

"O YE OF LITTLE FAITH."

A sower sowed his seed, with doubt's
and fears,
"I dare not hope," he said, "for fruit-
ful ears;
Poor hath the harvest been in other
years."

Yet ere the August moon had waxen
old

Fair stood his fields, a waving sea of
gold;

He reaped a thousandfold!

In a dark place one dropped a kindly
word;

"So weak my voice," he sighed, "per-
chance none heard,

Or, if they did, no answering impulse
stirred."

Yet in an hour his fortunes were at
stake;

One put a life in peril for his sake,
Because that word he spake!

"Little I have to give, O Lord," one
cried,

"A wayward heart that oft hath Thee
denied;

Couldst Thou with such a gift be sat-
isfied?"

Yet when the soul had ceased its
mournful plaint

God took the love that seemed so poor
and faint,

And from it made a saint!

CHRISTIAN BURKE.

**BE CONSISTENT.**

NEWELL DWIGHT HILLS.

You will not join a church because of inconsistent church members! Consistency, then, is the word you wish to emphasize. Very well. Here is the world of trade and commerce. To-morrow, merchants will adulterate their goods, traders will tamper with their weights, milkmen will water their milk, drapers will sell cotton for silk, clerks will steal money from the bank, and the whole kingdom of trade stands for hypocrisies and lies. Since you do not care to associate with hypocrites, withdraw from business, and pledge yourself never again to enter the kingdom of commerce. If inconsistent members keep you out of the church, why do not inconsistent members keep you out of business? Here is the kingdom of law. To-morrow lawyers will be tricksters. They will suborn witnesses. They will conceal evidence. They will deal in subterfuges. But because some lawyers are unprofessional, will that compel you to stand aloof from the study of jurisprudence? Here is the kingdom of love and marriage. To-morrow some man will play false to his marriage vow, and some woman will profane the holiest sanctities, and those who have solemnly pledged themselves to the law of love will stand forth clothed with hypocrisy as with a garment. But does their inconsistency mean that you can never stand at a marriage altar, and never swear fealty in the name of an eternal friendship? Why, there are spots on the sun, but we need the sun for harvest. To be consistent, you must give up the Venus de Milo, because there is a flaw in the marble. We must pull down the Parthenon, because there are black stains on the columns. Now, something is wrong in the man who refuses allegiance to the church because of inconsistency, but turns around and gives allegiance to a hundred other institutions, in the very face of greater inconsistencies.

The time has gone forever for men

to plead bigotry and bad lives of the unworthy disciples of a Master who confessedly is worthy. Peter and Judas were not Christian and misrepresented their Master. But in that hour of misrepresentation they ceased to be disciples and became hypocrites. Let all those who dislike hypocrisy leave immediately the company of Judas, and Peter with his denial and join the ranks of the other ten. We grant that there are men outside the church who are better than some in the church. Now and then a youth appears in the realm of art who is blessed with such native genius that instinctively he understands the laws of the drawing and perspective and the laws of harmonious color. And side by side with him is another youth who for years has been in the school under a great artist-master, and after long drill can scarcely equal his brother who is self-taught. But shall this gifted youth who has received so much from his parents and his God declaim against his father, or despise the school of art?

There are many poor pupils in schools and colleges, but when you find some youth who is far from being the ideal scholar, do not rail against the college and the university. The poorer the scholar the more necessary the maintenance of the school in which he studies. If men in the church are sinful and weak and full of error, it is the more necessary to strengthen the church that manhood later may be strengthened. Unconsciously, he who urges the inconsistency of Christians and rails against their errors, has forged a weapon that turns against himself.

How ungenerous are all these excuses, as well as how wicked! We live in God's world. He hath fitted up this world-house as no prince hath ever fitted up the halls of a palace. We breathe His air, are warmed by His summers, we feed upon His harvests, we are pilgrims who stoop and drink at His fountains. The angel of His providence goes before us to prepare life's way; the angel of His mercy follows us to recover us from our transgressions. And how shall men meet such overflowing generosity save with instant obedience? What mark across the page or memory so black as the mark of ingratitude?

**AN ABIDING LIFE.**

It is sad to think that a life which has been built up with so much toil and pains should utterly pass away and be forgotten. Surely the Creator did not intend it to be so. As a house is builded of stones taken from the quarry—hewn, polished, and fitted to their places one upon another—so life is built up of the deeds men do. Every day we are building. In everything we do we are building.

We do not all build alike. One builds of wicked deeds—shameful deeds, base deeds. So rotten is the material that the walls will not stand until they are finished. Another builds of something more durable. He chooses wealth. He adds farm to farm, store to store, house to house. Surely this will stand. It is solid as masonry and the solid earth. Men pass by and say, What a splendid block! This the Brown block. What a fine farm! This is the Brown farm. What a magnificent estate! This is the Brown estate. His possessions are called by name. His name shall endure because it is builded into houses and lands. His life will abide, for he has put it into granite walls and broad acres.

Soon the owner dies and is buried, but his name is permitted to remain on his property for a time. In a few years the estate passes into other hands. Improvements are made, and the name of Brown is left out and another name put in. The estate no longer goes by the old name, and soon it will be necessary to search old, musty records to find evidence that such a man ever lived. Ere long the very name disappears altogether and the life is gone, for his whole life was in his material possessions.

The Christian builds his life of benevolence, righteousness, truth, goodness, love. The outward character of his deeds is not his life. His life is in the spirit of what he does. He does not live for his store, his money, his fields. These are the shell. His real life is spiritual. It shall abide. When houses and lands have passed into the hands of other owners the life which he put into the world remains, and it is his forever. The life of Simon the fisherman abides. The life of Levi the publican abides. The life of Bunyan the tinker abides. If their names should pass into oblivion their lives would remain with men on the earth. The saints who have builded their lives of truth and righteousness and left no name in history have left what is better—an abiding life of goodness. Their lives are builded into the everlasting temple of righteousness with which the King of glory is filling the universe, and they cannot pass away. The life of the most obscure saint on the earth abideth forever.—*Chris. Advocate.*

**THE SPIRIT OF PEACE.**

Peace was a legacy which Christ left to His people when He said, "My peace I give unto you." It is that deep repose of spirit which we receive when we enthrone the God of peace as the Lord of our hearts and lives. When this peace becomes the paramount consideration everything that disturbs the profound rest of the soul will be instinctively avoided, and every act that would weave the thinnest veil between us and the face of our adorable Saviour we shall instantly shrink from.

A man who is exploring an old well lowers a candle before him, knowing that where that can live he can live. If the light goes out, he knows that it is safe to go no farther. The peace of God is the Christian's test-flame. Anything that in the slightest degree disturbs it should be instantly discarded, otherwise the storm has begun which will wreck the fair beauty and happiness of the soul.

The peace of God will approve of nothing into which Christ cannot be introduced and assigned the seat of honor. It should be to us what the barometer is to the sailor, and if it sinks let us take warning. Whenever we find it in peril we must retrace our steps. In all matters of doubt, when contending impulses and reasons distract, and seem to pull in opposite directions, our safety is to "let the peace of God" decide which is to prevail. Under His watchful rule the soul settles down into resolute and calm obedience to the law of Christ. Happy are those who have enthroned the peace of God in their hearts. We share with Christ then, not only the peace that He gives, but "the peace which lay like a great calm on the sea, on His own deep heart."—*The Rev. Thomas Cook.*

THE WITNESS OF CHARACTER.

Nothing imparts life but life; knowledge cannot do it, nor wisdom, nor strength, nor any gift of grace. Life flows only from life, and not until knowledge, wisdom, strength, and grace become vitalized by incarnation in a human life have they power to reproduce themselves in others. Abstract talk about patriotism leaves the boy's imagination cold; but one glance at a living hero, and his heart leaps up with joy that after all, the dreams of youth are true. Beauty has made many a pen eloquent; but the soul is not moved until the vision comes before it, and thenceforth words are not needed. Love has many beautiful tributes in the books; but no one understands its mystery and its sacredness until it possesses his own soul or he sees it shining from the soul of another. The world is full of these noble incarnations of truth and goodness and purity; and this revelation of divine realities is continued age after age in countless households and in unnumbered communities. Many a patient, quiet woman has been to her children a chapter of that great Bible of life which God is continually writing. Many a wife has been, to a husband less noble and steadfast, as the light of a star, which no darkness could quench, and whose gentle shining has been a part of heaven to him.

Fortunate are they whose ideals, unrealized in their own characters, walked beside them in the daily ministry and fidelity of other, and who are bound, therefore, to faith in the nobler possibilities of life.—*Great Thoughts.*

**LIVING EPISTLES**

Known and read of all men. Christian lives are about the only books the world ever reads, and as the world reads impressions are made, not as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, but as revealed in us. There are many who do not study God's Word, but they do study the church. Opportunities come, we use them, and as we do we lead men to Christ, or we drive them farther away.

David realized his state and standing when he said: "Cleanse thou me from secret faults." "Create in me a clean heart, O God." "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit; then will I teach transgressors (by my life and example) thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

Am I a living epistle. Does God shine out of my life. Is God satisfied with me, and can He trust me. If not my whole life is, and will be a failure. "Ye are the light of the world"—light dispels darkness. "Ye are the salt of the earth"—salt preserves from decay. By the Master's help, you and I may be useful.—*Exchange.*

**THE EXPLANATION.**

When Hannah More was dying she said three words: "Light, light, light." Then she went up on the wings of light to the city of light. A neighbor of Hannah More's died near the same time, and made all hideous about him with his cry: "It's so black, so black!" How do you explain the difference? Hannah More was scared to death at a little mouse. Her neighbor was the boasted bully and infidel of the country, bragging that there was no God, man, or devil that he was afraid of. The only rational explanation to a reasonable mind is, Christ was with Hannah More.