

"Peace, Be Still"

Dark was the night; the foaming deep—
Raged madly round: He rose from sleep—
The Man; the God; the King; the Lord.
He spoke; obedient, trembling, awed,
Low sank the proud wave's crest; head
Far the affrighted storm-tossed fled.

We sail on life's tempestuous sea!
O Thou, whose voice with Galilee
Heard 'bove the storm-blast, speak the word
Which oft since then the saints have heard!
May we, when tempests buffet skill,
Hear the commanding, "Peace, be still!"

Speak! and the sky of sorrow's night
Is radiant with celestial light;
Speak! and the wild waves obey,
And gently bear us on our way;
Speak! and temptations' fierce blast
Is harmless, all its fury past.

Speak! and the winds of death
Shall wait a moment's pause to breathe—
To fairer realms than heart conceives,
Or tread of happier fancy weaves;
To worlds where evil never trod,
Bright as the diadem of God,
Arthur Vane Hall.

Praying By Machinery.

Rev. James Gilmour, the author of the interesting book, "Among the Mongols," gives the following account of the prayer mills of the Buddhist Mongols. He says: Nine out of every ten Mongols you meet will have rosaries in their hands, and be rapidly repeating prayers. The efficacy depends not on the meaning, but on the repetition of the prayer. It is not, properly speaking, praying at all, but "repeating charms." But mouth repetition is a slow process, and to expedite matters a praying wheel has been invented, into which are put a large number of printed prayers; the wheel is turned round, and by this simple act, all the prayers contained in the machine are supposed to be repeated. This is a wonderful acceleration. The wheel is fitted on to a handle, which a man can easily hold as he walks about; and thus it comes that men may be met, while examining their cattle, or going from one place to another, whirling their prayer wheels all the time. In some tents there is a stand on which is placed a large wheel, bearing about the same relation to the hand-wheel as a family Bible bears to a pocket-Bible. A thong is fixed to a crank, the inmates taking their turn in pulling it. If a wrongly timed pull sends the cylinder turning backwards, according to the Mongol idea it makes sin in place of merit. In one house I saw a wheel placed over the fire, and driven by the upward current of hot air, after the manner of a roasting jack. A common form of the praying-wheel is a windmill set on a lofty pole high above the tent. When a strong north-west gale springs up the machine goes whirling round; and the poor Mongol as he shudders at the tempest, in his tent below, is comforted, so far, at least, by the thought that the blast is performing a lot of prayers for him. Sitting in a tent once, I heard behind me a curious clicking noise, and looking round, found a prayer-wheel going by machinery. The master of the house, being a mechanical genius, had bought an old clock in a Chinese town, taken out and rearranged the spring and wheels, and made them drive a cylinder filled with prayers. When he got up in the morning he simply took the key, wound up the clock-work, and then the thing made prayers for the whole establishment. He that is too poor to buy a hand-wheel or a windmill gets a prayer flag—a piece of common Chinese cotton cloth printed over with Tibetan characters—fastens it to a pole, and sets it up near his tent, believing that every time it flutters in the wind all the prayers on it are repeated. Not only at tents, but over stone cairns on hilltops, these flags abound. The cloth is coarse, the printing rude, wind and rain soon make havoc of its appearance; but there it is, and there it flutters, bleached and ragged, long after the weather has removed every trace of letters. Large temples have sometimes large praying-wheels, broad and high, filled with sacred books, shrines and idols. Pilgrims come from long distances, assemble around the wheel, lay hold of its handles, and with a long pull, a strong pull and a pull all together, by their united strength drag the creaking fabric round, and believe that each one who has helped has acquired as much merit as if he had read all the books, repeated all the charms, and worshipped at all the shrines contained in the wheel. The thing would be laughable were it not too serious a matter by far for laughter.

A Critical Visitor.

Grace C., last summer, visited for the first time her cousins in Dunville. Her reputation preceded her. She was beautiful, clever, a fine musician, an ambitious artist. Louisa and Jane, used to quiet village life, were alarmed and anxious until their cousin's cordial manner and laughing face relieved them.

She arrived in the morning, and by the time the noon dinner was over they were enthusiastic in admiration of her beauty and wit.

She knew all the new music, had seen all the best pictures, and had met almost everybody worth knowing, in the seaboard cities.

During the afternoon, one of their companions called.

"That is my dearest friend," Louisa said when she had gone.

"How oddly she resembles a little white owl," remarked Grace, carelessly.

Louisa was startled and silent. Undoubtedly, with all of Mary's virtues and graces, she did look like a fluffy white owl.

"Uncle Joshua," said Jane, when another caller went out, "is considered the most just judge on the bench in this State. He is your uncle, too, Grace."

"How glad I am! But do his trousers always bag so at the knee?" This novel kind of criticism was continued, accompanied sometimes by an arch bit of mimicry of the oddity of each new relation who came to welcome her.

Her cousins laughed; but they were perplexed and frightened. It was not ill nature; she was so merry and gay. She probably had a keen artistic eye. Certainly they never before had seen Uncle Joshua's baggy trousers, nor Dr. Floyd's red nose, nor observed how much like a terrier dog Aunt Susy looked, nor how like a file dear grandpa's voice was. Their little world seemed to start out in new lights and to take on new meanings.

For a week or two the family clustered around Grace, delighted. She kept them laughing perpetually. She discovered the oddest resemblances, the most whimsical absurdities in the people whom they had known and loved since childhood. Presently Louisa and Jane timidly began to imitate her sallies of personal criticism, and were astonished to find how easy it was to bring a laugh and applause, with ridicule. But in the course of a month they found that they had oddly lost the power of seeing beyond these absurd points in their friends. How could they remember Aunt Susy's noble life, when her ridiculous nose was in sight? They could not gather the meaning of the sermon, because the new preacher's eyes were crossed, and they were actually ashamed now to speak of his noble life or the truths in the sermon. Noses and trousers and crossed eyes were the important matters of life. Every day their horizon grew narrower and the world meaner.

Grace did not leave them until September.

"Open the windows! Let the fresh air in once more," said Uncle Joshua, as she drove away. "There are people, who, for the sake of raising a laugh, belittle their talk, their minds, and at last the lives of all who fall under their influence."

"She had a quick eye," said Louisa, apologetically.

"For personal peculiarities: but even a dog looks below them. He does not care whether his master had a broken nose or glass eye. It is his soul that he reads in his face; his kindness or cruelty or love. Shall we be more blind than a dog?"

—Youth's Companion.

Our Dear Boy.

I saw my wife pull out the bottom drawer of the old bureau this evening, and I went softly out and wandered up and down until I knew she had shut it up and gone to her sewing. We have some things laid away in that drawer which the gold of kings could not buy, and yet they are relics which grieve us until both our hearts are sore. I haven't dared to look at them for a year, but I remember each article. There are two worn shoes, a little chip hat with part of the brim gone, some stockings, pantaloons, a coat, two or three spoons, bits of broken crockery, a whip and several tops. Wife, poor thing, goes to that drawer every day of her life and prays over it and lets her tears fall upon the precious articles, but I dare not go.

Sometimes we speak of little Jack, but not often. It has been a long time, but somehow we can't get over grieving. Sometimes, when we sit alone of an evening, I writing and she sewing, a child in the street will call out as our boy used to and we both start up with beating hearts and a wild hope, only to find the darkness more of a burden than ever.

It is still and quiet now. I look up into the window where his blue eyes used to sparkle at my coming, but he is not there.

I listen for his pattering feet, his merry shout and his ringing laugh, but there is no sound. There is no one to search my pockets and tease me for presents, and I never find the chains turned over, the broom down, or ropes tied to the doorknobs. I want someone to tease me for my knife; to ride on my shoulders; to lose my axe; to follow me to the gate when I go, and be there to meet me when I come; to call "good night" from the little bed now empty.

And wife, she misses him still more. Here are no little feet to

wash, no prayers to say, no voice teasing for lumps of sugar, or sobbing with the pain of a hurt toe; and she would give her own life almost to awake at midnight and look across to the crib and see our boy there, as he used to be. So we preserve our relics, and when we are dead we hope that strangers will handle them tenderly, even if they shed no tears over them.

Bemoaning The Past.

It is not unusual to meet people who are always bemoaning the past. There are many such who spend more energy in thinking what they ought to have done, and chiding themselves for not having done it, than in thinking what they ought to do, and planning how to do it.

Life is really too short for this sort of the thing; there is too much to be achieved in the present and in the future to justify continuous dwelling on unimproved opportunities in the past. It is always in order and in time to turn over a new leaf to begin again, to make stepping-stones of the sins and errors and mistakes of the past, remembering them only so much and so long as to learn how to avoid and overcome them in the future.

"O, if I could live my life over again," says one, "how differently I would act." But you cannot live it over again. The only thing you can do is to live to-day as well as you can, to straighten your lines of action, and see that they all point upward, away from the wrong, toward the right. Time spent in mere idle regret is worse than wasted.

The atmosphere of regret is debilitating, enervating, asphyxiating. It should be avoided by us as we avoid malarial atmospheres and those saturated with infection. A great purpose will lift one out of regrets, and failing a great purpose many smaller ones will accomplish the same end. In such a world as this there is always enough affirmative, positive good to be done to occupy all one's time and thought, all one's capacity of doing and willing.

—Exchange.

Sisters' Duties To Brothers.

A ruin women alone can rebuild is carelessness with which "brothers" are treated. Some sisters forget that the first, and most enduring impressions men receive of their sex, come through their sister's actions. Is the girl a vain, petty, selfish being, never considering the brother's needs. Is it any wonder if the brother thinks all girls are like his sister? Sisters should seek to be the friends of their brothers. Their gentle, virtuous conduct may do much to create a right tone in the brother's mind, and will inevitably refine and help him. You, dear girls, can, and you are doing very much in shaping a young man's habits. If the sister shares his youthful troubles, advises him in difficulties, makes his home attractive, refuses to listen or to mix in any wild conversation, seeks to lead him into the right conception of manhood's privileges, in short becomes a loving companion, then I am sure that many a youth who now sees in girls vain, giddy creatures, will have that exalted view of womanhood which will be a safeguard in the time to come. Try to be the angel of the home to the brother. If you have failed here, begin to build this very day. God will give you strength.

A Danger To Young Children.

The people who complain that children are disagreeable, often are as much to blame for the fact, when it is a fact, as are the children themselves. Is it not you, madam, who to-day are commenting upon the self-consciousness of your neighbor's child, who yesterday called attention to the beauty of her hair and the tastefulness of her dress? If people would stop saying foolish and harmful things to children, or about them within their hearing, a prominent cause of the unpleasantness of some boys and girls would cease to operate. There is nothing except actual solicitation to evil, which judicious parents more dread for their children than such kindly intended, but mischievous remarks. All who have much to do with the young, understand this danger.

Congregationalist.

STATE OF A BACKSLIDER.—As David cried, how are the mighty overthrown; we may mourn and say, How are the zealous cooled, How are the diligent tired! They which should season others are become like the white of an egg which hath no taste; once they seemed to have fruit, but now they are not hanged with leaves. As God cried unto Adam, "Adam, where art thou?" so they may cry, Zeal, where art thou? Learning, where art thou? Conscience, where art thou? Love, where art thou? They which shone like the sun, when they rose, seem now to be eclipsed of their light. The world hath won the flesh, the flesh hath won the spirit, and Jordan hath turned back.—H. Smith.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IS ONE OF THE SMALLEST of books. One can read it through in a few hours. But it has made a greater stir in the world than any other book. It has contributed more to the improvement of society and the advancement of civilization and the comfort of the afflicted and the happiness of individuals than all other books in the world. It is one of the oldest books extant, and yet it is the freshest of all books. It is read by more people and with a keener relish than any modern production. It has been assailed more bitterly and violently than any other book, many of its enemies declaring and believing that they had killed its influence forever, and yet no other book shows such unmistakable signs of life as it does to-day. The most potent factor in modern civilization and thought is this little book. No book has been studied and explained and commented on half so much as the New Testament, and yet no intelligent man is so foolish as to claim that he has thoroughly mastered its wonderful lessons. The limits of the "treasures of wisdom" stored up between its lids are past finding out. It was written by men who, with one or two exceptions, had no opportunities of culture, and it contains a system of human redemption and improvement promulgated by One whose earthly origin was obscure and whose educational advantages were limited, and yet it is the study, the marvel, and the admiration of the most intelligent and cultivated men of the most enlightened age.—Advocate.

Your Own Home.

If you marry, set up a home of your own at all hazards. The plan of taking lodgings, in preference to housekeeping, is adopted by many young people, in consideration of certain supposed advantages it holds out. One pleads inexperience in household duties; another, the advantages of leisure that will thus be secured, and the opportunities for improvement; a third urges the importunities of friends. In every case the argument is against them. They intend to become householders at some future day. Will the duties they now dread, and are unacquainted with, become more easy and familiar by postponement? No teaching is so rapid and effectual as that of experience, and no time so fitting as the proper time—namely when they are first married.—Select.

A Home Test Of Religion.

"Go home to thy friends" (Mark v. 19). Home and friends—these are a true test of real conversion unto God. If the people at home don't see our conversion and hear of it, too, in vain do we sound abroad what the Lord hath done for souls. The man who was cured was evidently not in a hurry to go home, but the Lord said to him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee."

Testimony for God begins there. The question was once asked, "Is So and so a Christian?" "I don't know," was the answer, "I have never lived with him." That's the test—the fireside and the family circle. We may make a great noise in the world, and be great workers; but what do the folks at home think about us?

Drifting Away From God.

I was invited to be present at a wedding in a distant city. I was not able to reach the house of my friend till late in the evening of the day before the auspicious event. We sat in the pleasant parlor chatting for a time; then, though we were all weary, and the hands of the clock indicated that it was almost midnight, the bride-elect said: "Papa, we must have evening prayers to-night just the same as usual." Then turning to me, she added in a low tone: "I am so afraid that in the bustle and preparation we may drift away from God."

There is often danger that the current of the world may sweep us along with it, but if anchored by prayer, we need not fear.—American Messenger.

A PRAYER MEETING.—It was decided, through discouragement, in a certain village, to close the prayer meeting; but a pious old woman declared that it should not be so, for she would be there if no one else was. Next morning some one jestingly asked her, "Did you have your prayer meeting last night?" "Ah that we did," she replied. "How many were present?" "Four," she said. "Why, I heard that you were there alone." "Oh, no! I was the only one visible; but the Father was there, and the son was there, and the Holy Ghost was there, and we were all agreed in prayer." Before long, from shame of themselves and from admiration of the old woman's perseverance, the meeting was revived, and brought prosperity to the church.

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