

Poetry.

Who Shall Roll Away the Stone.

BY G. WASHINGTON MOON.

Mark xvi. 3-5.

That which weeping ones were saying  
Eighteen hundred years ago,  
We the same week faith betaying,  
Say in our sad hours of woe,  
Looking at some trouble lying  
In the dark and dead unknown,  
We, too, often ask with sighing,  
"Who shall roll away the stone?"

Thus with care our spirit crushing,  
When they might from care be free,  
And in joyous song out-gushing,  
Rise in rapture, Lord, to thee,  
For, before the way was ended,  
Oft we've had with joy to own,  
Angels have from heaven descended,  
And have rolled away the stone.

Many a storm-cloud sweeping o'er us,  
Never pour on us its rain;  
Many a grief we see before us,  
Never comes to cause us pain.  
Ofttimes in the feared "to-morrow,"  
Sunshine comes,—the cloud has flown!  
Ask not then in foolish sorrow,  
"Who shall roll away the stone?"

Burden not thy soul with sadness;  
Make a wiser, better choice;  
Drink the wine of life with gladness;  
God doth bid thee, man, rejoice!  
In to-day's bright sunlight basking,  
Leave to-morrow's cares alone;  
Spoil not present joys by asking,  
"Who shall roll away the stone?"

The Seven "I Wills."

BY D. L. MOODY.

1. The first "I will, I want to call your attention to this morning is in the eleventh chapter of Matthew's Gospel and the 28th verse, and reads: "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. There is not one of us but is seeking for that. If you probe down deep into the heart there is want, want, want, and its fulfilment constitutes rest. Well, no one ever found rest in fame. Neither has it ever been found in wealth. Pleasure does not give it. Now the Son of God has said that if we come to him he will give us rest. I am one of those who believe that it is not to be found anywhere else. We are running here and there drinking out of broken vessels, but in Christ is there fullness and sufficiency.

Now, if there is any man here who is bowed down and troubled in heart, he can find rest just as God says, provided he takes it as a gift. God won't sell his blessings. If we are to get them we must take them as free gifts. No one ever got help by looking at themselves or their sorrows, but thousands have had their sorrows taken away as soon as they had fixed their eyes steadily on Jesus Christ. What we want is just to take God at his word. As long as there is sin in the heart there is no rest, and it is Christ that takes away the sin. All the churches in Christendom can't take away one sin. Only Jesus Christ can do that. Just as soon as any man says "O Lord, I am tired of sin any want to get rid of it, won't you take it?" Christ is ready to bear the burden.

2. The next is: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." I am one of those who believe that this is just as true as that I stand before you. Christ is so anxious to save that he will save any man that comes along, so he acknowledges himself a sinner. He comes to save sinners and of course if we don't acknowledge ourselves sinners, how can we expect to be saved? The greater sinner you are the greater claim you have upon him. There was a man I knew who accepted this, but on the way home he kept thinking that maybe it was a mistranslation. Finally he concluded to stick to it, and made up his mind that when he got to heaven if anything was said about it he would blame the translator.

There was another man who thought he was so chained to sin that he could not come. Well, said a friend, why don't you come chains and all? And so he did. So any of you can come, chains and all. You see there is no use coming and trying to make yourself out very good. Neither is it the correct thing to wait till you are better before you come to Jesus Christ. That is like waiting till you get well before sending for a doctor. I've heard of a minister who was trying to convert a man in one of our large prisons, and the man said to him, "Why do you talk to me? There are a good many worse men here than I am." "Why," said the minister, "you killed a man didn't you?" "Yes," said the prisoner, "but there is a man down there in the other cell who killed six." It is a false idea to be trying to appear respectable when you are not.

3. "I will; be thou clean," is what Christ said to that leper that came to him. Who would have had that man? Your elegant Baltimore Society would not have received him. It reminds me of a sailor who said he'd wait until he got ashore and then he'd try and be good. That's the way with a good many of us. We're waiting until we get ashore. We'll, when he landed he tried to get into the Oddfellows; but they found that he was only a poor drunken sailor and they blackballed him. Then he tried to get into the Masons and they blackballed him too. But one day he went into a church where they were preaching free salvation, and he went to Christ and Christ didn't blackball him, you may be sure.

4. "I will make you fishers of men," is the "I will" for service. A man isn't much of a Christian unless he tries to convert others. The better Christian he is the more he will have of this spirit. There is such a thing as resting in a bare empty formality. Going to Church regularly is not going to save anybody. What is going to church? Why there is nobody goes to Church so regularly as Satan. He is in every church in Baltimore to-day. He is right here trying to counteract the effects of God's Word. It is all a mistake to suppose that Satan is only in the vile places of the earth. The spirit of Christ's mission and work was to convert and it is the spirit all of us need in abundance. If there is a Christian here in this institution, he'll be trying in one way or another to communicate his joy to others. Job's captivity was turned the moment he took to helping others. He that winneth souls is wise says the Gospel, and you will find it true if you try.

5. "I will rise him up at the last day," is another. This is the "I will" of resurrection. What a glorious promise. I'd rather have it than riches. After Christ made it he first went and raised up a few to show that he could do it. It is well that he mentioned his friend Lazarus when he called the dead in that grave-yard, or else all that we buried would have been rising up in their winding sheets. Christ's voice will call all the dead one day, and the dead in Christ will rise first. I thank God for this blessed "I will."

6. In the fourteenth chapter of John he says, "I will not leave you comfortless." For twenty-four years this month I've had Christ and he has never left me comfortless a moment. He has been a comfort all the time. You very often talk of the darkness of the Valley of Death, but that is one of Satan's misquotations. It don't say anything about darkness at all. It is the valley of the shadow of death that we have to pass through—we who are Christ's. So you see that death only casts a shadow over the path; he can't do anything more.

7. The last is, "I will that they may be with Me." That was Christ's prayer for all his disciples. Oh may it be our blessed lot.

Dr. Guthrie's Bells and the Woman's Dream.

A benevolent lady, staying in Edinburgh (a contemporary writer tells us), noticed a very lofty attic in the High Street, near Dr. Guthrie's church. The thought struck her mind that there might be some poor lonely creature living in one of those upper stories whom no one visited; so, lifting up her heart to God for His guidance and blessing, she began her investigation. After ascending the almost innumerable stairs of the house, she reached the top story where the poorest people lived.

Knocking at one of the doors, she was answered by an old woman, who, opening it very cautiously, asked what the stranger wanted. "I want to see you," said the lady. "No one ever comes here, or wants to see me," replied the woman. "Well," rejoined the kind stranger, "that is just the reason why I wish to see you." Then the cautious old woman opened the door, and let the lady into her little room, which only contained enough furniture for the bare necessities of its aged inmate. The only seats were a rocking chair, and a stool, and lady L., taking the stool, made the old woman seat herself over the fire in her rocking chair.

After a few kind words, the lady said, "I am not going to ask you, my friend, if you know the Lord, but I should like to hear if you can tell me anything to show me that the Lord knows you, and has found you out in your lonely little room." The old woman brightened up at once. "Yes, I can," she replied; "and I will tell you all about it, though I never told any one before. If he had not known and sought me, I should never have known Him, for I lived like a heathen in this

room. I have had many troubles, and lost my all; and not having a friend or any one to love, I shut myself up in my own misery, and did not want to know any neighbors.

"Week-days and Sundays were all alike and dark to me. I never went anywhere. I lived just as if I had no soul. And thus I should have lived and died, had not the Lord had mercy upon me."

"And how did He awaken you from your state of spiritual death?"

"By Dr. Guthrie's bells," replied the old woman. "When they rang on Sundays, I used to wish they would leave off—they troubled me. They seemed calling to me, till at last I could not bear it any longer, so one day I put on my shawl and went into the church, just to get peace, as it were, from the bells."

"Well, and how did you like what you heard?"

"Not at all. I came home very angry with Dr. Guthrie, for as I stood in the crowded aisle, he preached all his sermon about me, and I determined never to go and hear him again. But when the next Sunday came, the bells tormented me more than ever. I was forced to go; and again I came home feeling what a great sinner I was; and thus I continued from week to week, and then I had a dream, which cut down all my hopes.

"I seemed to be in a square place, where a number of flowers in pots were standing, and in the middle of them, I saw Dr. Guthrie with a watering pot. He went round and watered every plant until he came to one, which I thought meant me; and then he stood still, and said in a solemn voice, 'It is no good watering this, for it has no roots,' and he passed me by. And when I awoke, I felt what a dreadful state I was in." And thus the arrow of conviction entered the poor sinner's heart, till he who had wounded her in love was pleased to heal her wound with the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

Sin of Indifference.

Rev. George F. Pentecost met a young man about nineteen years of age in the inquiry room in Boston who said he did not believe in religion, and thought that almost all professors of religion were hypocrites.

"That's a serious charge to bring against us," said Mr. Pentecost.

"I do not want to judge harshly," said the young man, "doubtless many think that they believe what they profess to, but it does not seem to me that they really do."

"Is your mother a Christian?" resumed Mr. Pentecost.

"She is a member of the church."

"But is she a Christian?"

"I do not think it hardly fair Mr. Pentecost, for you to ask such a question."

"But you have brought a sweeping accusation against Christians. Let us begin at home and see if you can verify it."

The young man's chin and lip quivered as he burst into tears, replying:

"If my mother believes that I have an immortal soul bound for everlasting destruction unless I repent, why does she never speak to me on the subject of religion?"

"Oh!" said Mr. Pentecost, "next to unbelief, indifference in Christians seems to be the great stone that prevents dead souls from being quickened into life."

Immediate Results.

Why not preach in expectation of immediate results? It would give more grip and power and edge to the sermon. It would warm and thrill the speaker and hearers. The faith that aims and strikes for immediate results, kindles the whole man and gives him great power and efficiency. So the Apostles preached. On the wonderful day of Pentecost, while Peter yet spake the plain simple, burning words of the gospel, the Holy Ghost fell upon all those which heard the word. The Gospel of Christ was the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believed. It is so now. It will be so until the last sinner is saved or damned. The energy of the Holy Spirit in the Word can never be exhausted. Nor is that all. It can never fail. The touch of faith will inevitably draw from the Spirit-charged Word the fire that illuminates, warms, and purifies and saves. We may have the Spirit. When we teach, or preach, or read, or hear the Word, we may claim the great gift of the Holy Spirit to make it efficacious. The promise is unto us and our children.

Prayer

If, when I kneel to pray,  
With eager lips I say:  
"Lord, give me all the things that I desire—  
Health, wealth, fame, friends, brave heart,  
religious fire,  
The power to sway my fellow-men at will,  
And strength for mighty works to banish ill!"—  
In such a prayer as this  
The blessing I must miss.

Or if I only dare  
To raise this fainting prayer:  
"Thou seest, Lord, that I am poor and weak,  
And cannot tell what things I ought to seek;  
I therefore do not ask at all, but still  
I trust Thy bounty all my wants to fill!"—  
My lips shall thus grow dumb,  
The blessing shall not come.

But if I lowly fall,  
And thus in faith I call:  
"Through Christ, O Lord, I pray Thee give to me  
Not what I would, but what seems best to Thee,  
Of life, of health, of service, and of strength,  
Until to Thy full joy I come at length!"—  
My prayer shall then avail,  
The blessing shall not fall.  
—Christian Intelligencer.

The Great Fountain.

An aged gentleman at a watering place said to a lady, a stranger to him, as she came up to take her usual draught of water, "Have you ever drank at the Great Fountain?" The lady colored, and turned away without replying. The following winter, in another place, he was asked to visit a lady who was dying. As he entered her room, she said, with a smile, "Do you not know me? Do you not recollect asking a woman at the spring last year, 'Have you ever drank at the Great Fountain?'" "Yes," said he, "I do remember." "Well, sir, I am that person. I thought at that time you were very rude; but your words kept ringing in my ears. I was without peace or rest till I found Christ. I now expect shortly to die, and you, under God, have been the means of my salvation. Be as faithful to others as you have been to me. Never be afraid to talk to strangers on the subject of religion.

Have Faith.

Here is one of the most significant and valuable utterances of Prince Bismarck. We are indebted for the remarkable saying to Dr. Burch. "If I were no longer a Christian I would not remain for an hour at my post. If I could not count on my God surely I could not do so on earthly masters. If I did not believe in a Divine order which has destined this German nation for something great and good, I would at once give up my business of a diplomatist or I would not have undertaken it. Orders and titles have no charm for me. I owe the firmness which I have shown for ten years against all possible absurdities only to my decided faith. Take from me this faith and you take from me my fatherland."

A hawker handed a tract into a little cottage. It fell into the hands of Richard Baxter, and was the means of his conversion. Baxter wrote the "Saints' Everlasting Rest," which aroused Doddridge to seek salvation. Doddridge wrote the "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," by means of which Wilberforce was converted. Wilberforce wrote a book, "Practical Christianity," which found its way into the hands of Thomas Chalmers.

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