

October.

October is the treasure of the year,
And all the months pay tribute to her
store;
The fields and orchards still their tribute
bear,
And fill her brimming coffers more and
more.
But she, with youthful lavishness,
Spends all her wealth in gaudy dress,
And decks herself in garments bold
Of scarlet, purple, red, and gold.

She heedeth not how swift the hours fly,
But smiles and sings her happy life
along;
She only sees above a shining sky
She only hears the breeze' voice in song.
Her garments trail the woodlands through,
And gather pearls of early dew
That sparkle, till the roguish sun
Creeps up and steals them every one.

But what cares he that jewels should be
lost,
When all of Nature's bounteous wealth
is hers?
Though princely fortunes may have been
their cost,
Not one regret her calm demeanor stirs.
Whole-hearted, happy, careless, free,
She lives her life out joyously.
Nor cares when Frost stalks o'er her
way
And turns her anuburn locks to gray.

—Paul Laurence Dunbar.

Estimating Values.

The merchant who habitually pays too much for his goods, and the dealer who sells for too little, whatever their original capital, will end in insolvency. He who both pays too much and sells for too little shortens the time of the journey to the same precipice. The ruin of most business houses and of nearly all banks that fail, is traceable to improper estimates of values. He who disposes of his wares on credit, to purchasers who are unable or unwilling to pay, is entrapped by the same error. Hence it was wisely said by one of the greatest of merchants, the first act of a business man is to determine the worth of what he has, and the second, to estimate the value of what is offered him in exchange.

The same principle applies to religious matters; if it were otherwise our Lord would not have been able to illustrate spiritual truth by so many commercial symbols. The man who built his house upon the sand overestimated its value as a foundation. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." The thoughtless who fancy that without consecration and divine help they can become Christians, are instructed to "count the cost," and to consider the transcendent question, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

If the Christian judges wisely he will count worthless everything unfavorable to his religious life, and everything helpful to it, of value. The price of discipleship is the renunciation of everything incompatible with it, hence the figure of "the pearl of great price," to buy which a man went and sold all that he had. The young man on whom Jesus looked with love had a great fortune, but when the test came he esteemed his fortune more highly than the eternal life.

A poor man becomes a Christian, finds his consolation in the love of God, the service of Christ, the communion of saints, the work of the Church, and the hope of everlasting life. By economy, frugality, and prudence he accumulates money. Placing an extraordinary estimate upon society, he conforms to its ways; his expenses increase, his time is absorbed; he is spoken of as a great merchant, a man of wealth. Hearing himself compared with others and determining to be the first of his class, he stakes his spiritual life on the result of the game of competition which he is playing. Certainly he has deceived himself. His estimate of values is not God's estimate nor His judgment of truth. His children, surrounded by luxury, early become dissipated or frivolous; to his pastor he never speaks of their spiritual state. Absorbed in business, he does not mention the things of the kingdom to them: the day comes when the son or the daughter contracts a matrimonial alliance with the most worldly of his acquaintances, yet his estimate of values has so changed that he is inflated with satisfaction. He receives the congratulations of his friends, and is much happier than he would be had his children experienced the blessing of conversion. Thus he goes on, his judgment of commercial values sagacious, his estimate of spiritual things such as has bankrupt him if called to account of his stewardship.

Churches and ministers fall into the same snare. Such is the condition of the minister who would be made happier to see a distinguished citizen take a pew in his church, than to discover that, as the result of his preaching, public sinner were crying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Such is he who regards the size of his congregation as the test of his popularity, and will

maintain it at every cost, preaching only those things which will please the people. Such indeed is he who preaches without regard to the needs of the people, merely to gratify his own intellectual tastes.

A whole denomination may pass into a similar state; for what is a denomination but an aggregation of individuals whose spirit is its spirit? History already records several denominations which, in their beginning, sought only the salvation of men, their genuine reconstruction, and their spiritual edification. In the lifetime of a single human being they have departed so far from their original principles that numbers, wealth, and secular learning are their chief objects.

For all these things they are paying too much. They are on the highroad to bankruptcy, and it behooves every minister, parent, or individual Christian to ask himself whether he is placing a proper estimate upon earthly values, and upon his spiritual possessions and aspirations.

Since where the estimate is wrong, the more industrious, vigorous, and faithful the worker, the more certain the destruction. The more goods one sells at less than cost, the more he squanders his substance; the more he pays out more than worth, the more he reduces his assets. The more of this world a Christian has, unless it be held subordinate to the things of the kingdom of Christ, the poorer he is in spiritual wealth. As thousands upon thousands have thought themselves solvent in business, yet were upon the verge of bankruptcy, so countless thousands imagine themselves spiritually rich, but they are paupers in the sight of God. "And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked?"

These are the sentiments for the time, for the Christian preacher, and for the earnest Christian worker. Not the mutations of empires, the assassination of kings or queens, the election of governors or senators, nor even the prosecution, solely or chiefly, of any single reform.

He who adds a true convert to the Church, upholds all good things, and saves a soul from death.—Chris. Advocate.

The Privilege of Service.

The master passion which Jesus sought to arouse in the hearts of his disciples was a passion for service. He found that they were intruding like politicians for place and power, they were disputing among themselves which of them should be the greatest, and he told them that the way to greatness was the path of service. "Whoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Service was the privilege which he himself coveted, for the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and this is the privilege which he offers to all of his disciples.

Only by service can we come into harmony with God's plan. There is only one comprehensive plan, the plan of God which appears in the creation and preservation of the universe, and nothing is of value except as it serves some useful purpose in that plan. In the material universe we see harmony, because everything falls into its place in the comprehensive plan of God and serves the ends for which it was created. But in human society there is much discord and trouble, and it all arises from one cause, a refusal to serve God, a refusal to come into harmony with his moral plan for the government of his children. All things work together for good to them that serve God, for service is love in action. Such persons find that they are working with, rather than against, God's perfect plan. But on the other hand those who refuse to serve put themselves out of harmony with God and his way of doing things, and by so doing they find more and more, or if they do not discover the fact it is nevertheless the case, that all things work against them. Things do not come their way because they are going the wrong way. The final prediction of ungodly men arises from the sad fact that God cannot use them.

Only by service can we attain to harmonious development. In the lower orders of creation development arises from the harmony of the individual with its environment. And it is only by service that God's human children can come into harmony with their environment. We see this in material things. This is a work-day world, an admirable place for service, and one of Nature's beatitudes is, "Blessed are the workers, for they shall inherit the earth." And religious history from the time of the Apostles onward tells us that the great men of Christ's Kingdom are those who consented to serve God in their day and generation.

Only by service can we bring about the perfect order of society. There

are not many sayings about heaven which we can free entirely from figurative drapery and say, "I shall find it to be just so," but one saying of the Revelator states in a few literal words the fundamental reason of the perfection which makes heaven the home of perfect harmony and complete happiness: "And his servants shall serve him." This is why Jesus put into his model prayer the petition: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Perfect and universal service would bring about perfect society on earth, and in no other way can it be brought about.

And it need hardly be said that only by service can we become one with Christ. It is true that we are saved by faith in Christ, but faith is merely instrumental, for it is not the procuring cause of our salvation. We are saved by likeness to Christ. In God's plan of salvation the redeemed are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. The new birth is the beginning of this conformation, but only by Christian service can one grow into the image of Christ. The Jews took knowledge of Christ's disciples that they had been with Jesus. By engaging in his service for three years they had become identified with him, not in a merely official, but in a vital way; they were recognized to be the disciples of Christ by being like him in certain characteristics of speech, conduct and character. This is the method of discipleship. Jesus said to men then, and he says to them now, "Follow me;" that by becoming one with him in daily service they may grow into his likeness.

What the Church needs to-day, and the world, is service. Here is something in which there is not only room at the top, but at the bottom and in all the grades between. Jesus once said, "Be not many masters." The world does not need many, but it needs many servants. Let the inquiry of every Christian be not, "What can I receive from God in gifts," but, "How can I be used of God in service;" and the gifts will come in so far as they are needed to qualify for service.—The Advance.

How He Answered Infidelity.

An instance of a blind man's familiarity with the Bible, which ought to bring the blush to some cheeks that enclose eyes flashing with light, was related by Robert E. Speer in one of his Northland addresses.

Last year we had a meeting with some Korean Christians who had known the Gospel but a few years. I said to them: "Now, you know that not everybody in America believes in this Gospel. The majority of the people in our country are not followers of Jesus, and as to this Bible, there are a great many who do not believe in it; and some day they will come here and they will tell you these things. Is your faith in Christ and this Bible dependent on your belief that a great nation, mightier and wiser than you, believes in Christ and the Bible? Or does it rest on other grounds? What will you say when men come and question your faith in Christ and his word?"

There was a young man sitting down on the floor, who had been blind from his early childhood, with the marks of the disease that had made him blind all over his face. He raised his head and said:

"I will tell you what I would say. I would answer him in the words of the nineteenth and twentieth verses of the fourth chapter of Acts: 'Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.'"

I said, "Do you know all your Bible as well as that?" He could not read, and they have no raised-letter Bibles in Corea.

"Well," said the blind man, "I know my Bible pretty well."

I asked, "Can you tell me what is in the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel of Luke?"

"Certainly," he said; "that's the chapter that has the parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son."

"Do you know in what chapter of Matthew is the feeding of the five thousand?"

"Certainly," he answered; "it's in the fourteenth."

I thought it was the twelfth, but I turned to the fourteenth and found that the blind man had located it correctly.

He had learned all he knew about Christ's life from his friends, who sat on the floor of the little room in which he lived, and read to him, translating out of an old Chinese Bible the whole life of Christ.

I asked him what he liked best of all.

"Oh," he replied, "I like the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John, that

tells the story of the blind man to whom Christ restored sight."

I asked him what he looked forward to most.

"Well," he said, "I look forward most to Christ's meeting me at the gates of that Beulah Land. I wouldn't dare go up to see the Father alone, a blind man from Corea, but I shall wait at the gate until Christ comes and takes my hand and leads me up to his Father and mine."

I don't know when I was so rebuked as to my own knowledge of the Bible as by that poor, blind Korean, who had been less than three years a disciple of Christ.

The Gentleness of Jesus.

It was gentleness, not weakness. It was that calm sweetness of disposition and manner which illustrates the kindly self-control of a strong, masterful spirit; not the shrinking, timid uncertainty of temper and behavior which resembles gentleness because it lacks something of the power of self-assertion. It was entirely consistent with sturdiness of conviction, positiveness of speech, and boldness of action. It was exhibited not only towards our Lord's friends, but also towards his opponents. It was especially noticeable in his treatment of all who came to him in fear or doubt or sorrow.

Let those who sometimes suppose gentleness to be a tame, insipid virtue, make careful study of it as seen in the character of Jesus. They will learn to admire it. They will be impelled to cultivate it. They will perceive it to be the fruitful source of true and mighty power. When we understand that one is gentle, as Jesus was, because he can afford to be; because, apart from the moral aspect of the matter, he realizes that he is strong enough in the highest sense to dispense with bluster, we feel that he has attained to a lofty and honorable level of character and life.

Then, when the time comes for righteous indignation of soul—as come it does now and then—and for vigor, incisive speech in the support of the right or condemnation of the wrong, then the very contrast between one's customary gentleness and his temporary fierceness adds immensely to the effect of the latter. If such a gentle spirit can be wrought up to such a pitch, we say, How grave the cause must be! We never have known men or women more intense in their opinions, or more unflinching and potential in their conduct and influence than some of those who have most closely resembled Christ in gentleness of disposition and manner.

Gentleness is a characteristic excellence of the truly great. It also is one of the greatest of excellences. Perhaps no other is so commonly associated with Jesus in our thought. Nor is the endeavor to attain to any other more difficult or profitable. Happy is the home, the office, the factory, the school, where gentleness like that of Jesus reigns.—Young Man.

Who Wears a Crown?

While listening to an address recently on the subject of a new day in the calendar, the day when Jesus should come and be crowned, I shut my eyes and dreamed. It seemed as if when we accepted Jesus Christ as our Saviour we put him on the throne of our lives—crowned him. We rejoice over the change that comes into our lives by reason of making Jesus king and ruler of our lives. But by and by we neglect Bible study or morning or evening prayer, and we are tempted and we fall, and he lifts us up. But we fall again and again, and allow, through spiritual carelessness, some sinful habit to fasten on our lives, some selfishness, some fleshly lust. And Jesus is king no more, but our Saviour still. Sorrowfully, with pain like unto that he endured on Calvary, he hands us back the crown; we take it and place it on our own heads, this crown we gave to Jesus. But he never leaves us nor forsakes us. Our Saviour he remains until we deliberately reject him, but not our king, not the keeper of our hearts and lives. If we only trusted him to keep that which he saves by obeying him, the kingdom he told about would be much nearer than it is to-day.

Where is the crown to-day that you gave to Jesus in the days gone by? Are you wearing it? What caused him to give it back to you? Think soberly a few minutes. Pray over the matter when you arise in the morning for several days. He'll take it back so gladly if you give your allegiance to him again, and ask him daily to keep you.

Assurance.

An aged saint who was near her end remarked to a Scotch minister that she knew her Saviour would never leave her to perish. The minister said:

"But suppose he did not keep his promise, and you were lost?"

The good woman who knew "whom she believed" promptly replied that in that case he would be a greater loser than herself.

"What do you mean by that?" was asked.

She rejoined, "It is true that I would lose my soul; but God would lose his honor and glory if he were not true."

This it is to have perfect assurance; perfect faith in his promises. The redeemed of the Lord may find reason to doubt their nearest and dearest, may have abundant cause to mistrust even their own selves, but they know he cannot fail.—Anon.

Looking Up.

Did you ever notice, on a crowded street, how one man by looking upward can make the whole multitude stop and look up? That is only curiosity to begin with; but if they see something worth looking up at, curiosity gives place to interest. Just so if your eyes are always looking to Jesus and his brightness is on your face, others will look too. Let it be only from curiosity at first, there is something worth looking at in Jesus, and some who looked first simply because you did, may never cease to look. No one can tell how much help we can give struggling humanity simply by having our faces in the right direction, simply by living good, clean, holy lives. . . . It is our glorious prerogative as we pass by to cast shadows of blessing on men.—Rev. Geo. A. Paul.

Nothing Hid From God.

A rich landlord once cruelly oppressed a poor widow. Her son, a little boy of eight years, saw it. He afterwards became a painter, and painted a life-likeness of the dark scene. Years afterwards, he placed it where the man saw it. He turned pale, trembled in every joint, and offered a large sum to purchase it, that he might put it out of sight. Thus, there is an invisible painter drawing on the canvas of the soul a life-likeness reflecting correctly all the passions and actions of our spiritual history on earth. Eternity will reveal them to every man. We must all meet our earth life again; whether it has been good or evil.

Going back is sometimes a dangerous business. It may prove disastrous to others as well as to ourselves. In certain mountain passes of Austria are found sign-boards bearing, in German, the words "Return forbidden." These roads are so narrow and precipitous that there is not room for two carriages abreast; therefore, to attempt to retrace one's path might bring disaster upon one's self and upon those coming after. Once having started there, you must keep straight on until you have reached your destination. To-day's pressing duties call us forward, not backward. There are others coming after; we must push ahead for their sakes and for our own. Austria is not the only place where there is need of the warning, "Return forbidden."—Charles Gallaudet Trumbull.

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