

Endure, and Hope.

"Behold, we count them blessed which endured."—JAMES.

Stand firmly. Do not yield nor quail!
Force back the cry, let Hope prevail;
Or brace thyself the worst to meet,
Even defeat.

The victor is not always blest,
Thou canst lie down and take thy rest,
A nobleman, though dispossessed.

Meet the fierce onslaught. See it comes
With flashing swords and roll of drums;
Summon thy courage and thy faith
For life or death.

This is no time to faint or fear,
See how the foemen-hosts appear;
Oh, Knight of Christ, be valiant here.

Love not thy faith in mists of night,
Keep thy face forward to the light,
The soldier must not fearful be—
Christ is for thee!

A little while be brave, stand fast,
Day breaks, the trouble soon is past;
Those who endure are crowned at last.

MARIANNE FARRINGTON.

The Sin of Covetousness.

REV. B. VAN ALKENBURG.

"And covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3:5). This is the declaration of the Almighty, by the mouth of the Apostle Paul. It is elsewhere defined to be "an inordinate desire for earthly possession." This sin had its origin in the fall of man, and is one of the most debasing and soul-destroying sins. It is productive of more evil than all other sins; indeed, it is "the root of all evil." Covetousness sinks a man, corrupts him, damns him, allies him to the devil, and, if persisted in, will ultimately destroy soul and body forever in hell. It is positively forbidden in the Decalogue, and throughout the Scriptures Jehovah fulminates his threatenings and denunciations against the indulgence of this sin. We propose to notice some of the most prominent cases of covetousness mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. Because of the covetousness of Achan, who "took of the accursed thing," the army of Israel were smitten by the men of Ai, and suffered an inglorious defeat. And Achan and his family, and all his possessions, were stoned to death and burned with fire. "So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his wrath." Through covetousness Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, ran after Naaman, the Syrian, with a lie in his mouth, and returned to the prophet, and, in order to hide his covetousness, told another falsehood. And the leprosy of Naaman came to him, and to his seed forever. "And he went out from the presence of Elisha, a leper white as snow." Covetousness slew Naboth, and gave his vineyard to King Ahab, and the blood of Ahab and Jezebel to the dogs.

The case of Balaam stands out conspicuously in the Scriptures as a warning against covetousness. He sinned against convictions of duty, through the love of worldly gain, and for filthy lucre's sake, he would have cursed the armies of the living God; but was compelled by the power of God to bless them. Covetousness had blinded him, mind and heart, that he saw not the angel of the Lord in the way, to withstand him; but the dumb brute saw the heavenly messenger, and speaking with man's voice, forbade the madness of the prophet. Through his counsel, the Israelites were tempted to sin, and in consequence were punished by a plague, by which many thousands perished. And finally he suffered a violent death on the field of battle.

Jude, in his epistle, speaking of false teachers, says, "They ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." The Apostle Peter, in his second epistle, speaking on the same subject, says, "And through covetousness, shall they with feigned words, make merchandise of you; and again, 'A heart they have exercised with covetous practices, . . . which have forsaken the right, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.'" The Saviour also condemns the doctrine of Balaam in the following words, "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication." This case of covetousness is referred to in several other places in the Scriptures, and ought to be a terrible warning to all covetous persons. We do not think there are many ministers of the gospel guilty of this awful sin. What a spectacle such a man must present to all good and benevolent beings in heaven and earth. What! an ambassador of Jesus, preaching a full and free salvation without money and without price, he covetous? What a contradiction, what an incongruity, what a moral monstrosity.

There was one covetous soul among the Twelve whom Jesus chose to preach the gospel and to perform miracles. He was also a thief, and finally sold

the Lord of life and glory for a few pieces of silver, and then went and hanged himself, and went to his own place. Through covetousness the young man who came running to Jesus refused eternal life, and "went away sorrowful," rather than sell all his earthly possessions and give to the poor. Ananias and Sapphira were also guilty of this sin, and kept back part of the price of the land, and lied unto the Holy Ghost, and fell dead at the apostle's feet from the visitation of the wrath of Almighty God. How important that we remember the words of the Saviour, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth." Our prayer should be, "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness."

Paul, in his first letter to Timothy, says, "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as ye have. The Saviour said at one time to his astonished disciples, "Children, how hard it is for them who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God." Let us, therefore, trust in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

It will be noticed that covetousness is classed or catalogued by the sacred writers with those sins that are generally considered most abominable, such as theft, drunkenness, seduction, adultery and fornication. But, says one, you would not have us understand that covetousness is as heinous a sin as those above mentioned? Most emphatically we would. We do not think it would be extravagant to say that it is a worse sin, productive of greater evil, than any of those sins mentioned by the apostle. God hates all sin, but the covetousness of the soul he abhors. There is a woeful neglect on the part of the ministry in denouncing this soul-destroying sin. Once in a while a minister is heard presenting covetousness in its true light. Not long ago a presiding elder had the courage to tell the people what bad company covetousness keeps. He took the position, and correctly, too, that it was as mean as adultery, and that the members of the church were guilty of covetousness, and it was but little thought of. Ministers should lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show the people how the Bible talks about this abominable sin—how the cause of Christ suffers because of covetousness, because those who profess to be the followers of the benevolent Jesus withhold from the treasury of the Lord what justly belongs to him. Will a man rob God? Yes, men will steal from the Lord. God says, "Ye have robbed me." "Wherein have we robbed thee?" says the covetous soul. And the Lord replies, "In tithes and offerings." Mr. Finney says, "It is robbery in the highest sense of the term." It is an infinitely higher crime than for a clerk in a store to go and take the money of his employer and spend it on his own lusts and pleasures. I mean that for a man to withhold from God is a higher crime against him than a man can commit against his fellow-man. . . . And the church of Christ never will be disentangled from the world, never will be able to go forward, without these continual declensions and backslidings, until Christians, and the churches generally, take the ground, and hold it, that it is just as much a matter of discipline for a church-member to deny his stewardship as to deny the divinity of Christ; and that covetousness, fairly proved, shall as certainly exclude a man from communion as adultery.—Rel. Telescope.

Resist the Devil.

Some men give place to the devil. Instead of fortifying themselves against him and resisting his assaults they invite his advances, make room for his entrance, and entertain him cheerfully. But they know not what they do. They are not aware that they are preparing for themselves a dark future. They do not believe that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

Our Lord is our model in everything. If we study His life, we shall learn how to meet the devil by inward purity. He said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." When Satan tempted Jesus he found nothing in His spirit which responded to his evil suggestions. So pure and guileless was His inner life that the solicitations of evil fell harmless at His feet. There was no inclination, no desire, no propensity rising up in response to the temptations of the devil.

We are told that the air is full of germs of disease. When science first suggested this fact many were alarmed for their safety, but later the wise men told us that if the physical system is in good health, disease germs may be disposed of with comparative impunity. In a perfectly sound body there is nothing to respond to the outward conditions which produce disease. The secret of successful battle with microbes is good physical conditions. Let the body have a fair chance, and it will fight its own battle. Do not abuse the digestive organs, and they will take care of the germs that may lurk in food and water.

In like manner the secret of successful battle against Satan is good spiritual health. A pure heart will resist temptation with comparatively little difficulty. Christ was pure, and even we may be pure also. He was free from sin, but we have all sinned. Yet the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseeth from all sin. Through His atonement and by the power of His Spirit we may be so transformed that Satan shall find nothing in us. The propensities which respond to the solicitations of evil may be crucified. Inward purity produced by the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us is the sure fortification against the wiles of the devil. Without this we may strive in vain to resist him. He is more than a match for us.

Our Lord used the "sword of the Spirit." Satan came to Jesus at a time when human nature would be most likely to crave the things he had to offer, but He responded, "It is written," and this was sufficient. For every temptation of the devil there is a word of God in the Holy Scriptures. Familiarity with the Bible is essential to successful warfare with the evil one.

Another means by which Satan may be successfully resisted is constant activity in the service of God. The idle soul falls into the snare of the devil. One who is busy in selfish pursuits is no better off than the idler. But the Christian whose time is all taken up in doing good is on safe ground. The fiery darts of Satan shall not harm him. When the enemies of Nehemiah suggested to him that he should come down and engage in a parley about the best method of procedure for the good of all parties his reply was, "I am doing a great work; I cannot come down." So may every busy man answer the solicitations of evil. It is a good thing to be so busy about well-doing as to have no time for parleying about doubtful things. Let the mind be occupied, the heart be full, and the hands busy every day and hour.

"Watch and pray," said Jesus to His disciples, "that ye enter not into temptation." It is not enough to be fortified by a good character, to be familiar with the word of God, and to be actively employed in doing good. Satan will not abandon his purpose to ruin our souls even then. Having done all these things, we must be vigilant. As the sentinel watches for the approach of the enemy, and does not give way to slumber for a moment, so must we watch against the prince of this world. One unguarded moment may cause our ruin. And when we have done all we can, and guarded ourselves by constant vigilance, we must realize our helplessness. Pray as well as watch. Pray without ceasing. Pray everywhere. Behold the Christian warrior clad in panoply of truth complete:

"Undaunted to the field he goes;
Yet vain were skill and valor there,
Unless, to foil his legion foes,
He takes the trustiest weapon, prayer

"Thus, strong in his Redeemer's strength,
Sin, death, and hell he tramples down;
Fights the good fight, and wins at length,
Through mercy, an immortal crown."
Chris. Advocate.

How a Church Was Filled.

The evening services in a certain parish were poorly attended. People thought they could not come out.

The vestrymen talked the matter over. Their talk resulted in a pledge to each other that they would never absent themselves, willingly, from the evening service, and they would urge every one they saw to plan for a second attendance.

The parents talked it over. They found that their children were not in the habit of spending the evenings religiously or profitably, and they determined to set them the example of an earnest devotion to spiritual concerns. They began going.

The young men talked it over. They concluded that it was their duty to attend services, and to bring at least one young man apiece with them.

The young ladies talked it over. They thought that if they could go to a concert or party at night, it could not do them any harm to be at church after sunset. They decided that they would all go regularly, and each take a friend with them.

The minister did not know what to make of it. He began to flatter himself that he was a latent Spurgeon.

The attendance was increasing every week. Strangers, seeing the direction of the crowd, followed. It became the most popular church in the city.—Cathedral Record.

Some Women's Wicked Contentment.

"That sweet virtue, contentment," is the way it is put. And a very nice putting of it, too. But there are times when contentment is not a virtue, but a positively wicked thing. For instance:

First—That young woman's contentment is wicked, who, having finished school, has settled down in a home where she is always welcome, but not needed, where she is reading a little and working a little, but practically idling away her life.

Second—That girl's contentment is wicked who is a teacher or stenographer—has a position engaged for next year but who does not need to teach or do office work—could just as well engage in some special religious work, even though that work gave her only her support. For there are so many and such wide-open doors in lines of religious work! And there are scores of women who stand ready to take the secular work she would relinquish—women who really need the money for the support and help of dear ones.

Third—That woman is wickedly contented who has a gift from God—of singing, or playing on instruments, or speaking, or writing—but who has settled down to use her talent for herself or for the occasional pleasure of friends. Every gift of this kind can be abundantly utilized in special Christian work, where there are so many calls and so few to fill them.

The Lord break up this wicked contentment of thousands of our Methodist young women! And if he shall begin to answer in your heart, dear reader, this prayer born out of a heart-breaking vision of the great need, write to Miss Jean Scott, 257 Jarvis Street, Toronto, and find out about these thousand urgent calls, and how you might plan to help meet them. That such a great need exists should fire you with a holy discontent with anything less than an active reaper's part in this great ripe harvest field.—Pacific Advocate.

Twelve most Popular Hymns.

In order to ascertain the hymns most in use among English-speaking Christians, Dr. Louis F. Benson obtained a copy of all the leading hymn-books and carefully compared their contents. He collected together ninety-eight hymn-books.

'Rock of Ages, cleft for me,' proved to be the chief favorite, for it was found in more of the hymn-books than any other—ninety-seven out of ninety-eight.

According to this test the following is a list of the most popular hymns, the figures at the end of each line showing in how many hymn books the hymn appears:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me (97).
All praise to thee, my God, this night (96).
When I survey the wondrous cross (95).
Jesus, lover of my soul (95).
Jesus, I my cross have taken (94).
Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear (94).
Awake, my soul, and with the sun (93).
Hark! the herald angels sing (93).
Abide with me; fast falls the even-tide (92).
Nearer, my God, to thee (92).
Jerusalem, my happy home (92).
How sweet the name of Jesus sounds (92).

A Rich Man.

Once in New England, says a writer in The Outlook, I was driving with an old farmer, and some of the men of the neighborhood came under criticism. Speaking of a prominent man in the village, I asked, 'Is he a man of means?'

'Well, sir,' the farmer replied, 'he hasn't got much money but he's mighty rich.'

'He has a great deal of land, then?'

'No, sir; he hasn't got much land neither, but still he is mighty rich.'

The old farmer, with a pleased smile, observed my puzzled look for a moment, and then explained:

'You see he hasn't got much money and he hasn't got much land, but still he is rich, because he never went to bed owing a man a cent in all his life. He lives as well as he wants to live, and he prays as he goes; he doesn't owe anything, and he isn't afraid of anybody; he tells every man the truth and does his duty by himself, his family, and his neighbors; his word is as good as his bond, and every man, woman, and child in the town looks up to him and respects him. No, sir, he hasn't got much land, but still he is a mighty rich man, because he's got all he wants.'

The Answered Prayer.

The Rev. Archibald G. Brown tells a thrilling story of how God can answer prayer. He says, "Some years ago I was getting up one morning, and standing before the looking-glass, there suddenly and unaccountably rushed into my mind the recollection of a brother minister I had known years before, and something said to me, 'You must send that man five pounds.'"

"I thought about the matter on the way downstairs. It seemed to be a dangerous thing to run against an impression like that, and so I got five pounds and posted it to the brother minister who lived eighty miles away. Some time afterwards I heard that just at that particular juncture the minister in question was sorely pressed for five pounds. In his trouble he got up early and went into the vestry of his church, so that he might not be disturbed, and wrestled with God in prayer to help him out of his difficulty. And so while he was praying for five pounds in a place eighty miles away, so nothing said to me in London, 'Send that man five pounds.'"

A Christian in the world is one thing, and the world in a Christian is quite another thing.

An old Scotchman is said to have remarked to his pastor: 'I'm none of the speakin' sort, but, brither, I'll tell ye this, there is never a Saturday night but my gude wife an' me has oor bit o' prayer together that the dear Lord will bless the preacher an' take him safely through the mornin'.' Are we surprised to know that this pastor went back to his work with new zeal and hope?

COUNTRY AHEAD of the city for residence. But, alas, neither place is proof against coughs or colds, and so Adamson's Botanic Cough Balsam is welcome in both localities. 25c. all Druggists.

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