

"There is a Peace that Cometh after Sorrow."

JESSIE ROSE GATES, IN THE APRIL CENTURY.
"There is a peace that cometh after sorrow."

Of hope surrendered, not of hope fulfilled;
A peace that looketh not upon to-morrow;
But calmly on a tempest that is stilled.

A peace which lives not now in joy's ex-
cesses,
Nor in the happy life of love secure;
But in the unerring strength the heart
possesses

Of conflicts won while learning to endure.
A peace there is, in sacrifice secluded;
A life subdued, from wild passion free;
Tis not the peace which ever Eden brooded,
But that which triumphed in Gethsemane

Dangers of Concession.

The world moves from one extreme to another. Like a ship, it goes on one tack, and then zig-zags ahead on another, making headway on the whole. Sailing too long on one tack, it loses all that it gains. So there are times of expansion in human thought, when we open the mind wide to embrace all that is coming toward it, and ages of contraction when we close the mind around our new material to make sure of it. The last generation has been one of enthusiastic reception of new fact and experience. But unless we sometimes close in upon these things, they will pass on and be lost. The seine has to be closed and drawn, or the fish all escape. So while we cannot but welcome all the open-eyedness of the world and all the open-heartedness of it, there is danger of its becoming so open that nothing is saved. Mere openness becomes often mere emptiness.

Other times have seen belief made as difficult as possible, and our day has seen the revolt against this. We may rejoice that we live and have a part in making belief less difficult. But we need not close our eyes to indications that we may, for all our good intentions, lose as much as we gain. Having made faith rational to a man, you may, without impudence, ask him what he is going to do about it. Conviction has suffered some discount, and respect for other people's convictions has appreciated, until we are in danger of dilettantism, which has been well described as "an incapacity for affirmation."

Rough and angular and assertive as were our fathers' convictions, we may be excused for wondering whether they were not as good as our convictions, which we have tried to make as amiable and reduce as near to a minimum as possible. This is not to say one word in depreciation of the noble effort of our own time, but we need to ask the question whether we have not done injustice to ourselves and to many a cherished belief. It is one thing to hold views for ourselves, and quite another to insist that other people hold them. Our duty toward them is best done by giving them liberty without inflicting on ourselves poverty. In the long run, the world does not thank us for a "mush of concession," which hastens the conclusion of nothing. Heartily as we may have joined in simplifying the demands of Jesus, there is a limit to this process of minimizing things.

There is great danger that the man who believes the least shall come to be considered the normal man and the type of belief, and this catastrophe every thinking man will do his best to avert. We believe in the weak brother but we do not believe that he should rule the community. Willing as never before to help him, we may insist that we shall not help him by coming down to his outfit in either faith or habits. The inevitable result of this is a weak social and spiritual life.

There are two classes of weak brethren: those who want patience and help to get up where their stronger brethren are, and those who can see no millennium save in reducing their stronger brethren to their condition. This is "the millennium of Moab," as Dr. Bushnell calls it. It is one of our sorry experiences to find how much concession on our part some men will take without taking a step farther for themselves. Spiritual poverty must make concessions if the world is to be better, not spiritual richness. And while nowhere as in the service of our Master must we use the motto Noblesse oblige ("Nobility demands noble behavior"), we shall do no service to anybody by parting with our best.

In such matters our duty is to restate our beliefs in terms of the present day, to find a fresh voice for the gospel in every age, to reduce offensive utterances to a minimum, to lop off unnecessary additions to show that they run parallel with the great courses of human need and experience; to discern clearly what are the weightier matters of the law, and to put the emphasis on them. Below this minimum we cannot healthily go. It is one thing to encourage weak faith; it is

another to stimulate capriciousness, and with this last we want nothing to do. Reducing things to "bare essentials" sounds alluring, but "essentials" are just the things which are never "bare." Essentials bloom out into all manner of forms, which we are unwilling to mutilate or cut off; and a faith of bare essentials would be, according to the idea of some people, like a tree which never leaved out. If there is one thing more essential for faith than another, it is that it be rich. It is well for us to be jealous of anything which seems likely to put disabilities on fair-minded people, but equally well for us not to impose upon ourselves the disability of poverty in the utterance of our faith. A faith which is simply a coolly calculated average of faiths, gives out a thin sound which but few will hear, and by which none will be comforted.

A preacher who is manifestly trimming down his every utterance so that the feeblest belief may not be offended, and so that the man in the audience who believes nothing may not be troubled, is thoroughly depressing to everybody. Let a man be sure of love in his own heart, sure that it is conviction, and not whim, which inspires him, and he may preach a full belief and fear not. In this attempt to make belief acceptable, the man who believes the most in the best spirit is the type to follow.

But it is in the Christian life that the danger of minimizing is more visible. Few people do a great deal of thinking, but everybody does a vast amount of living of one sort and another. In order to show that we are not prudish, and that the Christian life may be a pleasant life, we often abdicate positions which the world, spite all its fault-finding with our gloom, yet expects us to maintain, and even hopes we will maintain. One can imagine no worse disaster than that the Prodigal Son, when he came home, should have found that his Father had grown to be the same sort of man that he was. Such a discovery would have killed every upspringing goodness in the soul of the son. His return would have been harder than the far country. Into vastly more confusion than he ever confessed to, is the unbeliever thrown when the Christian goes wrong. The unbeliever may rail at character, but it is the one thing which he respects, after all. His creed, in his better moments, is the character of some nobler man; and when that nobler man goes under, this man's belief is shaken.

Trying to carry our faith jauntily, catering to some worldly person by being flippant about some sacred thing, or jesting over some matter of faith, or dismissing decorum and reverence just to show the world how much we can be like it and yet be Christians, is one of the most sickening things in the world to the unbelieving onlooker. In his heart he despises us. If a man is a Christian, he had better be one right through, and in all companies. If he is a minister, he had better be a minister, and not try to be a man of the world (in the average sense) and a half-fellow-well-met with everybody. If he is a man, this will appear in good season from under any cloth, and in the long run the advantages of being a minister are greater than the advantages of being a little of everything else.

We may freely concede every disagreeable manner, we may freely meet the man of the world, the sinner, and be agreeable, courteous, kind, without any fear of conceding too much; but down in his heart he does not want us to concede any more, and a world of harm is done by our concessions. Phillips Brooks speaks of certain passages of Scripture which are forever robbed of some of their sweetness by flippant jokes or puns upon them which, having once heard, one can never forget. There is a world of this sort of thing which Christian people are forever mistakenly doing, without gaining any esteem, but steadily forfeiting it. The world is sorry when we cease to be Christians, when we forsake our professions, when we cater to what is low, when mountebank tricks are played in the pulpit, or slanting remarks are put into prayers. They will not ask us not to do it; they will even, perhaps applaud when we do; but down underneath they wish we would not.

Concessions are to help, and not to hinder, let us remember this; and there are enough concessions demanded of us nowadays without our running out of our way to make what there is no demand for. All the good things which are wrought by charity, fairness, and broadmindedness, may be attained without the sacrificing of a single self-respect or the lowering of a single ideal. — S. S. Times.

The actions of this life shall be the fate of the next. — Eastern Saying.

What Pastors should do for Converts.

Who has not read with interest and gratitude the weekly reports of revivals which the Telescope has contained for months past? These visitations of the Spirit have been to hundreds of churches and to thousands of souls the beginnings of a better life or a life wholly new. The revived churches have become increasingly active and effective in their organization and work. The souls that have been converted have entered a new world of thought, motive, and aspiration. They have found new fellowships in the church of Christ. They have been the recipients of new blessings, and will meet new duties and opportunities for service to their fellows which they have never before known.

What is the duty of pastors to this large class of converts? Certainly their new relations to the Church justify large expectations of wise counsel and helpfulness. Shall these expectations be realized? Shall these new members find the help in the Church they need and expect? This will depend largely, the pastor who discharges his obligation to the new recruits in the Lord's army will—

1. Exercise a personal watchfulness over them. He will seek to know the employment, associations, home influences, personal habits, etc., of the lambs of his flock. By personal acquaintance and personal attention he will by direct counsel and public teaching seek to have them become settled in their faith, and intelligent and consistent in Christian living. These ends are rarely reached apart from the personal influence and helpfulness of the true and wakeful pastor.

2. Such a pastor will maintain such an attitude toward the young disciples of the Church that they will freely seek his counsel and help. They will regard him as a friend in whom they can fully confide. They will go to him with their troubles. They will consult him as to their employment, as to their associations, and their work in the church. If properly encouraged they will soon come to take all those things that perplex them to their pastor with the greatest freedom. Who has a right to be more familiar terms respecting Christian living than the pastor and those he has been instrumental in leading to Christ? Where this intimacy is judiciously cultivated it will surely yield a good fruitage, just as a proper intimacy between father and son, mother and daughter, may lead to mutual esteem and confidence between parents and children.

3. The faithful pastor will be anxious about the thorough spiritual and intellectual culture of the new converts under his care. He will be concerned about the proper food for mind and heart. He will want them to grow. Therefore he will be concerned about the character of their reading. He will follow up his revival campaign with a campaign for the Religious Telescope. He will plan this part of the work with great care. He will make a systematic canvass. He will by advice and suggestion show those who may have only a small income how they may practice enough self-denial to secure a religious paper. There are many young people who would take the Telescope if asked to do so. They need it, and they should not be overlooked.

Then it will be profitable to publicly bring the matter of good reading before the people. In this way many may be led to provide themselves with wholesome and instructive home reading which would not be personally solicited to do so. Pastors cannot more effectively serve their new members and the local church than by emphasizing the importance of pure and helpful home reading.

If they will do this, and will then make a faithful personal canvass, the denominational paper might have many new names added to its lists within a month. The new converts may soon be made earnest and loyal workers in the Church if they take and read the church literature. Otherwise they will never be. They will not be interested in that of which they know nothing. Therefore, let pastors feel the magnitude of the opportunity for present and permanent usefulness in getting young Christians to read the periodicals of the Church.

There are, of course, many other things faithful pastors will do for young converts. Their preaching will be plain, earnest, and warm from the heart. They will be careful not to put the spiritual provender too high for the lambs to reach it. Then, too, it should not be forgotten that if the lambs are well cared for the other members of the flock are not likely to be neglected. If the attention given to the least and weakest be special, those who are older and stronger are likely to be fully provided for. No one ever heard of a church where the lambs were wisely nurtured that the sheep suffered for food or care.

Only so much needs to be done for converts that none of them fall away. That much certainly needs to be done. — Rel. Telescope.

How God Helps Us.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

"God is my helper" is a truth as old as the Bible, and confirmed by myriads of human experiences. But it is important for us to know how our loving Father helps us; for we may expect things that He never grants, and lose things that He offers to give us. There is a right way and a wrong way of looking at God's deities; the one sets us to murmuring and complaining, the other gives us a wonderful uplift.

If we looked at God as always wise and always loving and always holy, we should know, in the first place, that He often helps us by a sharp discipline that tries us most terribly. It helps the grass on my lawn in summer to put the mower over it, and it helps my grapevines to apply the pruning knife. Abraham came down from the mountain where he was told to sacrifice Isaac a stronger man than when he went up. What a train of troubles overtook Joseph from the time when he was put into the pit until he was put into the prison! By and by he looked his rascally brothers right in their faces, and said, "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." As head winds make a steamer's fire burn more briskly under the boilers, so adversity often drives a true Christian ahead in his spiritual life. Everything that makes you and me purer, humbler, braver, stronger, or holier is a mighty help; and if we keep the eye of faith open we shall see a loving God behind the pruning knife and behind the furnace of affliction.

What an immense lot of overloaded people there are in this world! We can see it in their careworn faces; and each one thinks his burden is the heaviest. There is a certain kind of care that is wise; a man who has no forethought for the future is a sluggard or a fool. The apostle had no reference to a wise thoughtfulness for the future when he said, "Cast all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." That much-perverted verse is accurately translated in the Revised Version:

"Casting all your anxiety on Him, because He careth for you." Now just what our almighty and all-loving Father offers is to help us carry our loads. He who watched over the infant deliverer of Israel in his cradle of rushes, who sent his ravens to feed Elijah by the brookside, who protected Daniel in the den, and kept Paul calm and cheerful in the hurricane, is the very One who says to us, "Roll your anxieties over on me, for I have you on My heart!" To do this requires faith. When God says, "Give over to Me what will break you down, and I will help you through," He puts our faith to a pretty severe test. As the sinner must accept Jesus Christ as the burden bearer for his sins before he can be saved, we must accept God's offer to lighten our loads by putting Himself, as it were, into our hearts and under the burdens. He then becomes our strength. His grace becomes sufficient for the hard duty to be done, the tough conflict to be fought, the sacrifice to be encountered, or the trial to be endured. This is a supernatural process. It actually means that the divine Spirit comes into us, and imparts divine strength just as much as the nutritious element in our daily bread imparts strength to our bodies. The "Everlasting Arm" is no less a support because it is an unseen Arm; but we can feel it. My brother, have you never felt the lift of that almighty Arm when you came up victorious out of a great temptation, or calm out of a great sorrow, or strong out of a heavy "weight of afflictions"? God helped you.

Those who know how to use God's help are the calm Christians who possess their souls in quietness. Work never hurts us. A stiff fight does not exhaust us. It is worry that frets and fevers us. It acts like an ague on the body and leaves us weak and wretched. Athletic old Paul, who fought beasts at Ephesus and bloody Neros at Rome, who was a "Board of Foreign Missions" in himself, and had the care of all the churches on him, never chafed his great soul into a worry for a single moment. "Be anxious for nothing, brethren!" was his cheerful counsel to his comrades. He knew how to let God help him do God's work. He knew whom he believed, and worry would have been suicide. Be assured of this, all ye pastors, teachers, and workers of all kinds, that if you and I work on God's lines, He is bound to help us. If we attempt to work on our own lines and for our own selfish purposes, we shall be rebuked as Peter was when his Master said to him, "Put up thy sword into the sheath!" When Peter drew the sword of the Spirit at the time of Pentecost the divine help came,

and thousands of souls were converted. Let us lay hold of God's work with a steady and a stalwart trust, and all the time be hearing Him say, "In Me is thy help." — New York Evangelist.

Holiness.

These days we hear of holiness preachers and holiness meetings. The fact is, every preacher of the Gospel is a holiness preacher; the Gospel is the gospel of holiness. Every Gospel meeting is a holiness meeting. Holiness is wholeness; it embraces the whole of experimental and practical religion. Holiness embraces the whole of experience and practice from conviction and repentance up to perfect love and constant joy. Holiness is not a branch of Christianity—it is the whole of it. It is not the goal at which Christians should aim; but the atmosphere in which they should live. It is not a supplement to regeneration, but it begins in it. By Christians it is to be kept rather than sought, to be practiced rather than professed. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord, and yet every child of God, however humble and imperfect, shall see the Lord. — Holston Methodist.

Beginning the Day.

Our early hours tune all the rest of the day. Broken, discordant, or disfigured days are possible largely because we have not learned to protect their beginnings. We trust to chance to get through the day. Against such dangers a devotional habit is the surest and most natural protection. An appeal to our own experience reveals that only as we have made it a rule to pray have we prayed effectively. To respect this rule rather than our moods is the only guarantee of secure and steady living. We may say as little as we please about our devotional habits, but a Christian life which can rely upon itself is sure to have them. There is a sustained power in the life which carefully observes its devotions, and nowhere do we need them more than at the beginning of each mysterious new day, with all its unknown dangers and blessings. — S. S. Times.

Random Readings.

The sunniest of lives have seasons of shadow. — Lutheran Observer.

What men call a failure may often be what angels call a success. — The Evangelist.

Strength alone knows conflict. Weakness is below even defeat, and is born vanquished. — Madame Swetchine.

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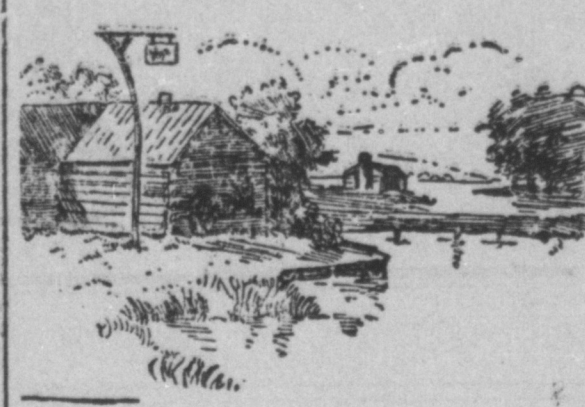
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