

Trust Him.

BY C. RANSOM HOWARD.

We know not what the future years
May bring or may withhold
Of sorrow, pain, or burdens sad,
Or wealth of joy untold.
Then let us trust whate'er our lot,
He holds our hand and says: "Fear not!"

What though affliction's scourge we feel,
And anguish hours know,
Faith looks beyond this vale of tears,
Where living waters flow.
Forgotten, then, each smart, each pain,
We find new strength to live again.

Tho' tempests toiled and mountain waves
Of sorrow flood our way,
And midnight darkness hedge us in,
We'll trust, and watch and pray.
Grow calm while waiting His sweet will,
Who softly whispers: "Peace, be still!"

Bidding Jesus Good-Bye.

REV. A. WYLLIE MAHON.

John Graham, the pastor of a large church in a growing manufacturing town, had entered upon the work of his first congregation full of enthusiasm, longing to be used by the Master to improve the condition of his people in every way, longing to be the channel by which heavenly things might flow into the hearts and homes of those to whom he ministered; but his work had been in many ways a great disappointment to him. Strife and contention amongst some of the prominent members of his church made his soul sorrowful, and the unreasonable demands upon his time filled his life so full of work and worry that he could say with Dr. Chalmers that he was almost bustling out of his spirituality.

One Saturday morning an incident occurred which led the minister to fear that he was losing his hold upon spiritual things, that he was unconsciously drifting away from Christ. The week had been a more than ordinarily disheartening one, full of a multitude of petty perplexing cares which anxious parishioners had forced into his life and which had led him at times to long like the prophet for a lodging-place in some vast wilderness, or like the psalmist for the wings of a dove that he might fly away and be at rest.

There had been scarcely any time to think about sermons and now Saturday had come. He went to his study with a weary troubled expression on his face and with a feeling of utter failure in his heart, and sat down at his desk, above which hung a copy of Hofmann's beautiful picture of Christ and the Rich Young Man. He placed his elbow upon the desk and his head upon his hand and tried to think, tried to pray.

Just then the door of the study opened gently and the sweet little face of a child peeped in to see what his father was doing. The minister turned in a nervous, irritable way, and told the child to go away. As the child turned to go, he waved his little hand and said with a tearful tone in his voice, "Dood-bye, papa," and then catching a glimpse of the tender, loving face in the picture above his father's desk, he said, "Dood-bye, Jesus."

In a moment the child was gone, but his last words had strangely roused the minister and started an unexpected train of thought. Was he not himself all unconsciously but not so innocently as the dear little child bidding Jesus good-bye? He knew that he was all the time becoming more fretful and impatient and irritable. Every little thing seemed to annoy him, to put him out of sorts.

As he looked up at the picture over the desk he thought that he could see in that face so wondrously human and divine, in those great loving eyes so full of tender, yearning pity, the sorrow which fills the dear Saviour's heart as one whom he loves—and whom does he not love?—turns away from him and bids him a conscious or unconscious good-bye.

The minister bowed his head and like the erring disciple of old wept bitterly. With a heart-cry to God for help, he looked up into the face of his great, tender, loving, forgiving Friend, and consecrated himself anew to Christ. As his whole soul went out in the strong emotion of that hour, there came into his heart such a sweet sense of the divine Presence that he realized that heaven could be found without the solitude of the wilderness, or the wings of a dove.

Going in search of his child he took him up in his arms, pressed him to his heart, and kissed away the little lines of sorrow which his unkind words had imprinted upon the sweet child-face. The whole world was a different world to him from what it had been a little while before. It had become bright and hopeful and restful, full of the divine spirit and love, full of opportunities of helping others to find their way heavenward through all the perplexing cares and anxieties of life.

There are many to-day who know something of an experience of this kind, something of the power of the work and worry of life to make the

heart less sensitive to spiritual things, to rob the soul of that special grace which gives a touch of heavenliness to the most trying experiences of life.

In many lives this process of spiritual decline goes on for a time unconsciously. A man may be degenerating in character, may be losing the best part of his life, without being distinctly conscious of what he is doing. This is what the prophet means when he says, "Strangers have devoured his strength and he knoweth it not: yea grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not." Gradually the change goes on till man awakens at last to realize that he is far away from Christ. There is a strikingly suggestive series of pictures, called Drifting Away, which illustrates very impressively this danger to which life is often exposed. The first picture is a quiet, peaceful one. A boat lies at rest on the bosom of a broad calm river, while the sleep of the solitary voyager whose head is pillowed in the stern is undisturbed by any sound. Just a little distance behind the boat is a rock above which rises a cross, which suggests to us the meaning of the picture, which suggests to us that he who sleeps in the boat is all unconsciously drifting away from Christ. In the second picture of the series we see the same boat, but the river is no longer so still and peaceful as it was. We can see the foaming rapids, and in the dim distance we can see the faint outline of the cross; but still the man sleeps on. In the third and last picture of the series, the boat is being whirled along through the raging rapids, and is just about to make the awful plunge into the gulf below; while the man awaking from his sleep, stares wildly about, at the fearful doom which awaits him. This is a true picture of what life often is, an unconscious drifting away from Christ.

The spiritual nature becomes less sensitive to the touch of God, to the breath of heaven, to the divine voices and visions. The tone of life loses its sweetness; the light becomes dim, and man sinks down gradually to a lower plane of existence, where work is a less enjoyable thing and worship a less heavenly experience. Whenever George Muller of Bristol, felt that he was getting out of touch with God, that prayer was losing its spiritual tone, that life was losing its spiritual sensitiveness, he went aside and waited with open heart for God's Spirit to fill him. This is a plan which never fails to lift us up into the sweet light of the divine countenance, which never fails to give our lives a touch of heavenliness, which never fails to keep us from bidding Jesus good-bye.—Evangelist.

"Fools For Christ's Sake."
BY GEORGE R. SCOTT.

If you desire to be useful in the Master's work one of the first requirements is to have the spirit of Paul and be willing to be counted as nobody for Christ's sake.

It is not often that the very wise are useful in bringing men to a knowledge of the fact that they are sinners and need to be washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Too often men's heads are enlarged at the expense of their hearts. They know more than they feel on the subject of religion. They are wise in their own estimation, and the result is they lose their hold upon the hearts of men and women.

It is a good plan to avoid bringing your own head into collision with the heads of others; for most persons have the idea that their brains are as good as anybody else's, and will therefore resent any attempt to controvert their opinions.

The power of the mind is wonderful, but that of the heart is greater still. An ordinarily intelligent person who is willing, if necessary, to be looked upon as a fool for Christ's sake, is the one that has power with God and can influence for good those with whom he comes in contact.

Some of the best people that have lived were looked upon, by those who made it a practice to scoff at religion, as fools; but I have noticed that such people were often turned from the error of their ways by the splendid specimens of men who were willing to be thought "fools for Christ's sake."

For one I do not pretend to explain the mysteries of Godliness, but I accept the teachings of the Bible on faith. And there is a peculiar satisfaction in receiving revealed truth by faith alone that is not experienced when one is able to reason out and solve a problem.

Not to be able to understand all that God has given us in the Bible has the effect of making us feel humble and more thoughtful, and is calculated to encourage a spirit of reverence, which we greatly need to have encouraged.

Somehow it is hard work for a man to properly honor another man whom he feels to be his inferior.

In my boyhood days I was acquainted with an old lady who went from house to house speaking kind words and doing all the good she knew how. She was an ignorant woman, but she could tell what a loving Saviour had done for her in words that brought tears to many eyes and contrition to many hearts. Some people thought she was a fool, some people said she was a fool, and others that she was a little foolish. But when she died nearly all the inhabitants of the town attended the funeral services. The minister, who preached the funeral sermon, said that she was one of the best women of the place and would always be remembered. That was fifty-four years ago, and her memory is yet precious to the writer of this article.

The men and women of the world who looked upon her as nobody are not remembered as she is.

It is grand to go to your grave beloved by those who knew you best; respected by those who knew that you walked and talked with Jesus; honored by those who were positive that you had a heart that felt for them when in distress and that was large enough to take them in in the days of adversity as well as in the days of prosperity.

Brilliant people are not always the best to associate with. An extraordinarily brilliant acquaintance will keep you too busy consulting a dictionary.

The wisest people are sometimes the most foolish. They "know it all," and therefore often get tripped up.

"Fools for Christ's sake" are a great blessing to the community in which they reside. They are the salt and not the pepper of the neighborhood. They live to receive instruction as well as to impart it. They move among the people to bring them nearer to Christ and remove them further from the Devil.

I look upon Paul as the smartest fool that ever lived. A fool with a purpose; a fool with a crown in prospect; a fool never to be forgotten; a fool that others might be made wiser; a fool to make sure of Heaven; a fool that others by the foolishness of his preaching might be made wise unto salvation, and might inherit eternal life.

There are two kinds of fools. The fool that saith in his heart, "No God," is a miserable fool. The fool that throws away worldly pleasures and advantages to do what God tells him to do, because he feels that he is not as wise as God, is an intelligent fool, worthy of the respect of his neighbors and of the angels.

It is an awful thing to know too much to be saved.—Sabbath Reading.

Spiritual Frontage.

As one travels through the countries which the Old Testament describes—through Syria or Arabia or Egypt—he is apt to see a very strange and impressive sight. He stands watching the sun drop behind the violet hills and the shadows lengthening across the tawny plain, and far away on the desert he sees a solitary Arab guiding his camel over the yellow waste. The sun sinks, and this lonely traveler halts, dismounts, and spreads his little carpet on the sand. He is all unconscious that any human eye is upon him; all he thinks of is that his hour of prayer has come. He turns himself toward the point where he believes that his holy city of Mecca lies.

The same instinct which makes these Arabian races turn to their sacred place moved the prophet Daniel. What Mecca is to them, Jerusalem was to him. It was his holy city, and he a captive in far-away Babylon. He is homesick for his lost temple; he longs for his home-worship. So he gets him a dwelling fronting toward the city of his God, and as he prays he looks out across the open view, as though his prayers could cross the desert and touch the walls of Zion.

Now, there may well seem to us much that is outgrown and superstitious in this caring which way a worshipper should face. Every land, we say, is holy. All windows open on sacred scenes. The Meccas and Jerusalems of our worship are not walled cities; they are invisible and inward sources of inspiration. And yet it remains true that this principle of the outlook of the soul, the habitual frontage of one's life and thought, is still the most preliminary question of religion.

Here, for instance, are two men who belong to the same political party; they assent to the same platform; they vote for the same candidate; they cheer at the same meeting; and yet the motives that govern their minds are absolutely opposed. To one the party means the principle of reform, the security of trade, the permanence of our institutions; to the other it means the keeping of his own place, the hiding of his own crime, the price for his own vote. They are like people who live on opposite sides of the same street. In a certain sense they are

near neighbors, and yet their points of view are directly opposite. One faces north, the other south. One looks toward the sun, the other toward the shadow. Each of them finds in the party which he opposes many persons much more like him than some who vote by his side. They do not vote for the same ticket, but they vote for the same ideas. They are not such near neighbors, but they do look out on the same view.

Or take the sympathies which people sometimes feel in religion and which are often quite perplexing. Now and then you fall in with a person whose religious convictions are apparently very far removed from your own, but with whom you feel the subtle sympathy of a congenial soul. Worship means the same thing to you both; the windows of your souls open the same way; and you find more genuine sympathy with this believer in another creed than with many who stand very near you in opinion, but who stand, as it were, back to back with you and look out on different views.

The first thing which religion does for many a weary and hemmed-in life is not to give it an absolute conviction, or a stable creed, but simply to open the windows that look out upon a larger world. With all the incompleteness of your intellectual convictions or your moral decisions, this at least has come to pass: that you are facing the right way, and across the sterile details of your daily life are able to lift up your eyes to the distant hills of holiness and reverence and love.—Rev. F. G. Peabody, D. D., in "Afternoons in the College Chapel."

A Discouraged Pastor.

Some years ago a pastor of a little church in a small town became exceedingly discouraged, and brooded over his trials to such an extent that he became an inveterate grumbler. He found fault with his brethren because he imagined they did not treat him well. A brother minister was invited to assist him a few days in a special service. At the close of the Sabbath morning service our unhappy brother invited the minister to his house to dinner. While they were waiting alone in the parlor he began his doleful story by saying:

"You have no idea of my troubles; and one of the greatest is that my brethren in the church treat me very badly."

The other propounded the following questions:

"Did they ever spit in your face?"

"No, they haven't come to that."

"Did they ever smite you?"

"No."

"Did they ever crown you with thorns?"

The last question he could not answer, but bowed his head thoughtfully. The other replied:

"Your Master and mine was thus treated, and his disciples fled and left him in the hands of the wicked. Yet he opened not his mouth."

The effect of this conversation was wonderful. Both ministers bowed in prayer and earnestly sought to possess the mind which was in Christ Jesus. During the ten days' meetings the discouraged pastor became wonderfully changed. He labored and prayed with his friend, and many souls were brought to Christ.

Some few weeks after, a deacon of the church wrote and said: "Your late visit and conversation with our pastor have been a wonderful influence for good. We never hear him complain now, and he labors more prayerfully and zealously."—Moody's Anecdotes.

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Look Up.

There are times in the experience of every person when in dire distress he knows not whither to turn. In our sorrows, in our distresses and perplexities, oftentimes it seems as though nowhere upon earth could succor and



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