

Answered Prayer.

I asked for bread: God gave a stone instead.
Yet while I pillowed there my weary head,
The angel made a ladder of my dreams,
Which upward to celestial mountains led,
And when I woke, beneath the morning's beam,
Around my resting-place fresh manna lay;
And, praising God, I went upon my way,
For I was fed.

I asked for strength; for with the noontide heat
I fainted, while the reapers, singing sweet,
Went forward with ripe sheaves I could not bear.

Then came the Master, with His blood-stained feet,
And lifted me with symmetrical ease.
Then on His arm I leaned till all was done;
And I stood with the rest at set of sun,
My task done, late.

I asked for light; around me closed the night,
Nor guiding star met my bewildered sight,
For storm-clouds gathered in a tempest near.

Yet, in the lightning's blazing, roaring light,
I saw the way before me straight and clear.
What though His leading pillar was of fire,
And not the emblem of my heart's desire?
My path was bright.

God answers prayer; sometimes, when hearts are weak,
He gives the very gifts believers seek.
But often faith must learn a deeper rest,
And trust God's silence when He does not speak.
For He, whose name is Love, will send His best.
Stars may burn out; nor mountain wall endure.
But God is true. His promises are sure
To those who seek.

—S. S. Times.

Some Lessons of the Hard Times.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

The year 1893 will long be remembered—like the years 1837 and 1857—for its financial disasters in the United States. Very few people have escaped entirely from the widespread financial gale. How far it was produced by past legislation in regard to "silver," or apprehended legislation in regard to tariffs, this is not the place to discuss. A vast amount of disaster and bankruptcy has been produced by causes entirely disconnected with legislation by either political party. Suffering commonly means sin—not everybody's sin, but everybody's sin; and during these late years there have been a great many sinners.

In a certain good old book—which is as wise in the things of this world as in those of the one come—occurs the following sentence: "He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall lose them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool." Probably but few people know that there is such a passage in the Bible; and it would be a good thing to have it written up large in the counting rooms and stock boards and produce exchanges and every place in which business is transacted. The gist of this pithy text is that the loss of riches is very apt to come from the wrong-getting of riches. This plain truth has a great many applications. It applies to all that large class who seek a livelihood without any kind of productive labor, or any that adds to the resources of the community. Mere "speculation" (as it is called) is generally a game of hazard. It invents nothing useful, manufactures nothing valuable, and contributes nothing to the wealth of society. Its vital idea is the same as that which inspires the gambling table; its atmosphere is intensely intoxicating and demoralizing. Every financial gale sweeps down a large number of those who are attempting to get rich by their wits, and not by any honest work. Over such losses no Christian conscience will shed any tears. Would that every young man who wishes never to "end as a fool," would keep out of that witch's cave of speculative gambling!

Another very large class of self-made sufferers are those who have been recklessly living beyond their means. Their whole style of living is fictitious. The "fortunes" which they claimed to possess have proved to be fictions. Thousands of people who have taken on the airs of wealth and have grasped at the luxuries of wealth, have found out, when the time of "settlement" came, that they were really poor. And their present poverty

K. D. C. Relieves Distress After Eating.

is tenfold more respectable than their former pretension to what they never possessed. Their "losses" are the loss of what was never theirs—the mere loss of gas from an inflated balloon; and now that they are landed on terra firma they may well learn some wisdom from their tumble.

When we recall the wild future of extravagance and self-indulgence, the mad ambitions to live on delirious incomes a life of vain show, we discover some compensations in the sobering and salutary effects of "hard times." They are a big dose of solvent to those whose systems were terribly out of order. Hard times often harden good men's virtues, and give new fiber to their courage and self-denial. Hard times smash some of the idols that Christians are too often tempted to worship. Hard times are really the hardest on whatever is worm-eaten and worthless. Unfortunately it is that the crashing down of decayed trees often carries away some limbs from the surrounding trees which are healthy and vigorous. The mischief thus done is partial, and generally temporary; the benefits to the whole community are widespread and wholesome. My observation has been that, in the long run, very few wise, honest and industrious persons are permanently injured by financial storms. The ships that weather out the stiff gales are the ships that bring in the best cargoes at last. Storm does not always mean shipwreck.

There is really, in God's sight, only one kind of wreck that is utterly ruinous, and that is the wreck of character. The saddest sort of reading that we encounter is the obituary column of dead reputations. Some financial bubbles have exploded; some "securities" have depreciated; but the most attending losses have been the losses of conscience, of principle and of good name! These are the bankruptcies that knock the bottom out of "the market." "We have plenty of money in the street," said a banker to me; "what we want is confidence." The question asked in such times is, In whom can we confide? On every side the question is, Whom can we trust? To such questions my answer would be, You can trust God and all men who fear God and keep His commandments. Never did strict uncorrupt integrity command a higher premium. If these times of fiery trial throw out a great deal of "slag," they are also testing the pure gold gloriously. While one man after another who ventured into slippery places is catching a bad fall, "he that walketh uprightly walketh surely."

Let us hope and pray that the losses in 1893 may bring some gains in 1894. Nearly all of us may be the poorer for the financial calamities of the past twelvemonth. We had better mark ourselves down lower as to the value of our assets; for there has been a shrinkage of pretty much all marketable "securities." Nearly everything has depreciated except faith and good works; they still pay grand dividends. There are many wholesome lessons to be learned in these hard times. The first one is to learn the wisdom of doing business by God's plumbline. After Chicago was burned out, she built more fireproof dwellings and warehouses. We ought, also, to have a more righteous dread of debt. All debt means danger. Reckless running into it has ruined more Christians and broken more hearts than many a flagrant vice. To incur any pecuniary obligation, large or small, without a well-founded assurance of ability to repay it is as bad as highway robbery.

Another hint for the hard times is that, in our schemes for retrenchment, let us be careful not to begin by cheating God. Some people commence their curtailment of expenditures by cutting down their gifts to wise charities; these ought to be the last to come down. The benevolent Henry Thornton, of London, subscribed ten pounds to a religious object; but soon afterward, having met with a great loss he sent fifty pounds to the treasurer, with the remark: "I don't want to lose this, also." The safest loans are loans to the Lord; he repays with compound interest. Would you be rich toward God? Then give freely. He that saves for self losses; he that gives for Christ's sake is sure to save. Have you a clean conscience, a chance to work and a clear hope of Heaven? Then you may march through this year with a light heart against any head-winds, and may sing the one hundred and third Psalm at every step.—Independent.

The devil has a high regard for the man who has a much higher opinion of himself than of any one else.

Love is a very contagious disease, but all young people, and even some old maids, old bachelors, widows, and widowers, heroically expose themselves to the contagion.

K. D. C. Cures Midnight Dyspepsia.

He Leadeth Me.

One of the most blessed promises in the Bible is this one in Isaiah xlii, 16; And I will bring the blind by a way that they have not known; I will make the darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Surely this is something we can personally appropriate without question as to whether or not it applies to us. For we are verily blind. We cannot see what is going to happen to-morrow; we know nothing that is before us; our eyes are of no use whatever in foretelling either good or ill; and being blind, it is impossible for us to know which is the best path in life for us to take. In our perplexity God says: I will take you safely through these ways that are dark and unknown to you; in these paths that are so doubtful, that lie along really dangerous places. I will even make the darkness light before you; and I will straighten out the things which seem to you hopelessly crooked. If you will only suffer Me to do this for you, I surely will. Put your hand in Mine, and I will not forsake you. We wistly with anxious foreboding: O, if I only knew what is best to do! God says: You do not know, but I know, and I will lead you by a way that you know not. The trouble is that, being blind, we act as though we could see, and run into dangers and calamities with a terrible shock. When we remember and fully realize that we are therefore glad to have a guide, the dangers and calamities come in our way, to be sure, but we meet them very differently. The hand of our Guide is so full of strength and rest and comfort that we come out of the painful experience stronger than when we entered it; even the darkness has become light before us through the shining of His countenance.

Many a one is asking, in the midst of hardship and sorrow, Is life worth living? is it worth the anxiety? If we believe in our Guide, we will not be swept away by such thoughts. Ours is a God-given life, and every soul is precious in His sight. Why was I born? What can I do? God knows; He made me. He never made a human being without some purpose. He plans a high destiny for every one of us. A great many beautiful fabrics are woven by weavers who can see nothing of their work but the wrong side. They sit before the loom, the wrong side of the tapestry, with rough edges, always before them. But the master workman knows just what he wants; he has chosen the pattern and set the weaver at work, and by and by, when the tapestry is finished, the workman is astonished at the beauty his own hands created.

We have the pattern of a perfect character in the Lord Jesus Christ. He sets us at the task of weaving from that pattern day by day. How disappointing and wearisome is my life! I say. Where is the use in this monotonous round? But if our eyes are upon the pattern, and we faithfully obey orders, though we may not see now how the right side looks, it will be a glad surprise when it is finished. "Looking above at the Pattern, no weaver hath need to fear; Only let him look clear into heaven, the perfect Pattern is there. If he keeps the face of the Saviour forever and always in sight, His toil shall be sweeter than honey, and his weaving sure to be right."

So may we take the infinite comfort of the promise to our hearts. Blind though we are, and rough the road over which we walk, our Guide knows the path perfectly, and is not only able to take us over it in safety, but also to give us great comfort and good cheer on the way.—Chris. Advocate.

Christ in the Soul Effects the everyday Life.

Christ's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. Its cardinal principles are such as take hold of the affections. It controls the lives of men by capturing and subduing their hearts. Its supreme governing principle is love.

While all this is strictly true, it is also true, that the religion of Christ in the hearts of men enters into and gives trend to their business and their social life. This it must do to be worth anything to the individual and to the world. Its mission is to elevate and ennoble men and bless the world. This it cannot do without elevating the individual; and it cannot elevate the individual without entering into and controlling his life and acts in relation to things material and personal.

Some fall into the mistaken notion that being a Christian so hampers men in their business affairs that they cannot succeed—cannot accumulate rapidly and become rich. True, it does prevent men from becoming rich dishonestly. It forbids oppression; it pronounces a curse upon those who keep back the wages of their toiling labor-

The Worst Disease—Dyspepsia, The Best Cure K. D. C.

ers. And doubtless this is the very reason why some of the great manufacturers who have in a few years piled up immense fortunes are skeptics. The Christian religion condemns them for thrusting all the profits into their own pockets and grinding their laborers down to wages that afford to them and their families a bare living.

But Christianity encourages men to be "diligent in business," and it promises a blessing upon riches honestly accumulated, were also distinguished as most exemplary, faithful Christians. Prominent among these stand out George Peabody, William E. Dodge, and Cyrus H. McCormick. These men by devoting themselves to business, amassed great fortunes honestly, and then used their fortunes to promote the glory of God and to elevate and bless their fellowmen. Their eminent success and honorable, useful lives demonstrate the untruthfulness of the declaration that the Christian religion interferes with the successful prosecution of legitimate business enterprises. Nor does the Christian religion, in its requirements, prevent men from taking active interest in the nation nor hinder them from becoming great statesmen and political leaders. The greatest living statesmen and eminent politicians, Hon. Wm. E. Gladstone, is one of the most eminent, the most devoted Christians of this or any other age. He serves his country and his queen all the more efficiently because he serves God most loyally. No man can be a corrupt, selfish, timeserving partisan and be a Christian; but the true statesman and the great political leader is only made the more capable of serving his country in the highest sense by being a devout follower of the Nazarene.

So with all the legitimate avocations and professions of life; Christianity in the soul only gives greater force, courage, and efficiency in the prosecution of business by imparting confidence and hope to the heart. It demands honest methods, unselfish aims and clean hearts; and the business man who has these is intrenched in an invulnerable fortress and clad in an armor of mail; and when the storms of adverse fortune sweep the country in the form of great panics, carrying other great business firms before them, he weathers the gale because his heart is strong in the consciousness of his honest acts and his high and holy purposes.

It is because of considerations of this kind that the Christian religion, even when viewed only from the standpoint of the interests of this life, shines with a transcendent, heavenly luster. It takes hold of all the inner life of the individual. It corrects and controls his business life, his social life and his political life. It makes him a good husband, a good neighbor, a good business man, a good citizen, a good statesman.—Rel. Telescope.

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Spiritual Nourishment.

We cannot work successfully for the Master without this. The table is richly supplied with convenient food; the wellspring of life affords ample supplies to quench the burning thirst. The welcome is most hearty; it is to every soul, and it is accompanied with the assurance that no one is so poor that he cannot "buy, because this refreshment is "without money and without price."

Since our ability to render acceptable service depends upon buying "wine and milk" so freely offered; and since an abundant provision is within the reach of all, and is offered upon such easy conditions, why will anyone prefer a life of spiritual impoverishment? At God's table there is "bread enough, and to spare." Why will we "perish with hunger?"

Many see the folly of this unsatisfactory mode of living, but are overcome by the world, the flesh, and the devil. The rich feast is just at hand, but evil forces restrain them from partaking. These forces are both within and without the soul, and sleepless in their activity. The better judgment is captured, the struggling will is overborne, the sensibilities are paralyzed by these implacable enemies; the soul is left by the highway to die, starving, wounded, and forsaken.

Nothing will recover these souls save Jesus the Christ. He speaks into their ears, so dull of hearing, and says: Come unto Me for sustenance. Thy Father giveth you the true bread from

I. D. C. Restores the Stomach to Healthy Action.

heaven; for the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world. "Lord, evermore give us this bread. May this be the beseeching cry of famishing perishing souls!

Sincerity.

In the great movements of our time there must be sincerity in the heart of each worker. As our Lord was "without guile," so must we seek to be. Especially at the one vital point of "doing all to the glory of God," not unto self, there must be vigilant watchfulness on our part. Conscious sincerity in acting, in holding to the worthy service for truth's sake, in desiring to reach the goal of success, in order that others may be led through our efforts to glorify God, tends to increase our own convictions, and gives to us the pledge of final victory. There may be deficiencies in many other respects—in speech, in qualities for leadership, in personal training. Grant all this. Still, if genuine sincerity is reflected in all that is done, we may be used as instruments in God's hands in most remarkable ways.

Attention must be given to our special work. We live in an age of peculiar perils. Not the least of these is the danger coming from multiplicity of engagements. Willing workers are often exposed to temptation at this point, unknown to the slothful servant. It is very possible to forsake the plain path for some devious and uncertain byway. Calls for sympathy, or an unexpected summons to meet a supposed duty, may frustrate the divine order by diverting our attention. Our own providential task is thus left unfinished. Many a sincere worker needs not only to ask strength at the beginning of each day to fulfill its duties, but also for wisdom to undertake no unnecessary work. When we consider what is meant by doing God's will from day to day, what is involved therein both to ourselves and others, we must see how important it is to concentrate our whole thought upon the work He has planned for us.

Preachers have need not only to look well after their flocks, but to look well after themselves. The worst calamity that can befall them is a severe stroke of the "big head."

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