

Reprieved.

I have been near to death;
So near, I caught his chilling breath,
And felt his strange mysterious power
Enfold me. Hour after hour
I lay between his world and mine,
And thought no more my sun would shine
For me, nor happy seasons roll
For one who swift had reached the goal.

Death has been near to me;
He turned my hopes to mockery,
And showed me how unfinished were
My dearest plans; with a demur
He showed me all that I had done,
The failures made, the little won,
How I had lived too much for self,
And gained small store of future wealth.

I have been near to Death;
And, underneath his icy breath,
I heard him say: "For bitter rue
I bring thee ease; tried and true;
I give succor from toil and pain,
From care and fear, and ne'er again
Thine eyes earth's salt tears shall weep,
But, fold'd, know the calm of sleep."

Death has been near to me,
He whom I deemed mine enemy;
I did not fear him now so much
Since close I felt his kindly touch,
And heard him whisper: "It is best
To give up strife and pain for rest;
With one last prayer give me thy hands,
And trust to God, who understands."

Then Life stood in Death's place;
Dear Life, sweet Life! more full of grace
Than e'er before. She smiled on me,
And thrilled me with a hope to be
Of plans fulfilled, and stronger will
To all kindly things, and fill
My little station with more grace—
Since I have seen Death face to face.

I feel like one reprieved,
Who blessed respite has received;
This pleasant earth is dear, so dear,
There is so much to hold me here,
That when Death smiled and turned away,
It seemed my night had dawned to day;
And from henceforth my care shall be,
To use the time thus given me.

—Zion's Herald.

Fraternal Love.

Christianity warms all the natural affections of the heart. Kindred are drawn closer together by it. Sacrifices are cheerfully made under the strength of its indwelling. The nearer we come to being like Jesus Christ the larger and purer the love of the soul. It is this wonderful love that brought the Saviour into a place in our race, and that will prompt him to stand by us as a brother in the great future. Someone tells this beautiful incident of Mr. Moody:

He was holding a meeting in one of the large cities. The public interest grew so intense that no building could be got large enough to hold the thousands of people. When the last day of the meeting had come, hours before the time of the meeting the building, holding nine or ten thousand, was packed to its utmost capacity, and some thousands of persons could not gain admission. Policemen and stewards assured the people that there was not standing room inside, and that there was no chance of gaining admission. Ladies drove up in magnificent carriages, and could hardly be persuaded that no differences could be made in their case.

One lady, handing her card, said, "When the steward sees my name he certainly won't refuse to let me in." All entreaties were in vain. "No room," was the reply, as the servant returned to the lady's carriage, which soon drove away, only for another to take its place. "Say," said the next person, "say that I will give a sovereign if I am let in even to stand anywhere." The servant returned, saying, "Please, my lady, the house is full for the last two hours, and no money can purchase a seat." Many went away grieved and disappointed, while others remained, hardly knowing why; as the crowd increased each moment until the hour of the commencement of the meeting.

Just at the last minute a plain-looking little man in a new homemade suit of clothes was seen elbowing his way through the dense mass of people. The crowd looked at him with wonder, and said: "What audacity he has; if grand folks are not let in, and the people who have been standing out in the cold for hours are kept out, that man need not think that he will get in." The little man shoved his way through to the door, and pushed his card through the small aperture.

While this bustle was going on outside, the inside audience was eagerly alive. Nothing could be seen but one mass of human faces in the hall, on the platform in the galleries, all waiting with zealous patience to hear one man tell of God's love for lost souls. The clock strikes the hour as Mr. Moody appears; there is but one empty seat which was kept for the preacher, and he now occupies it. All eyes are upon him. He now stands up; not a stir is heard, every eye is gazing on him, and there is a breathless silence and suspense.

At this moment the usher comes and touches Mr. Moody's shoulder, and

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

hands him a card. Mr. Moody immediately takes his own chair, and places it on a line with the spot on which he is now standing; there is no room elsewhere. The multitude wonders for whom can the chair be so placed; it must be someone very great, a prince, or a lord, perhaps some very rich merchant. There is a little murmur among the audience, and a slight stir on the platform, as Mr. Moody turns round towards a private door on the right, and there is seen our common-looking little friend whom we noticed outside the building in the frieze suit, striving to get his way up to the platform. Mr. Moody takes his hands in both of his, and shakes him warmly over and over again, and a tear falls from his eyes, which seems full of sympathy. Then he places him on his own chair, and begins the meeting by apologizing, and saying: "You must excuse me, my dear friends, but it is my brother George, whom I have not met for years, and he has come hundreds of miles to see me to-day."

So however great the hosts of heaven Jesus will make a place for even the humblest disciple who loves him and will own him as brother.

The Proving of Faith.

One of the methods of our divine Teacher in bringing us into the knowledge of himself is the frequent testing or proving of our faith. Problems are put before us which test our strength in our own eyes and in the eyes of those who observe us; these testings often show us how little we yet know, and set us to serious thinking. If we are true students, they send us on to more patient, thorough study, and with more ardent zeal to reach the highest standards. So, then, in looking at our trials we must not look through tears only. We must not meet them as foes, nor dread them so much as to run away from them in a cowardly spirit. We may "count it all joy when we fall into manifold trials, knowing that the proof of our faith worketh patience"; and if patience has her perfect work, we may have good hope of becoming "perfect, entire, wanting nothing."

Everything of value costs something. A perfect character costs a great deal of patience, but it is worth all it costs. The tests of our faith which God either sends or suffers to come upon us are all directed to prove our secret self; for he desires "truth in the inward parts." He hates a sham. "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness." Some of the most effective tests are the seemingly insignificant ones, and many of them are known only to God and the suffering soul, and cannot have the help of human sympathy.

To settle down, down firmly upon solid rock, where nothing can move us, to find the centre of eternal quiet amid all commotion—can anything be more desirable than this? And it is to this our Father would lead us by the testings of our faith.

How should we know his promises are sure were they not verified to us in fiery experiences? "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you," is true of the Christian life as it was of the possessions of God's people in Canaan. The Lord Jesus has told us of a time that should come upon all the earth to try the souls of men. We seem to be living now in such a time. Financial, social, religious problems are testing thoughtful minds very seriously; these are the provings of our faith in the sovereign Ruler that are apparent to all. But there are secret personal testings in the affairs of God's people, in their experiences of illness, bereavement, losses, with numberless anxieties pertaining to family life.

We may say: "God does not send these trials"; they are the result of our mistakes, our follies, our sins. So in a sense they may be. But the God who cares for the sparrows and numbers the very hairs of our head has not left his children to be the victims even of their own errors—*New York Advocate.*

The Toilet of the Fly.

The toilet of the fly is as carefully attended to as that of the most frivolous of human beings. With a contempt for the looking-glass, he brushes himself up and wobbles his little round head, brimful of vanity, wherever he happens to be. Sometimes, after a long day of dissipation and flirting, with his six small legs and little round body all soiled with syrup and butter and cream, he passes out of the dining room and wings his way to the clean, white cord along which the morning glories climb, and in this retired spot, heedless of the crafty spider who is practicing gymnastics a few feet above him, he proceeds to purify and sweeten himself for the refreshing repose and soft dreams of the balmy summer night so necessary to one who is expected to be early at breakfast.

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

It is a wonderful toilet. Resting himself on his front and middle legs, he throws his hind legs rapidly over his body, bending down his frail wings for an instant with the pressure, then raking them over with a backward motion, which he repeats until they are bright and clean. Then he pushes the two legs along his body under the wings, giving that queer structure a thorough currying, every now and then throwing the legs out and rubbing them together to remove what he has collected from his bodily surface. Next he goes to work upon his van. Resting upon his hind and middle legs, he rises his two forelegs and begins a vigorous scraping of head and shoulders, using his proboscis every little while to push the accumulation from his limbs. At times he is so energetic that it seems as if he were trying to pull his head off; but no fly ever committed suicide. Some of his motions very much resemble pussy at her toilet. It is plain, even to the naked eye, that he does his work thoroughly, for when it is finished he looks like a new fly, so clean and neat has he made himself within a few minutes. The white cord is defiled, but Floppy is himself again, and he bids the morning glories a very good evening.

The Purpose of Affliction.

Afflictions do not spring out of the dust; do not be impatient with them; we need something to soften this hard life. O, if it were all buying, selling, getting gain, outunning one another in a race for wealth in which the racers take no time to record themselves, there would be no places consecrated to floral beauty, no houses built for music, no churches set up for prayer. But affliction helps to keep us right; affliction helps to bring us to our knees. Poverty says: "Think, fool, think."

Affliction opens the Bible at the right places. If you, strong man, with the radiant face and full pocket, were to open the Bible, it would open upside down and at nothing. But you, broken-hearted mother; you, child of sickness; you, orphan and lonely one, your Bible falls open always at the right place. Give me your family Bible and I will tell your history. The Bible of the strong, prosperous, rich man, 'tis like himself; well kept—too well. Hand me yours, man of the broken heart and the tear-stained cheeks and the reddened eye and the furrowed brow. Ah! all marks and thumbings and turnings down and marginal notes and pencil indication—thirty-third Psalm, fourth of Isaiah, a hundred places in Jeremiah, including the Lamentations—why, I need no concordance to this Bible if I want to seek out the promises. I see your guest has been sorrow, and the hospitality you have offered him has been patience. If you would know the value of the Bible in the house, consult those who have used it most, and abide by their sweet reply.—*Joseph Parker, D. D.*

The Story of Missions.

All religions tell one story, of men reaching out their hands for help, but the only religion which tells of God reaching out his hand to men is the religion of Jesus Christ. I have explicit belief in the fall of man, and the redemption of human nature, and that the motive power by which the good news of redemption is to be made effectual is in that love that came down from heaven with the coming of the Son of God. This is the story of missions. It is seen in Francis Xavier, sailing along the coast of India and, in bitterness of soul, crying, "O rock, rock, open for my Master!" and thus touching the heart of the Roman Catholic Church and again kindling in them a thirst for missions.

It is seen in David Livingston, writing in his journal, "O God, when shall the great sore of the world be healed?" It is seen in Henry Martyn, dying alone in Persia, and kindling in the heart of England that love that sent out many like Bishop Heber. And so everywhere—in Bishop Patterson, lying on that heathen shore with the stigma of his Master in the five wounds of his passion, and in the journal of Hannington, "In the heart that is stayed on him is perfect peace." It is seen in those black boys of Uganda, consenting to have the flesh cut from their bones rather than deny Jesus Christ. And where have men learned such love? I believe that, for the most part, they have learned it where St. Augustine learned it—from his mother, where St. Timothy learned it, when he was trained up in the unfeigned faith of his mother.—*Bishop Whipple.*

K. D. C. Pills act in conjunction with K. D. C. where a laxative is required.

The Overwhelmed.

Broken-hearted persons are more numerous than most imagine. They usually hide their sorrows from their neighbors, and often from their best friends. Now and then one may be found who takes pleasure in parading the wounds in his heart, but most men and women who suffer conceal their troubles from the criticizing and unsympathizing gaze of the world. We hear merry laughter and gay songs, and see calm and smiling faces on every side. But many sing to drown the agony within; many faces are wreathed with smiles while their spirits are shrouded in gloom; many laugh outwardly and groan inwardly at the same time.

But the afflicted did not hide from Jesus. They perceived that He understood and sympathized with them, and they flocked around Him and cried after Him.

Almost every day we read in the daily papers of an unfortunate man who has committed suicide, and it is often added that no one knew of any trouble or disappointment which could have caused it; He carried his secret in his own heart until it became so heavy that it broke his heart or dethroned his reason.

"A face may be woeful-white to cover a heart that's aching;
And a face may be full of light over a heart that's breaking."

To all such we recommend the prayer: "From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."—*Advocate*

God's Love.

Human love may change. The friendship of last year has grown cold. The gentleness of yesterday has turned to severity. But it is never thus with God's love. It is eternal. Our experience of it may be variable, but there is no variability in the love. Our lives may change; our consciousness of his love may fade out, but the love clings forever; the gentleness of God abides eternal. "For the mountains shall depart, and hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." There is never a moment, nor any experience in the life of a true Christian, from the heart of which a message may not instantly be sent up to God and back to which help may not instantly come. God is not off in some remote heaven merely. He is not away at the top of the long, steep life-ladder, looking down upon us in serene calm, and watching us as we struggle upward in pain and tears. He is with each one of us on every part of the way. His promise of presence is an eternal present tense: "I am with thee." So "Thou, God, seest me" becomes to the believer a most cheering and inspiring assurance. We are never out of God's sight for a moment. His eye watches each one of us continually, and his heart is in his eye. He comes instantly to our help and deliverance when we are in any need or danger.

He Got the Blessing.

Canon Wilberforce tells a pathetic story illustrating the force of the little word "now." It was of a miner who, hearing the Gospel preached, determined that if the promised blessing of immediate salvation were indeed true, he would not leave the presence of the minister who was declaring it until assured of its possession by himself. He waited, consequently, after the meeting to speak with the minister, and, in his untutored way, said, "Didn't ye say I could have the blessin' now?" "Yes, my friend." "Then pray with me, for I'm not goin' awa' without it." And they did pray, these two men, until the wrestling miner heard silent words of comfort and cheer. "I've got it now!" cried the miner; his face reflecting the joy within; "I've got it now!" The next day a frightful accident occurred at the mines. The same minister was called to the scene, and among the men, dead and dying, was the quivering, almost breathless body of the man who, only the night before, big and brawny, came to him to know if salvation could really be had now for the asking. There was but a fleeting moment of recognition between the two ere the miner's soul took flight; but in that moment he had time to say, in response to the minister's sympathy, "Oh, I don't mind, for I've got it—I've got it—it's mine!" Then the name of this poor man went in the sad list of the "killed." There was no note made of the royal inheritance to which he had but a few hours before come into possession, and all by his believing grip of the word "now."

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Random Readings.

Heart song lives long.

Never forget how sacred a thing honesty is.

God's promise is more sure than man's performance.

If crucified with Christ, you cannot be satisfied with sin.

It lightens a duty to resolve to perform it cheerfully.

Faith is the root of all good works; a root that produces nothing is dead.

Hatred stirreth up strifes, but love covereth all transgressions.—*Proverbs.*

Help others by telling them what God can be to a soul, what he has been to you.

"There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

A righteous act, to possess merit, must be performed with a righteous motive.

Chance opportunities make us known to others, and still more to ourselves.—*La Rochefoucauld.*

It is the height of unthankfulness to forget our hundreds of blessings to think of our two or three crosses.

The religion which draws its supplies from the fountain of divine truth is the most fragrant with heavenly perfumes.

Half the spiritual difficulties that men and women suffer arise from a morbid state of health.—*Henry Ward Beecher.*

What are aims which are at the same time duties? They are at the perfecting of ourselves, the happiness of others.—*Kant.*

God asks for the heart. His gospel appeals to the heart; and the true preachers of the gospel will aim to reach the heart rather than the head.

I have always found that the honest truth of our own mind has a certain attraction for every other mind that loves truth honestly.—*Carlyle.*

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