

## FAINT NOT

By George D. Watson

There is an experience of soul exactly like the fainting of the body. When a person faints there is an utter loss of strength accompanied with a real sickish feeling, paleness and a clammy sweat, causing the body to get limp, beyond the control of the will, and fall away in an unconscious swoon. There is a real fainting of the soul which we are admonished against in the Word, "My son, despise . . . not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels . . . for which cause we faint not." "Faint, yet pursuing."

Some of the feelings which may lead the Christian heart to faint are the following:

A feeling of loneliness of soul, as if we were isolated from all other spirits, and especially shut off from the souls that are around us. We seem to be a castaway on some ethereal and desert island, with all intelligible communication with other souls cut off. We sometimes think we would like to open all our inner feelings to a fellow spirit, but if the opportunity occurs to do so, an invisible, yet powerful, check is laid upon us. We seem to be more in fellowship with the souls of far-distant ages than with those nearby. We seem to pace the boundless shore of our solitary island, waiting for any sort of a change to break upon our experience, until we feel like sinking down under sheer sameness and monotone of soul.

Another feeling is that of being caged in, hampered and tied in an inextricable manner. Providence seems to go off and leave us to the heartlessness of a thousand petty demons who pervade every little circumstance; who seem, like the fabled Lilliputians, to tie our hands and feet while we sleep; who snap all the threads in our financial looms; who upset our ordinary plans; who turn anticipated joys into ashes; who bother us with a host of mental perplexities too subtle to define and too numerous to count. There are times when a current of such things seems to set in; times when everything seems to weave itself into a network of crippling environment, and any effort to extricate ourselves only bruises us. At such times the question is shot into the mind, "What's the use?"

Another feeling is that of a strange pressure and a heavy bearing down in the soul; it seems we cannot get low enough to slip out from under the weight; the floor or ground is entirely too high for us.

Another feeling is that of paralysis. The faculties seem benumbed and unable to exert themselves. Prayer is not versatile and fluent, but is reduced to a heart groan or the simple cry of the woman in the gospel, "Lord, help me." This inertia of the faculties is accompanied with a sense of weariness in the soul; the Holy Spirit recognizes this state of experience and distinctly mentions this heart tiredness. "Lest ye be weary and faint in your minds." The Spirit has given us three remedies to prevent soul-fainting.

One remedy is, "Consider him that endured . . . lest ye be wearied and faint." When prayer is inert, when every pinion of heart and mind is bound, we are to quietly fix our consideration on Him who endured; spread out before the mind how he was cramped, limited, contradicted; his inner feelings fettered and smitten in a thousand inconceivable ways; how the normal yearnings of his heart were denied and snubbed; how the whole of his outward environment was at such horrible disagreement with the fitness of things in his soul—to consider all this, and much more which will occur to a meditative soul, will bring a sense of fellowship with him which is excellent medicine for faintness of spirit.

Another remedy is, "Despise not thou the chastening

of the Lord." God arranges, or permits, for our chastening to come to us in such strange and unlooked-for ways, in such mortifying and disagreeable circumstances, by such undignified and outlandish agencies that we are apt to despise the chastening.

We think we could take the scourging much better if it were applied with a more dignified and beautiful whip. Our chastisement often occurs by things in which we see no semblance of divinity. The trials, the besetments, the persons, the events, the gnarled and knotty annoyances which God employs to correct or rebuke us, seem often so low and mean and out of harmony with the fitness of things that we are liable to despise the correction. Now, if we can discover the hand of God in all these ugly things, if we can see the divine presence under all this network of unpleasantness, it will at once throw a new light on them, and the recognition of His presence will keep us from fainting. "Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked by him."

Another remedy for soul fainting is the manifestation of Jesus to the inner spirit. Paul tells us in second Corinthians, the fourth chapter, that God hath shined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and says this manifestation is a treasure which we have in earthen vessels, then, after alluding to our peculiar sufferings, concludes by saying, "For which cause we faint not." So the best cure for heart fainting is the blessedness of Jesus revealed in us by the Holy Ghost. The clear, deep apprehension of Jesus as a personal, sympathizing, indwelling Saviour is a soul tonic, an invigorating balm to the spirit which nothing else can be.

—Pilgrim Holiness Advocate

## THE HILLS ARE STILL THERE

She was a woman of wonderful faith. Often had it been severely assailed, but it remained firm. One day I said to her, "I wonder if back in your life somewhere there is not a record of the foundation of this faith—or the beginning of it?" And perhaps because I am an old and privileged friend, or perhaps because she knew I would understand, she told me about it.

"It was when I was a very young girl that there was a fire in our village. It was the home of one of my mother's dearest firends that burned. She was a woman to whom my childish heart had deeply attached itself, and her home had become almost a second home to me. I was heart-broken over her loss. I longed, yet dreaded to go to her. When I went the embers of the home were yet red. She was standing in the yard. She saw me coming and came to meet me. After a few moments she turned away from the blackened ruins and faced the distant hills. I can hear her voice yet—"The hills are still there." It was all she said, but it was the text of the mightiest sermon on faith I ever heard. All through my life that single sentence spoken out of the heart of loss and sadness has wrought itself into my life's experiences. And always as I have looked on these unchanging features of the landscape have I been reminded of the Presence that abides with us unchanged through all human changes and through all the vicissitudes of life."

As she was speaking there flashed into my thought the words:

"When the anchors that faith had cast  
Are dragging in the gale,  
I am quietly holding fast  
To the things that cannot fall."

Oftentimes the shadow lifting reveals a sky of blue of which we little dreamed. We find that "What most seemed reproof was love most true."

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The King's Highway