

## No Best on Earth

I wonder if ever a song was sung  
But the singer's heart was sweeter!  
I wonder if ever a rhyme was rung  
But the thought surpassed the metre!

I wonder if ever a sculptor wrought  
Till the cold stone echoed his ardent thought!  
Or if ever a painter with light and shade,  
The dream of his inmost heart portrayed!

I wonder if ever a rose was found  
And there might not be a fairer!  
Or if ever a glittering gem was ground  
And we dreamed not of a rarer!

Ah! never on earth shall we find the best!  
But it waits for us in the land of rest;  
And a perfect thing we shall never behold  
Till we pass the portal of shining gold.

—Norman McLeod D. D.

## Covetousness in bad Company.

If one were to examine all the passages in the Bible in which the term *covetousness* occurs, he would be at no loss in seeing that for some reason the Word of God puts it in bad company. Paul, for example, in specifying the gross sensualities and depravities of the heathen world, places covetousness in the list of fornication, maliciousness, malignity, and murder. (Rom. i, 29.) In his Epistle to the Ephesians we find covetousness connected with fornication, filthiness and uncleanness; and the covetous man is declared to be an idolater, of whom it is expressly said that he shall not have "any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." (Eph. v, 3-5.) So, also, in the Epistle to the Colossians, the Apostle defines covetousness to be one form of idolatry, and speaks of it as among the things for which "the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." (Col. iii, 5, 6.) Our Saviour warned men to beware of covetousness, "reminding them that 'a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.'" (Luke xii, 15) These passages, like many others of similar import, show what the God of the Bible thinks of covetousness.

What, then, is this covetousness which the Bible condemns and denounces? The general answer is that it is a purely selfish passion, having its seat and life in, and deriving its laws and impulses from an abiding state of supreme selfishness. It is penetrated through and through from top to bottom, with this one principle, without a single element of any kind to modify, mitigate or improve its character. It begins with selfishness and ends with it, and knows nothing else and cares for nothing else. It has all the meanness, and all the unreasonableness, all the iniquity and all the enormity of such a state of mind and heart. Everything in it at last comes back to this one idea.

The specific form in which this sort of selfishness manifests itself, consists in an inordinate love of worldly property. And inasmuch as what is called "money" is the standard representative of worldly values, Paul speaks of it as "the love of money," and declares this love to be "the root of all evil," by which he means that it is the prolific source of a vast variety of evils. (1 Tim. vi, 10.) The "love of money" in the sense and to the extent intended by the Apostle is covetousness. Alluding to this passion he says: "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition." (1 Tim. vi, 9.) The covetous man loves money not as a final end, but rather as the means by which he can gratify other selfish passions. These other passions are selfish, and with money he can gratify them. He lives for himself in his efforts to get money, and then he lives for himself in spending it. Self, and that only, is the dominant principle with him, whether he makes money or spends it. He is the supreme centre of his own existence, and all else is subordinate. God is of no account in his plan of life. Society is secondary, and even those to whom he is bound by the ties of nature, are secondary to himself. His one supreme purpose is to serve himself, and he loves money as the means to this end.

Covetousness—more, perhaps, than any other form of supreme selfishness—is a germinal iniquity, standing in such relations to other iniquities as to be immensely prolific, not only in the number of sins which it begets, but also in their great variety. There is hardly any end to the sundry forms and degrees of depravity that may be traced to the single principle of covetousness. All sorts of meanness, trickery, intrigue, double-dealing, deliberate and persistent lying, cheating, frauds, stealing, robbery, murder, and, indeed, almost all the wrongs, crimes, and cruelties against humanity and justice may, and often do, find their source in covetousness. Paul was a sharp observer of facts and things, as well as an inspired man; and, hence, speaking in general terms, he spoke correctly, according to

his own observation and according to fact, when he said that "the love of money is the root of all evil." No one who looks at this world as it is, and sees what this passion has done among men, and what it has led men to do, will think of raising any controversy with the Apostle's statement, or impute to him any extravagance of language. The fact, as it is, could be adequately stated only in strong terms.

What then shall we do with this vile passion? The answer is that we must crucify it as a *passion*, and bring the love of money within the limits of reason and sound Christian morality, whether in acquiring it or spending it. The evil is not in the money itself, but in the inordinate and sinful love of it. Any degree of that love which leads one to sin, is a covetous love. This is a sure test of its character. The man who lies and deceives another as the means of making a good bargain for himself, loves money more than he can innocently love it. So he who has the means of helping others and shuts up his compassions against their wants, refusing to afford them any help when he can do it and ought to do it, has the covetous heart. The employer who squeezes the wage-earner to the very lowest possible rate, against justice, and against the imperative necessities of the latter, is led by his covetousness to sin against God and man at the same time. The love of money must be in subjection to the rules of justice and benevolence, in order to be innocent and proper. The moment it transcends and violates these rules, it becomes the sin of covetousness.

A good way to conquer this passion and drive it out of the heart, and keep it out, is to cultivate and cherish just the opposite feeling, not in the form of personal luxury, extravagance and wastefulness, which is only another mode of selfishness, but in the form of a generous, sympathetic, and practical benevolence. Let any one follow the direction of Paul, "working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth," and then let him give as God has prospered him, and he will be quite sure to keep covetousness out of his heart. (Eph. iv, 28, and 1 Cor. xvi, 2.) Let Christians and, indeed, all men study and put into practice the great principles laid down by the Apostle in the eighth and ninth chapters of his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and they will be in no danger of losing their souls by the sin of covetousness. The best possible cure for this corrupting sin is *love*, thoroughly established in the heart and reduced to practice. Such love is alike hygienic, prophylactic and therapeutic. It makes the atmosphere healthy in the soul and around it, and kills all the base vermin that would otherwise gather there. The latter cannot live where love reigns. Love makes a tender and sympathizing heart; and covetousness makes a cold and icy heart indifferent to everything but its own selfish pleasure.—*Independent.*

## Talk with Him.

If I were asked what is the thing which the devil and the world and the flesh try hardest to prevent Christians from getting, I should reply, "Conversation with Christ." I say this from my own experience and from observation of all the Christians I have ever known. A quiet, unhurried speaking to Jesus alone, and hearing his replies—that is what every Christian needs every day, and what many get only once a month—or more seldom still—or never. When did you last so talk with Christ? Do stop and answer this question to yourself before you read on.

It is so easy to go to services and to listen to prayers, and to join in them. It is easy to sing to him, or to pray to him with others, or to think that we are doing so because we "feel refreshed" by it. But what if it should turn out that we were really only talking or singing for other people and ourselves to hear? Communion services are not necessarily conversations with Christ; nor is preaching or teaching, or working for him. You may be a most religious person—busy all day long about God's matters; you may give time, money and thought to him, and yet never converse with him alone for some time, perhaps an hour each day, you will certainly get thoroughly wrong, and that when you and he meet you will see all your work crumble away, and suddenly wake up to the fact that you and your Saviour are strangers.

It will be a horrible surprise to you that nothing should remain of all the work on which you spent your life, for "without Me ye can do nothing," had been forgotten by you. He meant that you should have talked to him continually about everything you did, and should have always been conscious of his sympathy and oversight. But instead of that you talk only to men and women, and make shift with their sympathy, advice and help. He meant you to have asked his counsel about

that money trouble. He would have arranged it all; but you only asked your lawyer, and it turned out badly. He meant you to have told him your anxieties about your son, and he would have ended them; but you only consulted your friend, and matters got worse and worse. He meant you to have asked him for light about that doctrine which you could not understand; but went to books to get it explained, and you became more uncertain than before he would have satisfied you. He meant you to have confessed to him that secret sin, and he would have forgiven you and cleansed you; but you confessed it to your clergyman or minister, and it tormented you to this hour. He meant you to have asked him how much money you were to give away; but you settled that yourself, and settled it wrong. He would have been your counsellor about the profession you chose, the situation you accepted, the servant you engaged, the books you read, the friendships you formed; but you choose other counsellors; and all has been failure. May the Holy Spirit strike the scales from your eyes now, and may you take Christ now as your personal friend and counsellor.—*Edward Clifford.*

## A Prevalent Offence.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that two-thirds of all the talk floating about through society regarding persons and families is absolutely without foundation. Over every community one may observe at times this mist of misrepresentation and misunderstanding, sufficiently tangible to blur the outline and harmony of things, but never tangible enough to be traced back to its origin so that responsibility can be fastened. Not long ago, in a church in another section of the country, it was suddenly reported from mouth to mouth that there was serious dissatisfaction with the minister in charge; a man of the greatest sincerity, integrity and fidelity, respected and beloved. There was instantly great anguish of mind on the part of many worthy people, who resented the injustice, and who detested the sort of spirit which manifests itself in church divisions. Presently it occurred to a few sceptical spirits to ascertain the dimensions of the dissatisfaction. They went to all the persons whose names were mentioned in connection with the movement, and from each they received not only a positive disclaimer, but a protestation of absolute ignorance; and both the protestation and the disclaimer were true. The whole dissatisfaction existed in the mind of one well-meaning but exceedingly irresponsible woman, who had excited herself to such a degree and talked with such volubility that she had persuaded herself and almost convinced a congregation that there was a serious disturbance at hand. This woman meant no evil, but she caused a great deal of suffering, and she might have been the occasion of a great piece of injustice. There is no way of punishing such an offence as this, although it is an offence which society ought to be able in some way to bring home to the offender. The absolute lack of responsibility which a good many well-meaning people show in the matter of talking would be incredible if one were not constantly coming upon illustrations of its extent.

Men and women give forth impressions and repeat, without qualification or condemnation, statements regarding others which have absolutely no foundation in fact, and to ascertain the truth or falsity of which not the slightest effort has been made. These same people would shrink from the idea of burning down a man's house or taking a ten-dollar bill out of his pocket; but they do not hesitate to smirch his character or destroy his peace of mind, calamities much more difficult to bear than the results of arson or theft. Society stands in great need of sound education regarding personal responsibility for talk which affects the character or standing of others.—*Christian Union.*

## Influence.

How startled a man would be, if with naked eye he could see the influence that proceeds from him, just as our breath becomes visible on a frosty morning! Every word and act even in the humblest life reaches so much further than one would at first suspect! Longfellow, in one of his letters, tells an odd story of a Jew who purchased all the flies in a certain grand mansion, together with the privilege of killing them anyway he pleased. The price he paid was very considerable and the contract was signed and sealed in due legal form. Then drawing a revolver he began deliberately to shoot the flies. Bang! bang! bang! Now the ball would shatter a plate-glass mirror; now it would puncture a beautiful painting; and now it would plough through the polished surface of a mahogany table, till the owner of the house cries "enough," and pays a large price to

released from his bargain. Every human act is like a bullet launched into space. One cannot divine its ulterior effects. We are like sportsmen who thoughtlessly fire leaden pellets like spray into the green banks or leafy tree-tops, aiming perhaps at some large game, heedless of the little sparrow who is smitten by the stray shot, or of the innocent field-mouse who creeps away to die. We aspire to lofty stations where we think we may be able to wield a long lever of influence, and never ask ourselves the question whether we have sufficient character and intelligence harmlessly, rightly, and nobly to wield the little influence we now have. How common and how pitiable the spectacle of a small man in a lofty position! Our misfortune in municipal, national and even ecclesiastical politics is that little men have shouldered or wormed their way to high offices, the duties and impossibilities of which they have neither the character nor the intelligence worthy to perform. How sorry the spectacle of a soul strutting about in garments that are too large for it! Such lives have coiled up within them infinite possibilities of mischief and harm and wreck to other lives. The crude boy in thoughtless and ignorant cruelty tears from the butterfly the gorgeous wings which the wisest scientist cannot replace. A small man carrying through the streets a long ladder thrusts the end of it, without meaning to, through a valuable plate-glass window.

## Some men we have no Faith in.

We have no faith in the man who calls the God-inspired reprover of sin a crank, and who goes on loving his sin and his present evil life. "Servant of sin, free from righteousness." "He that loveth his life shall lose it."

We have no faith in the man who belabours his horse and kicks his cows and runs a pitch-fork into a stray hog. "The merciful man is merciful to his beast."

We have no faith in the man who says "he is too poor to give." But whose life-aim seems to be to add farm to farm, dollar to dollar, or one who on the other hand allows the vanities of life to consume all. Bound up in self, the better, the higher nature, yearly becoming weaker, the soul shrivelling because its powers are not exercised. They plead poor for policy, but we must say that is a poor policy. Who has eyes to see let him see! "Who hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

We have no faith in the man who says: "Don't drink, my son, don't drink—the cup of custom is the cup of devils," but who in private says: "A glass of whiskey does me good." "Be sure thy sins and also sons) will find thee out."

We have no faith in the man who has faith in himself. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

We have no faith in the professing Christian who does not progress, grow, bear fruit. Growth is one of the never-failing signs of life and fruit. Much fruit is a sign that the life is healthful, pure, vigorous. The law of the kingdom is that the branch that does not grow and bring forth fruit is cast forth and burned. But those who know their Maker and Master trust in Him, abide in Him, receiving His life, they flourish and bring forth much fruit to the glory of God. If we do these things we shall branch out, adding to our stem of faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, etc., add, add, add. "For if these things be in us and abound, they make us that we shall be neither barren nor unfruitful." If we do these things we shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "He that lacketh these things is blind." "Open Thou our eyes, that we may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law." "The entrance of Thy Word giveth light."—*Can. Presbyterian.*

## Hold On!

There comes a time in the life of every boy when he thinks he knows it all. If he were riding on a locomotive he would want to tell the engineer just how to run the engine. In his own home he thinks he knows more about how the house ought to be managed than his mother does, and he is positively certain he knows much better what is best for himself than his father knows in spite of his age and experience.

This does not usually last long, and from that time on for the rest of his life he will realize more and more how little he really knows. Some boys get over their conceit gradually; others are hustled out of it very unceremoniously by some unpleasant experience. This was the case with the gentleman who relates his experience in the New

York "Sun." Ice-boating is dangerous at the best; and when the flying boats, going at railroad speed, find it necessary to tack, it must require all the strength and attention of the passengers to hold on successfully.

I remember the first time I ever climbed into an ice-boat. It was near Saugerties, on the Hudson, about thirty years ago. Three other passengers were there, too; but I was the only novice. I was horribly afraid of air-holes, for I had heard a great deal about them. Seeing one about fifty yards in front of us, and directly in our track, I nervously drew the steersman's attention to it.

"Do you think I am blind?" he replied, angrily, for I had bothered him that way once or twice before. A second later he shouted, "Hold on, all!" and I, who had not held on fast enough, as the boat spun away on another course, was shot out of the craft and went sliding along over the ice at a wonderful rate of speed. There was a splash, and I felt the water close over my head. I thought we were all lost, for in my fright and confusion, I had not noticed that I had left the ice-boat, but when I rose, spluttering, to the surface, I saw my companions 200 feet away, and quite safe. It was I who was in the air-hole, and I was there alone.

It was a quarter of an hour before I was fished out, half-drowned and two-thirds frozen. Since that day I have never attempted to offer suggestions to the steersman, but have devoted my attention exclusively to my own business, and chiefly to holding on when he tells me.

The moral is, if you are the helmsman, steer your best. If you are only a passenger, don't attempt to manage the steering, but "hold on."—*Advocate.*

## Random Readings.

If we measure distance by time, we are not far from home.—*Spurgeon.*

To have what we want is riches, but to be able to do without it is power.

In company set a guard upon your tongue, in solitude upon your heart.

That is a poor sort of Christian who does not grow more patient and charitable as he grows older.

Make others to see Christ in you, moving, doing, speaking, and thinking. Your actions will speak of him, if he be in you.—*Samuel Rutherford.*

"Learn of me," says the philosopher, "and ye shall find restlessness." "Lean on me," says Christ, "and ye shall find rest."—*Drummond.*

The thought of God as one who is ever present ought to be a steady one, keeping us on the one hand from sinful daring, and on the other from foolish fear.

Earnestness commands the respect of mankind. A wavering, vacillating, dead-and-alive Christian does not get the respect of the church or the world.—*John Hall.*

My soul, be still! Thou hast in affliction one means of glorifying God, which even angels have not, in a sorrowful world—patience under the rod—submission to thy heavenly Father's will.

That peace is an evil peace that doth shut truth out of doors. If peace and truth cannot go together, truth is to be preferred, and rather to be chosen for a companion than peace.—*J. Tillington.*

If we are to succeed in the higher walks of life, we must prove ourselves successful in the lower. No man can stand on the last round of a ladder unless he stood on the first at the out-start, and then gradually worked his way to the top.

We cannot walk in two ways at the same time. We cannot follow our own will and the will of God. We must choose the one or the other; we must deny God's will to follow our own, or we must deny self and self-will to follow the will of God.

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Day Express for Halifax and Campbellton ..... 7.15 a.m.  
Accommodation for Point du Chene ..... 7.30 a.m.  
Fast Express for Halifax ..... 7.45 a.m.  
Fast Express for Quebec & Montreal ..... 8.15 a.m.  
Express for Amherst ..... 8.30 a.m.

A parlor car runs each way daily, express trains leaving Halifax at 7.15 a.m. and St. John at 7.30 a.m. Passengers from St. John for Quebec and Montreal leave St. John at 7.45 a.m. and take sleeping car at Moncton.

The trains leaving St. John for Montreal on Saturday at 10.20, will run on Sunday.

## TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN.

Express from Amherst ..... 6.15 a.m.  
Fast Express from Montreal and Quebec ..... 6.30 a.m.  
Fast Express from Halifax ..... 6.45 a.m.  
Day Express from Halifax and Amherst ..... 7.15 a.m.  
Express from Halifax, Picton and Mulgrave ..... 7.30 a.m.

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D. POTTINGER, Chief Superintendent, Railway Office, Moncton, N. B., 27th December, 1889.

## New Brunswick Railway

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In Effect April 7th, 1890.

## Eastern Standard Time.

## LEAVE FREDERICTON.

6.05 A. M.—Express for St. John, intermediate points, to Vancouver, Bangor, Portland, Boston, and points West; St. Stephen, St. Andrews, Houlton, Woodstock, and points north.  
11.20 A. M.—For Fredericton Junction, St. John and points east.  
3.20 P. M.—For Fredericton Junction, St. John, and points east. The Junction with East Express via St. John for Montreal and the West Houlton and Woodstock.

## RETURNING TO FREDERICTON.

From St. John 6.15, 8.55 a.m.; 4.45 p.m.  
Fredericton Junction 7.45 a.m.; 12.50, 6.25 p.m.; McAdam Junction 11.05 a.m.; 2.20 p.m.; Vancouver 10.45 a.m.; 12.10 p.m.; St. Stephen 9.10, 11.55 a.m.; St. Andrews, 6.55 a.m.

## ARRIVE IN FREDERICTON.

8.55 a.m., 2.00, 7.20 p.m.

## LEAVE GIBSON.

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

## ARRIVE AT GIBSON.

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