The apostle Peter's first discourse after Pentecost was not a bid for popularity; he did not seek to bribe those Jerusalem sinners by telling them how easy it was for them to become Christians, and what a "good time" they would have if they embraced the new Gospel. He knew that the very best thing for them was to convict them of their sins, and a prompt acceptance and confession of Jesus Christ. Thorough conviction brought thorough conversion; then came gladness of heart and steadfast continuance in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. This same kind of sub-soil ploughing down to the roots was the characteristic of Whitefield, Finney, Edwards, Nettleton and Lyman Beecher; it is characteristic of Spurgeon's preaching to-day. The best service that can be rendered a sinner is first to convince him of his sinfulness, and then lead him to Jesus' blood; the more thoroughly sick of sin he becomes, the more he gets the bad stuff out of him by deep repentance, the healthier, holier Christian he will be afterward. But to preach to an unconverted man that "it is just the easiest thing in the world to be a Christian," and to urge him to come on board the church-train just as he is, and be transported safely and comfortably to Paradise, is pretty sure to either hoax him into self-deception or to make him a crude, half-converted, self-indulgent professor to the last.

2. Our blessed Master—who loved sinners infinitely more than we can—never bribed men into discipleship. He invited them to come to him, but he frankly told them that unless they were willing to deny themselves, and take up a cross and follow him, they could not be his disciples. There was a magnificent reward waiting for them at the terminus, but no palace cars to carry them there. The young ruler who fancied he might find one, and ride to heaven "like a gentleman," went away disgusted and disappointed. Brethren, we are always safe when we copy our blessed Master. So in dealing with the unconverted and with the awakened inquirer, let us be honest with them and tell them that if their "right hand" be a favorite sin, the hand must come off. The biggest devil in a sinner's heart is self, and unless that greedy devil is cast out, Christ cannot and will not come in and flood the soul with peace and joy and power. What is it but the subtle spirit of self that would seek to bargain with Christ for a safe and "gentle" journey to heaven in a palace car?

3. The spirit of indulgence eats like a canker into the life of too many of our churches. It leads them to choose as their place of worship, not the one in which they are the most needed, but the prosperous one in which they have the lightest load and the most luxuries. The wealth that ought to feed a dozen feeble churches into independence runs right down into the pool of one aristocratic church and stagnates there. Self-indulgence inquires—"Who preaches there? Is he eloquent? Is the music fine? And do the best society go there?" In plain English this means—bribe me with a seat in the drawing-room car and I will go with you. Self-indulgence always goes to its store through a storm, and hires a carriage on the bitterest night to reach a pleasure party; but it leaves Christ's ambassadors to preach to empty pews on an unpleasant Sabbath. The conduct of a vast portion of Christ's professed followers (I fear a majority of them) on every wet or inclement Lord's day is a severer reproach and works a severer damage to our Christianity than the ribald assaults of a hundred Ingersolls. It practically means, "My religion is worth heaven to me in eternity; but in this world it is not worth a little exposure and discomfort."—Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

A Sunny Atmosphere.

One way to make a church attractive is to put a sunny atmosphere into it. The minister must not be a scold, nor must the people be quick to give wings to any one's feelings. We do not mean that the minister is not to declare against unfaithfulness. He is appointed of God to reprove, to rebuke, with all long-suffering and doctrine. The tone and spirit, however, should always be that of the Master. What we need is to fill the church with kindness and good cheer. Let the Gospel sing in every soul, and Christ's beaming face shine in our own, and no stranger will lack a hearty welcome, and the complaint that there is a coldness, reserve, stiffness, and want of sociability will be gone. This is not something that can be cured by any mechanical arrangement. It must be sincere. If the heart go not with the clasp of the hand and the word of friendly greeting, the whole thing is a pretense, far better in the breach than in the observance. It is said sometimes that Christians are too stiff, not social enough. How shall the evil be removed? Let us begin at home. The church people seem stiff to you, they fail to recognize you sometimes when they should. What shall you do? Be anything but stiff to them; be sure to speak to those who forget or neglect to recognize you. What right would the sun have to complain of the dark day down here when his own face is covered with cloud? Let us remember that the law of retaliation in Christ's Church is wicked. Have unkind things been said about you?—say something good of the offender, or do as Jesus did when reviled, revile not again. Does it seem to you that your neighbor in the next pew is stiff, and cold and unsocial?—be sure to show just the opposite spirit yourself; the cure will be as effectual as it is Christlike. The church is no place to stand on ceremony. The aisles and pews are not platforms for the display of etiquette.

Let each greet his or her neighbor nearest by, and let every member of the church feel that it is his or her duty to welcome most heartily the stranger within our gates, and it will not be long until your church will be bright, cheerful and home-like as a garden of God. As it is, it is the nearest place to heaven we can find outside of our own homes. Let all who unite with the church say: "I have come into this church because I believe it to be a fold of Christ; because I would hear and honor the Gospel, which I believe is preached here; not to be selfish, but to be benevolent, loving, and self-denying; not to resent wrong imaginary or real, but to be charitable and forgiving toward others as I must be if I expect the forgiveness of my Father in heaven; not to give any ears to gossip, nor my tongue to reproach, but both to such ministries as only become a Christian; not to indulge my pride by watching where I am wronged, or by refusing to do my little because I cannot do what might sound my name in a louder tone; not to complain of my pastor, and to break his arms and burden his heart, but to heed his counsel, to pray for him, and so hold up his hands and cheer his heart. In short, I have come into the church, not to play into the hands of the world or the adversary of souls, but to serve God faithfully, to grow in grace constantly, and to do all my Lord bids me to help save the world."—Mid-Continent.

FORGIVENESS.—A Christian visitor once found a young woman, who had left her father's home to fall into a sinful life, and was wretched beyond comparison. Her anguish was especially in the desire to get home again, and her certainty that her father would not and could not receive, nor forgive her. "Have you ever tried him?" was asked. "No, I dare not." "Does your father know where you are?" No; I have never written to him since I left home." It was a long time before she would even let the visitor write in her behalf. But at last she consented, and the letter was well prayed over. By return mail an answer came with the word "immediate" written large on the outside; and the substance of it was, "Ready to forgive." Said the father, "This is what I have been earnestly praying for; I have wanted to know where my wanderer was, and yearned to hear that she was willing to return. Let her come back at once; I will forgive all, and love her still." Notice that this father's readiness to forgive and receive his child was a fact before the letter was written—a fact all the time she thought so hardily of her father, and judged his heart by her own deservings. What should this teach us about our heavenly Father?—Sunday at Home.

UNSTABLE.—The secret cause of many failures is not want of ability, but want of stability. Many men of talent begin well, but when obstacles present themselves they turn aside and seek some easier enterprise on which to expend their gifts. A story is told of a boy who always had a hobby which he rode with fiery speed, but could only ride one hobby a very short time. One winter he collected rare coins with wonderful zeal. Next he took a fancy to collect autographs. Before he had time to make much headway he wearied of this and bought a printing-press. Soon the drudgery of type-setting disgusted him, and he turned his fancy to pigeons. When he grew to manhood his fickleness followed him. He went the rounds of the political parties and reform associations and religious denominations. He wasted his talents in trying everything but doing nothing. There are many similar cases. Every calling has its objectionable features; every theory of usefulness has its weak points; every society has its faults; every way of life has its hardships. The man who lacks the peculiar quality which holds on steadily through good report and ill must fritter away his strength and waste his life.

Random Readings.

To be ignorant of one's ignorance is the malady of ignorance.—Alcott.

Be not satisfied with merely being on the Lord's side; be zealous for God and godliness.

Common actions become holy, and drudgery grows divine, when the motive is pure and high.—Spurgeon.

The heart is like the tree that gives balm for the wounds of man only when the iron has pierced it.—Chateaubriand.

The more God empties your hands of other works, the more you may know he has special work to give them.—Garrett.

Don't be disturbed by a little fault-finding. Go ahead with your work, and do your best every time and all the time.

What is it glorifies God? Faith, penitence, love, and obedience; where these are, and are exercised, God is greatly honored.

The sun drinks in the drop of dew which casts back its rays, and God absorbs the soul which reflects him.—Joseph Roux.

The essence of true nobility is self-passion. Let the thought of self pass in, and the beauty of great action is gone, like the bloom from a soiled flower.—Froude.

He is happy who is able to have peace in his soul when all distraction and turmoil around him. As compared with that, all earthly defences are insignificant.

He is always strong who has untroubled faith. Whether to worship, work, gather in his Christian fruits, fight his enemies, or simply to enjoy, his faith makes him earnest and able.

The religious sentiment will and must be expressed. Here it resembles not the fire in the flint, which is struck out by concussion, but the light of a lamp, which is itself radiant.—Dr. E. A. Park.

Troubles often meet us in the way of duty; they are designed to try our constancy, courage, and sincerity; think not I am going wrong, because tried; wait on the Lord; he shall save thee.

I will answer for it, the longer you read the Bible, the more you will like it; it will grow sweeter and sweeter; and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ.—Romans.

Whatever the world may say concerning the elements and conditions of success, it remains true that every life is a failure that does not grow better as it grows older.

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

Alter all, the most natural beauty in the world is honesty and moral truth; for all beauty is truth. True features make the beauty of a face, and true proportions the beauty of architecture, as true measures that of harmony and music. In poetry, which is all fable, truth still is the perfection.—Shattsbury.

I never saw in any sermon of Christ's anything that looks like strain. There was a splendid ease about him. It came out of him because it was in him, and he could not help giving it. His meat and drink was to do the will of Him that sent him. He rested by doing; he obtained refreshment for his weariness by getting on with his work.—Spurgeon.



INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY

1889. WINTER ARRANGEMENT. 1890.

ON and after MONDAY, 18th November, 1889, the Trains of this Railway will run daily (Sunday excepted), as follows:—

TRAINS WILL LEAVE ST. JOHN.

Day Express for Halifax and Campbellton 7.30
Accommodation for Point du Chene 11.10
Fast express for Halifax 14.30
Fast express for Quebec & Montreal 16.20
Express for Sussex 16.35

A parlor car runs each way daily on express trains leaving Halifax at 7.15 and St. John at 7.30 o'clock. Passengers from St. John for Quebec and Montreal leave St. John at 16.20 and take sleeping car at Moncton.

The train leaving St. John for Montreal on Saturday at 16.20, will run to destination on Sun day.

TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN:

Express from Sussex 8.30
Fast express from Montreal and Quebec 11.10
Fast Express from Halifax 14.50
Day express from Halifax and Campbellton 19.25
Express from Halifax, Pictou and Mulgrave 23.30

The trains of the Intercolonial Railway to and from Montreal are lighted by electricity and heated by steam from the locomotive.

All trains are run by Eastern Standard Time.

D. POTTINGER, Chief Superintendent, Railway Office, Moncton, N. B., 15th November, 1889.

New Brunswick Railway Co.

All Rail Line to Boston, &c. The Short Line to Montreal, &c.

ARRANGEMENT OF TRAINS

In Effect Oct. 7th, 1889.

Eastern Standard Time.

LEAVE FREDERICTON.

6.20 A. M.—Express for Fredericton Junction, St. John, and intermediate points, Vanceboro, Bangor, Portland, Boston, and points West; St. Stephen, St. Andrews, Houlton, Woodstock, Presque Isle, Grand Falls, Edmundston, and points North.

11.20 A. M.—For Fredericton Junction, St. John, and points East.

3.20 P. M.—For Fredericton Junction, St. John, Woodstock, connecting at the Junction with Fast Express via Short Line for Montreal and the West.

RETURNING TO FREDERICTON.

From St. John 6.40, 8.45 a. m.; 4.45 p. m.; Fredericton Junction 8.10 a. m.; 12.50, 6.25 p. m.; A. Adam Junction, 11.20 a. m.; 2.06 p. m.; Vanceboro, 10.55 a. m.; St. Stephen, 9.20, 11.30 a. m., 12.15 p. m.; St. Andrews, 6.45 a. m.; arrive in Fredericton 9.20 a. m.; 2.00 and 7.15 p. m.

LEAVE GIBSON.

8.00 A. M.—Mixed for Woodstock and points north.

ARRIVE AT GIBSON.

5.30 A. M.—Mixed from Woodstock, and points north.

A. J. HEATH, F. W. CRAM, Gen. Pass. & Ticket Agent, Gen. Man.



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