

Work To-Day In My Vineyard.

Where is Thy vineyard, Lord of love? Thy fields stretch far beneath the sky— Swept by all heavenly winds they lie, And heaven's light floods them from above.

Where is Thy vineyard? Here am I, Hither Thy grace hath led my way; Lord, I will go, nor ask to stay; wait to hear Thy mandate high.

I wait to hear the trumpet blast; Forth to some deed of noble name! With nerve of steel, with heart of flame, I'll join the struggle's glorious haste.

Is this the trumpet?—this sweet voice— Low, sweet, and still within my heart? This love, of life itself a part? This symphony of earth's best joys?

Is this Thy vineyard?—this dear home Where day by day the old sun shines Upon the old hill's rounded lines, And stars I know gild night's blue dome?

Is this Thy vineyard? Is it mine To call the fruit for those I love? Among my chosen ones to move, And fill their cup with life's rich wine?

Is this Thy mandate? Can it be? No seas to cross, no steep to climb? Nor seek the place, nor wait the time, But till the little field I see;

Is this my service? Happy I! To serve the dearest Thou hast given! Oh, tender plan conceived in heaven! How should my soul with joy comply

Lord of the vineyard, this I ask— Nearest of all that Thou wilt stand, Dearest of tones be Thy command, And best reward the lowliest task.

—Chris. Union.

Christ's Fruit-Trees.

BY THE REV THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

"Much fruit" means simply the giving to Christ the best we have got. It is the lading of every bough on life's tree—be that a giant or a dwarf. He who, in the humblest sphere, walks according to the Bible rule, employs his time, controls his words, directs his choices, and regulates his conduct so as to glorify his Saviour, and make his religion legible and luminous to all around him; such a man is a bountiful fruit-bearer. Sweet, gentle 'Daughter' of the Isle of Wight's poor 'dairyman' in thy lonely sick-chamber thou didst yield ripe clusters of grace that have refreshed many a dweller in lordly mansions and in college halls. She 'did what she could.' Bunyan, the prince of allegorists, Wesley, the prince of church organizers, Judson, the prince of modern missionaries, shook down their fruits over Christendom; yet they won no higher honor than that. One of these magnificent bearers, who 'yielded his fruit every month,' has lately been transplanted to a higher clime, amid the loving lamentations of God's people of every name. I did not agree with my beloved brother, Howard Crosby, in all his utterances, or approve of all his methods; but, O, how widely did he spread his branches, how bravely he withstood the gales, and how bounteously did he yield the 'fruits of the Spirit' amid the arid atmosphere of our city streets!

WELL ROOTED.

Such Christians as these are well rooted; like those prolific orange-trees that struck down deep through the surface sands, and found their moisture and nutrition in the rich under-soil. No part of a tree is so invisible and none is so important as its roots. The condition of a tree continually reports where its roots are and what they are about. A drought below ground means deadness above ground. The roots of our religious life are our secret motives and ruling affections. We are shocked to discover that some church members are so lax in their devotions, and so loose in their practices, and so barren in their lives. The reason is, that while their branches may hang over on the church side of the wall, their roots run under the wall, and are in the bad soil of 'the world' on the other side. Outwardly, there is a Christian profession; inwardly, there is no fresh, full heart-nation to Jesus; for he hath declared that 'except ye abide in Me ye can bear no fruit.' Some professing Christians root down into covetness. There is no use in shaking its branches with the vain hope of filling a basket of benevolence. Others are dry in soil, never moistened or fertilized by prayer. Others root down into secret sensualities and fleshly indulgences. David's temptation came through his eyes; but David's gross sin came up from his impure heart. Therefore it was that he cried out in penitency, 'O, God, create in me a clean heart!' The reason why so many apparently reformed men and women go back to their cups, or their sensualities, is that their roots were never transplanted into union with Christ; they were never renewed in the inner man by the divine Spirit.

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THE REAL "FRUIT-BEARER."

A genuine fruit-bearer draws his inspirations of conduct from his deep-down heart loyalty to Jesus Christ. These are the motives which subdue selfishness; these the holy affections which hold him as stout roots hold the tree alike from the severities of wintry gales or the parching droughts of summer. Grand old Paul seems never to have had a barren branch; he was always abounding in the work of the Lord. A drought never affects a well-rooted Christian, whose soul is in connection with the Fount head of all spiritual power. Some church members are never flourishing except during the heavy rains of a revival season. All the rest of the time they show dingy, cobwebbed branches, and rather puny and knotty fruit. If pastors get sick of such periodical professors, how weary the Master must be with them! But the joy of every minister is that glossy-leaved Christian who when the community is spiritually dry as Florida sand keeps his heart fresh, his prayers fervent, his purse open, and his daily life as beautiful as an orange-tree. Every year is a bearing year. The ground under his laden boughs always has something sweet for our baskets.

SMALL THINGS.

Living to Christ in small things and living for Christ every day is the secret of large fruitfulness. A peach-tree or an orange does not leap into a bounty of fruit by one spasmodic effort; an orchard does not ripen under a single day's sunshine. Every rain-drop, every sunbeam, every inch of subsoil does its part. A fruitful Christian is a growth. To finish up a godly character by a mere religion of Sundays and sermons and sacraments and revivals and special seasons is impossible. A man may be converted in an instant, but he must grow by the year. The tough fiber of the slender branch that can hold up a half-bushel of oranges is very different from a little willow switch; it is the steady, compacting process that makes that little limb like a steel wire. Such is a healthy and holy believer's life. Every honest prayer that is breathed, every cross that is carried, every trial that is well endured, every good work for our fellow-men lovingly done, every little act that is conscientiously performed for Christ's glory, helps to make the Christian character beautiful, and to load its broad boughs with 'apples of gold' for God's 'baskets of silver.'

Possibility The Measure Of Responsibility.

No person in any relation of life— certainly no Christian in the highest relation of life—has a right to do or be anything less than his best. This is a high standard, but it is what God expects of us. He has given us the power to attain a certain degree of excellence. By so doing He has imposed a definite responsibility upon us. It would not be just of God to expect either more or less of us than He has given us the power to render. If He expected more, He would be cruel and tyrannical. If He expected less, He would show a lack of confidence and trust in His children. Our best is all God can expect, and be true to Himself and us.

Possibility, then— each person's power and capacity of development in virtue and usefulness—is the measure of responsibility. But observe that this does not mean what a person might accomplish, or be, if circumstances were always and in every way favorable. Such an ideal condition of life seldom if ever, exists in this world. God does not expect of any of us that we shall be what our powers for good would make us, if it were not for hindering and baffling conditions. The Judge of all the earth takes into account the special circumstances and conditions of every life; and He expects of you and me just what we can be and ought to be, with our initial capacity, balanced by the obstacles which we have to encounter. It is quite possible that God may expect less of some magnificently endowed persons, whose lives are peculiarly beset with trials, temptations and difficulties, than He expects of others with less initial capacity and fewer obstacles to surmount. Further, may we not at least venture the hopeful conjecture that God has compassion and infinite pity—yes, it may be help and blessing—to bestow upon those whose capacity for good was great, but who seemed to fail in the terrible struggle with adverse circumstances or inherited physical appetite? Are there no souls, whom the world counts lost, that may find mercy with God in the great judgment day? No mercy in heaven? Then heaven is both less kind and less just than earth.

But whatever the final judgment of God, conscience tells us with no uncertain voice that He expects of every person, taking into account all the circumstances of life, the best of which

that person is capable. The result may be only a sad and losing struggle throughout life, but so long as it is a struggle, existence has not been in vain. God measures results very differently from the world. He looks upon the heart, and if the heart is true to Him, then there is hope for clemency. God looks for everybody's best, no matter how small it is. Therefore, let every downcast soul take courage! Do your very best. Pray when you faint, rise when you fall. It may be that by barely conquering one sin you will achieve a greater victory than if, under favoring circumstances, you had conquered all.—Zion's Herald.

Plain Talk.

Of all men in the Church to-day, the most despicable is the man who dares not go where his conscience bids him, or who dares not speak what he believes for fear of losing temporal support. The man who will not help when he knows the need, or who will not seek to know the facts for fear that it will disturb his ease and luxury, is a parasite. The Church can do without him. Verily, the Scripture is fulfilled, when "men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof." If some of the time spent in contemplating the "awfulness of the mystery of the God-head" were spent in relieving the "awfulness" of the sin and crime and degradation of the masses, we might gain a point in this contest with sin. The masses are in revolt against endless theories of religionist and evolutionist and philosopher, and crying out, with Dr. Holland, "O God, give us men!" We want less of slavery to belief, more toleration of men, that we may give the lie to the statement that "the preacher's lips are padlocked, and only the golden key of temporal support can open them." The facts are that many of our churches are practically owned and operated by capitalists in the interests of the stock-holders; that many a church is so far committed to a policy befitting a fashionable clubhouse that to preach such doctrine as "the sanctification, without which no man shall see the Lord," creates well-simulated surprise, and would find horse and guards ready to conduct the pastor to calvary.

When men's names continue on the church register who have robbed a man in business of all he had; when men deliberately get into debt without possibility of paying; defraud their grocer, grind the washerwoman, or rob the laborer of his hire; when usurers, swindlers, and dishonest real estate men, flock into the Church to make merchandise of the membership, they should be rebuked. Lying real estate men need a sermon on the fate of Ananias and Sapphira. Usurers need a sermon from Proverbs xxviii. 8, or Ezekiel xviii. 13, or xxii. 12. Some landlords need a sermon from this text: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, even while for a pretense ye make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive greater condemnation." When these men make their business principles Christian principles, a mighty step will have been taken toward evangelizing the masses. Imagine Paul in a gorgeous pulpit, at a salary of \$10,000 per year, a \$5,000 choir, pew rent as high as house rent, a few pews down by the door for the poor, and then attribute the absence of the poor to total depravity! The masses are right. They do not want a Gospel that can be bought and sold. If we are to rescue the fallen to-day in our cities, we must first of all scourge out the money-changers from the temple.—Christian Standard.

Pulpit Wit

In the Contemporary Review appear the following anecdotes illustrating the keenness of the wit that may be wielded in the pulpit with beneficial effect: Robinson, a famous dissenting minister of Cambridge, had frequently to face that most difficult audience, an audience of undergraduates, his chapel being frequented often by university men, sometimes hostile. He observed on one occasion a little knot of men who had evidently come in out of malice prepense to interrupt and annoy him. He wound his discourse round quite naturally to a subtle point in natural science, and fixing his eye on the jibing intruders, remarked gravely: "It has long been a disputed question among philosophers whether there is such a thing as a vacuum in nature; but the difficulty has at last been solved, it having been ascertained that there is a vacuum in the head of every undergraduate who disturbs a worshiping assembly in a dissenting meeting house."

Mr. Spurgeon has always been perfectly appalling in his readiness to deal with insolence in the house of God. The finest case on record is perhaps one in which three young fellows came in and settled themselves conspicuously in the gallery with their hats on. In vain the officials requested them to uncover. Of course Mr. Spurgeon's eye was soon upon them, and leading his discourse round to the respect which all Christians are bound to show for the feelings of others, "My friends," he said, "the other day I went into a Jewish synagogue, and I naturally uncovered my head; but on looking round I perceived that all the rest wore their hats; and so, not wishing to offend against what I supposed to be their reverent practice, though contrary to my own, I conformed to Jewish use and put on my hat. I will now ask those three young Jews up in the gallery to show the same deference to our Christian practice in the house of God as I was prepared to show them when I visited their synagogue, and take off their hats." He would indeed be a pendant and a prig who could refuse a sympathetic smile of approval, even in the sanctuary, to a rebuke so genial so witty, and so just!

"His Name Shall Be Called Wonderful."

He was tempted as man! but victorious as God, and command us to trust and be of good comfort; because he had overcome the world. Matt. iv. 1-11. He was hungry; but fed many thousands, descending from heaven as the living bread. John vi. He was athirst; but he cried: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." John xix, 28; vii. 37. He was weary; but to the weary that came unto Him He promised rest. John iv, 6; Matt. xi, 28. He prayed; yet He answered prayer. Mark vi, 46; Matt. viii, 3. He wept; but He wipes away all tears. John xi, 35 Rev. xxi. 4. He was sold for little, even for thirty pieces of silver; but He redeemed the world at a great price. Matt. xxvii, 3; 1 Peter 1, 18, 19. He was dumb like a lamb before her shearers; yet He is "The Word." Isa. lxi, 7; John i, 1. In His thirst He was given vinegar to drink; yet He changed the water into wine. Luke xxiii, 36; John ii, 7-10. He gave up the ghost; yet He had power to resume His life. He died; but He lives, and by death abolished death. John xix, 30; xx, 19, 20; Rev. 1, 18; 2 Tim. 1, 10. He was buried; but He rose again. Matt. xxvii, 58-60; xxviii, 9. Rightly, therefore, is His name called Wonderful; for He is full of wonder and does wondrous things wonderfully. Isa. ix, 6.

The Restful Yoke.

Mark Guy Pearce tells us of an incident which occurred in connection with a sermon of his on Christ's invitation to the weary and heavy-laden: "I had finished my sermon, when a good man came to me and said: 'I wish I had known what you were going to preach about. I could have told you something.' " "Well, my friend," I said, 'it is very good of you. May I not have it still?'" "Do you know why His yoke is light, sir? If not, I think I can tell you."

"Well, because the good Lord helps us to carry it, I suppose."

"No, sir," he explained, shaking his head; "I think I know better than that. You see, when I was a boy at home, I used to drive oxen in my father's yoke. And the yoke was never made to balance, sir, as you said, (I had referred to the Greek word. But how much better it was to know the real thing.)"

"He went on triumphantly: 'Father's yokes were always made heavier on one side than the other. Then, you see, we would put a weak bullock in along-side of a strong bullock, and the light end would come on the weak bullock, because the stronger one had the heavy part of it on his shoulder.' "Then his face lit up as he said: 'That is why the yoke is easy and the burden is light—because the Lord's yoke is made after the same pattern, and the heavy end is upon His shoulder.' " "So shall ye find rest to your soul."

Ministers and Churches.

Your minister must have hours for study. The quality of the output depends upon the opportunity for the input. Genius cannot be always extemporaneous. The pulpit can never afford to be on a level with the pew. This does not mean hierarchical pretensions but it does mean that the source of supply must ever be higher than the consumers and consumption. Force your minister to the most exacting

WONDER WORKING K. D. C.

week-day service, and you prepare for yourself a disappointing Sunday service. The pew cheats itself when it robs the pulpit. Then, too, yield proper deference to his judgment. He is not to be a mere pawn on a chess-board. He stands not for himself alone, but for many inside and outside. His horizon is larger than yours—he is on higher ground. He may see what you cannot see. He may discern what you never dream. Offer your word, but do not urge it; yours may be good as far as it goes, but his may be better because it goes further. Trying to run the minister has often simply ruined the church—it is the company directing the captain. Than that, better have no superior officer; better pew the pulpit and cancel the divine ordination. Confidence in his ability to lead has called him; cordial and constant cooperation will sustain him.—Joseph R. Kerr, D. D.

MANY A POOR MAN goes along the street whose name would not be worth a snap on a note. He could not get a bank in New York to lend him a hundred dollars for a month. He is of no market value whatever. But if your dear child was dying, and you did not know how to pray, he is the very man that you would send for. You would say to him, when you were in distress: "Come to our house." Ah! a man may not have outward prosperity, and yet prosper. He may have that which money can not buy—peace, happiness, joy. The power of making joy he has; and is he not prospered? Is he not well off?

Random Readings.

Goodness is the only investment that never fails.—Thoreau. He who hath no bridle on his tongue hath no grace in his heart.—St. Jerome. Life is a quarry out of which we are to mould and chisel and complete a character.—Goethe. Those who have obtained the farthest insight into nature have been in all ages firm believers in God.—Dr. Whewell. Patience is the ballast of the soul, that will keep it from rolling and tumbling in the greatest storm.—Bishop Hopkins. Never remain in ignorance for want of asking. God and man are ready to teach the meek and humble.—Isaac Watts. Even the wisest are long in learning that there is no better work for them than the bit God puts into their hands.—Edward Garrett.

He that seeketh forgetfulness of God in this life will reap the reward of being forgotten by him in the world to come.—Bishop Seymour. True peace consists only in possession of God, and the possession of God here below is only to be found in submission to the faith and in obedience to the law.—Fenelon. To take up the cross of Christ is no great action done once for all; it consists in the continual practice of small duties which are distasteful to us.—Cardinal Newman. This world of ours, in spite of its graves and sorrows, is a goodly world in which to live. Nevertheless the best thing about it is, that there is a way out of it to a better world.

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