

Bread Upon the Waters.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."—Eccles. xi. 1

'Mid the losses and the gains,
'Mid the pleasures and the pains,
'Mid the hopes and the fears,
'And the restlessness of years,
We believe it more and more—
Bread upon the waters cast
Shall be gathered at the last.

'Gold and silver, like the sands,
Will keep slipping through our hands;
Jewels gleaming like a spark,
Will be hidden in the dark;
Sun and moon and stars will pale,
But these words will never fail;
Bread upon the waters cast
Shall be gathered at the last.

Soon like dust, to you and me,
Will our earthly treasure be;
But the loving words and deeds
To a soul in bitter need,
They will not be forgotten—
They will live eternally—
Bread upon the waters cast
Shall be gathered at the last.

Fast the moments slip away,
Soon our mortal powers decay,
Low and lower sinks the sun,
What we do must soon be done;
Then what rapture, if we hear
Thousand voices ringing clear,
Bread upon the waters cast
Shall be gathered at the last.

Winfield Mott's Conversion.

BY KATE UPSON CLARK.

It was a warm morning in July, but there had been no drought in Eastboro. The verdure of the fields and woods was fresh and glossy, and the brook which turned young Winfield Mott's planing mill brimmed its pretty banks full. There was, therefore, no apparent reason why the mill should not be running, but it was not. Winfield Mott himself sat in the middle of the mill floor on a pile of shavings, a fair-haired, blue-eyed young man of, perhaps, twenty-seven. His handsome face was clearly shaven but for a light moustache. His clothes were neat and good. He looked robust and intelligent, yet there was an expression upon his countenance of great dissatisfaction. What was worse, this expression had rested there for a year or more. He had been a merry boy, but people said that he was getting sour.

"Things have gone wrong with Win Mott, and kinder soddged him all up," was the way in which Aunt Nabby Tolman put it. Aunt Nabby was the village oracle, and kept a sharp lookout on all her neighbors. Her phrases were often hard to parse, but there was never any doubt as to her meaning. Another remark which she made about Win Mott was that he looked as if he were "chuck full of besom," which the plain country folk who heard her understood to mean that he looked as though he were full of bitterness and hatefulness, though no dictionary could have helped them to such a conclusion.

After Winfield Mott had sat upon the pile of shavings for perhaps fifteen minutes he rose and walked toward a window. Opposite the mill stood a little white cottage. Winfield Mott, as he glanced toward it now, could see his young wife moving slowly about in it, while his year-old baby cowered as it crept about the floor.

"I don't believe Clara will ever be strong again," he sighed, as he turned away. "Well, I don't know that I can do any more than I am doing for her. Anyhow, now I must go to work."

Just then, without a note of warning, the door opened and a gray-haired, thin-faced man walked in. Winfield Mott started.

"Good morning, Mr. Ely," he stammered, extending his hand, though with scant cordiality. "I didn't hear you coming. Did you drive up from the village?"

"No; I walked through the woods and came in at your back door."

The old man took off his spectacles to wipe them and revealed a pair of mild, kind, blue eyes.

"You must excuse me for calling so early, he continued, "but these hot days I have to go early if I go at all; and I have wanted to see you. It isn't a busy time with you, I hope, that is, too busy for you to spend a few minutes with me?"

An ungracious "I suppose not," muttered almost beneath the young man's breath, was all the reply that he vouchsafed, though his visitor's manner was tender and even affectionate.

"Now, Win," he began, seating himself upon a work bench close at hand, "talk with me freely. I have been your pastor for ten years. I baptized you into the church and your wife with you. You and Clara seem like my children, but now you rarely come to church or to the Sunday-school. Clara never comes. I suppose she cannot leave the little one?"

"No," returned Winfield Mott speaking with difficulty, "Clara is obliged to stay with the baby. She isn't strong enough to go, anyway. I am worried about her all the time."

"But she is doing her house work alone, I understand." "Yes; she isn't able to do it, but she won't let me get anyone to help her. She says I can't afford it."

"Are you having very hard times, then, Win?" asked the old man, anxiously.

"I've had the worse kind of luck I suppose everybody knew it."

"I have heard that you were not prospering, but I did not know for certain," murmured the pastor.

"I can easily show you the main causes of my trouble," snapped Winfield Mott, throwing his reserve to the winds. "My fellow church members have used me ill, Mr. Ely, I might as well tell you," he went on, raising his voice fiercely, "that I bought a young cow of our precious Deacon Moseley, and it proved to be unsound. He knew it was sick when he sold it to me. He must have known it!"—Winfield Mott was now fairly husky with wrath—"I paid him in hard money, and when the cow died two weeks afterwards I was that much poorer. I tell you that he is a cheat, and I will never take any communion from his hands again."

"But that is only one thing. I had a large order for hard wood finishings. I bought a load of wood in the log, and was going to saw it myself. I bought it of your honorable church member, L. S. Mead. O, he's a virtuous and upright man, he is!"

Winfield Mott laughed harshly. "I tell you, Mr. Ely, half that load was poplar. Mead left it here just at night, very promptly, O very—the next day, in fact, after I ordered it—and I did not happen to look at it for ten days or a fortnight. Then I found that half of it was no good. Mead swears that 'somebody meddled with it,' that I had no business to leave it lying around loose so! 'Does L. S. Mead take me for a fool?' cried the young man, his face now fairly purpling under the stress of his emotions. 'Don't you suppose I could tell if anybody touched my logs here? L. S. Mead is a fraud; but the money loss wasn't all. I saw what religion amounts to. I don't want any more dealings with church members, thank you! World's folks are good enough for me."

"O Win, Win!" sighed the pastor. Drops were gathering upon his brow. He meekly wiped them away.

"Yes," went on Winfield Mott, frowning darkly, "and my wife and baby have been ailing for months; the doctor's bills are enormous. He's another member of the church, but he charges me right up to the mark every time. O yes! I've had to mortgage my house and my mill! I'm about as tied up as a young fellow can be. There are other things about church members that I might tell you. I don't feel much like attending church. I confess I go only to please her."

The old man took no notice of the brutal frankness of these words.

"Does she feel as you do?" he asked after a pause.

"Clara! No. She's as good as gold, and she thinks everybody else is. But I'm free to tell you, Mr. Ely, I don't care for any church in which such men as Deacon Moseley and Mr. Mead are shining lights. No, I thank you!"

He laughed another bitter laugh. "O Win, Win!" cried the old man again, in a tone of acute distress. He paused. His heart was evidently too full for utterance. Then he turned and took his young friend's hand.

"Let us pray, Win," he said gently, and together they knelt upon the floor among the bits of brook board and the little heaps of sawdust.

"Dear Lord," implored the old man, "come to us this morning and show us thyself as our pattern, our guide. Stand between us and the world. Hide that from us, and let us see only thee in thy beauty. Let humanity be blotted out before us. Reach forth thy loving hand and pull us from the Slough of Despond into which we have fallen. Take suspicion and hatred from our hearts, if such there be, and fill us with love and forgiveness toward all who have injured us, even as thou wast full of love for those who reviled and persecuted thee. Quickened and enlightened us."

"O thou that didst still the tossing waves of Galilee, speak peace to our souls. Take our hands in thine, and tell us how these our afflictions, are meant for our good, and help us to keep faith in thee, through all. Amen."

The old man's words came to Winfield Mott like a reviving torrent upon a parched land, sliding irresistibly upon its blessed way. God had inspired them. It was like David's music upon the darkened spirit of King Saul.

As they rose from their knees the aged pastor caught the young man's hand.

"I mustn't take too much of your time, Win," he began. The tears were welling up to his kind eyes. But I must confess to you—may God forgive me!—that I have been almost afraid to speak to you for fear I should say the wrong word.

Then, as I said, I couldn't see you alone, but, O Win, let God say to you what I cannot! Study his word; pray to him. Whatever others are or are not, he is always the same—pure, true, loving. I can't help thinking you're too hard on these men. I can't think they mean to wrong you. But the human heart is deceitful, God knows, and you must not look at the faults of church members. There wouldn't be any end to that, would there? We are all sinners, you know. The young man dimmed a little under the searching glance which the good pastor gave him. "Can't you fix your eyes on him, Win—just him! Clara will tell you I'm right. I can't bear to see your young spirit clouded so! O, come out of the shadows and be our own bright boy again! Good-by, Win. God bless you."

The young man stood gazing after the retreating figure of his faithful friend, his handsome face flushed and his eyes moist. Was it true, indeed, that God was not against him? Could he believe that God was just, though every man were a liar? Yes, yes! He felt it as he had never felt it before. Passage after passage of Scripture came floating into his mind, verses, long forgotten, but full of comfort, verses which warned Christians of exactly such trials as those who had come to him. Perhaps he had been too hard in his judgments. At any rate, whatever might be true of Deacon Moseley Mr. Mead and the doctor, God was still good. He always would be. A great light seemed suddenly to shine through the bare, plain, shaving-mill. He could think of nothing but Paul on his journey to Damascus.

Outside he heard a soft, slow footstep. Clara was coming, probably to ask him some question. He had not been very pleasant to Clara lately, he reflected with a qualm; in fact, he had been sullen, perverse, gloomy—a brute. She opened the door timidly. His heart smote him anew as he observed her manner. He had been so cross and ugly that his very wife whom he loved was afraid of him. Her face wore a sad look as she peered in, but something in his expression changed hers and she smiled. How soft her husband's eyes had suddenly become! There was no shadow to-day on his broad, white forehead.

"Come in Clara," he said gently. He took her hand and pulled her down beside him on the bench where the good pastor had sat a few moments before. "O Clara!" he continued, brokenly, "I have been a bad husband to you, morose, unkind. But you have been a saint! Why haven't I looked to you for a pattern instead of to Deacon Moseley and the rest? Why, Clara," he continued earnestly, "I have been thinking that everybody was bad, and that every man's hand was against me. I have distrusted the goodness of God, but Mr. Ely has been here and prayed with me, and God has seemed to show me my sin. I am going to be different now Clara. I believe that I never was converted—never really had my heart changed—until now. What I thought was conversion was only a sort of fair-weather conversion, but now I believe it is for good, no matter what storms may come. Let us pray together, Clara."

The young wife had never heard her husband pray as he prayed for the next few minutes. Her heart was full of happiness as they rose from their knees, and she hurried back, after doing her errand, to the babe whom she had left sleeping in the little cottage.

On the way out she met a man who was coming, as she afterward learned, to order a quantity of work of her husband. God does not always send an earthly blessing without heavenly, but

"He answers sharp and sudden on some prayers," and he was very good to Winfield Mott to-day.

"You are looking first-rate, Win," said the man, an old neighbor, as he turned away.

"I never felt better in my life," responded Winfield Mott, heartily. "Your wife looks to-day as she used to," went on the visitor. "I haven't seen so much color in her face for a long time."

"I can't help thinking that she may get back her strength," said Winfield Mott, hopefully.

As the good neighbor went out the young man laughed aloud for pure pleasure. The morning took a new splendor. What a beautiful world it was, and how good God was!

Five years have passed. Winfield Mott is no longer picking flies in his neighbors. He is a Christian now, and nobody doubts that he has been really "converted" for his face, his presence in the house of God, his voice in the prayer-meeting all attest that the Lord has taken away his stony heart and has given him a heart of flesh.

Aunt Nabby Tolman wonders "whatever came over Win Mott to change him so, four or five years ago."

"After hein' all soddged up for a year or two," she said, "so that folks thought he was goin' to turn out a regular crosspatch, all of a sudden he grew different. From lookin' as 'glum as a plate of cold victuals,' (a favorite, though not elegant, simile of Aunt Nabby's), 'he's come to be as smilin' as a basket of chips. Folks do say that he's been converted over again. I always supposed once was enough, but if it would effect other folks as it has Win Mott I wish more of 'em would get converted twice.'"—Congregationalist.

The Five Talents of Woman.

The five talents of women, according to Mr. John Ruskin, are those which enable them to please people, to feed them in dainty ways, to clothe them, to keep them orderly, and to teach them. It is true that Mr. Ruskin, while an authority on painting and architecture, has no down laws for mankind in general or womankind in particular; and one may decidedly differ from him without incurring penalty, unless it be his wrath or contempt. Nevertheless, it might be worth while to look a bit at these rather singularly expressed "five talents," and to repress the impatience which would turn from them hastily or scornfully as something quite too humdrum and commonplace to deserve attention.

It is doubtless claiming too much to assert that these constitute a complete inventory of womanly duties. Probably Mr. Ruskin would not wish to be understood as so claiming. But that these five matters do include a very wide sweep of influence not to be despised by any, however loftily gifted in other directions, it needs but little penetration to perceive. Are not all womanly instincts on the side of these things?

Take the first of them—"to please people." Can any one doubt that it is a part of woman's mission to be an ornament to society, that she is not discharging her proper function in life unless she is somewhat ornamental as well as more coarsely useful? She is certainly conscious of this from the first budding of her maidenhood. It is wholly right and proper that she should wish to be an object of admiration and give pleasure to those who behold her. It is far from being a good sign when either maiden or matron become careless as to how she looks and leads not whether she be attractive or otherwise to those who meet her. We all feel that such a condition of mind betokens the absence of qualities we do not like to miss, and that the woman for lack of them is less valuable in the world and has lost something of her self-respect.

The feeding and clothing have always fallen to woman's share, and it may be safely assumed, always will. How much depends on its being done well! What myriads of inebriates would never have become thus degraded had their poor stomachs had a decent chance at whole some, well cooked, fitly-chosen food. How large a part of health and happiness is spoiled by a ruined digestion springing from poor management in pantry and kitchen.

To keep men in order no satisfactory substitute for woman has ever been found. Vigilance committees may do as a temporary makeshift in wild border communities where men have herded in most unnatural bachelorhood; but the only permanent safety is in the importation of women and the setting up of peaceful homes. Then the riots calm down and the mobs move on. One defenceless woman, from the very fact of her being defenceless, does more than bayonets for the maintenance of order.

That woman has, as a matter of right and manifest fitness, absorbed pretty nearly all the teaching functions, needs no demonstration. In family and school at least she reigns supreme, and platform and pulpit have been in part wrested from men.

The children gather round her knees, the young sit at her feet; over all ages and both sexes her sceptre of instruction stretches far and wide.

If she fully cultivates these five talents and becomes completely mistress of the domain they outline, it would hardly seem that she need sigh for more worlds to conquer. Yet if such worlds are given her because of faithfulness in subduing the former, who can wonder, who complain?—Z. Herald.

Mr. W. Thayer, Wright, P. Q., had Dyspepsia for 20 years. I tried many remedies and doctors, but got no relief. His appetite was very poor, had a distressing pain in his side and stomach, gradual wasting away of flesh when he heard of, and immediately commenced taking Norbrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery. The pains have left and he rejoices in the enjoyment of excellent health, in fact he is quite a new man."

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