

God's Answer.

Where is healing for my sorrows?
So I cried in my distress.
Give me hope for dark to-morrows,
Let the tempest hurt me less;
Let an angel come to bring me
Freedom from life's weight and pain,
But the wise God, for my healing,
Sent me back to work again.

Thought and talk bring truth no nearer,
Trouble lies in doubt for me,
Let the vision be made clearer;
God arise and set me free!
Baffled, weary, restless, helpless,
I prayed on through all the night;
But God spoke amid the darkness;
Work thy way out into light.

I am weary for the faces
Thou hast taken to Thy heaven;
I have prayed so long for graces
That I see to others given.
Friends meet dear are taken from me,
In my path grim evils lurk;
What can change these troubles for me?
And God answered, Only Work.

Still I cried; O God deliver!
Work is but the common lot,
And my griefs will last for ever
If Thy strong hand help me not.
But the Master knew; His answer
Came in fresh tasks multiplied,
And my prayer for blessings brought me
Chiefly work, on every side.

So I took the duties pressing
Near me, and with patience sought
To perform the work, what blessing
Has the mere endeavour wrought!
Work can make the sad light-hearted,
Work makes strong the young and old,
Work wins treasures far more costly
Than the idler's game and gold.

Therefore work! God calls thee to it,
Not in anger, but in love.
Take thy work with joy, and do it
As to please Thy God above.
All life's best has not been taken
While good work remains to thee.
Let thy heart grow glad in labour;
Love and work, and happy be!

—Marianne Farnham

The Religion of Gratitude.

For the great bulk of the divine goodness to us we are apt to be indifferent; for the rare and special we have demonstrative thankfulness. If our child recovers from sickness which seemed unto death, we are moved to expressions of gratitude; if the angel of health hovers over the whole household, we hardly note the divine mercifulness. If a storm desolates a neighbor's fields and does not touch our own, we give God thanks; but if there be no destructive storm near us, we forget the divine gentleness displayed in the wind and the rain. A starving man will bless God for a dry crust; a full man has no sense of God when he pours plenty upon his table. Is this not our case? Can we wonder that Providence stings us into remembrance by hunger, loss, pain, bereavement?

The sound religious feeling sees God in common blessings—in health, in abundance, in all prosperity. And so the devout heart is prepared to see its own errors, faults, sins, in the day of adversity. "God is good; but I have come short in use of his goodness." And therefore, thankfulness for special mercies has a deep undertone of repentance. A genuine gratitude says, "I went astray, and yet God rescued me." In his "straitest pinch" Jacob said, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies . . . which thou hast showed unto thy servant." A true piety sees God's good hand in all the evenness and ease of life, and sees our own personal hand in the obstructed path and the Hill Difficulty.

This spirit of humble devotion makes any life a happy one. "The Lord thinketh upon me. The great King reigns for my protection, to give me water from his clouds, fruit from his trees, pleasures from his light and verdure. I am the child of a King." If there is a change, and want pinches, the same piety looks within and over past conduct for the cause of the change. A false piety is always blaming God or some other human soul. The true cry of devotion is, "I only have sinned!" What a clamor of voices rends the skies complaining of our fellow-men! How feeble seem the accents of self-accusing repentance! These cries and this silence are our reproach and our shame. How often our prayer means, "Forgive John and Joseph, those awfully wicked brothers of mine who have wronged me." "I, even I only!"—that is the voice of devotion, and it cannot be so faint or feeble that it shall not be fully heard in heaven. Blessed is the man who so prays in the day of calamity. Whatever he may have lost, he has found an infinite more, for he has found God, the Father Almighty. And the pangs of such penitence shall soon become the joys of salvation. For the blind, obdurate, egotistical heart there is no consolation in pain. We must find the cause of our ills in ourselves before we can overcome the evil. They will vanish from our sight as clouds dispersed by sunshine, just

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as a true penitence brings God back into our heart life.

Forgetfulness of customary mercies, that is the worst incident of prosperous hours. All spiritual dangers are in that forgetfulness. For if one has forgotten God's goodness, he has become a practical atheist. God is fading out of his life. "I was as a beast before thee," when he surveyed the external prosperity of the wicked. "So foolish was I, and ignorant!" The brutishness of a materialistic atheist steals in upon the soul in all forgetfulness of goodness to his children. The hours of return to God will be the prodigal's hour—"Father, I have sinned." To keep God always before us as the giver of every good and perfect gift is the only means of religious safety. We shall go astray when we forget that daily and common gifts fall on us from the great unclosed hand of our Father. We shall be right, and all right, so long as we can see that hand sowing blessings along our path. There is no true religion possible for us without this constant vision of un-resting, un-failing divine beneficence. Remembering—this is a test—does it not yield us joy! Does it not broaden us to do well? Does it not broaden and brighten the light in us? Does it not reveal more and more in us the spiritual manhood? Does it not smooth rough ways and temper harsh winds? It is the only way of keeping God in our daily life, and so making us "partakers of the divine nature."

And is it not at least possible that the spirit of gratitude might find a larger place in social life, and sweeten it with a religious influence? There is a reluctance in us to gratitude toward our fellow—to even the recognition of obligation. It appears in the first revolts of childhood; it makes doing good very hard in a multitude of cases. A good man can be put under an obligation which will sway his whole being and command his last dollar. A bad man cannot be bound at all by kindness. Some men compromise all along these lines. We must serve one another; we must be served. It cannot be reduced to a matter of dollars and cents. Not to feel and confess and remember a kindness, or to make it small and hasten to get rid of it; not to rest happily under a sense of gratitude—that is spiritual weakness, if not sin. And here, too, gratitude is a duty of peace. The man will have joy in his brethren who forgets no kindness. He will have more than his own number of kindnesses, and the unkindnesses of a few will be swallowed up in the goodness of many.—Pittsburgh Advocate.

"Bear Ye One Another's Burdens."

Nothing seems more pitiful than a soul bearing the burdens of life alone. It is a sorrowful experience, except that sometimes through it we are brought to the comfort of knowing more intimately the great burden-bearer, Jesus. Then it becomes the greatest experience of our life.

But Jesus said: "As my father hath sent me into the world, even so have I sent you." His work and mission are committed to us, his followers. In many words of the blessed book he teaches us that we should bear to each other the same relation of helpful sympathy which he bears towards us all, and the spring or source of helpfulness should be in us as in him, unselfish, unfeeling love—the love which is "kind." Bearing burdens for each other in this way is fulfilling the law of Christ, which law is to love our neighbor as ourself. Rom. xiv and xv tell us very plainly how we may bear the burdens of others by not condemning or judging harshly when they differ with us in matters of conscience. How beautifully we are taught consideration and helpfulness toward those who seem to us weak in faith or narrow in their views of Christian liberty. St. Paul says: "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ greatness of the act which transcends, according to human standards, but on the intensity with which the sinful element is working in it; for acts make crimes, but motives make sins. If you take a bit of prussic acid and bruise it down, every little microscopic fragment will have the poisonous principle in it; and it is very little use to ask whether it is as big as a mountain or small as a grain of dust, it is poison all the same. And to talk about magnitude in regard to sins is rather to introduce an irrelevant consideration. But still, recognizing that there is a reality in the distinction that people make between great sins and small ones, though it is a superficial distinction and does not go down to the bottom of things, let us deal with it now. And so I say that the small sins, by reason of their numerousness, have a terrible accumulative power.

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

They are like the green flies on our rose bushes, or the microbes that our medical friends talk so much about nowadays. Like them, their power of mischief does not in the least degree depend on their magnitude, and like them, they have a tremendous capacity of reproduction. It would be easier to find a man that had not done any one sin than to find out a man that had only done it once. And it would be easier to find a man that had done no evil than a man who had not been obliged to make the second edition of his sin an enlarged one. For this is the present Nemesis of all evil, that it requires repetition partly to still conscience, partly to satisfy excited tastes and desires; so that animal indulgence in drink and the like are types of what goes on in the inner life of every man. In so far as the second dose has to be stronger than the first to produce an equivalent effect, and so on ad infinitum.

And then remember that all our evil doings, however insignificant they may be, have a strange affinity with one another, so that you will find that to go wrong in one direction almost inevitably leads to a whole series of consequential transgressions of one sort or another. You remember the old story about the soldier that was smuggled into a fortress concealed in a hay cart, and opened the gates of a virgin citadel to his allies outside. Every evil thing, great or small, that we admit into our lives, still more into our hearts is charged with the same errand as he had. "Open the door when you are on the inside, and let us all come in after you." "He taketh with him seven other spirits worse than himself, and they dwell there." "None of them," says one of the old prophets, describing the doleful creatures that haunt the ruins of a deserted city, "None of them shall by any means want its mate." And the satyrs of the islands and of the woods join together, and hold high carnival in the city. And so, brethren, our little transgressions open the door for great ones. And every sin makes us more accessible to the assaults of every other.—Alexander McLaren, D. D.

Immaturity.

Some years ago a writer of eminence wrote a series of articles on "Veal," which he styled "immature beef." His purpose was to show that there was much immaturity in the world, and that many people had a very great liking for it. Those who have predilections toward immaturity are by no means confined to those who have a distorted physical appetite. There is the same tendency to put an excessive valuation on the immature in the sphere of the intellectual and spiritual. For instance, in some churches there is a veritable craze for young men in the pulpit, which would retire all ministers who have reached the age of forty-five or fifty years. They seem to want the dash, the vivacity of youth, however much there may be of immaturity in the preaching. By the immature preaching of young men is not meant merely that which comes too early but that into which all the ripening constituents, which require time to reach perfection, have not yet entered. There are other churches that prefer an immature preacher—either a very young man or one who has just gone from the shop or the farm to the ministry, for the reason it is more economical. Such a preacher is cheaper than one who has had training and is well equipped for his work. So he charges seem to have a craze for immaturity in their pulpits. At least they are on the lookout for men of that class, either on account of the meager demands it makes on their pocketbooks or because they love immaturity for its own sake—prefer soft, unsubstantial veal to real solid, nutritious meat.

It is this craze for the immature, that is seen in an offhand, unstudied, undigested form, that has ruined many young preachers. They early saw what the people wanted, and instead of laboring to lift the people to higher ideals, they yielded to their whims and at once started in a downward course. They took no time for study, no time to delve deep into the revelation of God, that they might bring forth things new and old for the edification of believers and the conviction and conversion of sinners.

That which is called a sermon is in no sense worthy the name. It is in no sense a finished product, the result of honest, intelligent, conscientious labor. Such a preacher cannot be said to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Unlike the immature preacher, the mature preacher "likes to preach on the great truths, the large thoughts of God, the wide-reaching subjects." His aim is to lift men up by the power of simple, consecrated speech into the lofty world of God and his truth.

Immature preaching often bears the marks of inexperience, or of nothing but "experience." A man may have

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

a good experience, but even that may lack maturity. He may be spiritual, and yet his spirituality may lack the force it ought to have by reason of his immaturity.

The immature preacher has not a very high idea of the great truths of the Bible. He does not comprehend their far-reaching import, and so he treats them feebly or vaguely. He relies more upon expedients, upon methods, upon measures that especially reach the emotions for results, instead of relying on the truth adapted to the conscience and life of men. How feeble is such preaching.

There are many who are content to live and die in immaturity, mental and spiritual. They read little, they care nothing for the improvement of the mind and for a true spiritual life, that can alone come from close communion with God and insight into his truth. God gives all time to ripen. What a pity so many should not strive for maturity—should not study, labor, and pray for larger knowledge and loftier and purer thoughts and aims. The means are at hand—the influence of grace and the aid of books and other helps, with living teachers are abundant, to insure a healthy ripening in character and life for the Master's use. In all our relations let us strive for that goal.—Telegraph

Save the Children.

Christ is the Savior of the world, and therefore the Savior of children. Half the world's population consists of children, and the other half, men and women, had their characters formed while they were children. It is of comparatively little use to try to modify the character of grown people. Their character is generally fixed; but the character of children is plastic and easily molded. If we want to help our Lord save the world the most important thing for us to do is to help him save the children.

The children are placed in families, under the charge of parents. It is the first duty of Christian parents to make their children Christians. No other duty is comparable with this. It is something to make them healthy; it is something to make them rich; it is everything to make them Christians. And parents can secure this; indeed, they are responsible for it. If children do not grow up Christians from their early youth, it is almost certainly the fault of the parent quite as much as that of the child. We wish to press this point very closely on the heart of every Christian parent. If your child is not a Christian, where does your fault lie? Did you teach the child as soon as he could lip a prayer that there is a loving God who must be loved and obeyed? Did you tell him the story of Jesus Christ so as to draw out his heart's affection? Did you have him bend at your knees and teach him to say "Our Father," and to frame his own petitions? Did you kneel and pray with him and for him? Did you show your own dependence on the divine favor by gathering your household about you in family prayer? Did you pray yourself often and earnestly and secretly that your child might be a child of God? Did you take your children with you to the house of God and command them after you to walk in his ways? If you have done this lovingly, leading them to the loving Father, then they will themselves find your Savior.

But not all children have such parents, and therefore the necessity of the Sunday-school for all our children. The Sunday-school is the church's school, its chief work, more important than the prayer-meeting, not less important than the chief Sunday service. The season has now come for putting fresh vigor into this branch of service; and we would press its importance on pastors and people. It is important that our children who have had the best Christian nurture should attend the regular Bible lessons of the Sunday-school; but even more important is it to secure the attendance of those children who are not taught at home how to pray. If they are not taught in the Sunday-school they will probably grow up irreligious, very likely vicious and ungodly. They will be enemies of the Church and of all good. From them will the armies of the saloon and of Satan be recruited. We can in no other way so cripple the saloon as by stopping the inflow of our youth. If there be a child anywhere that is not taught in the home or in the Sunday-school, it is the grievous fault of the local church. In Germany every child's name is enrolled, and the public school keeps an account whether or not he is in attendance and how long, and he is carefully accounted for on the ledger. Is there one town in this country, the churches in which keep such a list and can account for every child as receiving religious training? Such ought to be

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

the case everywhere if we would educate for the Lord as faithfully as Germany does for the State.—Independent.

THE RECOLLECTION of the committal of a grave sin should humble us ever, but it should not be recalled constantly to sting and crush us. When God forgives, the pardon is full and complete. Peter did well to weep when he came to the consciousness that he had so wickedly denied his Lord; but it should not be forgotten that the best and most happy part of Peter's life came after his great sin. Dean George Hodges, D. D., in his excellent volume upon "Christianity Between Sundays," discourages the tendency in some good people to constantly afflict themselves with the memory of some old but forgiven sin. He says: All stirring up of that old memory, all transferring of that unfortunate part into the living present, I will tell you what is like: it is like a soldier who has stumbled on the march sitting down and spending the rest of the day lamenting that stumble, instead of going on and fighting better to make up for it.

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There is only one way of gaining peace and happiness now and salvation hereafter, and that way is through Christ. Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Random Readings.

Truth is in demand. The best business to be in is "the Father's business."

Those engaged in "building for eternity" lay the foundation in time. God made all men to be happy; if you are unhappy it is your own fault. The higher the tide of the spirit of consecration, the farther it reaches out.

If you have asked God for anything, wait in patience for the answer to your prayer.

God made all men to be happy, if you are unhappy it is your own fault.

Have you ever noticed how fast God's mercies multiply when you try to count them up?

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