

The Christian Life.

"COME UNTO ME."

When men revile thee till the way grows dreary
In which thy feet so long have blameless trod,
When friends condemn thee and the heart is weary
Beneath the chastening of misfortune's rod,
Then turn unto the Master's kind bequest:
"Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."

Be not cast down; behold, the roses borrow
Fresh buds of promise from the cloud-rapt day—
Buds that shall blossom in a fair tomorrow,
And seem the sweeter for the rude delay;
So may the clouds beget the promise blest:
"Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."

Fret not thy soul, though now misjudged and slighted,
If thy own heart no condemnation feels.
Thy bruises shall be healed, thy wrongs be righted,
In God's own time; He knoweth all our needs,
And gently bids the weary and oppressed:
"Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."

—Alfred Cole.

"WHATSOEVER" CHRISTIANS.

BY HENRY FORCE.

The Bible whatsoever is a large company, and we cannot undertake to mention them all in the space of a brief article. Every child of God is called upon to be a whatsoever Christian. If the whatsoevers of God's Word be graven upon our hearts and carried out in our lives, we shall add greatly to our own blessedness and to the world's sum of profitable examples. Paul's exhortation to the Colossians, "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men," is one worthy of all acceptance, and suggests the only safe rule for the disciple of Christ. It is sweeping and continuous in its demands. It is an injunction for any day and every day, and when obeyed, forms a protecting hedge on every side of the believer. Life's aspirations would be more noble and less selfish if tested by and made to conform to this reasonable command, while great achievements would ensure an eternal weight of glory, where now they often win but the ephemeral plaudits of men. Even the seemingly lowly duties of life would take on a splendor altogether absent from the dull routine of the daily walk, were this exhortation made life's invariable motto. That which is done unto the Lord will be done well, whether it be great or small in itself. The motive makes the character and worth of all deeds. A man's prayers are idle breath if intended to impress men, while chopping kindling wood is a worthy spectacle for angels if done unto the Lord.

Whatsoever we do is to be done heartily. The poet Longfellow's ship-builder did well because his heart was

in his art. That to which we cannot give the heart must be poor work, for no honest work and no good work is unworthy of the heart's best interest. It were worth while to write these words, "Do it heartily," in letters of gold and to let them shine ever in gleaming lustre before our eyes. It will be difficult to do much of our necessary work heartily unless we do it as to the Lord. Happy is the soul who can honestly label his completed tasks, "as to the Lord." Secular pursuits so-called become sacred while followed in the spirit involved in the thought as to the Lord, while so-called sacred duties and sacred services lose all sanctity when otherwise performed. Life would be transformed for some of us did the spirit of the injunction apostolic permeate its words, and deeds and such a state is possible, for grace hath in it great possibilities, and God is ever willing to give grace, and yet more grace, to them who seek it.

It was a very simple word which Mary, the mother of our Lord, gave to the servants in attendance at the wedding feast at Cana, when she said to them, "whatsoever he saith unto you, do," yet she laid down a law for all who profess and call themselves Christians. All things done should be done because he says, "Do," and nothing of which he bids us do should be left unattempted. Grace and guidance, wisdom and energy, and courage, come to the obedient soul who hears Christ say Do, and starts heartily and promptly to obey. Christ tells us that we are his friends if we do whatsoever he commands us, an honor with incentive enough in it to last a lifetime.

It is not to angels, but to men Paul writes, "whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," and obedience is man's chief end, as surely as it is the chief end of an angel's being. That this rule is to be continuous and constantly observed, is evident from the fact that it is prefaced with the words, "whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do." This makes of every meal a possible banquet, and better yet a possible sacrament, while if unobserved, a feast hath less profit in it than a fast, and the glitter of the banquet table pales away or darkens into gloom. Life itself becomes sanctified and beautified and glorified, as the soul puts all things in the whatsoever catalogue. Verily he who will seek to do this shall be helped from on high, and will find himself in the company of holy angels and all good men. One may make his religious fast a farce if he seeks not God's glory thereby, but bread and water are a king's portion when partaken of in the whatsoever spirit.

Paul tells the Galatians that whatsoever a man soweth shall he also reap. Such is the trend of human nature towards evil sowing, that the words have a mournful cadence and one prophetic of bad harvests. Yet should it not so be, for while he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, he that soweth to the Spirit shall as surely of the Spirit reap life everlasting. It is a poor rule, men say, that does not work both ways, and God's rules do this. Indeed they work always and all ways. The heritage of blessing is as sure to the sower of righteousness as is the heritage of curse to the sower of ill. This divine declara-

tion comes with a word to win as well as a word to warn, and many a soul would be driven from the bad and drawn to the good were it better remembered and regarded. Christ speaks of a certain man who went forth to sow, but all men are sowers, and the seed cannot fail to mature in a harvest of gladness or of gloom, according to the seed sown. We tremble at times as we think of the terrible results of a scattered handful of evil seed, but there is a thought, inspiring indeed, in the assurance of the harvest of blessing which may spring from a mere handful of good seed.

Very simple seems the words of the Divine Master as he says, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even to them," but as simple as they seem, this, he tells us, is the law and the prophets. With all their simplicity, the sublimity of the golden rule is so apparent, that men have willingly given it that name, and it stands to-day the ideal of man's behavior in his relations with his fellows. If, as we ponder it, it appears high and unattainable, the fault lies with us, for when the Master commands he is able to make obedience possible. The union of mankind in fraternal regard and interest will not be brought about by the most earnest philanthropists unless their aim be to enshrine the golden rule of Christ in the hearts of men everywhere. Universal obedience to the law of love would make the world a paradise.

Paul gives us a nest of whatsoevers for our profitable consideration in his words to the Philippians: "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, think on these things." He will be a high thinker who makes these things his food for meditation, and no lower level of thought is worthy of those whose duty it is to bring every thought into captivity to Christ. God's whatsoevers are to be put in control of our very thoughts. Thought, word and deed are to be swayed by them. It is manifest that we cannot hope to live up to the whatsoever ideal of the Christian life unless we seek divine incentive and power. Nor need we lack these, for in the list of Bible whatsoevers we find the words of the Master as he says, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," and again, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you." There are other whatsoevers all helping to form a company of holy, happy, helpful counsellors, who wait to lighten and brighten life's pathway and to lead us into abiding fellowship with God here and hereafter. Listening to their voice, the soul shall sing its way to heaven, for in keeping of these divine commandments there is great reward.—Observer.

THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING.

The mystery of human sorrow baffles our understanding, though it does not shake our faith. Here is a Christian, a loving, earnest, devoted disciple, living in self-denial and continuing in prayer, giving means, strength, and effort to the service of the Master. To that disciple are appointed successive trials, the loss of children, the loss of friends, the loss of fortune, the loss of health. And while his neighbor who spends his years in worldly pleasures or strife for material ends increases in prosperity, has apparently no vexing annoyances, nor crushing griefs, the good man baffles with accumulating adversities.

"Why does God permit it all?" inquires an onlooker. The question cannot be answered, because we are not in the counsels of God. But one thing we know, and that is, that out of the mystery of human pain there will emerge for the Christian a dower of compensation: serenity that no storm will ruffle, communion with the Lord in the midnight and tempest, a deeper feeling for others' woes, a readier and surer touch of consolation.

For he doeth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. He knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are dust. In our sorest trials, underneath are the everlasting arms. God is with his own in the furnace fire that burns away the dross and refines their gold. And God, being with them, their souls shall be delivered, though the battle seems to be against them.

We cannot explain why a dear daughter of the King must spend months and years in a darkened chamber chained to a bed on which she cannot turn herself nor move hand or foot. We cannot explain why a man in his prime is suddenly stricken, falling like an ox shivered by the woodman's axe. We cannot explain why dear little children are one by one called from mothers who love them to the last sleep. But we can and do accept whatever God appoints, as a part of his gracious will, and believing that every life is planned by the Lord, our souls have no resistance to will or plan. Whatever our Lord sends is the best and the only right thing for his children.

Character, ripened in God's school and disciplined by suffering, often grows very beautiful and strong as the years go on. The tree that strikes roots has sturdier fibre and more abundant foliage than the little bush that has no depth of soil. The tool that is fit for the master's hand must have an edge of proof. The work that cost the artist pains will most express the artist's meaning.

The saint who has been often under God's loving hand may most reflect glory and the shining of God's face.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

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If a man will be content with nothing but the best thought, best work, best friends, best environment, he need not trouble about avoiding the worst. The good drives out the bad.

What ought a Christian to read? Every book which feeds the intellect. Where ought he to go? Every place where the moral atmosphere is pure and bracing.

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Far more seemly were it for thee to have thy studie full of Bookes than thy Purses full of Mony.—*John Lyle.*