

The Christian Life.

WHERE THE SAVIOUR LEADETH ME.

BY M. V. THOMAS.

When days are dark and dreary
And the light of hope is gone,
And my soul would fain grow weary,
Ere the work of life be done.
Then speaks a voice to me,
"As thy day thy strength shall be."
And trusting, I will follow
Where the Saviour leadeth me.

When the way is filled with danger
And my heart grows faint with fear
I would wander forth a stranger
His tender voice I hear,
"Come, put thy trust in Me
I will be a shield to thee."
And trusting, I still follow
Where the Saviour leadeth me.

When'er the sky is lowering
And earth is filled with gloom;
And the mists of doubt o'erpowering
Hide all beyond the tomb,
Then the promise comes to me
Of pardon full and free.
And trusting still, I follow
Where the Saviour leadeth me.

—Bap. Commonwealth.

Shall We Give Up the Prayer Meeting

The prayer meeting is an old and honored institution, which to remove entirely would be a great loss to the church. And yet were a stranger to enter the average church prayer meeting and to compare it with the numerical strength of the congregation, he would conclude that the representation was a confession of lack of interest and failure. Is the prayer meeting doing the work which it is intended to do for the whole congregation? Does it furnish comfort for weary souls, solve the difficulties of the tempted, increase church loyalty, beget real fellowship through genuine and hearty sociability and minister to spiritual culture? It certainly does one or more of these things for a few persons, but the whole congregation is practically untouched. The average prayer meeting has failed in great measure to do the work for which it was intended. In many parts of Britain it is a preaching service with a small audience, but in Canada it is a social service, which is better for the people. Why is there so great lack of interest in this helpful service? Go to the average prayer meeting and you will find the address of the leader is immature through imperfect preparation, the attendance is small because there have not been personal invitations to saints and sinners, the singing is not hearty, the prayers are long and indefinite, and the meeting drags along without life or a definite aim. It can be improved and made so attractive that the people will attend. Take up the prayer meeting addresses of Beecher, F. B. Meyer or J. H. Jowett, and see what force and sweetness can be put into a message for the spiritual life in a ten or fifteen minutes talk, or look into the longer addresses of Dr. McLaren, and you will learn the secret of gaining a large audience. Every leader ought to ask, "Is there any word from the Lord?" and then go with a definite message to the people. The leader should strive to have several persons invite their friends specially every week. Let the leader set the example of short prayers for a definite object, and sing the old hymns with fervor. A question drawer, wisely

used, will get at the hearts of the people by helping to solve their difficulties. It is a good plan to give an informal talk on some current topic, social, political or literary half an hour before prayer meeting. A list of topics may be followed or the study of one book of the Bible with much profit. Different persons might lead the meeting in rotation with the minister. Look for conversions at the prayer meeting and work with that end in view. We cannot let the prayer meeting go, but we must make it better.—*The Wesleyan*.

WHY PREACHERS FAIL

Many preachers fail, not because they lack knowledge, but because they lack unction. They are orthodox, but they never take fire when they preach. Their sermons are all brains and no blood. They have plenty of thought, but no feeling. The dinner they serve up to their people on Sunday is elaborately prepared, but cold. No preacher is to be excused who does not as diligently study his manner as his matter. It was said of a certain preacher that he had got his matter from God, and his manner from the devil.

Many a good sermon is spoiled by a cold delivery. Two men were addressing a large meeting at Exeter Hall, the one a D. D., and the other a working man. The doctor was polished and pompous in his style of oratory, and his words fell like a drizzling rain upon the audience—they fairly shivered as he proceeded. Presently the working man rose to speak. He told of his experiences, and spoke out of his convictions; he was on fire with his subject, and his words fell like sparks among gunpowder—the people took fire and broke out in thunders of applause. Said a gentleman to a man sitting by his side, and who was applauding most vigorously, "What is he saying?" "O I don't know, but look how he is saying it!" How much of pulpit power under God depends on that element of enthusiasm. They make others feel who feel themselves. How can he plead for souls who neither knows nor feels the value of his own? How can he recommend a Saviour to others who himself despises and rejects him?

THE FAMILY ALTAR

The family altar, around which so many fond memories cluster, has in these busy days, been crowded out of our homes. It has been said that not even one out of every ten of the families that make up our churches, have worship in their homes. We hear much said of the important part secret prayer and meditation play in our Christian lives, and, indeed, we cannot live correct lives without them, nor can we afford to neglect another duty just as important; in fact, the two are not often separated; where souls commune with God, there, almost invariably, a family altar is found.

When we think how much this duty is neglected in the many so-called Christian homes, it is not strange that the children grow up without intelligent knowledge of God and his word. The church may cry out against incoming wrongs, but until the home sets up a true standard of life, little lasting good can be done. It is here that life has its beginning, that character is formed.

Here we find the individuals that make up the church. There is no surer way of determining the future life of the church than to learn the life of the home. We would hardly expect to find a Moses in a home where there is no teaching of God's word, or a Timothy where the spirit of religion did not pervade all the early home life. "Train up a child in the way he should go," is spoken first of all to the parents to whom is given the sacred charge of sowing the first seeds of character, of giving the first ideas of obedience, love, and reverence to others, and above all, to God.—*Herald of Truth*.

TWO FOES OF HAPPINESS.

Discontent is one enemy of happiness. Discontent is thirst. Men thirst for physical gratification, for social enjoyment and position, for worldly possessions, and for intellectual improvement. They feel their lack, their emptiness, and feel it most keenly. If they should possess all these things they would not be satisfied. The soul of man has a place for God, and so long as He is kept out of that place the soul is empty and barren. It is only when God fills the thoughts, the affections, the will, the conscience, and the aspirations that true contentment is found.

Fear is another foe to happiness. No soul can be happy so long as it is racked with fear. Fear of want, fear of evil report, fear of what men may think or say or do, fear of loss, fear of sickness or death, and many other fears keep men and women on the rack all the days of their lives. Many schemes have been resorted to for the purpose of overcoming fear, and some have succeeded. But fear may be overcome in such a way as to leave the soul quite as desolate as it was before. One may overcome the pain of fear without touching the cause of fear. Why are we so fearful? Is it not because we have given to God such a mean and narrow place in our hearts? Perfect love casteth out fear, and God is love. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and let the King of glory come in, and fear shall fly away.

SMALL CAUSES OF DEFEAT.

I begin my day's work some mornings perhaps wearied, perhaps annoyed by a multiplicity of trifles which seem too small to bring great principles to bear upon them; but do you not think there would be a strange change wrought in the petty annoyances of every day and in the small trifles that all our lives, of whatever texture they are, must largely be composed of, if we began each day and task with that old prayer, "Rise, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered?" Do you not think there would come a quiet in our hearts and a victorious peace to which we are too much strangers? If we carried the assurance that there is One that fights for us into the trifles as well as into the sore struggles of our lives, we should have peace and victory. Most of us will not have many large occasions of trial and conflict in our career; and if God's fighting for us is not actual in regard to the small annoyances of home and daily life, I know not for what it is available. There are more deaths in skirmishes than in the pitched field of a great battle. More Christian people lose their hold of God, their sense of his presence, and are beaten accordingly by reason of the little enemies that come down on them like a cloud of gnats on a summer's evening, than are defeated by the shock of a great assault or a great temptation, which calls out their

strength and sends them to their knees to ask for help from God.—*Dr. Alexander McLaren*.

A PALACE AND TENEMENT.

A marble statue of a kneeling girl with face upon an open book was placed by Queen Victoria in an English church as a memorial to the royal princess who was found with her dead cheek resting upon the words of her open Bible: "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

In a rear tenement of lower New York lay a dying woman, whose husband brutal through drink, would not allow hospital care. Under the bed snarled the hungry dogs. The place was noisy and foul and dark, but the missionary kept at her post.

"I'll go soon," said the sufferer, "there is nothing more you can do—only stay—tell me the words again." So over and over, until the angel of death had sealed the ears and closed the lips, the dying woman tried to repeat with the missionary: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Whether in castle, or palace, or tenement home, the human soul cries out with the same longing which can only be satisfied and comforted by the love of God.

You need not cough all night and disturb your friends; there is no occasion for you running the risk of contracting inflammation of the lungs or consumption, while you can get Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup. This medicine cures coughs, colds, inflammation of the lungs and all throat and chest troubles. It promotes a free and easy expectoration, which immediately relieves the throat and lungs from viscid phlegm.

The world delights in sunny people. The old are hungering for love more than for bread. The air of joy is very cheap; and if you can help the poor with a garment of praise it will be better for them than blankets.—*Henry Drummond*.

It Keeps the Muscles Pliant.—Men given to muscular sports and exercises and those who suffer muscular pains from bicycle riding, will find Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil something worth trying. As a lubricant it will keep the muscles pliant and free from pains which often follow constant use of them without softening or impairing their strength. For bruises, sprains and contusions it is without a peer.

The church is attractive when men feel that God is with its members—meets with them in their worship, goes with them to their business, is invited to be a sharer of their pleasures.

Cheapest of All Medicine.—Considering the curative qualities of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil, it is the cheapest medicine now offered to the public. The dose required in any ailment is small and a bottle contains many doses. If it were valued at the benefit it confers it could not be purchased for many times the price asked for it, but increased consumption has simplified and cheapened its manufacture.

The measure of our power with others is the measure of our clear transmission of the light that God has put within our spirits. If we are Christians, the light is ours.