

The Christian Life.

TRUST IN GOD.

Life's bitter trials, earth's despair,
The darkest sorrows crush me not;
To Thee my weight of woe I bear,
Great God, Thou guardian of my lot,
My bosom finds in Thee alone
Its grandest strength, its sweetest balm,
And sheltered by Thy mighty throne,
I conquer, I am brave and calm.

I know Thy mercy changest pain
To joy and blessedness and peace;
All worldly loss is holy gain—
A rapture that can never cease,
With thanks I taste Thy bounteous store,
Though oft my cross may heavy be;
I, like a little child adore,
For Thou, my Father, leadest me.

Bright hope sustains and comforts all
Who see Thee, Lord, in faithfulness;
Not cruel death can them appal,
Nor make Thy mystic transports less.
O, Father, I shall ever praise
Thy wisdom, Thy salvation great;
With voice eternal as Thy days
Proclaim Thou art compassionate.

—“Hymns of Denmark.”

OUR UNSUSPECTED PERILS.

BY REV. J. R. MILLER, D.D.

Many of life's worst dangers are unsuspected. Disease lurks oftentimes in a soft, still, dreamy atmosphere, which we think delicious, with its sweet odors, while the chill, rough, wintry blast, from which we shrink as too severe, comes laden with life and health. Most of us think of a life of ease, leisure and luxury as the most highly favored lot, one to be envied. Yet there is no doubt that a life of rugged toil, hardship and self-denial, which we look upon as almost a misfortune, is far safer than one of ease.

There was laid one morning on the minister's pulpit a little folded paper which, when opened, contained the words, “The prayers of the congregation are requested for a man who is growing rich.” It certainly seemed a strange request for prayer. If it had been for a man who, through misfortune, had become suddenly poor, or for a man who was suffering in some great adversity, or for one who had met with sore loss or bereavement, every heart would at once felt deep sympathy.

Such experiences as these are thought to be trying and perilous ones in which men need special grace. But to ask prayers for a man who was growing rich, no doubt to many people in the congregation seemed incongruous. Should it not rather have been a request for thanksgiving for this man's success?

Yet when we open the Bible we find that the experience of growing rich is indeed set down as one full of spiritual peril. It was Jesus who said, “How hardly shall they who have riches enter the kingdom of God!” And St. Paul said, “They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all evil.” There is no doubt that when a Christian is growing rich he needs the prayers of God's people, whether they are requested for him or not. Countless men have buried their manhood in the fabrics of earthly prosperity which their hands have reared. Many a man's

envied fortune is in God's sight but the splendid mausoleum of his soul. We do indeed need the prayers of God's people in the time of prosperity that our hearts may be kept warm and soft, and that we may be sheltered by the love of God from all the insidious dangers and hurtful influences that belong to the experiences of worldly favor. Another condition that, according to the scriptures, hides an unsuspected peril, is one of unbroken prosperity. “Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.” Those who are thus described are free from trouble, from adversity, from misfortune, from disappointments. It is not usual that such an experience is regarded as one of danger. Indeed we naturally consider such persons as peculiarly favored. For example, here is a home which has gone on for a long time without saddening changes. Business has prospered, and the circumstances of the household have become more and more easy. There have been no long, serious illness, causing pain and anxiety, no deaths breaking the happy circle of loved ones.

No one naturally looks upon that household as in any peculiar danger. The neighbors do not have special prayers for it in the church. Yet there is no doubt that insidious, moral dangers do lurk in such an experience. Oftentimes God has less and less welcome in such a home. Christ is lost out of the household life, and beneath the bright earthly prosperity the angels see spiritual death.

The same is true of individual life. Unbroken prosperity is the bane of spiritual good. For one thing it hinders growth in knowledge and experience. There are truths that can be learned better in darkness than in light. We should never see the stars if there were no night to blot out the glare of day. And there are truths in the Bible which are perhaps never learned in the brightness of human joy. There are divine promises which by their very nature are invisible in the noonday of gladness, hidden away like stars in the light, and revealing themselves only when it grows dark around us. The deeper meaning of many a word of Scripture is learned amid life's painful changes.

There are also developments in spiritual growth which cannot come in time of unbroken prosperity. The artist was trying to improve a dead mother's picture. But the son said, “No; don't take out the lines. Just leave them, every one. It wouldn't be my mother if all the lines were gone.” It was well enough, he said, for young people who had never known a care to have faces free from wrinkles; but when there have been seventy years of love, service and self-forgetfulness, it would be like lying to cover up their tracks. The very beauty of that old face was in the wrinkles and the lines which told of what her brave heart and strong hands had done for love's sake. There is a blessing in such a life. But in the life of ease which many a woman lives there hide sore perils.

Another of the unsuspected perils of no changes is the lessening of dependence upon God. While there are no breaks in the flow of favors, we are apt to forget that all our good gifts come from our Master's hand. It is a sad hour in any life when the consciousness of the need of God fades out

of it. It seems pleasant to go on making plans of our own, and carrying them out without check or defeat. We like to say that we are master of circumstances, that we make all things serve us, that we turn obstacles into stepping-stones, climbing continuously upward upon them. But a little thought will show the peril that hides in thus having always one's own way. It is not the doing of our own will but God's that leads to perfect character and blessedness. Unless, therefore, we are filling out God's plan for our life, the unbrokenness of the prosperity is not an unmixed good. Most of us need to be baffled oftentimes in our schemes, to be defeated in our projects, to have our plans fail, to be compelled to yield to a stronger will. In no other way can the sense of dependence and obligation be kept warm in the heart. If we always get our own way, we are apt, being human, to grow proud, wilful, and rebellious. It is a sore misfortune to any of us if, in having our own way, we forget God and cease to love and follow Christ. Says Archdeacon Farrar: “God's judgments—it may be the very sternest and most irremediable of them—come, many a time, in the guise, not of affliction, but of immense earthly prosperity and ease.”—*Interior*.

WHEN PEACE LIKE A RIVER.

“It is well with my soul,” was written by H. G. Spafford, and the popular tune to which it is always sung is one of P. P. Bliss' best compositions. Mr. Spafford was a member of the Chicago bar and an elder in a Presbyterian church. He had been successful in his profession, but have made some unfortunate investments, and when the financial panic of 1873 seriously disturbed the business of the country, Mr. Spafford found that his savings of many years had been swept away. The members of his family were prostrated by this disastrous turn in their affairs and he acceded to the wish of helpful friends that they should visit Europe and thus be removed for some time from scenes of his financial ruin.

Mrs. Spafford and her four children took passage on the French liner Havre, and the story of that voyage is one of the most appalling of the many calamities of the sea. When in mid-ocean and in the blackness of a November night, in 1873, the steamship collided with the Glasgow clipper, Loch Earn, and in twelve minutes the former went down, carrying to death 230 souls, and among them were Mrs. Spafford's four daughters. Mrs. Spafford sank with the vessel, but floated again and was finally rescued.

The saved were taken to Havre, and from that city she sent a message to her husband in Chicago: “Saved, but alone. What shall I do?”

This message of fearful import—“sufficient to drive reason from her throne”—was the first notice Mr. Spafford had that his dear ones were not as happy as when he parted with them a few days before in New York. In his unutterable sorrow Mr. Spafford did not chant a dirge to impossible hope. When he reflected that his property was lost in destruction's waste, that his wife was painfully prostrated, and that his four children were buried in the dark waves of the sea, there came from his heart of hearts a song of trust and resignation that has many times encircled the globe.

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,

When sorrow like sea billows roll;

Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me
to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

When Mr. Spafford returned from Havre with his invalid wife, he said to his friends:

“I never felt more like trusting God than I do now.”

Spafford's hymn of resignation, with its fine musical setting by the lamented Bliss, is one of the most helpful of the many gospel songs written during the past quarter of a century. One Sunday evening, a service of song was given in one of our large cities, at which the story of “It is well with my soul” was told, and the lines sung with great tenderness of expression by the audience and choir.

Attending the services was a gentleman who had suffered financial reverses in the panic of 1893. When he heard the story of Spafford's heavy affliction, and joined in singing the hymn so pathetically inspired, he said to his wife on their return home from the services: “I will never again complain of my lot. If Spafford could write such a beautiful resignation hymn when he had lost all his children, and everything else save his wife and character, I ought surely to be thankful that my losses have been so slight.”—*Philadelphia Press*.

An Asthmatic's Story Told.

Sleepless nights, suffocating sensations, difficult to even breathe. “I can scarcely describe all I suffered from asthma,” writes Mrs. E. P. Cavanaugh of Colborne. “Spasms of coughing would come on that made me weak. Nothing did me any good until I used the fragrant healing Catarrhzone. I am delighted to recommend this remedy which cured me of chronic asthma after scores of good physicians had given me up. Catarrhzone is better for asthma, gives quicker relief than any remedy I know of. My cure is a perfect one.” Try Catarrhzone, it never fails to cure asthma. Complete outfit \$1.00; trial size 35c.

Be ready to endure with cheerfulness what of pain is meted out to me—this be my ideal for the new year.

Just a teaspoonful of Perry Davis' Pain Killer in warm water or milk, will quicken the circulation and thus prevent a chill. There is but one Pain taken after exposure to cold or wet Killer, Perry Davis'.

A resolve for 1904: This one thing I will do: I will strive with all my heart to win Thee, Lord Jesus.

So rapidly does lung irritation spread and deepen, that often in a few weeks a simple cough culminates in tubercular consumption. Give heed to a cough, there is always danger in delay, get a bottle of Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup, and cure yourself. It is a medicine unsurpassed for all throat and lung troubles. It is compounded from several herbs, each one of which stands at the head of the list as exerting a wonderful influence in curing consumption and all lung diseases.

Think—say—do—only such thoughts, words and deeds as will uplift and ennoble your life.

Tested by Time.—In his justly-celebrated pills, Dr. Parmelee has given to the world one of the most unique medicines offered to the public in late years. Prepared to meet the want for a pill which could be taken without nausea, and that would purge without pain, it has met all requirements in that direction, and it is in general use only because of these two qualities, but because it is known to possess alternative and curative powers which placed it in the front rank of medicines.