

A HYMN OF THANKS.

O thou whose bounty fills my cup
With every blessing meet.
I give Thee thanks for every drop—
The bitter and the sweet.

I praise Thee for the desert road,
And for the riverside;
For all Thy goodness hath bestowed,
And all Thy grace denied.

I thank Thee for both smile and frown,
And for the gain and loss;
I praise Thee for the future crown,
And for the present cross.

I thank Thee for the wing of love,
Which stirred my worldly nest,
And for the stormy clouds that drove,
The flutterer to Thy breast.

I bless Thee for the glad increase,
And for the waning joy,
And for this sweet and settled peace,
Which nothing can destroy.

—Selected

FAITH, NOT PRESUMPTION.

JAMES H. ALLEN.

It is not for us to be over-confident. No Christian has the right to boast of his experience. Even Paul, the mighty orator, eloquent preacher, and the most gifted apostle, who declared himself to be not a whit behind the very chief apostles, yet considered himself the least of all saints and did not dare to be arrogant, and has left on record: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." All that we have and all that we are by the grace of the Son of God, and to him we should ascribe all honor, glory, and praise. Some Christians in testifying in prayer and class-meetings seem to take delight in placing the emphasis on the "I." We think it would be far better to place the emphasis on "Christ" and let the "I" sink into insignificance and out of sight. Such testimonies as "I've got religion," "I have 'got' sanctified," "I've 'got' Jesus in my soul," etc., are out of place in any Christian assembly. They give the glory to the "I" and not to Christ. This is one phase of presumption. Faith would lead us to give the glory to God.

expect an answer. To ask God to forgive either ourselves or others prior to repentance is presumptuous and wrong. Likewise it is wrong to request the baptism of the Spirit prior to consecration. We must first meet the conditions, then we have the right to expect an answer; not only that, but the answer is sure to come.

We have no right to ask God to do that which we should do ourselves. It would be wrong for a man, having the ability to earn it, to ask God to supply food or clothes. And to ask and expect God to do so is presumption, not faith.

And it is presumption, not faith, to run into either danger or temptation with the claim that God will protect and deliver. No Christian has the right to run into either. If duty calls us into either, then we have the right to expect help from God. And if we do our part we will never look there in vain. Our Savior was woefully tempted in this line, when Satan took him into the holy city and up on the pinnacle of the temple, and said, "If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down, for it is written he shall give his angels charge concerning thee and they shall bear thee up lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." First implant a doubt, "if." "I don't believe you are what you profess to be. But 'if' you are, now prove it." Thus Christians are many times tempted to venture into dangerous places to prove that God is taking care of them. All such if yielded to are presumption, not faith. Faith is a reliance upon a reality. Presumption is a reliance upon a supposition.—Wesleyan Methodist.

FAITH AND SIGHT.

"What shall I do with this sorrow that God has sent me?"

"Take it up and bear it, and get a strength and blessing out of it."

"Ah, if I only knew what blessing there was in it, if I saw how it would help me, then I could bear it like a plume!"

"What shall I do with this hard, hateful duty which Christ has laid right in my way?"

"Do it, and grow by doing it."

"Ah, yes; if I could only see that it would make me grow."

In both these cases do you not see that what you are begging for is not more faith, although you think it is, but sight?

You want to see for yourself the blessing in the sorrow, the strength in the hard and hateful task. Faith says not, "I see that it is good for me, and so God must have sent it," but "God sent it, and so it must be good for me."—Phillips Brooks.

RESPECT AGED MINISTERS.

All the relations between ministerial brethren of all grades and ages should be considerate and tender. In this respect we all are to be examples unto the laity of the church. It is certainly a beautiful and God-pleasing sight for the younger ministers to treat the more aged ones with becoming reverence and love, and when the older ministers in turn manifest a spirit of tender sympathy and appreciation toward the young ministers. The duties and courtesies are mutual and should be carefully and tenderly cultivated and practiced. To my mind there is nothing more belittling to a young minister, and nothing more fully reveals the lack of a gentleman, the lack of culture of mind and heart, and the lack of the Spirit of Christ in him, than when he wants to lord it over his more aged brethren, and in a kind of independent spirit try to ride rough shod over them. Such a spirit and course of conduct reveals the real character of the man, no matter what his official standing may be in the church, or how useful he may be in the Master's vineyard.—Ex.

SHINING FACES.

"Many years ago," says a writer, "in a company of several ministers, I spent a morning with the Rev. W. Pennefather, of Midway Park. After breakfast he read a portion of scripture in a manner so devout that the guests not only listened but looked, for the pure soul of the man of God was shining in his face. It was a face one could never forget. Naturally of a hard, stern type, now the hardness was changed; he had a beautiful, softened, saintly face. As we sat around the table, fastening our eyes on him we saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

"Afterwards, I was not surprised to hear of a little boy who one day ran home from school, and joyfully rushed to his mother to tell her that he had seen Mr. Pennefather. 'And what did he say to

you, my lad?' asked the mother. 'Oh, he said nothing, but he beamed on me, mother,' said the delighted child.

"Hudson Taylor mentions of one of the missionaries who went to China that he was so full of love of God and man his great, loving heart kept his countenance always aglow. Before he was twelve months in China, the natives gave him the name, Mr. Gloryman."—Selected.

THE DIVINE FORGIVENESS.

Last winter, as the train was coming into the railroad station, one stormy day, we saw a boy leap from it and fall under the cars. A bystander seized him and drew him out before the wheels touched him. The man who drew him out stood him on his feet and then dismissed him with a kick. The boy went away much frightened at his peril and hurt by the kick. We could not help thinking that if God had served us that way we would have deserved it. If he had snatched us from hell, where we were bound, and then had punished us for having ever dabbled with sin, it would have served us just right. But that is not the divine method. God is not like man. "His mercy endureth forever." He not only forgives us but loves us freely. He never brings up the past to cause us to feel sore or dejected, which he might do. But he says that he will remember our sins against us no more forever. God never twits us as to the past as men do. We have known professed Christians who would bring up sins of the past after a man had been saved from those sins. But this is not God like, but devilish.

WICKED CHURCH MEMBERS.

If church members commit sin every day, how do they differ from the world? If Christians commit sin every day, how do they differ from other sinners? Are there holy sinners and wicked sinners? Does being baptized and joining the church give a person such a guarantee of heaven that committing sin every day will not affect his right and title to a mansion above? What is there about being baptized and joining the church

that makes us expect any more heaven in the sight of God? Some of these sin-committing professors of religion might do well to get out their Bibles and see what answer in the divine truth they can make to these questions. Is there a charm about church membership that takes away the curse of wrong-doing? What are presumptuous sins, from which the Psalmist prayed to be kept?

The fact is, sin is sin, no matter who commits it, only it is little worse if committed by a church member, because he has more light. Sinners, in the church and out, need to repent of their sins and get saved, that they be not eternally lost. A man who commits sin is a sinner. It is no marvel that people indoctrinated with these ideas do not understand holiness. To such the simplest truths of salvation must be a mystery. There is nothing that will blind the moral perceptions like sin. It is sinners who declare that the Lord's hand is shortened, that he cannot save; his ear is heavy, that he cannot hear." It was the wicked Israelites that limited that Holy One of Israel.

There was a class in St Paul's day who had a "form of godliness," but denied the power thereof, and the apostle calls them some pretty severe names. He says they are "covetous," "boasters," "proud," "unholy," "false accusers," "despisers of those that are good," lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." They were professors of religion, that is, they had "a form of godliness," but they denied the power; the power that saves, makes holy, and keeps from all sin, and enables a believer to walk before God and do the things that are pleasing in his sight. They repudiated the vital supernatural, transforming force in godliness that transforms man in his soul, and fits him up to live godly in this present world. Wicked church members and sin-committing professors of religion of today are doing the same thing. They belong to the church, they profess Christ, they have a form of godliness, but they say no person can live without committing sin. Not that a professor of Christ wants to sin, but he is obliged to, he is compelled to, he cannot help it, he has no power to resist temptation. In that they repudiate the power of godliness, justify and defend themselves in their wickedness and continue in a life of slavery to sin and bondage to the devil. They deny the power of godliness and denounce as a crank or a fanatic all who do not agree with them. They take the position of the wicked Pharisees of old, who would not enter the kingdom of God themselves, and those who were entering, they would hinder.

SOBRIETY IS BEST.

Lesson That has Been Learned by Americans Everywhere Thoroughly Well.

(Memphis Commercial-Appeal.)

It is said that there is as much drinking now as there ever was, but that men do not drink in the same way as of old; and that public drunkenness is now comparatively rare. Occasionally we see men upon the streets who are under the influence of liquor; but one might go from one end of Memphis to the other and not find a drunken man in a day's journey. Indeed, so rare has such a sight become in this city that it excites universal attention. The drunken man used to be a familiar personage. Now he is an object of curiosity.

Of course there are still plenty of men who take their daily allowance of liquor, but they do not hire a brass band or fire off a few bombs to advertise the fact. Men whose business permits of a certain amount of leisure are apt to be convivial; but it is observed that their conviviality is pretty well regulated. It is the rare exception when they cross the bounds.

The methods of modern business men have much to do with the spread of temperance. Even if the head of an establishment is intemperate himself, he does not surround himself with inebriates. He knows that the details of his business require cool heads and steady hands; and he will insist that his employees shall be sober men. Sometimes he candidly declares that he will do the drinking for the entire concern. When the head of a business is himself a teetotaler he will probably insist still more stringently upon his subordinates averting their faces from the flowing bowl. He may tell them that he has no control over private habits, and that they are at liberty to drink as much as they please, but that if they do drink they shall not work for him. Modern business is entirely without sentiment. It objects to the drinking man, not on moral, but on practical grounds. The judgment of the drinking man is apt to be awry at times. Liquor will make a fool of a sage under certain circumstances; and a trusted employee might fail his employer at the critical time if he were addicted to drink.

Employees are learning everywhere that it pays to be sober. The steady fellow who can always be found, and when found is sober, is the man who wins out. There are any number of vocations which can be filled only by sober men. No railroad in the world would think of entrusting a train to a drunken engineer. Drunkards would not be tolerated on a police force, in the postal service, or, indeed, in any business affecting the lives of people, or requiring exceptional judgment and care. Of course, there are successful men who drink; but, as a rule, it will be found that they drink discreetly and never overstep the bounds of moderation. Where they drink to excess, they are but the exception that proves the rule. The millionaire, however, is master of his time, and if he chooses to spend a part of it in riotous living, he can afford whatever loss such a course entails. He is in such a position that his business does not necessarily suffer when he blots out a few hours from the course of time.

The employee who begins by practicing sobriety during office hours is apt to continue it after office hours. The after-dark jag is not conducive to easy labor the next day. Furthermore, the young man soon finds out that the pleasures of alcoholism are not up to the advertisements. Seen in the green light of the next day, they have a curiously unreal and fantastic effect. The humors of the cup are very much like the magnificent visions which one has in dreams. They can't be remembered the next day. Perhaps to the general sense of disappointment are added a headache and a positive conviction that one has swallowed a mule by mistake.

Everything, therefore, conduces to sobriety in our day. The number of men who drink nothing at all is increasing. The men who drink know how to carry their liquor like gentlemen, and they drink wine, or beer or whiskey very much as they drink their tea or coffee. It is not a "drink" to them in the ordinary sense of the word; but a part of their daily allotment of meat and liquid.

One reason why alcoholism is decreasing is the explosion of several misconceptions regarding the use of liquor. Formerly it was thought that wine brightened the intellect; and that genius often lay dormant until set going by the sherry or the champagne. Possibly wine will unlock the lips of the taciturn man and make him garrulous; but it is absurd to say that the wine has created the wit and produced the thought. It has simply beaten down the man's customary reserve and made him willing to speak what was in his mind. The capacity to say bright things must have existed, and the bright things must have been there. The wine has merely opened the door. Many mythical stories have been told about men of genius writing sublime poems and delivering lofty orations when under the influence of liquor. It is all a mistake. No man on earth ever wrote anything that was fit to live when he was drunk. No orator ever delivered a speech possessing a particle of merit when he was drunk. Sometimes this has apparently happened; but the truth is that in some way the orator

became suddenly sobered. Otherwise he would not have been able to think on his feet.

Another myth that has been exploded is the idea that moderate drinking is good for a person. Modern medical science has given this idea its quietus. It is said that "a man is as old as his arteries," and when the ossification of the arteries begins the end is not far off. Science now holds that constant indulgence in alcoholic liquor has a tendency to ossify the arteries. It was formerly held by medical science that if a person drank two drinks of whiskey a day it would be beneficial, for this much liquor could be "digested," as it were, without any harm to the system. Now, however, the habit of regular drinking, even in moderation, is condemned.

It is fortunate that medical science has reached this conclusion, because it is bound to act as a restraint upon the practicing physician who has a fondness for drink. If there is any one who has no business drinking anything at all it is the family physician; and he cannot very well continue to be a drinking man in the face of the ban placed upon alcohol by medical science. The minister of the gospel urges everyone to observe the Ten Commandments, but he would not retain any parish long if it were known that he was a persistent violator of one of them. The physician must be held to a like account. If medical science condemns regular drinking, there is no excuse for the practitioner, and unless he can curb his appetite he might as well retire at once from his profession.

The conviction is becoming pretty general that sobriety is the best policy, and that drunkenness does not pay.

ANOTHER COUNT AGAINST THE STAGE.

Most of our readers remember the notorious robbers known as the James Brothers. One of their number, Frank, is still living and so far as we know is a worthy citizen, having abandoned his former ways of wrong doing. Last winter a theatrical company playing in Kansas City proposed to present the play "The James Brothers in Missouri." But Mr. Frank James procured an injunction restraining this company from so doing, on the ground that by making heroes out of outlaws the play was injurious to the youth of the country. If the position of Mr. James is correct, and we fully believe it is, every person who encourages such plays by the payment of admission fees or presence at such a performance is in some measure responsible for the injury to the youth of the country resulting from this evil. We know that in other cities, not the crime of robbery, but the crime of indecency has been put upon the stage, and the heroes magnified into supreme excellence are the men and women who are the vilest in their uncleanness. Who needs more evidence to condemn the stage?

IF YOU WOULD BE LOVED.

Don't repeat gossip, even if it does interest a crowd.
Learn to laugh. A good laugh is better than medicine.
Don't go untidy on the plea that everybody knows you.
Don't contradict people, even if you are sure you are right.
Don't conclude that you have never had any opportunities in life.
Don't believe that everybody else in the world is happier than you.
Don't be inquisitive about the affairs of even your most intimate friend.
Learn to attend to your own business—a very important point.

NOT DISCOURAGING.

John Wesley said that many "taste of that heavenly gift, deliverance from inbred sin, yet so few, so exceedingly few, retain it."

This would seem to be not a flattering outlook for a seeker, or for those who have come into this grace. But Mr. Wesley goes on to say to the person to whom he wrote these words, "I rejoice to hear that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free." And farther, he says "Shall not you, for one, retain this blessing? You will, if you watch and pray, and continue hanging upon him."

So this great teacher was not discouraging, but encouraging. The grace of perfect love may be found, retained and enjoyed. No need to lapse; no need to lose it. Bless God! He is able to keep that we have committed to him. But he must have it as a constant deposit. As we received Christ, so must we walk in him. We yielded all—we gave—we got all. That is the price of retaining. Cheap enough. Bless God for the privilege! We can get the pearl, and though some squander it, none need do it.

We are encouraged by the fact that holiness may be received and retained. This is what we want, and, bless God, we have.