

The Christian Life.

MY LORD AND I.

Perhaps no tenderer hymn of companionship was ever sung than the following, echoed in the rocks and caves of France during the persecution of the Huguenots, about three hundred years ago:

I have a Friend so precious,
So very dear to me,
He loves me with such tender love,
He loves me so faithfully,
I could not live apart from him,
I love to feel him nigh,
And so we dwell together,
My Lord and I.

Sometimes I'm faint and weary,
He knows that I am weak;
And as he bids me lean on him,
His help I gladly seek;
He leads me in the paths of light,
Beneath a sunny sky,
And so we walk together,
My Lord and I.

I tell him all my sorrows,
I tell him all my joys,
I tell him all that pleases me,
I tell him what annoys,
He tells me what I ought to do,
He tells me what to try,
And so we walk together,
My Lord and I.

He knows that I am longing
Some weary soul to win,
And so he bids me go and speak
The loving words for him.
He bids me tell his wondrous love
And why he came to die,
And so we work together,
My Lord and I.

CYNICAL CRITICISM.

The most uncompromising champion of the church will not assert that it is faultless. He knows that in its membership are found men and women from all social grades, and in all the stages of intellectual and moral development. It is not laid down as a condition that all entering the ranks of membership shall have attained to mature Christian manhood and womanhood. The church is rather a school or a nursery in which men and women are being trained and helped in their strivings toward a better and a stronger life. The material with which the church has to deal is often unpromising and unresponsive, and in the nature of the case the organization must be marked by a greater or less degree of imperfection.

And no reasonable man will object to any honest criticism from within or from without. There is always the tendency to lapse into formalism and to fall into ruts and to conform to the spirit of the times. The turning on of the searchlight of honest criticism is welcomed rather than resented. Wherever there is any departure from its high ideals or a compromise with the materialistic spirit of the age the stern prophetic rebuke is needed, and it will be all the more valuable and impressive when it comes from a man who loves the church and who longs to see it become an ever worthier incarnation of the spirit of him whose name it bears.

But it is a far cry from the position of the man who, gratefully recognizing all that the church has been and may be in the life of the world and longing to see it freed from everything that would weaken or emasculate, speaks out his

straight flung words of rebuke, to that of the professional cynic who studiously ignores all that it has done and is doing for the betterment of life, and who never loses the opportunity of flinging the sarcastic sneer and seeking to create contempt in the minds of the unthinking. There is no organization in which the professional fault-finder cannot find something to blame, and it is easy to pose as the destructive critic, but it is a sorry business at best.

It was said of a certain rugged philosopher of the past century whose intellectual pre-eminence made him a power among men, but who assumed the role of the universal censor, and rarely had a good word to say of any man, that he had gone on denouncing shams until his very denunciation had become itself a sham. The habit had become so fixed that thinking men ceased to take him seriously and came to regard him as but a common scold.

With all its acknowledged faults and limitations, and divided as it is into different families, the Christian church is the one organization that has steadily made for the betterment and the purifying of human life. Where it has been true to the divine ideal, it has kept before men that their duty is to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly before God. It has kept Christ in the forefront, and has pressed home his claims upon the hearts of men. He has been held up as the Divine Teacher, the Divine Example and the Divine Saviour. His cross has been proclaimed as the sinner's hope and the supreme motive to the altruistic life. The church has taught the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all men. Its message to the world is that character determines destiny. It has emphasized the great law that the strong shall help the weak, and has made the corner stone of its ethical system the golden rule of doing to others as we would that they should do unto us.

It may be retorted that some of the basest crimes that have been perpetrated in the name of religion, and that there have been times when the church has acted as a brake upon the wheels of progress. The obvious answer is that anything that has jarred the moral sense has been due, not to religion, but to its lack. Vitalized by the spirit of him who came to give liberty and abounding life, the church must necessarily be the dynamic of social and intellectual and spiritual progress. There is much in the past history of the church to cheer and to encourage. Many of the choicest spirits that have blessed the world have been its leaders. It has outlived the opposition of avowed enemies and the inconsistency of professional friends, and was never a more recognized moral force than it is to-day. It has been the herald of the gospel, and into every land into which the gospel has come the results have been seen in the betterment of the life of the people. It would be an interesting exercise for the man whose only word for the church is a cynical sneer to discover one hundred square miles of territory on the earth's surface in which a decent man may live and rear his family in safety and comfort that has not been made what it is by the influence of the Christian church. It is in the countries in which the church is strong and vitally aggressive that it has leavened all the social institutions,

that the rights of womanhood are respected and jealously guarded, that children are tenderly nurtured and cared for, that great educational institutions flourish, that human life is held sacred and property is safe. It is the spirit of altruism for which the church stands that is the dynamic in the great philanthropies that care for the weak, the suffering and the unfit, and if the church, to its own loss, has in some measure surrendered the direct control of these beneficent agencies, it is the spirit of the Christ that is the moving force, and they are supported by avowedly Christian men. The man who refuses to acknowledge Christ and repudiates the church, and yet helps to support an asylum, a hospital or an orphanage, is in spite of himself paying his tribute to the new thought that Christ launched in the world.

All good men deplore the crime, the selfishness, the intemperance and the dishonesty that persists in spite of all the efforts made to banish them. But would even the professional cynic care to live long and do business in a country in which all the churches were closed and a free rein given to the forces which make for disorder and decay. He may never darken the door of a church, he may have nothing but the cynic's sneer for ministers and churches, but if he has ordinary intelligence, he knows that he is none the less a debtor to the church for safety of life and property, and for all that makes life tolerable.

It was because the sturdy pioneers of Canada, even in their penury, struggled to establish the worship of God and sought to lay the foundations of the new land in righteousness that we stand as a people where we do to-day. And the men who are successfully appealing to the church to gird itself for the great task of evangelizing our fast filling country, and to follow the settler with the gospel, are showing the spirit of truest statesmanship. Any one familiar with the conditions in the new mining town knows that the church is the one agency that stands between the young man and the saloon and the brothel and all the other agencies that are leagued for his destruction, and that just as the church gathers strength, those things are crowded to the wall.

We may frankly acknowledge that the church is far from faultless, and that it is not the irresistible force for righteousness that it might be, and yet we can gratefully recognize all that God has wrought through its instrumentality for the redemption of the world. It is not a spent or a decaying force in the world and loyal to him whose abiding promise is, "Lo, I am with you always," it will become an increasing force to bring the whole world in surrender to him who is the head.—*The Presbyterian.*

TAKE TIME TO SERVE GOD.

It is said of a certain railway engineer that his duties call him at a very early hour—three o'clock in the morning. He is a Christian, and, knowing full well that soul-life must utterly perish without reading and study of the Bible and prayerful devotion, he rises at two o'clock in the morning. More than that, led of the Holy Spirit, without effort or affectation, he finds many an opportunity for pointing the wayward back to the cross, and sometimes of exhorting cold-hearted Christians upward to sunlit heights of holy living and heavenly happiness.

He is a happy man. You may be so, too. Religion is not a cunningly devised fable. Our Redeemer is mighty to save, strong to deliver, limitless in love, longing to make you happy. Believe him now. Do like that early-rising engineer—take time to be religious. Read and study your Bible every day. Talk to God every hour in the day. Believe what he says. Do what he tells you to do. Get the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Join the forward movement for a million converts for Christ. Put at least ten names on your paper list. Lay them on the altar for God. Do not give up until they are converted.—*F. W. Robertson.*

CHARACTER BY CONTRAST.

When our Lord would show forth the beauty and excellence of a good character, he sets it in a clear light by contrast. He first exhibits the negative side of a defective character. This he did in the parable of the good Samaritan. In that parable two persons stand out clearly convicted of flagrant wickedness. But what had the priest and the Levite done to bring them under condemnation? Nothing. They passed by on the other side. Then our Lord brings on the scene another sort of character. The good Samaritan was a man who not only abstained from actual transgression, but went on to do positive good. The negative character is fatally defective. Only a positive character can stand.

Pain is a Punishment.—Pain is a protest of nature against neglect of the bodily health, against carelessness regarding the physical condition. It steals in at the first opportunity and takes up its abode in a man, and it is sometimes difficult to eject it. Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil will drive it out in short order. Pain cannot stay where it is used, but immediately flees away.

Does your face and mine bear testimony that we have "been with Jesus?"—*Central Christian Advocate.*

The north wind doth blow and with it come the twinges of rheumatism. Dress warmly, stay indoors as much as you can and rub the swollen, tender muscles with Perry Davis' Pain Killer. 25 and 50 cents.

Repentance is the awakening of the consciousness of sin; and penitence is the ever-deepening abhorrence of its sinfulness.—*Bishop Thorold.*

Sure Regulators.—Mandrake and Dandelion are known to exert a powerful influence on the liver and kidneys, restoring them to healthful action, inducing a regular flow of the secretions and imparting to the organs complete power to perform their functions. These valuable ingredients enter into the composition of Parmelee's Vegetable Pills, and serve to render them the agreeable and salutary medicine they are. There are few pills so effective as they are in action.

You cannot make progress toward heaven in the pathway of sin.

"A little cold, you know," will become a great danger if it be allowed to reach down from the throat to the lungs. Nip the peril in the bud with Allen's Lung Balsam, a sure remedy containing no opium.