

Christian Progress.

God, in his image, made his creature, man,
And piece by piece, revealed to him the plan.
A God of power, of wisdom, love and truth,
Of liberty, as well, was he forsooth.

These qualities, in man his God would see;
He must be wise, and true, he must be free.
His image lost by sin, God did deplore,
And sent his Son that image to restore.

Great things, and many, must the Saviour teach,
Which must be learned before that goal we reach.

The preparations made, for him to show
The love of God 'mid wickedness and woe,
The object lessons of his human life,
The words he spoke, so free from guile and strife,
The disposition shown, when treated ill,
By those whose cup of joy he came to fill,
All these are found within the Book divine,
As gold and silver in the precious mine.

The Bible teaches what man might have been,
And what he may be, when he's freed from sin,
It must be searched, tho', as with burning light,
If man would understand its truths aright.

Some early followers of our dearest Lord
Found life and comfort in his precious word,
Found victory over self, and every foe,
Found heavenly mansions, when they ceased below.

Dark ages came, the word was hid from sight,
The world Christ came to save, plunged into night,
And selfishness, priest-craft, and open sin
Ruled world without, and ruled the church within.

'Tis plain to see how Priests retained their sway
Printing unknown, writing the only way
A Book to make, Behold how very few
Of God's great Book, could then have come to view.

The Printing Press appeared; it tolled the knell
Of ignorance, and tyranny as well,
Gave wings to truth which flew like morning light
Athwart the earth and blessed man in her flight.

God's word was printed and the people read,
Drank from its fountains, and received its bread.

Then Luther spake; to him the press was gain,
It was the track on which he ran his train.
From darkness coming, he beheld the light
His was the dawn, not the meridian height.
He saw some things, some things he did not see,
He preached much truth, but some mistakes made he.
And who in Bible love has made a find,
That took it all, and nothing left behind?

Then Calvin saw the Sovereignty of God,
Saw every creature pass beneath the rod,
God's Sovereignty he saw, but could not see
How that a sovereign God could make men free.

Great truth he held, but there's another still
Salvation is for whosoever will.

A question as to whether Popes and Kings
Should call men men or call them things,
The readers of God's word began to ask,
And claimed an answer tho' it were a task.

For rulers, used to arbitrary power,
To answer from the Book and rule an hour.
Like Banquo's Ghost the question would not down
Till power was wrenched from Crucifix and Crown.

Henry the 8th desiring to elope
Set led the question as regards the Pope,
And England's people, with determined frown,

Answered the question as regards the crown:
James 6th of Scotland, and of England 1st
Could almost wish his Parliament accursed,
Because they would not listen to such things
As he proposed, The divine right of kings
And Charles, to this idea securely wed,
Lost first his crown, and with it lost his head.

'Twas plain to see the heaven was in the meal,
'Twas not so plain its working to reveal.

Now persecution, and now soulless strife,
Cost some their wealth, and some it cost their life,
Ideas from God, each claimed to be their guide,
And neither could endure the other side.

In many cases differences were small
Each had some truth, but no one had it all.

The mayflowers deck was not entirely clear
She brought some bickerings as she landed here,
And Mass. may well note the day
When Roger Williams—had to flee away,
His crime was this, he needed too much water
When he baptized a christian's son or daughter,
He taught the people ought to separate
Between the interests of the church and state.

The Quakers stirred our Father's holy ire,
Teaching baptism of spirit and of fire,
Their tongues were bored with iron heated
And some of them were hung, but none were shot.

So emphasizing part, not all the truth,
Led to discussions hot, by age and youth;
Made numerous sects, the church of God divide.

With gulfs between, both broad and deep
And wide,
And pastors felt 'twere not within their range
To hear each other preach, nor e'en exchange

At length some noble minds, with Christ in heart
Believed the whole was better than a part.

Believed the kernel better than the shell,
Believed the whole book would do quite as well.

As taking pieces to construct cold creeds,
Neglecting man with all his daily needs.

They thought the Spirit to be better
Than frigid holding to the very letter,
So kind looks and words with hands extended
Have many of these breeches mended.

And prayers comingling at the throne above
Have fused disciples in the master's love.

Fences formidable with high toned gate
Around our houses, are things out of date,
Those who are building, do not build that way,
Those with them built, are taking them away.

This fashion takes with churches in our land,
The fences drop, and brothers hand to hand
Are helping each to make the other strong,
To aid the right and to suppress the wrong.

Such we have found as we have tarried here
And labored on for God from year to year.

We were installed beneath the old town clock,
As pastor of the youngest, smallest flock,
Received blessings of the Whittan pastors there,
Who filled these pulpits and who led in prayer.

They're gone from us, but their successors stay
And join with us to celebrate this day,
Our joy is heightened by one half at least,
To have these brethren with us at our feast.

God's Book means more to us than when of yore
Much time was spent in building fence and door.

Then clear the way whatever may be the cost,
Let us unite our hands to save the lost.

The Romance of Prayer.

REV. R. H. HOWARD, PH. D.

Many years ago, a burglary was attempted at an old-fashioned house in the southern part of England. The lady occupying this house, according to her custom, had retired to her room for the night. Presently, to her horror, she became aware of the fact that there was a man under her bed. What did she do? She did not faint; she did not scream; she did not even go to her door to unlock it, lest the burglar should suspect she was about to summon help and intercept her. With rare presence of mind and wonderful self-control she sat down, took her Bible, and opening it at random, lighted on the parable of the Prodigal Son. Kneeling, when the chapter was ended, she prayed aloud—not mechanically, but with unusual earnestness and fervor, beseeching safety for herself during the peril of the night, and casting herself, in supreme confidence, on the Divine protection. Then she prayed for others who might have been tempted into ill-doing; that they might be led from evil and brought into the fold of Christ; that to such might be vouchsafed the tender mercy and kindness promised to all who truly repent of their sins. Lastly, she prayed that, if He willed it, even to-night some such sinner might be saved from the wrath to come, might like the Prodigal, be made to see that he had sinned, and so be welcomed back with the joy that awaits even one penitent. The lady then arose from her knees and went to bed. As noiselessly as possible the man got up, passed through the bedroom door, unlocked it with some difficulty, opened a window, and dropped into the garden.

Years passed; and this lady, while visiting a friend in the north of England, was asked, one day, to go and hear, in a certain Dissenting place of worship, a minister who was understood to be a "reformed" man. She consented. In the course of his sermon this minister related, exactly as they occurred, the foregoing surprising incidents. At the close of the service the lady referred to sought and obtained an introduction to the preacher, and asked him who had told him that story. After some hesitation he admitted that he was himself the burglar; but that the intrepid lady's earnest supplication and tender intercession in that crisis sank so deep into his heart that, then and there, he resolved not only to abandon his guilty design, but withal to forsake his wicked life altogether and seek the salvation of his soul. To that resolution, thus formed, he had steadfastly adhered, and to her was owing whatever good he had been able to do as a minister of the Gospel. The feelings of the preacher, on learning that the party he was then addressing was the very lady to whom he owed so much, may be

"better imagined than described." Surely, the ways of Providence are often as wonderful as they are beneficent; while on the power of prayer hinges the majestic evolution of His will.

The world of fiction, probably, scarcely contains a more thrilling chapter than the following incident which, more than a quarter of a century ago, according to the *Christian at work*, marked the life of Rev. Mr. Lee, Presbyterian minister of the village of Watertown, N. Y. It is certainly worthy of rehearsal in this connection.

Mr. Lee was sitting in his study about midnight, preparing a sermon, when, hearing a noise behind him, he at once became conscious of the presence of some one in the room. "What is the matter?" he exclaimed, and, turning around in his chair, he beheld the grim face of a burglar who was pointing a pistol at his breast. The ruffian had entered the house by a side window, supposing all the occupants were at that hour locked in slumber.

Give me your watch and money, and make no noise, or I will fire, hissed the villain. You may as well put down your weapon, calmly replied the minister. I shall make no resistance, and you are at liberty to take all the valuables I possess. The burglar withdrew the menacing pistol, and Mr. Lee continued: I will conduct you to the place where my most valuable treasures may be found. He opened the door and pointed to the cot where his two children were slumbering in the sweet sleep of innocence and peace. "These," said he, "are my choicest jewels; will you take them?"

He then proceeded to say that, as a minister of the Gospel, he had few earthly possessions, and all his means were devoted to but one object—the education of two motherless children. The burglar was deeply and visibly affected. Tears filled his eyes, and he expressed the utmost sorrow at the act he had been about to commit.

After a few remarks by Mr. Lee, the would-be criminal consented to kneel and join with the good pastor in prayer; and then, in that lonely house at the silent midnight hour, this offender poured forth his penitence and remorse, while the representative of the religion of peace and good will, pointing him to Jesus the sinner's Friend, bade him "go and sin no more."

Newton Lower Falls, Mass.

Woman's Kingdom.

Even in the midst of this age which clamors for novelties and delights in changes of the most startling sort, we are not ashamed to confess our faith in the old-fashioned doctrine that woman's kingdom is pre-eminently the household. We can do this while at the same time unfeignedly rejoicing that woman's sphere has been so marvellously broadened in these later years. Now that women are found in all sorts of employments, so that it is much easier to say where she is not than where she is, there is far better opportunity than before for the permanent securing of "that holy household love that through our homes doth move." It is no not marriage or nothing, as a means of livelihood, nor are girls compelled to take the first offer through fear of coming to want. This is a very great blessing in that it enables them to wait with modesty and dignity until the right one appears, and helps them to avoid that hideous, heart-rending tragedy—union in form and in flesh where there is no union in reality and in spirit.

But this modern offering to women of so wide a choice in occupations, and the emancipation that springs from it, should not be suffered for a moment to dim the brightness of the truth that her noblest function, her chief profession, still is to be a wife and mother. The idea must in no way be permitted to gain currency that there is something finer and higher in being independent and working out a career in some more public position. It would be a sad day for the world if any such notion became generally accepted. Let it be emphasized that there is no higher title than queen of the home.

What influences gather round and go forth from the fireside and the hearthstone! She who rocks the cradle really rules the world. The home is next the sanctuary in sacredness. It is itself a kind of sanctuary, consecrated with mother love. It is the cherished refuge from the storms of life and the best preparation for breasting those storms. "The love of mother," it has been said, "is the last cable that holds the youth to his moorings. Every other anchor drags, but while that holds he is almost certain to outlive the wildest gales." It is the glory of the Anglo-Saxon race that it prizes its home. If the time comes when that word sounds less sweet to the American ear, or holds poorer meanings, the day of national decay and death will be perilously near.

The hearthstone has well been called the corner-stone of the republic. It must be carefully laid, and then kept clean and bright that happy hearts may cluster about it and give hearty thanks to God.

She, then, who more than any other makes the home, may fitly feel that in its keeping is a field for her fullest energy and greatest honor. There is certainly no place where influences so strong and permanent can be exerted. There is no work that requires higher qualities or reaps more glorious reward. The reason why there is so much left for philanthropists to do is because the home work is done so badly. The greatest reform is needed there, and only woman can accomplish it. Man may be a head of the family, but woman is the heart controlling and diffusing its life-blood. Let her never be induced to depreciate the importance of the home, or be discontented with its burdens or desert its duties. Let her count them the highest possible privilege and her supremest crown of rejoicing.

An All-Embracing Creed.

A well known American Episcopal minister tells the following good story:

A few years ago I was engaged in missionary work in the West, and one afternoon I alighted from the train at a small station, and, after walking a short way, I accosted an old farmer, and told him the nature of my business. The old man seemed quite pleased, and ventured the information that he was an Episcopalian, and would like to have me hold a "meeting" at his house—a large, roomy farmhouse, to which he at once conducted me. He showed me every kindness possible, and with his team drove all about the scattered neighborhood informing the people of the service, which I was glad to hold. We had nearly a hundred out in the meeting, and all seemed very interested and attentive, although I could see that few of them, if any, had ever attended such a service before.

The next morning, as I was leaving, I thanked my host for his hospitality, and asked what parish he belonged to.

"Don't know nothin' about any parish," was his answer.

"Well, what diocese do you belong to?" I inquired.

"There ain't nothing of that sort in this country that I ever heard of," he replied.

"But who confirmed you?" said I.

"Nobody," he returned.

"But didn't you tell me you were an Episcopalian?" I asked him in astonishment.

"Oh yes," said the old man, "I'll tell ye how that is. Last spring I went down ter New Orleans visitin', and while I was there I went ter church, and it happened ter be an Episcopal one, and among other things I heard 'em say that they'd left undone them things they'd oughter done, and done them things they hadn't oughter done, and I said to myself, 'That's jest my fix, too,' and since then I've always considered myself an Episcopalian."

"Well," said I, as I shook the old man's hand, "if your ideas of an Episcopalian are correct, we are the largest denomination in the world."

—B. T. Warner, in the Voice.

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Thoughts for Thinkers.

Deep love can do much, even when in deep poverty.

Well arranged time is a sign of well-ordered mind.

When you bury an evil habit do not visit the grave to often.

There is no social problem capable of being solved as a single blow.

The usual fortune of complaint is to excite contempt more than pity.

Childhood itself is scarcely more lovely than a cheerful, kind, sun-shiny old age.

When will talkers refrain from evil speaking? When listeners refrain from evil hearing.

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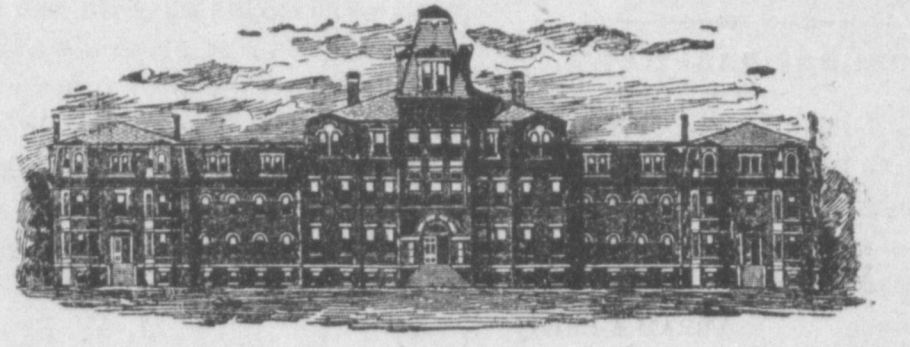
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