

Consecration.

Laid on Thy altar, O, my Lord divine,
Accept my gift this day, for Jesus' sake,
I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine,
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make.

But now I bring within my trembling hand
This will of mine, a thing that seemeth small,
But only Thou, dear Lord, canst understand
How when I yield Thee this I yield mine all.

Hidden therein Thy searching eye can see
Struggles of passion, visions of delight,
And all that I love or am or faint would be
Deep loves, fond hopes, and longings infinite.

It has been wet with tears and dimmed
With sighs,
Clinged in my grasp till beauty it hath none;
Now from my footstool, where it varnished lies,
The prayer ascends, "May Thy will be done."

Take it, O, my Father, ere my courage fail,
And merge it so in Thine own will that I
If in some desperate hour my cries prevail,
And Thou give back my gift, it may have been.

So changed, so purified, so fair, have grown
So one with Thee, so filled with peace divine.
I may not know or feel it as my own;
But, gaining back my will, may find it Thine.

—The Watchman.

Christianity in the Home.

It has been said that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." If this is so, then how important that that hand should be a consecrated hand. The hand that rocks the cradle inculcates into the mind of the child that instinctive affection for home which is secondary to no other motive force in the world. Home is the surest institution on this earth for the perpetuation of the moral and noble elements of the human race, by means of which society and nations are kept up to that standard which exalts. How essential then to maintain in the home the highest and purest spiritual atmosphere and how can this be done except by a thorough exemplification of real Christian life in the home?

What do we find? Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless the fact that true Christian piety of life is not the rule but rather the exception in our homes. We find instead a greater forgetfulness of the different Christian virtues and a greater absence of those spiritual fruits than what would naturally be looked for in a Christian home. The close familiarity which constant association engenders seems to be in some way productive of selfishness on the part of one member of the family towards another. Each other's feelings are ignored and rights are disregarded, while courtesy and etiquette would procure for strangers kindness and attention. Familiarity and the knowledge of each other's faults and frailties seem to deprive the members in the average Christian family of that thought and consideration for one another that a sincere application of the teachings of Christ should provide. For these reasons, to be a true follower of Christ and a consistent Christian in the home calls for more sacrifice, more patient unselfishness, and more genuine spiritual grace than what is required in almost any other surroundings. It is easier to be a Christian almost anywhere else than at home, comparatively speaking. Why is it that in almost every household may be found some member or members unconvinced? Simply because that part of the household whose names are on the records of the church of Christ forget to exemplify in the home the character of Christ. Satan is constantly making great inroads on the sacred hallowedness of home life. For this reason it is more than ever important to incorporate into our family life pure and simple Christian piety. What with the up-to-date apartment houses and the dwellings with modern improvements and conveniences, where the homely handwork and loving toil which in our ancestors' days supplied all the necessities and all the comforts have been supplanted by machinery, by gas and by electricity, by dumb waiters, speaking tubes, press buttons, and hired help of the lowest order of intelligence, it is a question whether the word home is not losing its original significance. Home is now being supplanted by beautifully arranged, mechanically contrived, conveniently equipped eating and sleeping quarters, each member of the household having his own special duties in the world and no time for family society; the fathers in their daily work, the mothers in their "societies," the boys and girls in their "clubs," and so on. What a dreary "home" is a that will be where no patient, loving mother's hand as a rule, the wrinkles will provide

the good things, and where no sweet mother's voice gives courage or comfort! Let Christians then cherish the precious privilege which is theirs in the home life; let us live out in the home the religion of Jesus Christ. Let the home be in reality that hallowed place where is fostered and inspired the desire for that highest and noblest of all professions—the following of the lowly Jesus. The home is the one place on earth where love most nearly resembles the love of God. The true home is the nearest illustration of the relation which exists between the inhabitants of heaven.

The kingdom of Christ should so dominate in our homes that every Christian home the land over would become a hotbed of spiritual life, where would be nursed into full growth hearts, intellects, and bodies sanctified and consecrated to the service of Christ. Individuals from such homes, coming together in business, in society, and in politics, would be impelled by a unanimous instinct to adopt such plans, transact such affairs, and adopt such laws as would primarily glorify the name and cause of Christ and elevate public morals and raise a high religious standard for society.

Let the responsibility for creating such homes be laid upon all. The owner of the palatial mansion as well as the humble tenant of the thatched cottage, and the entire gamut of intervening classes of society alike ought to feel under obligation to incorporate into their homes that sweet disposition, that lovely character, that pure life, that spiritual atmosphere, and that unselfish devotion so completely realized in the person and life of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."—R. R. G. S., in The Star.

Good Testimony to the Truth of the Bible.

The Word of God rests upon an impregnable foundation of evidence. Subterranean explorations and the discovery of ancient ruins are constantly adding external testimony to the genuineness of the word of prophecy. The actual condition of the sacred places of Old Testament times indicates a perfect literal fulfillment of the prophecy concerning them. It is a strong line of evidence, and tends to strengthen one's faith in the inspiration and inerrancy of God's work when all the facts are brought in.

The 'Record of Christian Work tells the story of a colonel in the Turkish army calling upon Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, the venerable missionary in Constantinople, and inquiring what proof he could give that the Bible is what it is claimed to be—the word of God. Doctor Hamlin, learning that the officer was familiar with the region of the Euphrates, inquired of the Turkish officer, "Were you ever in Babylon?" to which he replied, "Yes, and that reminds me of a peculiar experience I had there. I am very fond of sport, and, having heard that the ruins of Babylon abound in game, I determined to go there for a week's shooting. Knowing that it was not considered safe for a man to be there except in the company of several others—and money being no object to me I engaged a sheik with his followers to accompany me for a large sum. We reached Babylon and pitched our tents. A little before sundown I took my gun and strolled out to have a look around. The holes and caverns among the mounds which cover the ruins are infested with game, which, however, is rarely seen except at night. I caught sight of one or two animals in the distance, and then turned my steps toward our encampment, intending to begin my sport as soon as the sun had set. What was my surprise to find the men striking the tents. I went to the sheik and protested most strongly. I had engaged him for a week, and was paying him most handsomely, and here he was starting off before our contract had scarcely begun.

"Nothing I could say, however, would induce him to remain. 'It isn't safe,' he said, 'no mortal flesh dare stay here after sunset. In the dark, ghosts, goblins, ghuls, and all sorts of things come out of the holes and caverns, and whoever is found here is taken off by them and becomes one of themselves.' Finding I could not persuade him, I said, 'Well, as it is, I'm paying you more than I ought to, but if you'll stay I'll double it.' 'No,' he said, 'I couldn't stay for all the money in the world. No mortal flesh has ever seen the sun go down on Babylon and lived to tell the tale. But I want to do what is right by you. We'll go off to a place about an hour distant and come back at daybreak.' And go they did and my sport had to be given up."

"As soon as he had finished," said Doctor Hamlin, "I took my Bible, and read from the 13th chapter of Isaiah: 'And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there; but the wild beasts of the desert shall be there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.'"

"That's it exactly," said the Turk when I had finished, 'but that's history you have been reading.' " "No," answered Doctor Hamlin, "it's prophecy. Come, you're an educated man. You know that the Old Testament was translated into Greek about three hundred years before Christ." He acknowledged that it was. "And the Hebrew was given at least two hundred years before that?" "Yes." "Well, wasn't this written when Babylon was in its glory, and isn't it prophecy?" "I'm not prepared to give you an answer now," he replied, "I must have time to think it over." It was an artless but convincing proof of the truthfulness of God's Word.—Rel. Telescope.

The Care For To-morrow.

Everything difficult in life is met with far greater success when the duties of each day are taken up in their natural order. Anxiety as to the future is not consistent with a just view of God's superintending care. To neglect that which belongs to the day and become absorbed in future services is therefore not wise. When this habit is fixed, we are prone either to choose without regard to God's will, or to attempt present burdens in our own strength. There are few persons whose daily lives could not be improved at this point. We have need to learn yet the lesson that the best work, however inconsequent it may seem, is that which comes to us in God's appointment, and is performed at the time which His providence indicates.

Christ had a perfect ideal in His mind of the work which ought to be done in each particular day. He was fully able to meet that perfect ideal. All strain to compass the task of to-morrow was foreign to Him. He said: "Take therefore no thought for to-morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." He exemplified all this in His own blessed life. How did He observe this rule? In any hard Pharisaical manner? Was to-morrow an utter blank in His thought? We cannot suppose this, if Jesus lived upon earth, a man in all His beliefs, interested in human pursuits, and full of His official work to be accomplished at Jerusalem. He communed with Moses and Elias respecting His future. To-morrow was in His mind, but it was not to hinder, but rather to stimulate, the activities of the present. In all this He was our perfect example. A proper regard for our future is always consistent with the work of each day, and always helpful to it.

Our peril is often in an unlawful anxiety concerning the things of to-morrow. The experienced Christian knows how great this peril is. He feels this to be His weakness, and is often sorry that his power for usefulness is in this way taken from him. The all-perfect One was free from this disability. We are always subject to it. The danger will be best averted if we imitate Him. But to do this successfully we must dwell in Him and be loyal to Him.

Spiritual food we must have "day by day," if we would be strong in God. To anticipate some special religious feast in the future, some holy convocation of the saints on the morrow, without drawing from the supplies from this one day through which we are passing, will be only to reverse the divine order. These promised blessings can only become real when we act our part well in the living present. There is, then, a preparation for future good. The heart has an appetite to receive spiritual nourishment when it has been all along the precious days engaged in right living. It is suicidal to all vital religion to live in the present a life of self-indulgence, to neglect daily prayer or God's word, thinking that in the future we will attend to spiritual matters. However rich the opportunities may hereafter be, we can never become through them what we might have been, if we had not constantly failed through all our previous history.

Anything that robs us of the heavenly manna of this day is to be avoided.

God's order is in all things the best. "To-day, if ye will hear his voice," is the most suggestive Scripture. He has a blessing for everyone to-day in the closet, at the family altar, in acts of ministrations unto others, in manly endeavor to obey the golden rule of the Gospel, in hourly watchfulness against secret pride, in habitual mindfulness while engaged in earthly service of that spiritual realm which is out of sight, but which is more real than anything in this visible universe. May we follow our divine Lord in all things, especially in this, His word: "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day, for the night cometh, when no man can work."

The Best to Be.

A man of wonderful power was made by overhearing the casual remark, "The world has never yet seen what God can do through a thoroughly consecrated man." It was the making of him. The best education, the best machinery, the best government, the best politics, are yet to be born. All these are of man's devising. May it not equally be that the best understanding of the word, the greatest aggressiveness of the Church, the finest conceptions of Christian living, the highest conformity to the revealed will of Christ, the most generous giving, the highest illustration of manliness, the life that has in it the most of the Spirit of Christ, is yet to be seen in the world? We are to grow up not to Elijah or John, but, passing them far by, we are to grow up into Him who is our head, even Christ. That aim will help to beget the finest life. It is assuredly true that a widespread belief that the best life is not possible in these days will tend to create a race of small-sized men. Jonathan Edwards in his diary has these words: "If there could be in the world at one time only one good man, supremely devoted to God, resolved, that I would so live as to be the good man who should live in my age." Out of the aim to live the highest possible life there came a life of great intellectual and moral beauty.

The lives of good men in the past can be of vast help to us, but they must not be allowed to weigh us down. Let us not feel that the living and tender God loves the nineteenth century after Christ, with its enlarging opportunities and obligations, less than the nineteenth century before Christ. God is not moving away from His own world. We do not need a primitive piety revived, but a piety of this age suited for the age, moved by the Spirit of Jesus, bringing all things into subjection to His will, endeavoring to usher in the kingdom of righteousness. We cannot take a moral census, dividing men into men of the number one grade and number two grade. But we may fix it deep in our hearts that there is no reason why God, when He looks at men, may not find in the men now living the finest characters that have ever walked the earth. Let us not dishonor God or lower the ideals of the race by thinking that the world has seen its best men and women, and that there remains for us only a narrowing horizon. God has better things in store for us. Each good man may be a better man, each better man may be the best man, and ever the conception of that which is best may be widening.

"And ah, for a man to arise in me, That the man I am may cease to be."—The Examiner.

In The Desert With God.

In these days of hurry and bustle we find ourselves face to face with a terrible danger, and it is this: no time to be alone with God. The world, in these last days, is running fast; we live in what is called 'the age of progress,' and 'you know we must keep pace with the times.' So the world says. But this spirit of the world has not confined itself to the world. It is, alas! to be found among the saints of God. And what is the result? The result is, no time to be alone with God, and this is immediately followed by no inclination to be alone with God. And what next? Surely the question does not need an answer. Can there be any condition more deplorable than the condition of a child of God who has no inclination to be alone with his Father?

This "desert life," as many call it, is of an importance that cannot be overvalued; and as if with a trumpet we would sound it in the ears of brethren. Let us turn to the pages of God's book; for we can turn nowhere else if we are seeking light on this or any other subject. On scanning its precious pages we find that the men of God—God's mighty men—were those who had been in "the school of God," as it has well been called; and His school was simply this: "In the desert alone with Himself." It was there they got to their teaching. Far moved from the din and bustle of

the haunts of men, distant alike from human eye and ear, there they met alone with God; there they were equipped for the battle. And when the time came that they stood forth in public service for God their faces were not ashamed—nay, they had faces as lions; they were bold and fearless, yea, and victorious for God; for the battle had been won already in the desert alone with Him.—London Christian.

The Spirit of Peace.

It is a great, a memorable day, a way-mark in the development of the soul's life, when the Spirit that brings peace, that means essential, fathomless peace, comes into the dark and troubled experience of the individual, and makes anew the life. Is it some mystic dreaming—this peace that supervenes as the storm's anger sinks in the distance to a faint whisper, while the sky's glory falls soft and serene upon the resting, trusting, calmed soul? The Christian says no, it is no dream, or if a dream, would that all dreams were so hallowed and so fraught with blessed reality. Was it not this that the sacred writer meant when he referred to the joy that was unspeakable and full of glory? It was unspeakable, not voiced in shouts and hallelujahs, in choruses and hymns, not boiling over like some uncontrollable emotion or passion that must find vent in outward expression. No, it is simply peace unspeakable, joy unutterable, the sweetest, calmest, simplest repose in the Infinite, in the Father's love.

The Kingdom of Character.

Jesus was an absolute and unreserved believer in character, and was never weary of insisting that a man's soul was more than his environment, and that he must be judged not by what he held and had, but by what he was and did. Nothing could be easier than to say, "Lord, Lord," but that did not count. Jesus' demand was to do "the will of my Father which is in heaven," and all of this kind made one family. He only has founded a kingdom on the basis of character. He only has dared to believe that character will be omnipotent. No weapon in Jesus' view would be so winsome, so irresistible, as the beatitudes in action. His disciples were to use no kind of force, neither tradition, nor miracles, nor the sword, nor money. They were to live as he lived, and influence would conquer the world. Jesus elected twelve men—one was a failure—and trained them till they thought with him and saw with him. St. John did not imitate Jesus, he assimilated Jesus. Each disciple became a center himself, and so the kingdom grows by multiplying and widening circles of influence.—Rev. John Watson.

Never bear more than one kind of trouble at one time. Some people bear three kinds—all they have had, all they have now, and all they expect to have.—Edward Everett Hale.

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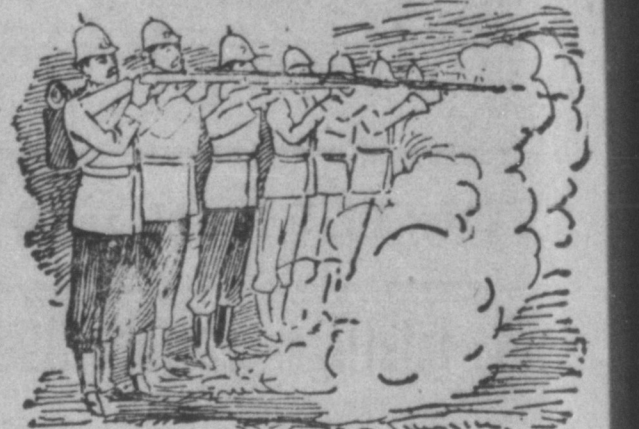
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