

Home Here and Hereafter.

BY M. R. JOHNSON.

Home! O by that little word
How the heart is soothed or stirred;
Magical old melody,
Sounding never weary!

If 'tis thus when we are there,
When our hearts are free from care,
What is it when sad, away,
Can the tongue find words to say?

'Tis 'twill in our slumbers creep;
In a dream we cross the street,
Put a hand upon the door,
Pass the well-known threshold o'er—

Then the welcome shout we hear
Of the brother, sister dear;
Then, O heart, no longer roam,
There she sits who makes the home.

Father, mother, hold them fast!
Ah, they're fled—the dream is past;
None save strangers, cold or gay,
Meet thy longing gaze to day.

Yet, sad heart, thou hast a home,
Though afar thy feet may roam;
Thou art blest, it was for thee
With its welcome, glad and free.

But the homeless ones! ah, they,
Sad, bewildered, far astray,
Wander as the sailor might
Should his star be lost in night.

Homes may perish, stars may fall,
But undying, over all,
Glean the many mansions fair,
Home and love and God are there.

—New York Observer.

Discouragements in Work.

BY JAMES BUCKHAM.

I never realized how true it is that "people are alike the world over," until, for personal reasons, I conducted a little canvass among my friends to find out their exact state of mind as regards their work. I had a notion—how foolish it was you will presently see—that nearly every one of my acquaintance had found some pleasant "lane" or current of life's ocean that gave them far smoother sailing than I enjoyed. I found my own work full of disappointments, discouragements and worrisomeness, from which I fancied my friends were comparatively free. Still, I was curious to know just how their work affected them, how they felt about it, and to what extent it was really meeting their expectations.

The first person I went to, in search of this information, was a young and popular clergyman. We had been chums in college, and I knew he would readily unburden himself to me if, indeed, he had a burden. We took a long walk into the country; and hardly had we got into the quiet of the fields when, to my utter surprise—for I had not yet begun to lead up to the subject next my heart—he broke out with:

"Oh, dear! I wish I was in your boots!"

"What?" I exclaimed, in amazement.

"I do," he reiterated. "I wish I was in your boots. I envy you every time I think of you. How free you are from the discouragements and perplexities that beset a man in my position! Why, a dozen times in the year I am on the point of giving up—actually giving up—defeated, beaten by the stress of life, unequal to the demands my profession makes upon me. You have no idea what depression of spirits I endure—not now and then, but almost continuously. It is terrible."

I gazed at my companion with undisguised astonishment. "You don't believe it?" he demanded.

"No, I don't," I replied. "It passes my comprehension, when I look at the results of your life, at your work as the world sees it."

"Ah," he sighed, "the world doesn't know anything about the tug of the undertow! The world doesn't know that some of us have to fight to the last ounce of strength to keep our heads above the surface. Yes, my dear fellow, I repeat it—I envy you. You don't know anything about the discouragements of a minister."

That interview sent me home perplexed, you may be sure; for my friend, with his brilliantly successful work in the community, was the last one from whom I had expected any report of personal discouragement or depression of spirits.

But I was bound to investigate further, so I went next to the leading business man in the community, a man of immense material success, of great wealth, of cultivated tastes, which he was able to gratify to the full; a man to whom one would naturally apply the epithet, "fortune's favorite," and whom nine out of ten persons would envy from the bottom of their hearts. I was fortunate in having this man as a companion on the golf-links, one day, and before we returned he had told me what I sought to know. He had fallen greatly short of his expectation for himself, he said. He often regretted having devoted himself

to business, because he had learned—now that it was too late to abandon his choice—that it was not altogether congenial to him. He was depressed by the results of his life. They were not what they might have been were his heart entirely in his work. He was sorry he had not given himself to literary pursuits, and—yes, I shall have to report it as another instance of the irony of fate—he envied me. Business was a constant burden and even aggravation to him, he said. The only peace of mind he found was in the avocations and recreations which took his mind away from the cares he detested.

And this was the man whom nearly our whole community (including myself) had set upon a pedestal of admiration! His work had no inspiration, no joy for him. He was depressed by a constant sense of failure and disappointment.

Some weeks later, I spent a night with a friend in another city, who is a professor in a well-known American college. How often I have looked with desire upon his dignified and honored and seemingly ideal life! But he told me that he was discontented. His class room duties were so pressing that he had no time for original investigation and production. His life was slipping away without any results of permanent scientific value. He was discouraged and disheartened as he contemplated it. Moreover, he was a poor man. His salary was small. It was difficult for him to make both ends meet, and he saw no hope of laying by a sum sufficient to enable him to retire and give himself up to original investigation. A discouraged man—discouraged with his work—and I had admired him so unsuspectingly.

It is scarcely necessary that I should add further details of my experiment, or lengthen the list of those whom I interviewed, the results were so nearly alike in all cases. I found two men—a doctor and a farmer—who thought they had chosen the best employment in the world, who envied no man his kind of work, but who were far from satisfied with the results of their own efforts, and confessed to periods of depression and almost discouragement. One man, a lawyer, was profane and cynical in his estimate of himself, his profession, the world, and me. Yet he was accounted the leading lawyer of his county bar.

On the whole, I have come back to my own quiet workshop with the conviction that a certain amount of "divine discontent" with one's work is universal and, presumably, wholesome; that some discouragement and depression of spirits as regards immediate results, are inevitable for us all; and that no one profession or trade involves more of this discouragement than another, in spite of the general impression to that effect among those who are engaged in it. It is certainly true that "misery loves company," so that it is some comfort to me to have learned these things.

My conclusion is this: that we ought to look at our work more in the large and the final, more in its totality, less in its variable and uncertain details. Most of us, who get so discouraged and depressed at times, are really, it is fair to say, doing some useful and helpful work in the world and meeting with a reasonable degree of success and appreciation. Let us judge work, even our own, as God judges it, largely, providently, for the future rather than the present, and not hinder or imperil its final result by losing courage over vexing and unfavorable incidents which may be only temporary in their effect.—The Standard.

Prayer Answered.

Rev. David C. Gilmore of the Baptist Mission, Henzada, Burma, sends this account to a contemporary of a remarkable answer to prayer as related by a Karen in one of their conferences for Bible study:—

"Last year I went down to Rangoon carrying five hundred rupees to buy earth oil for our chapel. [Rupees 500 in day's wages for a labouring man for 1,000 days—over three years.] When I had arrived in Rangoon and put up in a house there, I had occasion to go out, so I intrusted the bag of money to my companion, charging him to watch it carefully until I returned. When I came back, I found that he had left the room for a time, and during his absence the money had disappeared. I said to my companion: 'We can't do anything about this. You didn't watch the money as you should have done, and it's gone, and there's nothing we can do about it now.'"

"Then I sat down and prayed. My countenance fell, and I didn't want to speak to anybody. I sat there dejected, praying from time to time. From about half-past eight, when I missed the money, until after one, I must have prayed as much as ten times. I said, 'O Lord, we are poor

people, and this money was for Thy house. It is a hard thing for us. Help us.'

"About one o'clock a man came in with the bag, opened it, and said, 'There's your money.' In answer to prayer, God had inclined the heart of that thief, who had stolen our money, and already carried it off a long way, to bring it back and restore it to us."

How a Martyr was Converted.

I remember being in Dr. Campbell's house, one day, when he told me that a minister was preaching at Whitefield's old Tabernacle in Moorfields, one evening, when there were present, under very strange circumstances, two young men who had fallen into dissipated habits, and who had made an appointment with each other for the commission of some gross sin that very night. Had they committed what they had planned, it may be that they would have plunged themselves into a career of vice from which they might never have been extricated. They were passing by the Moorfields Tabernacle, which some of you remember, and as they wanted to know the time at which they were to meet for this unholy purpose one of them said to the other, "Go in, and see the time; there is sure to be a clock in there." But the clock was not fixed as it is here, at the back of the preacher, but the other way; so the young man had to go some little distance further in than he intended, in order to see the clock. If I remember rightly, the preacher that night was Matthew Wilks, and he was just uttering some quaint remark, something that arrested the young man's attention and held him fast in the aisle. His companion waited outside for a time, but it was cold; so he thought he had better go in and look at the clock himself, and fetch his friend out. He went in; the arrows of the Lord pierced the hearts of both of them, and the second of those young men was John Williams, the famous missionary, and at last the martyr of Erromanga.—C. H. Spurgeon

The Sermon That is After a Soul.

The sermon that is after a soul is, like the Master, "filled with compassion." It will have in it what was in Christ's eyes when he looked on Peter, with the curses and denials scarce off that poor disciple's lips. It will have in it what was in Christ's voice when he stood weeping over Jerusalem, and said, "How oft would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathered her brood under her wings, and ye would not." The severest rebuke will get its chief severity from this deep undertone of divine compassion. And whether it be warning or entreaty, command or invitation, the terrors of the law or the forgiveness of the Gospel, the pathos of a suffering and beseeching and pursuing love will bathe it all, and make it clear that if the sermon does not bring the prodigal home, it will be because he preferred to trample on his Father's heart and murder mercy.

Brethren of the ministry, what are sermons to "the times," compared with sermons to the eternities? Sermons of instruction are indeed priceless. But the Gospel is not simply food for saints. It is a cry of alarm. It is a word of rescue. It is a call to repentance. If sinners are not brought to Christ, how can they be built up in Christ? Let it never be forgotten that souls are before us every Sabbath—sinful, unsaved, perishing, lost souls. Men of God, "throw out the life-line!"—Herriek Johnson.

Forgiving.

"We can forgive the one who injures us," said a wise student of human nature, "but the one whom we find it almost impossible to forgive is the one whom we have injured."

We do not state the case in that way to ourselves; nevertheless it is true. There is nothing that will more surely incline us to dislike another than the knowledge that we have in some way wronged him. His acts, whatever they may be, take on unworthy motives to us. It is easy to believe any evil report concerning him. The sight of him awakens animosity. Why? Because deep in the spirit, too deep for our conscious recognition of it, perhaps, lies a desire to justify oneself, and to prove that he deserved the treatment we have given him. For the one who has wronged us we may find excuses, but for the one whom we have even a secret suspicion of having wronged there is a solace in finding condemnation. The sight of him makes us uncomfortable; his presence wounds our self-respect. We cannot forgive him for making it impossible to forgive ourselves.

"What has he ever done to you?" is the question commonly asked when an unexplained enmity manifests itself.

A question we might more profitably ask ourselves would be: "What have we ever done to him?"—Christian Uplook.

What is the Standard of Right Giving?

Not what we give, but the spirit in which we give, is the measure of our giving as God sees it. Jesus said of the two mites cast into the temple treasury by the poor widow, in comparison with the gifts of the rich: "This poor widow cast in more than they all; for all these did of their superfluity cast in unto the gifts; but she of her want did cast in all the living that she had." An old divine quaintly expressed it: "The Lord doesn't look so much at what you've given as at what you've got left." Yet it is not the amount, actual or relative, that we give, that is made the measure for our judging. It is our spirit as shown in our giving. A cup of cold water only, given in the name of a disciple to one of God's dear ones, will be counted as a gift to Christ himself. That gift may count more than the superfluities of the rich, or than the all of the poor widow. It is the spirit, not the gift, of the giver, that Christ judges.—S. S. Times.

Discouraged Christian Workers.

Have you noticed that the engine-driver in charge of a train, when he stops at a station, pays hardly any attention to the traffic at the station, no attention to the passengers—whether some millionaire is traveling or not? But when the train stops he is out with the oil-flash, lifting the little brass covers, and pouring in a few drops in one place, then another, to prevent friction and to make everything work easily; for friction means breakdown, and breakdown may mean disaster. So with Christ. Are you, my brother, the engine pulling and tugging away at some church in a backwoods district or in a godless town? My sister, are you an engine, in your own way pulling and tugging at some Bible class or Sabbath school or tract distribution in some wretched slum? You do not mean to give it up, but you feel as if the wheels are barely turning. You are making nothing of it. Think of this: The Lord looks after the engine especially. He comes with the oil of comfort and pours it on your overheated spirit.—John McNeill.

The Teacher's Responsibility.

Speaking of the Sunday-school teacher's responsibility, Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman says "that probably he stands between the scholar and life or death. A flippant teacher may turn a child forever against sacred things; a careless teacher may plant in a little life a seed which would produce a bad harvest; an unsaved teacher may be the cause of a loss of a soul; while a faithful, consecrated, godly teacher may in one lesson lead a scholar to Christ, and add a nation to the kingdom of God. I have in mind a missionary of wide reputation, a minister of international reputation, and an evangelist of world-wide fame, all led to Christ as boys in the Sunday school, the teacher being used of God to reach them. The missionary has made continents glow with the glory of God, the minister has led multitudes to a better Christian experience, the evangelist has led tens of thousands to the Master. Only God knows the turn that might have been given to these lives if these boys had fallen into the hands of a flippant, careless, or unsaved teacher."

EASING THE CHEST.

It is the cold on the chest that scares people and makes them sick and sore. The cough that accompanies the chest cold is racking. When the cold is a hard one and the cough correspondingly severe, every coughing spell strains the whole system. We feel sure that if we could only stop coughing for a day or so we could get over the cold, but we try everything we know of or can hear of in the shape of medicine. We take big doses of quinine until the head buzzes and roars; we try to sweat it out; we take big draughts of whiskey, but the thing that has its grip on the chest hangs on, and won't be shaken loose.

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The Preciousness of Christ.

To the young, Christ is not always as precious as he is to those who are further advanced in life. As the years come and go, and the day of life is lengthened by experience of sorrow and trial and affliction, we come to

know Christ better and better, and to love him more and more. Phillips Brooks says: "Christ, to the Christian growing older, seems to be what the sun is to the developing day, which it lightens from the morning to the evening. When the sun is in the zenith in the broad noonday, men do their various works by his light, but they do not often look up to him. It is the sunlight that they glory in, flooding a thousand tasks with clearness, making a million things beautiful. But as the world rolls into the evening, it is the sun itself at sunset that men gather to look at and admire and love."

How God Leads.

We need never be anxious about our mission. We need never perplex ourselves in the least in trying to know what God wants us to do, what place he wants us to fill. Our whole duty is to do well the work of the present hour.

There are some people who waste entire years wondering what God would have them do, and expecting to have their life-work pointed out to them. But this is not the divine way. If you want to know God's plan for you to-day. If he has a wider sphere, a larger place for you, he will bring you to it at the right time, and then that will be God's plan for you and your mission.—Selected.

God will credit us with what we would have been if we might. He that has the missionary's heart, though he be tied to an office stool, is reckoned as one of that noble band; the woman at Zarephath, who did nothing more than share her last meal with the prophet, shall have a prophet's reward; the soul that thrills with the loftiest impulses, which the cares of the widowed mother or dependent relatives stay in fulfillment, will be surprised one day to find itself credited with the harvest which would have been reaped had those seed-germs been cast on more propitious soil. In the glory David will find himself credited with the building of the temple on Mt. Zion.

—F. B. Myer.

There is always a remnant waiting for the true word of God. When a restored altar in Jerusalem may "fell to him out of Israel, for they saw that the Lord his God was with him."

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