

My Lord and I.

(Song in the rocks and caves of France during the fierce persecution of the Huguenots, some three hundred years ago.)

I have a Friend, so precious,
So very dear to me,
He loves me with such tender love,
He loves me faithfully.
I could not live apart from Him,
I love to feel Him nigh,
And so we dwell together,
My Lord and I.

Sometimes I'm faint and weary,
He knows that I am weak,
And so He bids me lean on Him,
His help I gladly seek.
He leads me in the paths of light,
Beneath a sunny sky;
And so we walk together,
My Lord and I.

I tell Him all my sorrows,
I tell Him all my joys,
I tell Him what annoys,
He tells me what I ought to do,
He tells me what to try,
And so we walk together,
My Lord and I.

He knows how I am longing
Some weary soul to win,
And so He bids me lean on Him,
The loving words for Him.
He bids me tell His wondrous love,
And why He came to die,
And so we walk together,
My Lord and I.

He has His yoke upon me,
And easy 'tis to bear;
In the burden which He carries
I gladly take a share.
For then it is my happiness
To have Him always nigh—
We bear the yoke together,
My Lord and I.

What Shall We Do With Our Influence?

Each soul possesses a strange power over others which we call influence. The effects of this mysterious power are not limited to those whom we meet. It goes far beyond the circle of our friends, touches thousands whom we never see, and lives long after we are dead. Its effects are seen in the language, the opinions, the habits, and the characters of those whom it has touched.

Everything that goes to make up our personality and our possessions contribute something to the influence we exert. There is power in wealth. A rich man may have no other element of power, but through his wealth alone he may dictate the government of the city in which he lives and control the Legislature of the State. Office in the State or Church carries power in it. Some men who hold important offices wield an influence which is due to their own worth, and an added influence on account of their office. Often the latter is far greater than the former. In some cases if they were stripped of office they would be reduced to mere cipher. There is power in knowledge, learning, and genius. Thought is mightier than money. The power of wealth may be more apparent and immediate in its effects, but the power of thought is more profound and enduring in its results. Natural gifts and dispositions contribute much to one's power over others. There is a man living who more than once has stood on the threshold of a nomination for the highest office in the republic, but it was alleged against him by members of his own party that he lacked magnetism, and would not make a strong candidate because of his coldness. Other men with far less talent have wielded a more powerful influence.

The chief secret of influence is character. One who possesses a strong and good character is a mighty man. He may not have wealth or learning or office, but if he has a sound mind and a good heart he will move men and bless the world. History makes us acquainted with a few mighty men. They have ruled the world. The men of might are not kings and generals, but men of character. The real kings and conquerors have not worn crowns and carried swords, but they have had brains and hearts. When Moses stood before Pharaoh, who was king? Pharaoh wore the crown, but Moses was ruler. When Samuel stood before Saul, who was king? When Elijah stood before Ahab, who was the real king? When Paul stood before Agrippa, when John Knox stood before Queen Mary, when Luther stood before the representatives of the great Powers of Europe, who was the real ruler? Germany owes more to Luther than to any king or general. Scotland owes more to John Knox than to any crowned head.

Of all that ever walked the earth in mortal form the one who wielded the most potent influence was Jesus. Who shall analyze, who shall define, who shall measure the influence of Jesus? It fills the world to day, and bids fair to rule the whole world to-morrow. And here we see the secret of power: it is found in union with God. Jesus was one with God, and the nearer we come to Him the mightier we shall be. That soul that com-

munes with God daily sheds on the world a divine savor of love and light which will in due time compel the respect and confidence of mortals.

It is not given to men of great genius alone to wield a powerful influence. The Creator has bestowed some share of this power on everyone. The father, who, although obscure, stands in the place of God to his children, is able to make them happy and noble, or miserable and base. He is not only able to do this, but he is so related to them that he may do it without an effort. He often does it unconsciously and unintentionally. The history of the great and good men of the world is largely the history of the influence of mothers. Even children have power over others—"A little child shall lead them."

What shall we do with our influence? How shall we invest it? One lay on on a sick bed which he supposed was his dying bed, and such questions as these forced themselves upon him: "What good have I done? What am I strengthened? What mind have I enlightened? What heart have I comforted and encouraged? What home have I blessed? What life have I brightened?" The answer which he was compelled to give to these inquiries startled him so that when he awoke he went forth to live a new life. We shall all come to that hour. Such solemn inquiries will arise in every soul. In that hour we shall not ask how much money we have made, how much knowledge we have accumulated, what titles we have won, what offices we have held, but what good we have done. May the answer be: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto me." "Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord."—Christian Advocate.

The Growing Church.

BY THE REV. JOHN H. WOLFE

This subject is one of vital importance to the kingdom of God, because on it depends the extension of the principles that Christ came to bring to lost man. Unless the church is growing it cannot impart life or help to anyone.

A growing church has certain characteristics by which it can be distinguished from one that is trying merely to "hold its own" but is in reality moving backward. What constitutes a growing church?

First, it is an expectant church. Christ said, "If I go away, I will come again," and for years the church was just quivering with expectation of the Lord's return. This mighty force prepared them for the next element that went to make them a growing church. So the church to-day that wants to grow must get back to the apostolic expectancy. It is one of the incentives to activity. "Watch, for ye know not the hour when your Lord shall come!" We are not very enthusiastic if a friend has said, "I am coming to see you, but not until sometime away in the future years." But if he has said, "I may come on any train," it gives us the added motive to prepare for his reception.

2. A missionary spirit. After the day of pentecost those early workers were set on fire with missionary zeal. Never before had they realized the magnitude of Christ's words, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." And until they knew that every creature had heard of salvation they did not consider their work finished. They knew that they were in possession of the truth, and they loved it. Whenever a church ceases to be a missionary church it becomes a mission church. May we learn well the lesson from the church at Antioch. Did it suffer for sending out its two most efficient workers? Nay! The church was simply enlarging its borders.

3. Unity. Unless the church possesses this characteristic it can no more do effective work than an army can with its divisions, regiments, and companies running independent of one another. Nothing but disaster follows such attempts. There is danger to day in the theory that "one church is as good as another," which throws together various beliefs in doctrine and polity, from which no unity can come.

4. A biblical church. (1) In soundness of doctrine. In this age the tendency is to put up for a standard humanitarianism, our natural obligation to our fellow creatures. This must be done, but the weightier obligation must not be lost sight of—our relation and obligation to God. (2) We must be biblical in thought. To grow we must have a biblical mind.

"For as man thinketh, so is he." We cannot hope for growth in our churches where malice, anger, or evil-thinking of any kind find harbor. Purity of life is the need of the day. (3) We must be biblical in action. One of the strong pillars of the church is obedience to the truth and fervency of devotion

"Move forward" was the watchword that removed obstacles, crossed oceans, climbed mountains, endured hardships in a thousand ways, and planted the banner of Christ on the very fortifications of Satan or entire routed him. Having a prayerful life and an abiding faith in the presence of God with the church we shall grow, for then we shall be in our native soil.

(4) A growing church is one that has biblical preaching. The one thing uppermost in the mind and heart being the salvation of the lost. To be like Paul, "determined not to know anything, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Not only biblical preaching but biblical instruction to converts. They must be well grounded in doctrine, Christian life, and duty both to God and man, if they in turn are to go out into the world to build other growing churches.

5. Yet another element in a growing church. Winning is success. Success may not be in the full measure of hope, or according to the full measure of possibility. The student may never know all he might have known, nor all he expected to acquire; but he is a winner if he continually sees and seizes upon new truths in his particular line of study. The church may never reach or attain to the measure of influence for which it longs; but it wins if it has growth in knowledge and power for good. If we are to find the element of a winning church, we must definitely ascertain the ends to be sought in church organization and church activity. Briefly (1) in the illustration of the gospel, and (2) in holding the truth. We cannot hope to know all truth, but there are certain great truths which have been plainly searched and long tested, which have withstood the fires of persecution and criticism. They have upon them the seal of the eternal God. For a man to be shaky in his faith, is to be weak and without power to win. For a church to be uncertain in regard to God's method of saving sinners, or in regard to its reach and range of saving forces, is to give unintelligible sound, to shine with obscured light, and add to doubts or half-formed faith, which are so fatal to the acceptance and obedience of Christ. Questionings are contagious, and churches are never aggressive when they but half believe the creed which they have adopted.

May we, as churches, stop and take our inventories and find how we stand as to these elements of a growing church: Expectancy, missionary spirit, unity, biblical character, winning power.—Morning Star.

Settled Things.

Some things are settled. Though this is emphatically a period of transition, though more than ever before theology is in the making, and the great doctrines of the Christian faith are being melted down and recast, yet amid all the questionings of our time there are some things of which we may not only be sure, but more sure than ever before.

The Bible is a settled thing. Men of education and culture, whatever their religious faith or want of faith, no longer sneer at the Bible. Conflicting opinions as to the authorship of certain books are of little moment save for the claims of scholarship. It does not matter whether David wrote all the psalms or a few, whether Solomon is the author or the compiler of the proverbs, whether such a man as Job ever lived, whether there were two Isaiahs or a dozen. The great spiritual truths which these books contain are true in and of themselves, and the researches of scholars from now to doomsday cannot touch them.

5. A settled thing. It may be the earmarks of our brute ancestors which, in the progress of the race, have not yet been outgrown; it may be the necessary corollary of free will; it may be an indispensable factor in the education of the race. How long it will be allowed we do not know. The millennium still gleams athwart the sky, but it is a pale and distant star which guides no man to a Bethlehem. But that sin is and what it is we do know—the greatest curse that ever came, of all other curses the cause, the blight upon God's beautiful world, the thorn with the rose, the serpent with his slime and hiss. Yet we can trust that the trail of the serpent will blaze the path to a fairer Eden in the soul than any garden of the past, that the golden age lies not behind, but before, and the perfect pair are yet to be.

Retribution is a settled thing. When for any particular sin it will come, here or hereafter, we know not; in what form we cannot predict; how it will affect us, harden or soften, we cannot say. Judas did his sin, and the punishment was suicide. Peter did his, and the loving look of Jesus brought tears of repentance. But that in this world of never-failing law, of cause and effect, retribution is sure as

the rising of to-morrow's sun we do know. We know it from experience, persons and general; all history declares it. It is not only a world, but a universe, of law. We know from the motions of the heavenly bodies that the same God and the same law that govern this planet govern the planet Mars, so that in this world not alone, but in any world, in this life and in every life, sin brings suffering.

Christ is a settled thing. The war of words has ceased. Define Him as one will, every heart that longs to be pure, every life that wants to be strong, must look up to Him as the leader of the race, the hope of mankind, the prophecy to be fulfilled in all who wish to be like Him. To us He is the Son of God as none other ever was; in His revelation of the Father of us all we place implicit confidence; to His matchless life and unselfish death we would ever turn our eyes as the sweetest and the best the world has known; in His spirit of forgiveness, in His boundless charity, in His surpassing love we can imagine nothing better for humanity in all the ages yet to come. What we need is not to dispute about Him, but to imitate Him, to catch His spirit, to make our human life divine, and thus ourselves become in the truest sense sons of God.—The Rev. Walcott Fay.

Something for Nothing.

There are many people who want "something for nothing." The more they can get in this way the smarter they count themselves. This temper is widespread, and is as evil in its tendency and outcome as it is common. It affects multitudes of our young people. They break away early from their parents. They are impatient of discipline. They are ambitious for high place with its honors and emoluments and trusts, but they disdain the processes of training by which they could prepare themselves for such place. They are unwilling to learn a trade, but want at once to get contracts. They aspire to eminence in profession, but are not willing to take the routine of growth and advancement by honest, patient effort. They want fame. Whether they deserve it or not it is to them immaterial. They are satisfied if only they can get it. The evils of this condition are obvious. It gets wrong ideas and ideals. It makes the life and character superficial and false. It fills our industrial and political systems with misfits. Men are not willing to seek advance by becoming more skillful, and productive, and worthy. They want to leap into high place or to be put into it without regard to merit. They want "something for nothing."—The Baptist Union.

Having Done All, to Stand.

Napoleon used to say that the kind of valor he prized was "two o'clock in the morning courage." A modern writer has said that "five o'clock in the afternoon courage" is the rare and priceless thing. After the nerves have been worn and the patience exhausted by the labor and irritations of a long day, it needs a high type of energy and persistence for a man to maintain his purpose, to keep his spirit up to the mark, and not to relax his effort a in the very last hour of the day's work. The present writer has more than once seen a choice business opportunity slip from the grasp of a man who should have held it, simply because he lacked the five o'clock in the afternoon courage, and if the secrets of the committee rooms of congress should be published, it would be found that many a great measure has failed simply because the man who had charge of it weakened at the last moment. If he had hung on a little longer, he would have carried his point. The French say that it is the first step that costs, but it is the last step that counts. The Apostle Paul understood this when he told the Ephesian Christians "having done all, to stand."—Selected.

Place of Duty a Place of Safety.

Duties never conflict, nor does duty ever intermit. We ought always to be in the place of duty, and there is never any place or occupation but one in which we ought to be at a given time. Just what is the one place of duty for a child of God at a given time may be a question to consider carefully and seriously; but when that question is settled for the occasion at the start, the ease or discomfort, the danger or the safety, of the undertaking is a minor matter. One is really safer when surrounded with perils in the path of duty than while seemingly protected on every side in a spot where one had no call from God to be at the time. God is more interested than the man himself, or his family, or his friends, as to the safety of every child of his who is where he has summoned him to be just now. On that point rest assured.—S. S. Times.

How to Have Power.

If you want power with God, come out and be separated. Let us not be swept away by the love of money or the spirit of the age. Let us not be catering to public opinion. If we live for God, we may expect people to say: "Oh, he is a narrow, bigoted man. I believe we are to go in and be yoked up with unbelievers, and get into all these lodges and societies, and lift them up in that way." I suppose Lot talked that way when he went to Sodom; but Sodom dragged him down, and we have no record that he lifted anybody up. So compromise with the world has always dragged the church down. If you want to be right with God, you want to be where you can testify against the sins of the world.—D. L. Moody.

Is the Grass Growing?

The earliest converts to Christianity in Africa were very regular and earnest in their private devotions. They had no closets to go to, but they had their separate spots in their thickets, where they used to pour out their hearts to God. The several paths to these little Bethels became distinctly marked, and when any one of these African Christians began to decline in the ways of God, it was soon manifest to his fellows, and they would finally remind him of his duty by saying: "Brother, de grass grow on your path yonder!"

If your heart cares less for spiritual things than it used to do, we may be sure the grass is growing in the path to your closet.

SUNSHINE.—All the coal beds in Pennsylvania and Ohio are only solidified sunshine. The love of Jesus streaming down into your soul makes the central heat; that heat generates spiritual power. So do the joy of Jesus become your perennial strength. A doubting, ague-smitten Christian cannot do much but shake. A back-sliding Christian is on his road to a cell in the castle of Giant Despair. But "he who is nearest to Christ is nearest to the fire," and the contact keeps the heart aglow. Why not rejoice more? Count up your golden mercies, count up your opportunities to do good, count up your exceeding great and precious promises, count up your joys of heirship to an incorruptible inheritance, and then march on the road heavenward, shouting.—Thodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

Henry Ward Beecher had a way, when he entered his church on Sunday, of taking up any letters addressed to him there; and he sometimes read one of these to the congregation, and made it a text for a discourse. One day he opened such a letter, and found it contained the word "fool." He mentioned the fact to his congregation, and then quietly added, "Now I have known many an instance of a man writing a letter and forgetting to sign his name; but this is the only instance I have ever known of a man signing his name and forgetting to write the letter."

When a man dies in his armor, says John Watson, "right knightly" it does not matter so much whether he has won or lost, as that he did his part bravely. Everyone that sees him dare and die departs from the lists less a coward and more a man.

"Some people keep their religion as they do their umbrellas, for stormy weather, and hope to have it within easy reach if a dangerous sickness overtakes them."—Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

Men talk as though God were an absentee. But every true believer, every audience gathered in the name of Christ, is the home, the seat, the body of God, the Holy Spirit.—F. B. Meyer.

Skepticism—This is unhappily an age of skepticism, but there is one point upon which persons acquainted with the subject agree, namely, that Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil is a medicine which can be relied upon to cure a cough, remove pain, heal sores of various kinds, and benefit any inflamed portion of the body to which it may be applied.

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