

'So Tired.'

BY ANNIE GRIER CALLENDER.

I am so tired, dear; full well I know
I should be made of sterner stuff, and go
Right bravely through the mist of silent
tears,
Until the pathway narrows down, and nears
God's pasture green.

But I am tired, dear, and all the way
Seems to wind up and up—I may not stay
To lean against you, nor to touch your
hand.

'Tis hard to journey on alone to that strange
land—
The rest unseen.

It must be just beyond; I will be strong—
I shall not faint now. The way is long,
The path is rough, but one can rest and
pray;
God will not let me falter by the way—
I need not fear.

—The Interior.

Christ and the Dance.

A pastor complains that his young people have become enamored of the dance and to such an extent that they are neglecting their duties as Christians, and are obliterating the distinction between Christians and the ungodly. Consequently the church is weak, and few souls can be gathered into the kingdom of grace and glory.

The complaint of the pastor is not his only, though such is the general sentiment among our Baptist churches that it is taken for granted that to become a Christian and a church member is to forego the pleasures and practices which have long been de-nominated worldly, and which seem to be contemplated by the apostle when he said that "the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." We once heard of a pastor to whom came a young woman, asking him whether it was consistent with the rules of his church for its members to engage in dancing, etc. She was not a Christian, but was seriously considering the question, and the thought that if she united with the church she would have to give up dancing was standing right in her way, and her peril was constantly increasing. The pastor was a wise man, and he did not repel her by at once saying Yes, she must give up dancing if she became a member of his church. But he said to her: "My friend, it is not a question whether you give up dancing, nor whether you unite with this or any other church; it is a question of the salvation of your soul. If you give your heart to Christ and become his indeed, as you must do, if you are to be saved from eternal death, after that you may dance as much as you please."

Of course, the young lady was taken by surprise; but the pastor repeated his language and solemnly reaffirmed it. He caused her to understand that to become a Christian is to become a new creature, or as Paul has it, "a new creation;" it is to enter into a new life, with changed tastes and sympathies and sources of enjoyment. When the soul has been renewed and the life of Christ, the Holy Spirit, becomes its tenant, "old things have passed away, and behold, all things have become new." The young woman finally saw it and accepted it, and, giving her heart to Christ, she found that she no longer desired to dance, but found far more pleasure in "the things that accompany salvation."

We are not now denouncing the dance as a thing of the devil, claiming that for a Christian to dance is to renounce the faith and to go over to the enemy of Christ and of souls. We do not say that. But we do say that there is something about "the dance of modern society" which seems to be incompatible with an earnest, faithful and profitable Christian life. We do not say that for a Christian family to allow its young people to spend an hour or two in a dance in the parlor, with some approved friends and under the eyes of parents, is altogether inconsistent with Christian experience and Christian living. We do not say that a family where such a thing is occasionally practiced can not be a Christian family in either head or members. But we do say that parents who bring up their children in the practice of promiscuous dancing, in what are denominated "balls" and dance parties, with no limit to the hours, are not only imperiling the future of their children, whether male or female, but are bidding defiance to the best sentiment of the Christian world—a sentiment not simply produced by the pulpit, but the result of large experience on the part of those who have been most familiar with the ball and its accessories. There ought to be no question in the thoughtful mind as to the evil atmosphere of the ball room. In almost all cases it is produced by those who can not be trusted with the virtue of the sexes,

All the accessories of the ball room are produced with a purpose to excite and unnerve the habitues. The music, the attire, the whirl, the maze, the contact—all are adapted to produce a condition most favorable to further temptation. And not only the dance itself, but the waiting, the corner "chats," the unusual attention of the sexes to each other, are adapted to arouse thought and feeling which endanger the integrity of the participant. It is a place of imminent peril, and all who frequent it must be aware of the danger.

We do not say more. There are other things sadly true, which might be said, and which can be conjured by the thoughtful mind, and which ought to cause parents and young people to shun the ball room as they would shun a pesthouse. It might be said, in a word, that more lives have been sacrificed in the ball room than in the lazar houses—the sacrifice of all that makes life worth living and gives peace to the death-bed. There are probably two thousand young women in Cincinnati who can testify to the loss sustained, the ruin wrought in connection with the ball room; and nearly all of these are from "the country" or country villages.

When, therefore, young men and young women, professing to hope in Christ, to have experienced repentance of sin and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, confess that they find such pleasure in the ball room and its associations that they can not and will not forego it, they beget in us a very serious doubt whether they are what they have professed to be; whether they have ever known the grace of God. We cannot think it possible that Christ lives in them, as he does in the renewed soul. It is not simply because of the fact of dancing that our churches raise a voice of warning and declare it incompatible with church membership. It is because of the fact of such indulgence on the part of a professed Christian is good evidence that there has been a mistake in the encouragement of hope and in the recognition of a new life in the soul. Christ in the soul is a barrier against "the desires of the flesh and of the mind." It is not an answer to say that the dance is "no worse than certain games, etc.," practiced by young people. That may be true, but probably is not true. There are other improprieties in which young people may indulge and from which they may get harm; but they will not be protected from these by indulgence in that which the experience of the wise and good has so generally condemned. —Journal and Messenger.

Christian Stewardship.

A steward is one who takes charge of and administers the property of another. The property does not belong to the steward, but to his master. At the same time the steward is made responsible for the use to which the property is put, for the master gives to him the right and the duty to judge what is best to do, and to act accordingly to the verdict of his judgment. Abraham had his steward, as also had Joseph, and they handed over to these men the right to use their property to the best of their ability, at the same time holding themselves responsible for the general results. Thus one side of the steward's position places upon him a grave responsibility.

There is also another side. If he looks after his master's property, his master is under obligation to take care of him and supply all his real wants. The steward has his own living provided for, and a good living it generally is. This being clear, we may leave it, and pass on to look at what we are now concerned with more particularly—the steward's standing and the steward's responsibility.

A steward must be faithful. Dishonesty here is an offence that nothing can atone for. Whatever other qualities the steward may have he must first of all be faithful, for with such truths committed to him he could easily do grave injustice to his master, having such frequent opportunities to misappropriate his master's property.

Again, a steward must be wise. It is not enough that a man should be honest, although that means a great deal. There is also need of wisdom, so that the best results may be obtained with the means available. There may be a sum of money to invest. The steward must be wise, so as to put it where it will be safe, and yet yield the largest honest returns. There may be a portion of his master's estate that is unproductive because it needs attention in the way of draining, or fencing, or in some other way. The steward must have ability to see this, and he must use that ability.

A steward must be industrious. The world moves quickly. Whatever any one undertakes there is always much

that is pulling the other way and tending to undo what he is trying to accomplish.

Are Christians regarded in the scriptures as God's stewards? They are. It is true that the number of passages where the word is directly used is smaller than we might at first suppose. But the idea is found all over the New Testament. To name no other, we may refer to what the Apostle Paul says to the Corinthians, "Ye are not your own."

If then Christians are regarded as stewards, it is clear that they are made responsible for the use of what our Master has placed at their disposal. This is a great responsibility, and by it real power is put into the hands of the Christian. He cannot be free from his responsibility by simply ignoring it. The time will come when we shall all have to "give an account of our stewardship." And the present is the time to make ready for that day of account. It follows also that the Christian as a steward will have his own needs provided for by his Master. This is the privilege of his standing, and he can make his mind easy on that score. It must also be true that a Christian must be faithful in administering his talents; that he must be wise in seeking for them the most productive investments; and that he must be constantly at work in order to meet the forces that are against him.

Over what things is this stewardship to be exercised? The man who has any ability to present Gospel truth is a steward of that gift. He is a "steward of the mysteries of God," and he must be faithful, and wise, and industrious, in administering them. The man who has influence is a steward over his influence, and in the use of his influence he must be "blameless as the steward of God." The Christian who has means is held responsible for his use of those means. What has he that he did not receive? And why has he received these means? Certainly not to please himself, but to do good. Upon this matter there is need of a mighty re-awakening. There is too frequently a disposition to imagine that our money is our own to do what we like with it. But this is not the Christian view. Our property is God's, and He has given us control over it, as His stewards; and if we use it to promote our own ease, or ambition, or pleasure, or sense of security, instead of administering it for the glory of God, whose stewards we are, the day of awakening will be sad and bitter. On the other hand nothing could be sweeter than the words that will be spoken to the faithful steward: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." —Can. Baptist.

Posture in Prayer.

A Correspondent asks for light as to posture in prayer.

The essential matter is that our posture must be such as to express the reverence which we feel toward God. At different times, and in different circumstances, this may differ. In sickness a man may pray while lying on his back; in sudden temptation a man may rightly pray as he walks on the street; in secret prayer we may prefer one posture, and in public service we may rightly use another, provided it be expressive of the reverence for God which we feel.

The standing posture has scriptural warrant. In the eighteenth of Genesis we read that Abraham "stood before the Lord;" in 1 Kings 8:22 we read that at the dedication of the Temple Solomon "stood . . . and spread forth his hands toward heaven." The Pharisee in the Temple was doubtless following the custom of Christ's day when he "stood and prayed;" we may infer as much from the language of Christ in Matthew 6:5: "They love to pray standing in the synagogues," etc.

The kneeling posture has a like abundant warrant. Part of Solomon's prayer was in a standing posture; as we learn from 2 Chron. 6:13 a part of it was in a kneeling posture. In Ephesians 3:14, Paul says: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father." Daniel (see ch. 6:10) "kneeled upon his knees," in prayer at home. Jesus in his private prayer (Luke 22:41) kneeled down. In social prayer Paul (Acts 20:36 and 21:5) "bowed upon his knees."

Prostration is recognized as the posture that is adapted when the suppliant most strongly feels the greatness of God and his own weakness or sin. In the fourth and fifth of Revelation we read that the four and twenty elders "fell down before the Lamb." This posture is associated with worship in Numbers 16:4, 22, 45; in Ezekiel 1:28; in Mark 5:22; in Revelation 1:17 and 7:11. There is no recognition in the word of God of a position of sitting upright

in the time of prayer. Indeed such a posture is obviously unseemly in that it utterly fails to express reverence and also fails to cultivate reverence.

Especially let the eyes be kept under control during prayer, lest they form a means for the entrance of worldly thoughts into the mind and thus sever entirely between us and the true spirit of prayer, yea, lead us into wandering thoughts—in itself a sin.—Chris. Observer.

The Healing Touch.

Christ's touch, when he was on earth, brought sight to the blind, healing to the sick, vigor to the limbs of the lame, life to the dead. And you and I can have that touch, far more truly and far more mightily operative upon us than they did, who only had the contact of his finger, and only derived corporeal blessing. For we can draw near to him, and in union with him by faith and love and obedience can have his Spirit in close contact with our spirits, and strengthening us for all service, and for every task. Brethren, that touch which gives strength is a real thing. It is no mere piece of mystical exaggeration when we speak of our spirits being in actual contact with Christ's Spirit. Many of us have no clear conception, and still less a firm realization, of that closer than corporeal contact, more intimate than any possible physical union, which is the great gift of God in Jesus Christ, and brings to us, if we will life and strength according to our need. I would that the popular Christianity of this day had a far larger infusion of the sound mystical element that lies in the New Testament Christianity and did not talk so exclusively about a Christ that is for us as to have all but lost sight of the second stage of our relation to Christ, and lost a faith in a Christ that is in us. Brethren, he can lay his hand upon your spirit hand. He can flash light into your spirit's eye from his eye. He can put breath and eloquence into your spirit's lips from his lips, and his heart beating against yours can transfuse—if I may so say—into us his own life blood, which cleanses from all sin, and fits for all conflict.—Alexander McLaren, D. D.

Folly of Being Powerless.

If an electric car stands motionless on the tracks, it is nothing against the power of electricity. If an invalid has no appetite, and cannot go out of doors at night, it is no argument against things good to eat and the joy of starlit air. If a man does not know a flower by name, nor a poem by heart, it is no indictment of the beauty of a rose or the charm of some poem. If we bear the name of Christ, but give no other sign of him, if we go through the forms of godliness, but live powerless lives, it is a thousand reproaches to us. To be powerless when Christ has all power, and we can have all we want, is an arraignment to which we can make no answer that is not self-incriminating.—S. S. Times.

The man who says he would like to get rid of his bad heart, but is not willing to get rid of his bad business, probably only means that he is willing to have a better reputation, if it will not require him to have a better character.

CROUPY COUGHS OF CHILDREN.

The tendency to croup is a foe that all parents have to fight. Croup comes in the night, when the help must be right at hand if it is to be helped at all. Adamson's Botanic Cough Balsam is a blessing to all families where there are children subject to attacks of croup or any mean cough. It has a wonderful reputation for its efficiency and fully deserves it. You cannot tell what night your child may wake up choking to death with croup. In such a case what do you do? Send for a doctor and wait an hour, or perhaps two hours, while the child is grasping for breath? How much simpler where the true specific for croupy coughs and all throat troubles is right at hand. Indeed, no other way is safe with young children in the house.

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The Evil of Dissension.

It is noticeable that while in the Epistles of St. Paul "perilous times" are often prophesied, the only perils Paul dreaded were those which arose from within the body of the Church itself. He never feared the greatest of the Caesars as he feared the weakest of the saints "gone wrong." The wolves he warned against, as he told the Ephesian elders, were those "from your own number." Persecution only solidifies a Church, but dissension disintegrates it. The fruit of our orchards and the sweetest roses in our garden are blighted by the worm in the core, the canker in the heart. One sinner destroyeth much good, but nowhere so much as in the Church. A fault-finding Church member will do the cause of Christ more harm than a profane and ribald infidel. The member who must rule or ruin usually finds that he rules only to ruin.—The Interior.

More Than Riches.

Zaccheus was rich, but he seems to have awakened, suddenly, to a realization of the fact that his riches could not raise him high enough to see Jesus; and, like the sensible man that he was, he got down from his pedestal of dignity, ran before the multitude, and climbed into a tree. Many of the rich men of to-day could learn a valuable lesson from the conduct of Zaccheus. They seem to hope that, by using and bestowing of their riches in a way to secure the applause of men, they will attract the notice of Christ and receive his commendation and forgiveness. Alas, they are doomed to disappointment. He who would attract the notice of the lowly Nazarene must earnestly desire to see him and, forgetting for the time his dignity, and riches, must improve the best means at hand for coming into his presence.—The Telescope.

A Skeptic Converted.

Years ago there was in a certain village a young physician who seemed to be a confirmed skeptic. At last, to the surprise of good people, he presented himself to the church committee as a candidate for church membership, and when asked what called his attention to the personal claims of Christ, he answered, "For years I have sat by my office window, and each Friday evening in storm and fair weather I have seen good Deacons G— and P— walk past to the Church prayer meeting, and their constant 'going' made me think."

It was not what they said, for he had not heard them say anything, but it was their "keeping at it" which shattered the infidelity of his heart.—S. J.

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