

Light and Shade.

There is no vale so low
It cannot see the sun,
And a soft after-glow
Comes when the storm is done,
And Bacchus hears the laugh of springs,
The silent beat of angels' wings.

There is no mountain height
We climb so wearily
But keeps the heavens in sight,
With visions fair to see;
And in the mountain cloud we fear
Is light and peace, for Christ is there.

There is no path we tread
But leads to richer grace;
The stars are overhead,
And in the desert place
The wanderer finds the golden stairs,
God's angels meet him unawares.

There is no cup we drink
Of mingled myrrh and wine,
But sweeter than we think,
It makes the life to shine;
Gethsemane itself is fair,
Soon as we find the Christ is there.

There is no heavy cross
But borne for him is light,
And what at morn was loss
We count as gain at night;
For he who seeks God's will alone,
Behind the cross beholds the throne.

The throne of love and power—
Which never sets to him—
We gild each passing hour;
The flaming seraphim
Have no deep joy he may not know,
For God and heaven are here below.

—Rev. Henry Burton, M. A.

In the Quicksands.

The following graphic delineation of a scene of subtle danger and certain death is from the pen of Victor Hugo:

"It sometimes happens on certain coasts of Brittany or Scotland that a man, traveller or fisherman, walking on the beach of a low tide, far from the bank, suddenly notices that for several minutes he has been walking with some difficulty. The strand beneath his feet is like pitch; his soles stick to it; it is sand no longer—it is glue. The beach is perfectly dry, but at every step he takes, as soon as he lifts his feet, the print which it leaves fills with water. The eye, however, has noticed no change. The immense strand is smooth and tranquil; all the sand has the same appearance; nothing distinguishes the surface which is solid from that which is no longer so; the joyous little cloud of sand-fleas continue to leap tumultuously over the wayfarer's feet. The man pursues his way, goes forward, inclines to the land, endeavors to get nearer the upland. He is not anxious. Anxious about what? Only he feels somehow as if the weight of his feet increases with every step he takes. Suddenly he sinks in. He sinks in two or three inches. Decidedly he is not on the right road; he stops to take his bearings. All at once he looks at his feet. His feet have disappeared. The sand covers them. He draws his feet out of the sand; he will retrace his steps; he turns back; he sinks in deeper. The sand comes up to his ankles; he pulls himself out, and he throws himself to the left; the sand is half-leg deep. He throws himself to the right; the sand comes up to his shins. Then he recognizes with unspeakable terror that he is caught in the quicksand, and that he has beneath him the fearful medium in which a man can no more walk than a fish can swim. He throws off his load, if he has one, lightens himself like a ship in distress. It is already too late; the sand is above his knees. He calls, he waves his hat or handkerchief; the sand gains on him more and more. If the beach is deserted, if the land is too far off, if there is no help in sight, it is all over. He is condemned to that appalling burial, long, inflexible, implacable, impossible to slacken or to hasten, which endures for hours, which will not end, which seizes you erect, free, in full health, which draws you by the feet, which at every effort that you attempt, at every shout that you utter, drags you a little deeper, sinking you slowly into the earth while you look upon the horizon, the trees, the green fields, the smoke of the villages on the plains, the sails of the ships upon the sea, the birds flying and singing, the sunshine and the sky. The victim attempts to sit down, to lie down, to creep. Every movement he makes intensifies him. He howls, implores, cries to the clouds, despairs. Behold him waist-deep in the sand. The sand reaches his breast; he is now only a bust. He raises his arms, utters furious groans, clutches the beach with his nails, would hold by that straw, leans upon his elbows to pull himself out of this soft sheath, sobbing frenziedly. The sand rises. The sand reaches his shoulders; the sand reaches his neck; the face alone is visible now. The mouth cries, the sand fills it—silence. The eyes still gaze, the sand shuts them—night. Now the forehead decreases, a little hair flutters above the sand; a hand comes to the surface of the beach, moves and

shakes; and disappears. It is the earth drowning man. The earth filled with the ocean becomes a trap. It presents itself like a plain, and opens like a wave."

What a picture of subtle deception, delusion, allurements to danger, unconscious and gradual entanglement in the meshes of death, slow, certain, and at length conscious, but helpless descent into the abyss of death! And yet how aptly does it illustrate the moral career and destiny of many a young man in this sinful world of ours. There are quicksands in the moral and spiritual world as well as in the natural. They lie along the coasts of the saloon, the gaming table, the theatre, the "social evil." No danger is visible on the surface. It all seems to be solid ground. But he who enters these coasts is putting his feet into the treacherous sands. He may fear no danger. He may laugh at the voice of warning. He may for a time lift his feet lightly, in token of his freedom. He may at first be able to retrace his steps. But soon he finds his feet becoming heavy. They begin to sink into the sand. And it is not long until he finds return to be no easy thing. And soon it is impossible. He is hopelessly engulfed. He begins to see his danger now, but it is too late to avert it, or escape from it. He is alarmed, he cries out for help, he pleads for deliverance, but he goes down deeper and deeper at every step. He begins to see home, and friends, and health, and reputation, and hope itself receding. He is going down. He is being engulfed. He is already more than half buried. He is but the remnant of a man. The very sands upon which he trod so gaily, at the outset are now becoming his winding sheet. This is the life picture of the young man who permits himself to become the patron of the saloon, or to be drawn into the gambler's snare, or into the house of "her whose steps take hold on hell," or even to become a habitual attendant upon the modern theater. "Oh, that men were wise! that they understood this! that they would consider their latter end!" What young man would deliberately, in the full knowledge of its meaning, and in the full conviction of its reality, enter upon a career of which this is the true portraiture? How constantly, therefore, should it be held up before the eyes of the young, that they may see not only the awfulness of the end of such a career, but also the subtle danger that lurks at its threshold.

Help Your Minister.

He has the most solemn and responsible office in the world. He is the ambassador of Christ. His duties are varied and delicate. He must not only be faithful to his commission, preaching the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and exhorting sinners to repentance, but he is to be a wise pastor, a good shepherd of the flock. He must lead his people, from the youngest to the oldest, in the paths of righteousness. He must rebuke—sometimes; but it must be done in the spirit of love and with the tenderest regard for the best interests of the erring one. How can you help your pastor?

You can pray for him every day. He needs enlightenment, discretion, consecration. He is human and subject to the same trials, discouragements and perplexities as other men. Indeed, his position often requires greater courage, keener discrimination and the solution of more perplexing problems than other men. If he is often carried to a throne of grace in the prayers of his people, many difficulties will be removed, a closer bond of love and co-operation will be sustained. Pray for your minister.

You can encourage him by prompt and regular attendance at the house of worship. A man who can be comfortable while his people show their lack of appreciation by frequent absence from the church is either too indifferent to the Church's interest to succeed in his work, or too much concerned about other matters to be solicitous for its welfare. But when your absence is noted and inquired after; when the minister puts himself to the trouble to call to learn the cause of your absence, he shows a solicitude that deserves your attendance at church. People should go to the house of God for the abundant grace and help that it affords them; but it will have the additional effect of encouraging and inspiring the minister and of increasing his usefulness.

Then you can help him by giving faithful attention to the Word. It is even more difficult to preach to a listless congregation than to a small and scattered one, if the latter exhibits an interest in the sermon. If God calls men to preach, he calls others to hear, and your responsibility in the matter is as great as his. God will hold him accountable for the faithfulness with which he declares his counsel; but he

The clergy have tested K. D. C. and pronounce it the best.

will hold you accountable for the manner in which you hear.

An appreciative word from you will help him much. There are men who are common flatterers. They say all kinds of extravagant things to the minister after every sermon. The man who is moved and flattered by such things has a degree of vanity that is out of harmony with the spirit of the Master he falsely represents. But there are men who never say a word to the pastor. They take pride in the fact. It must be difficult indeed to preach to such men. They exhibit no sympathy, express no interest, and leave the minister in painful, anxious doubt as to their relations with him. A word of encouragement may induce a confidence that will be of incalculable benefit to both. A further encouragement may be afforded by the gift of a good and useful book just now and then. Be sure that it is one that will be of value to him in preaching or in the prosecution of his work. A new and useful book just on the market may be of sufficient benefit to kindle new thoughts, stimulate inquiries on a large scale, and widen the intellectual and spiritual grasp of the preacher. Other articles may be given that will be appreciated, but do not give him useless things. That is almost worse than giving nothing at all. Then pay him his salary. It compromises a minister when you compel him to borrow money, or to do without those things that are essential to his comfort and happiness. No man can do the best work for his church and people when he is embarrassed for the care and comfort of his family. It gives the minister and the church prestige when he can pay cash as he goes. It starts suspicions, and sometimes evokes mean insinuation, when he is forced to ask the loan of money. Pay your preacher, and do it promptly. Visit his family. In some places the parsonage is shunned as if it were a prison; in other places it is properly made as common as a hotel. One practice is as vicious as the other. The preacher's family has as much claim to privacy as any other family. But if the preacher and his wife are expected to do all the visiting, you require of them that you do not ask of others, and what you are unwilling to do yourselves.

If you know some fact that will be of advantage to him, such as an unchurched family he may be able to reach, or some sick one that will be blessed by his ministrations, tell him or drop him a note. Don't let him find it out some other way, or accuse him of neglect of duty if he does not find it out at all. Dear reader, think of these things.—*Methodist Protestant.*

"If Ye Love Me."

There have been abundant indications the past winter of very widespread religious interest. Whatever be the cause—and this does not greatly matter, blessed be the prosperity, and equally the panic that brings to Christ—the fact is certain. One question may be however asked, How much the kindness of Christians toward the destitute and the unemployed this winter has to do, first in attracting people to Christ thus exemplified, and secondly, in securing the blessing of him who measures his reward according to the deed done—"Inasmuch as ye did it unto these ye did it unto me."

Those who this past winter have consecrated themselves to Christ, should listen with eagerness and joy to hear his words as addressed to themselves. Jesus made this the basis of an appeal to those who seemed to be his disciples, namely their love. If they loved him, of course their character and conduct would correspond. Let the new disciples of the winter hear the appeal, "If ye love me. They seek the love of Christ, and they think they do love him. Let them at once be out-and-out in the declaration of their purpose, giving effect by their deeds of practical beneficence. An editor who for years had been hostile to a certain gentleman, and in his newspaper criticised the gentleman's character actions, saw reason to change his mind. In other words, in this respect he was converted. Now what amendment could he make? Something must be done. An honorable man could not do otherwise than to publish his confidence if possible, as broadly as his accusations had extended. And just this was done.

But your life has been one in which you showed, if you did not actually and in words declare, your want of love for the Master. But if now you love him you will try to make amends for your wrong toward him. You will do so as openly and as continually as possible. Declare yourself, and if possible undo the evil you have done toward him whom now you love.

A man who fell into evil habits, and

Sour tempers sweetened by the use of K. D. C.

disgraced himself, and repented of his sin, he writes back, I would like to begin life over again among the people who were affected by my evil examples. I want to show them that I am leading a new life. We appreciate the honorable character of this man's intention. If not always best to seek the old field, at least in this instance it was best every way that he should carry out his purpose.

Now, will not the new disciples of this past winter do this—openly, heartily, in the presence of those who have seen and been influenced by unbelief and sin, attest a living faith and demonstrate the new life just entered into? Do it as openly and effectively as possible, and leave results with him who crowns his blessing every noble action.—*The Christian at Work.*

Beyond.

There is a right way and a wrong way of looking at almost everything. Spiritual discernment is a very important grace, for many of our sorrows proceed from our method of looking at those things which concern our peace. Salvation depends upon a right view of Jesus Christ. The difference between the impenitent sinner and the same person after he is regenerated is, that he looks at Christ with a new eye, and has discovered him to be the very Saviour and Guide that he needs.

How prone we are to regard many of God's dealings in a wrong light, and to call them by wrong names! We speak of things as afflictions which are really great blessings under a dark disguise. We often congratulate people on gaining what turns out to be a dangerous snare or a lamentable loss. Quite as often we condole with them over occurrences which are about to yield them blessing more precious than gold. Be careful how you condole with a man who has lost his money and saved his character, and be equally careful how you congratulate a man who has made a million of dollars at the expense of his religion.

Once more we repeat that there is a right and a wrong way of looking at all things. To the eye that has spiritual discernment this world is an avenue of the one which lies beyond it. Talents, wealth and influence are simply loans to be held in trust for God. High station means high work for him. A Christianized eye sees in money just so much bread for the hungry, just so much Gospel for the godless, and just so many lifts for the degraded—as well as innocent and refining enjoyments for one's own heart and household. Christ's image and superscription ought to be on every dollar. To a truly regenerated soul all things become new, and we may well doubt the genuineness of that conversion which does not bring an altered estimate of everything earthly. Faith breaks the false charm of this world and adds a charm to the better world. My friend, "thou has well seen" when thou dost behold Jesus Christ as the Lord of thy life, his service thy sweetest occupation, and his presence thy perpetual joy.—*Rev. T. L. Cuyler, D. D.*

Never Defend the Scriptures.

The mission of the minister of the gospel is to preach the word, not to defend it. The gospel is its own best defense. Where it is preached in its simplicity and power, and where men receive it to their hearts, their character and life are transformed. The following wise advice to young ministers is from that prince of preachers, Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

In addressing the young men he assured them that human nature was as sinful as ever and as suffering. Men needed as much as ever to be told of the danger and of the way to safety. Heaven and hell are not obsolete; they are tremendous realities. Preach the book; God Almighty never asked anybody to defend it. Preach the book; the minister who wastes time defending it is an idiot. God asks no one to defend his book. He will attend to that himself. Preach it, and preach it without a tremor of the lip or a trembling of the knees. I trust that neither of you has ever been hamstrung for a single moment. Preach the word, the word of God, glorious and inflexible, from the first of Genesis to the last word of Revelation. Let the backbone of your preaching be doctrinal, and let your doctrine be red-hot. The preacher who cannot beam and glow upon his people under the influence of the inspired word never really received a call. Keep closely in touch with your people. See them during the week. Visit at their houses. The popular preacher may gather about him a big mass meeting on the Sabbath day, but it takes a pastor to build up a church that will stand. The secret of being popular is to take an interest in the people. Sympathy is half a minister's power. I do not say it irreverently.

K. D. C. tones and regulates the liver.

but it is half the Saviour's power. Study human nature after your Bible. Be with your people. Spend your afternoons studying the doorplates and calling. You've got to be popular; it's your duty to be popular. I don't mean that sort of popularity that veers with every wind. A man of that stamp is not popular, however he may try to be, but the popularity which comes from people whom you love and who love you. If they love you they'll stand everything from you, and if they don't love you they won't stand anything. So you needn't try to suit your views to those of the pews at all times. It isn't necessary. Just be sincere, and true, and loving, and keep your hands on the shoulders of your people.—*Telescope.*

Soul Food.

Some Christians die of starvation. They surfeit the inner man with secular stimulants of all sorts—with spiced books of fiction, with "light reading" that is mere sillabub. Many swallow little else than their daily newspaper. The moral faculties become debilitated on this flimsy diet. Now, all the athletic Christians—all those who can carry heavy loads, do thorough work, and stand a long pull—are hungry feeders on God's book. Nothing will impart sinew and muscle to your piety like the thorough study and digestion of your Bible. A good sermon must be digested, or it will be of little use to you; daily bread of the Bible must go through the same process in order that it may be assimilated and taken into your spiritual fibre. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and they were the joy of mine heart," said the old-time saint. One strong Bible text lodged in the memory and turned over and well digested will be breakfast for your soul, and in the strength of it you may go through the whole day. A soldier is never in so good a trim for battle as after a sound sleep and a square morning meal; it is not easy to fight or to march on an empty stomach. In like manner every servant of Jesus Christ must recruit his or her spiritual strength by reading Christ's words and thinking about them, by meditation, by prayer, and soul converse with God. I have always observed that the light readers and light thinkers make light Christians, and those who neglect their Bibles and closets soon dwindle into dwarfs. Having no depth of root, their religion withers away.—*Selected.*

The Christian life can be made more beautiful by being in touch with Christ himself as well as those who love Christ.

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