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# THE LAND OF FAITH



JAMES MUDGE



W. E. Johnson, Weekly

6, Oct. 08

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# The Land of Faith

BY

JAMES MUDGE, D. D.

Author of "THE LIFE OF LOVE," "HONEY FROM MANY  
HIVES," "GROWTH IN HOLINESS," "BEST OF  
BROWNING," "FABER," "CHINA," Etc.

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*"This is the victory . . . our faith."*



CINCINNATI: JENNINGS AND PYE  
NEW YORK: EATON AND MAINS

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## PREFACE.



THE little book of devotion published last year and called "The Life of Love" met with such high appreciation from some of the best judges in such matters that I have been encouraged to send forth the present volume, which will be found of a similar nature. The main difference is that Faith, rather than Love, is now the leading theme. That Faith is the parent of Love must be admitted. And I have long been convinced that there was no line of thought and practice better fitted to lead the soul to the loftiest realms of Christian experience than the contemplation and cultivation of a strong faith. It is confidently believed that whoever will accept and carry out the tenets and suggestions of the following chapters on this subject will find him-

self making swift progress toward that completed Christlikeness which must ever be the goal toward which the devout, loyal Christian heart continually aspires. Such is the earnest desire of the author for himself and his readers.

He would also suggest that, since great concentration has been used in these articles, some single sentences containing the substance of volumes, the largest profit will be obtained by him who reads slowly and with careful thought. Let the pencil be freely employed in connection with the perusal, and let there be much self-examination. Most of the pieces will need to be read many times before they will yield their richest harvest of good. It is designed to be a manual of devotion, rather than something to be looked over once and laid aside. A little reading combined with constant practicing will give the best results.

J. M.

*Jamaica Plain, Mass.*



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# THE LAND OF FAITH.

## I.

### THE LAND OF FAITH.

FAITH has many meanings, and one may easily confound the genuine article with things that are kindred or similar. But when we speak of walking by faith and living by faith, or when we refer to the heroes of faith and the hymns of faith, we understand that trustful recognition of the unseen, that firm grasping of the ideal or spiritual world, that sense of the infinite, the eternal, and the divine which puts these transitory shows of sense and sight out of mind, dwarfing them into insignificance and compelling a radical readjustment of relative importances. Faith taken in this way may well be termed the God-faculty, or the faculty of religion; and it assumes at once a significance second to no other element of Christian character. So highly do we rate it, so many wide-ramifying,

far-reaching associations has it, that we are disposed to think there is no better name for the realm of religious experience than "the land of faith." What sort of a land is it?

I. It is the land of *uprightness*. No one is allowed in it who is not loyal to its King, and who does not hate iniquity. Any affiliation with evil, or complicity with crookedness, debars from this territory. He must walk straight who would have the freedom of its paths. The least sin cherished disqualifies for citizenship here. Only they can truly and fully believe who truly and fully obey. With that complete obedience there is no trouble about complete trusting; without it, doubt reigns. This, then, is the first thing; it lies really at the entrance to this beautiful country—a covenant with God that is deep, thoroughgoing, unequivocal, unreserved, and permanent. All the inhabitants of this land are straight and tall. They do not bow to the behests of the world; they do not lean on arms of flesh; they care not for carnal commandments or creature delights; with godlike beauty crowned, with open face and clear vision, they choose continually the Divine will, and march breast forward boldly.

2. It is a land of *sunlight* and *song*. Italy has been called this; the Vale of Kashmir is famed for its beauty; other countries have cast a magic spell over travelers or endeared themselves beyond words to those therein born; but the land of faith is what all these only seem. Its people are ever singing, because all their sorrow has been turned into joy, and their joy no man can take from them. They dwell in a sunshine which is neither oppressive nor scorching; but which always refreshes and stimulates; for the Lord is their everlasting light and their God is their glory. Not a shadow can rise nor a cloud enter their skies while the smile of the Lord remains, as it ever does remain, for those who trust and obey. Gladness abides in this region, as well it may where the pleasures are so solid, the entertainments so choice, the prospects so delightful, and the company so select. It is paradise regained and restored.

3. It is a land of *reality*. They who walk by sight and sense touch appearances and nothing more. It appears to them that evil forces rule the earth, that wicked men and wicked spirits have things largely their own way, that accident

and chance, fate and fortune, control matters. This is a wild delusion, and yet so under its power are the common inhabitants of the earth that phantasmagoria of this sort keep them miserable. They seem unable to break loose from the spell, or disenchant themselves. What they need is to enter the land of faith. There they would see things as they are; they would learn to deal first hand with the original cause of all occurrences; they would adjust themselves to facts and be delivered from fancies. Faith and truth are most closely allied. Only the one can give the other. We only know him whom we love and trust.

4. It is a land of *safety* and *peace*. No ravenous beasts infest it; no hurricanes lay waste or intimidate within its borders. Carking care can not come where trust abides. Worry is unknown, anxiety impossible, in such an atmosphere. The true believer cries: "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear; what can man do unto me?" He sees his omnipotent Protector so much more plainly than he does his assailants, and looks at him so much more constantly than he looks at obstacles or dangers, that he is undisturbed. The

gracious words of his God are so familiar to him, and so genuine in his complete acceptance of them and reliance upon them, that no kind of apprehension or solicitude has any chance to rear its noxious head. He is not even agitated or disquieted at things that would throw others into a panic. His calmness in the face of threatening peril or perplexity is a wonder to himself, and often an offense to the perturbed and distrusting. He has learned the secret of the presence of the Most High; he has found a refuge from strife in that sacred, strong pavilion.

5. It is a land of *plenty*. Among those who inhabit it the frequent exclamation is: "In Him all my wants are supplied." They also delight to sing:

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want;  
More than all in thee I find."

They count all things to be theirs, because all things belong to their Father, who will not see them lack. They are truly enriched and increased in all manner of goods. He who holds the wealth of the world in his hands will not permit his child to suffer. No tremor of trepidation, com-

plaint, or discontent can enter that child's bosom until he leaves the land of faith. Having the infinite storehouse within his reach and at his call, he simply wonders at the poverty of earth's millionaires and the foolishness of those who choose to cumber themselves with the burdens of worldly wealth. He has the good of riches without their evils and perils.

6. It is a land of *progress*. This should be clear to the most unilluminated mind. When we speak of little faith we are referring to those who have advanced but a short distance into this country, or are still on its outskirts. This would seem to be the most populous part. But certainly not because it is the best part. It is always better further on. They who win the high degree of great faith are those who have traveled far in this glorious kingdom, so far that none of the surrounding realms are even in sight from the highest outlook. Truly there are many degrees of faith; how many, no one has ventured to say; nor has any trustworthy traveler told us that he had reached a place where he felt obliged to stop. Some have thought there was nothing more for them to explore among the hills and valleys of



this delightful region; but time has shown them their mistake, shown them that, even in fields with which they counted themselves perfectly familiar, there were many new beauties to be disclosed, new glories to be revealed.

7. It is a land of *activity* and *work*. Many have fallen into error about this. They have imagined there was nothing to do in the land of faith, nothing that would task their powers or tax their strength; that they could bask all day on sunny slopes and give way to indolence. Never was there a greater blunder. They who seek the land with this idea will never find it. All who really possess it give willing testimony that they never were more industrious, or felt more like putting forth their utmost powers. The inward quietness marvelously helps outward efficiency. Peace of soul produces vigor of body and ministers mightily to usefulness. The King of the country, while freely supplying every need, does not propose to do so in any way that will promote laziness. Drudgery is turned into delight in this land. There is such a buoyancy of spirits created by its air, such an exhilaration comes to those who drink its waters, that labor

becomes luxury and is accomplished with ease. This, perhaps, is what has led some to think that the people of this country do not work. But the contrary is true.

Would that we might sound a call that should reach the ears of the vast multitude who know as yet very little about the magnificence of the land of faith: a call that should induce them to press at once into its precincts, and stop not until all its recesses were fully explored. They would certainly say, as did one of old concerning another matter, "The half was not told me."

## II.

### A PERFECT FAITH.

THE clear conception of an ideal in any matter is no little help toward its approximate realization. Even if one does not expect to reach an absolutely perfect faith, the having before him a standard by which to measure his progress will prove a substantial aid. It will keep him from being too easily or prematurely satisfied, from fixing his gaze too low on the one hand, and

from attempting impossibilities or fixing his gaze too high, on the other hand.

By faith we mean spiritual vision, the recognition of the divine, the realization of eternal things, the perception of the unseen. It may also be considered as man's response to God's revelation of himself, or the openness of a human soul toward its Maker. Evidently there are many, many degrees of such a faith. The vision will be weak or strong in different persons, weak or strong at different times in the same person. Some have but little faith. In other words, they have caught only a glimmer of God's presence; they see him once in a while when his manifestation is very plain, writ in large letters; their window skyward is hardly more than a crevice or a chink; their sense of God is feeble; they touch him at only a few points.

Others have great faith. They have opened wide their hearts toward God, so that they are full of him. And all things are full of him. When they walk abroad and look on nature, they look not so much upon it as through it. The rocks and rills, the flowers and trees, are a transparency, revealing their Creator. All outward

things are but signs and symbols of spiritual realities, suggesting lessons of immortal worth, and bringing close Him in whom they have their being. The very leaves become alive with God. All things speak of him. History declares him. Present-day events chronicled in the secular press, manifest his character and show how the great Father is governing the world. The small ongoings of the household, the minutest transactions of business, the drudgery and drive of shop or mill or store or counting-room, are crowded with him. There is nothing that does not disclose his presence.

Perfect faith leaves no moment and no spot unassociated with God. He becomes the Ever Near. The veils are taken away; the curtains are lifted; the mists and fogs are scattered; the spiritual world, with all its beauty and grandeur, the power of the Almighty, the glory of the All-Holy, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof, lie naked to view.

Rightly framed is that impressive description of a few choice spirits in Holy Writ who are spoken of as "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." For the fullness of one implies the fullness of the

other: one is the means to the other; they can not be separated. It is only by faith that Christ dwells in the heart. Where faith is, God is. Where God is, faith is. Not without significance is the marginal rendering at Mark xi, 22, "Have the faith of God," and Paul's words, in Galatians ii, 20, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." The apostle, perhaps, meant to indicate his faith *in* Jesus; but if he did intend to declare that the animating principle of his new life was "the faith which is in the Son of God" (R. V.), giving it a subjective rather than an objective purport, the assertion would be hardly more startling than that in the previous part of the verse, "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

Jesus had, of course, a perfect faith in the Father, and this was why he could say, "I do always those things which please him." This also was why his will and that of the Father were one. He who has a perfect faith in God has a perfect oneness of desire and fellowship with him. He cares only for God's will. Other things are worth nothing to him. That will is so beautiful, so splendid, so exquisite, so delicious,

to his fully-opened eyes that there is nothing else desirable or valuable in comparison therewith. To fear it seems on the face of the matter absurd. Can there be any room in such a soul for anxiety about mere temporal things? None whatever. Any room for fear of man or of the future? Not any. What of the world? It has vanished, dwarfed into insignificance; for He has become visible in his true light and bigness, and it has passed into entire obscurity. Creatures no more divide the choice of the completely-trusting soul; they are imperatively bidden to depart; sin departs; self disappears; Satan flees in utter rout and ruin.

Perfect faith, it will readily be seen, carries with it as a natural consequence and inevitable accompaniment, the perfection of all other graces and virtues. There will be perfect prayerfulness, because prayer at its best is simply communion with God, and this is insured by a constantly-acting and completely-developed faith. There will be perfect contentment and resignation, because the Divine will appears in its true clearness to the fully-illuminated spiritual vision, and when thus seen it can not but be welcomed. There will

be perfect praisefulness and trustfulness and fearlessness for the same reason; also perfect recollectedness and watchfulness, perfect gentleness, meekness, patience, peace. When God is ever near, in closest contiguity with the soul without ceasing, no break in the communion, all things else that are lovely and Christlike follow. Is not this the implication of Jehovah's word to Abraham, "Walk before *me*, and be thou perfect?"

There are great advantages in striving after perfection along the line of faith rather than along some other lines—that of love, for instance. It is very clear-cut and definite, so that it is not so easy to deceive ourselves in regard to it as in regard to most other things. If we show lack of faith by worry and by complaint, by wishing this and fearing that, by absorption in appearances and secondary agents instead of fixing our eye steadfastly on the great First Cause, we can not but know it, our shortcomings will be manifest, our conscience will convict us of sin. For "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" and only he lives without sin, in the fullest sense of that term, who lives the life of perfect faith.

Another reason for choosing this line of development and study is that no hour of the day, scarce any moment, is without its opportunity for practice; and only by practice can we become perfect, only by constant exercise will this virtue grow strong. Every occasion calls for faith, every event can be met in faith, or the contrary; our relation to each occurrence of the myriads that fill the day challenges our trust and forces us to treat it in a way that either invigorates or weakens that trust. If we see God in events, we shall feel very differently toward them, be very differently affected by them, from what we do if we behold them merely with the eye of sense. We can make each happening, however small, a means of dying somewhat to self and living more consciously and closely in and for God, if we are wide awake all the time on this side of our being, if we are full of faith.

It is in this way that earth becomes very much like heaven; for the chief distinctive mark of that happy place, we are accustomed to say, is the vision of God. "There we shall see his face." But how see him? Not physically, but much as here in our highest moments of spirit-



ual enlightenment. Faith is not to be lost in sight, as we sometimes sing; for it is written, "Now abideth faith." It will not be lost, but so intensified and purified that God will be continually felt in keenest fashion, and we shall have a fellowship with him far closer and higher than ever before. Therefore we have a right to say that in proportion as our faith grows purer and stronger, in that proportion we have already the best part of heaven begun on earth. For faith is heaven and heaven is faith.

## III

## BE CHEERY.

WHY should a person make himself a nuisance? What gain is there in grimness, and sourness, and unsociability? Few people care to listen to whining and complaint. On the whole the world uses us as well as we deserve. It is very hard for the defeated to admit this, but it is a fact nevertheless, and, if only admitted, one of the chief reasons for defeat is removed.

A cheerful philosophy is an important element

of success. He who is perpetually suspecting others of ill-treating him and keeping him down is not a welcome companion. Suspicion is usually folly as well as injustice and unhappiness. Moreover, gladness is one of the great rules of health. To be well, be glad. To be courted, be jolly. It is easy for the average man to hate, or at least to avoid, the unhappy. Nobody wants a death's-head at his table. Nobody considers himself regaled when forced to listen to other people's wrongs and slights, most of them either imaginary or exaggerated by over-sensitive conceit.

Every man is of less importance to the world around him than he likes to think. But he can easily test it by asking how much he himself dwells upon the condition of others. By as much as their grievances do not particularly concern him, by so much his own are matters of indifference to them. So let him be pleasant, bury his sorrows, pocket his affronts, make himself agreeable, trust in Providence, and thankfully take what comes.

“Build a little fence of trust around to-day;  
Fill the space with loving deeds and therein stay.  
Look not through the sheltering bars upon to-morrow,  
God will help thee bear what comes of joy or sorrow.”

## IV.

## HYMNS OF FAITH.

THE faith country is most emphatically a place of music. Not to be given to song, in the heart at least, and not to love hymns, would argue a decided deficiency in spiritual development. A hymn is a wing by which the soul soars above earthly cares and toils, into a purer air and a clearer sunshine. And when the hymn is married to such melody as is its fitting mate we have two wings with which to speed our flight toward the heavens. Naught can better scatter the devils of melancholy and gloom, of doubt and fear: and naught is more likely to lead us into the bliss of full assurance if suitably used.

In one sense pretty nearly all hymns are hymns of faith, for without faith no one can approach God, and every act of worship implies, of course, a belief in his existence and a trust in his goodness; if we address him in penitence, adoration, consecration, or thanksgiving, we of necessity put faith somewhat in exercise, the unseen is realized, God comes nearer. He who breathes forth the sentiments of

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,”

“Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,”

“Just as I am, without one plea,”

“Jesus, Lover of my soul,”

“Abide with me,”

and the rest of the universal favorites, must have a little confidence, if not more, in Him to whom these words of prayer are addressed, and whose love is taken for granted by them. Hence to sing almost any hymn, if it be done thoughtfully, earnestly, will increase faith. Hymns of praise and joy especially are hymns of faith; for how can there be the one without the other? Also hymns of affliction and resignation, for the promises of God are the soul's refuge in times of sorrow, and these promises in one form or another are embodied or involved in the hymns which have afforded such comfort to millions.

One may mean by hymns of faith hymns of the creed, like that well-known stirring lyric of Faber's,

“Faith of our fathers, living still

In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword.”

There are also many hymns about faith, describing it, like Bathurst's

“O for a faith that will not shrink,  
Though pressed by every foe,”

and Charles Wesley's,

“Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,  
And looks to that alone;  
Laughs at impossibilities,  
And cries, ‘It shall be done!’”

But those hymns which call, in the most imperative way, by their very structure and composition, for a direct exercise of implicit confidence and childlike trust, so that without it their repetition is but a mockery, and to say them from the heart, is to lean hard on the breast of the Lord,—these are what we more particularly account hymns of faith. They are exceeding plentiful and exceeding precious. A large volume might be made up composed exclusively of this class, and the number of those that are noteworthy is so great that a brief article like this can not hope to do them justice. If we mention a few, it must be understood that they are but specimens of a multitude.

Familiar to all are such thoroughly Scriptural productions as

“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord;”

“God is my strong salvation,”

“In God I have found a retreat,”

“Give to the winds thy fears,”

“Though troubles assail and dangers affright,”

“God moves in a mysterious way,”

“Thy way, not mine, O Lord,”

“Lord, I believe thy every word,”

“Fade, fade each earthy joy,”

“My faith looks up to thee.”

Some others, not less meritorious and felicitous, are not so well known. One by Charles Wesley, beginning “Away! my needless fears,” is so uncompromising in its confidence, and contains so positive an affirmation of the most thoroughgoing belief in the exceptionless sway of omnipotent goodness that to sing it over a few times must indeed put to flight all doubts, and a full acceptance of its sentiments would endow

a soul with waveless calm. Very similar is Madame Guyon's

“My God, how full of sweet content,”

and Miss Waring's

“Father, I know that all my life is portioned out for me;”  
also, by the same author,

“In heavenly love abiding;”

and Henry F. Lyte's

“Whate'er events betide,  
Thy will they all perform;  
Safe in thy breast my head I hide,  
Nor fear the coming storm.

Let good or ill befall,  
It must be good for me;  
Secure of having thee in all,  
Of having all in thee.”

Not a few choice spirits, among whom was President Wayland, of Brown University, have accounted Faber's

“I worship thee, sweet will of God,  
And all thy ways adore,”

as the most heavenly hymn yet written, the highest expression of the deepest, sweetest things in

life. It certainly contains lessons as to close walking with God and full fidelity to him, lessons as to the gain of loss, the blessedness of self-sacrifice, the destruction of disappointment, the joy of absolute acquiescence, the power of weakness when it trusts, the privileges of complete partnership with the Almighty, the secret of true freedom, the possibilities of devout obedience, that, properly coned, will inevitably transfigure the soul.

Miss Havergal, whose rich experience has become a precious legacy to the general Church, and who has laid that Church under deep obligation by her little books of Scripture meditation, has also finely expressed in more than one of her beautiful songs the lessons of trust. Perhaps the most suggestive for this purpose is her "Secret of a Happy Day," which has thrown light on the pathway of multitudes:

"Just to trust him—that is all,  
Then the day will surely be  
Peaceful, whatso'er befall,  
Bright and blessed, calm and free."

There is a German trust song, very admirable, written by Lampertus in 1625, beginning

"Just as God leads me I would go."



George Neumark, another German of a later time, has given us many noble expressions of high assurance, among the best of which is the one commencing,

“Leave God to order all thy ways.”

From France comes Pastor Theodore Monod’s

“On thee my heart is resting.”

Also Madame Guyon’s

“A little bird I am.”

There are many exquisite stanzas of faith in poetical productions, standard or fugitive, not designed to be sung as hymns. This is a beautiful avenue of great length, hardly to be entered here, much less explored. But we may mention as specimens Longfellow’s “Resignation,” Norman McLeod’s “Trust in God,” Miss M. G. Brainerd’s “Not Knowing,” and Rev. Isaac Williams’s verses entitled “Trust in God,” of which the third reads—

“The heart that trusts forever sings,  
And feels as light as it had wings;  
A well of peace within it springs;  
Come good or ill,  
Whate’er to-day, to-morrow brings,  
It is his will.”

Also must here be mentioned the poem called "Waiting," by John Burroughs, containing most surely a magnificent spirit of calm, implicit reliance that can not for a moment admit the possibility of any failure in life's conflicts. The first and last stanzas of the six are these :

"Serene, I fold my hands and wait,  
 Nor care for wind, or tide, or sea,  
 I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,  
 For lo, my own shall come to me.

. . . . .

The stars come nightly to the skies,  
 The tidal wave unto the sea,  
 Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,  
 Can keep my own away from me."

We have given just a few samples to stand in token of the many that must not here be quoted. Some of these others will rush to the memory of the reader, for they have solaced him doubtless in many hours when the clouds of despondency lowered :

"All the way my Savior leads me,"

"I leave it all with Jesus,"

"In some way or other the Lord will provide,"

“It is well with my soul,”

“The King of love my shepherd is,”

“His word a tower to which I flee,  
For as my days my strength shall be.”

The cultivation of faith must be one at least of the main objects of attention, if not the very foremost one, in the advancement of the Christian life. He who masters this attainment has mastered the spring and source of all true progress. No pains are too great to give to it, no measures promising help in its securement should be at all neglected. And a chief help we are confident, will be found in the digesting and assimilating of such hymns as we have noted above. What the poet, of passionate soul, in his brightest moments of special insight and inspiration, has had the genius to conceive and the skill to set forth in compact, finished form, where beauty is united with strength, we may adopt with great profit. Then what before was vague becomes clear; what was only half felt, because unexpressed, takes full possession of our being. We mount up with wings as eagles, we run and are not weary, we walk and are not faint.

“O, I know the Hand that is guiding me  
Through the shadow to the light;  
And I know that all betiding me  
Is meted out aright.  
I know that the thorny path I tread  
Is ruled with a golden line;  
And I know that the darker life's tangled thread,  
The brighter the rich design.”

## V.

## FAITH MOTTOES.

Those who abide in the land of faith—that blessed land of perfect safety and glorious plenty, of perpetual progress and constant activity, of complete liberty and abounding joy, land of sunlight and beauty and song—find themselves steadily settling down into certain habits of thought and maxims of conduct which gradually become second nature, and are carried out with little or no conscious effort. The longer they dwell in the land and are fed on its luscious fruits, the more readily they shape their behavior after a few well-defined principles. These principles may be compactly stated in a short series of mottoes convenient to commit to memory and

very suitable for adoption. They who adopt them, and only they, can be counted in the fullest sense of the term accredited citizens, having an assured position in the land of faith. What are these mottoes? They may be differently stated, but the following seven, it is believed, will cover the ground fairly well:

#### DISREGARD APPEARANCES.

God hides himself. "He is least seen when all the powers of ill are most abroad;" he "seems to leave us to ourselves just when we need him most." It is not so, but so it looks. Hence we lose courage, and give way to doubt; we query whether or not his promises mean anything in particular, whether it is worth while to serve the Lord or not, whether it may not be that just this once God has forgotten us. Appearances will floor us almost every time. We must learn to pay them no heed whatsoever, to look always below the surface, beyond the present, and above the shifting shadows which ceaselessly come and go in wayward, restless alternation. The only way is to stay the mind on Him who changeth not, and who alone is reality. Unsubstantial visions and

empty phantoms deceive the multitudes. Happy is he who is clear-sighted enough to ignore the plausible outside show, and fix his gaze on that only which truly is; that which lasts on, when the shows and gauds are gone.

#### DISREGARD SECONDARY AGENTS.

This motto resembles the first, for secondary agents have only apparent power. We give it a special place, however, because we deem it worthy of utmost emphasis. The tendency is very strong, almost irresistible—found entirely so, alas! by most—to confine the thought to visible instrumentalities, either of flesh and blood, or inanimate and material, and forget Him without whom they all are powerless. That “there is no power but of God,” very few seem to believe in any practical way. But this is fundamental to our peace, and to any consistent, comprehensive, satisfactory theory of Divine providence. If God has transferred some portion of his power to others, so that in the realm of matter they may act with complete independence of him, then his children are no longer safe from their enemies, nor can his plans be carried out save in a very uncertain,

halting, irregular way. We must deal directly with God, solely with God, if we would have perfect peace amid the fluctuations of events, and feel absolutely sure that all these events are doing his will and conveying to us his blessing.

#### NO COMPLAINT.

To complain is always to sin, for it means an unwillingness to accept those Divine arrangements for us which are manifested in the circumstances God sends. When we complain we say no to God, or we refuse to behold God at all in that which he brings before us. Either way we are injuring ourselves and displeasing him. How can we be happy if we are complaining? And happiness is a clear duty, as well as privilege. How can we scatter sunshine if we are dropping tears? It can not be good for us to set up our will and way as preferable to that of the Master, or to imagine that the path we had marked out, the pleasure we had coveted, is better than that which infinite wisdom and love combined to bestow. When faith is in full exercise we shall have no difficulty in receiving whatever comes with thankfulness, because to the eye of faith it

will bear very plainly the stamp of our Father's kindness and care, and we shall not be so foolish as to desire what is bad for us.

“NOTHING TO WISH OR TO FEAR.”

This phrase, from that wonderful hymn of John Newton on the preciousness of Jesus, may well be adopted as a helpful motto by those who wholly believe. Their faith brings them into such union with the Savior as makes him always nigh, and enables them to behold his face continually; they are blessed with a perpetual sense of his love, so that earthly possessions dwindle into insignificance; their sky is free from clouds; they abide in summer sunshine, and “perfume,” “music,” “gayety,” “sweetness,” fitly typify their spiritual riches. How can they wish anything when He is their all, and they have him? How can they fear anything, when the Omnipotent is their defense? Faith means fearlessness always. “Let not your heart be troubled; believe,” said the Master. “I will trust, and not be afraid,” exclaimed the prophet. When we desire only what God desires, we refuse him nothing that he asks of us, we re-



quest of him nothing that he does not choose to grant, and we rob him of nothing that is his. Truly this is great perfection.

## NO COMPROMISE.

Faith and trust have close relations; and the man of faith is a man who will not palter with principle. He sees the eternal too clearly to care very much for the temporal; he has too strong a sense of God to be much affected by men. When he is asked to surrender some little of the claims of righteousness that there may be peace with the unrighteous, he positively refuses. He prefers purity to peace. He expects the other side to do all the surrendering. He plants himself on the immovable foundation of unmixed virtue, and he proposes to do the duty of the hour no matter what may be the personal consequences. He has not learned to equivocate, or excuse, or retreat, or trifle with the smallest moral obligation. He only knows that what God says is to be done, and that with him all things are possible. So he follows the straight course, keeps in the middle of the road, and eschews all compromise.

## MOMENT BY MOMENT.

Short views are best. Yet, of course, in one sense we ought to take long views. We are obliged to put it in this way because of the pitiful ambiguity and inadequacy of language. There is certainly a great difference between living for the moment and living by the moment. The former marks the worldling, the latter the true Christian. We should indeed live for the future, with reference to its interests, but not in the future. This latter means unprofitable anxiety and wearing worry. Just for to-day the strength comes, and that may well suffice us. If we have light for one step more, and can always be sure of that, as we well may, what further need is there, since we can only take one step at a time? Many there are who lose all their joy and peace because they insist on living in the days which are gone, or in those which are yet to be, never in those which now are. What folly could be worse? If we are always happy in the present tense, what place will there be for sorrow? Only he who is woefully lacking in faith will find this motto impossible.

## DOWN WITH DOUBTS.

This means that there must be an exercise of will-power, and that we must treat our doubts as sins. Yet here again there is need of discrimination and care about meanings. For there are two kinds of doubt. One is innocent, and indeed most valuable. Intellectual doubt, in the realm of philosophy and science, has conferred great benefits on mankind, and is at the root of all advancing civilization; for except as men challenge the sufficiency of the old, they will reach nothing new. But the doubt which should be ruthlessly put down with all insistency and strenuousness is spiritual doubt, in the realm of morals and religion. This comes from the "father of lies," because it leads to questioning the truthfulness of God and the trustworthiness of his character. For this kind of unbelief and distrust there is no excuse. To parley with it in the slightest degree is a serious mistake. Not to believe God, not to accept his Word as ample foundation for any course of conduct, will bring us into trouble at once, as it should, for it is wicked. Away with the very first suggestion that there is anything to

do but to believe, when God speaks! Doubt of this sort is at the antipodes of faith.

Such are our mottoes. They are bold ones. They mean business. They are not for the indolent, or the illogical, or the impatient. To carry them out to the letter is no small or easy matter. But they contain the secret of the highest type of spiritual life. If we would know how far we have got, these mottoes will help us to find out. If we would hasten on and make the best use of our time in efforts after entire Christlikeness, these mottoes will certainly aid our advance.

## VI.

### UNOBTRUSIVE PIETY.

THIS is a favorite phrase with some people. They are very much afraid that it will be said of them that they set themselves up to be better than their neighbors. They have a horror of being accounted singular or peculiar. The applause of men, and to be on good terms with all about them, is the very breath of their nostrils. So they take much satisfaction in the thought that while they

are all right with God—for do they not worship him with all due decorousness, in the most approved style, and wear becomingly the conventional marks of piety?—it can not for a moment be charged against them that they are in the least Pharisaic or interfere in the slightest degree with others' spiritual rights.

Let such folks get what comfort they can out of whatever may be good in this attitude; but let them also reflect that two very serious dangers are in their pathway. They stand in great peril of moral cowardice, and their light, if put so carefully under a bushel, will be very likely to go out altogether. We are bidden to provoke one another unto love and good works. How can we do it if we keep our good deeds sedulously concealed, and are extremely solicitous not to give offense by intimating in any way that others are not doing all they should? Be more provoking, is a proper exhortation if we give the right meaning to the word. To thrust one's self in any shape—actions, opinions, professions, exhortations—needlessly into public view, is vulgar and offensive; but to stand with boldness, in a manly or womanly way, for truth and right when they are

assailed, or to exhibit our earnest, loving interest in the highest welfare of our friends, is quite another thing. One may be fervent, and yet not forward; aggressive, but not repulsive; courageous, while not conceited. In order to avoid a failure in charity, there is no need of laxity in principle. There is very little danger, in these days, of undue obtrusiveness in religion, of making our piety too prominent. Most people's peril is quite the opposite. The cross is too much covered up. The dividing lines between Church and world are too much rubbed out. Our devotion to Jesus should be pushed more into view, rather than less. If we have "no religion to speak of," it may be seriously questioned whether we really have the genuine article.

## VII.

### SAINTLY, YET SANE.

WHY is it that saintliness and sanity have in so many instances been divorced? As to the unfortunate fact of the separation there can be no doubt. The pages of history furnish illustrations by the thousand. They are so well known as to

preclude all necessity for citation, and so numerous that the merest catalogue would be intolerably prolix. Nor is this sad situation one pertaining to the past alone. The present is rife with examples, and every reader of these words must have seen plentiful instances. There are people in abundance belonging to every land and sect and community who are very devout, but not very sensible.

And we are apt to resent it, perhaps be stumbled by it, as though it were a reflection on religion and a reproach to goodness. But further consideration corrects this mistake. We perceive that it arises simply from the unequal endowment and development of the individual concerned. Very few men are symmetrically made; still fewer grow symmetrically. If the elements of their original constitution are entirely harmonious—which is rare—their surroundings are not likely to be such as will continue this favorable and desirable condition. Not many are equally strong in their sensibilities and their reason. Some are emotional, others intellectual. Some are violent in their feelings, and weak in point of will and understanding; while with others it is just the op-

posite. Education makes a great difference. Some are ignorant and untaught; hence a prey to all kinds of vagaries and delusions and impositions. Even where there is not much culture, some by nature have good judgment, and are not easily upset in their mental processes. Others, in spite of large culture, are eccentric and unreliable. So it comes to pass that not all who are saintly are sane, and not all who are sane are saintly.

But the combination is peculiarly desirable and peculiarly beautiful. How much harm has been done by those who have meant well, but have been far from wise! Most true is it that much love does not necessarily imply much light, and that there may be a pure heart without a clear head. When we are forced to choose between them in picking associates, preferences greatly differ. Some prefer the knave, others the fool. It is not always easy to decide which does the more evil—the well-intentioned person who continually blunders, or the shrewd, far-seeing man who is thoroughly selfish. Many say the former, and that he is the one to be dreaded and avoided most of all.

However this may be, it is surely a pity that



we should ever be shut up to this unhappy choice. Strong feeling and straight thinking are both important. Good morals and good brains are each to be coveted. There is certainly no reason for their being at any time disconnected. Neither mind nor soul can best prosper if either is neglected. We are told that we must "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good;" that we are to "try the spirits whether they are of God;" that we are to love God with all our "mind," as well as with all our "heart" and "soul;" and that, while babes in malice, we are in understanding to be men. These and other texts show sufficiently that, in the Scripture idea of sainthood, nothing of intellectual unsoundness is implied or encouraged. One may and should be thoroughly rational, sharp-witted, keen-sighted, and judicious, without losing thereby in the slightest degree his vigor of faith or ardor of love. Scholasticism and mysticism are not found so often together as would be well; for they are of immense value in mutually checking each other. Fanaticism would be prevented by the one, formalism by the other.

When a person is naturally pious or spiritual,

the tendency is for him to decry study and the free, independent exercise of the mind. On the other hand, he who has great mental powers rarely appreciates the value of soul-culture; his pride of intellect does not take kindly to the demand for humility; it is difficult for him to be patient with stupidity, and he is prone to limit unduly the province of faith. The contrary course should be taken by every one who aspires to a symmetrical development, by which alone the complete man is formed. The scholar should bend his energies to supplementing his religious deficiencies, and the devotee should guard most carefully against minimizing those learned attainments in which he is least proficient.

Occasionally one finds a person all on fire with fervent love, bent on proving to the uttermost all the possibilities of grace divine, intense in the pursuit of perfect holiness, on the stretch for the heights of supreme peace, insatiable for complete Christlikeness and saintliness, who is, nevertheless, a monument of common sense, in full possession of his unperverted reason, thoroughly sober-minded, sound in judgment, a vigorous thinker and a close student, as free from fanati-

cism as from formalism or lukewarmness of spirit. These are far too rare. The world greatly needs more of them; but it does not always welcome them very warmly. They are so peculiar as to be seriously misunderstood. They are not sufficiently partisan to be very comfortable or highly appreciated. They sympathize with both sides to such a degree that they are not altogether agreeable to either, and are viewed with general suspicion. It is but another instance of the way in which the world has stoned its prophets and crucified its Messiahs; for these men are its true leaders, deserving of highest honor and closest following.

So far as our observation goes, the Church of Christ—shall we say the Methodist Church especially?—imperatively needs to cultivate intellectual sanity along with its saintliness. It has an immense number very considerably devout who wholly fail to recognize the proper province of reason in religion. As Jehovah said of old, through the mouth of one of his prophets, so needs it still to be said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” There must be more knowledge of God, of ourselves, and of one another. Knowledge is life, and power, and pleasure, and

peace. The intellect eventually controls the situation. The theory shapes the practice. The work of the theologian is fundamental, and a small error on his part tells for evil on the life of millions through generations and centuries. Accurate definitions in theology, which so many unthinkingly deem of small account, are really of highest importance. To despise them is like undervaluing care in laying out the lines of a yacht or putting in the foundation of a lofty building. Much study may be a weariness to the flesh but it is a necessity to the spirit, and essential to the avoidance of dangerous error. We must, if the Church is truly to prosper and gain its largest and most permanent success, adhere closely to leaders who can clearly distinguish things which differ, as well as shout "Hallelujah!" and pray with fervor.

"Better sit at a master's feet  
    Than thrill a listening state;  
Better suspect that thou art proud  
    Than be sure that thou art great.  
Better a death when work is done  
    Than earth's most favored birth;  
Better a child in God's great house  
    Than the king of all the earth."

## VIII.

## SOUL DISEASES.

THE soul has as many diseases as the body. Some souls are puffed up with pride and vain-glory, swollen with conceit and presumption. That is a kind of spiritual dropsy, very common and very dangerous. Other souls are overheated with passion, flushed with excitement; there is heart-burning, high inflammation, incipient delirium. Spiritual fever has got firm hold of these, sending their temperature up to a perilous point. Still others have spiritual paralysis. This is of very frequent occurrence. Their legs give way entirely when they try to go to meeting, although somehow the very same legs manage to convey their owners to other places comfortably well. Their arms are quite useless when they are called on suddenly for some good work, or even to take money out of their pockets for a beneficent cause. Some have spiritual lockjaw. The muscles of speech concerning religious things have been unused so long that they have become entirely rigid; to get their mouth open in a meeting would

require a crowbar. A great many folks have spiritual fits. A fit of grumblng takes them every little while when things do not go to suit them, or even a fit of rage when somebody has opposed their plans or disregarded their dignity; others will have a fit of envy or boastfulness or covetousness.

For all these maladies the Great Physician has a perfect cure. If we sit long at the feet of the "meek and lowly" we shall learn not to be arrogant and vain. The fever of life's mad ambitions will leave us when the Master's cooling hand is laid upon our burning brow, and his quiet, steady fingers touch our bounding pulses. The paroxysm will pass, the irritation be wholly allayed, the sore spot will heal over, the boil will go down, instead of bitterness will be sweetness; when He who is perfect health comes in close contact with our diseased minds. He can cure spiritual palsy now as easily as he did the physical when on earth. If we are much in his company the limbs will get strength, the mouth will get open, and the various fits, now so harmful, will no longer torment us. The medicine this Physician prescribes sometimes has a bitter taste, but

it will do the work, and all the fee he asks is that we love him with our whole heart.

## IX.

### GREAT FAITH — ITS CONDITIONS.

WHEN one contemplates, in the light of Scripture, the all-important position of faith in Christian experience—(it is by faith we are saved, we stand, we walk, we live; it is by faith that Christ dwells in our hearts; it is faith which works by love; is it through faith and patience we inherit the promises; it is done unto us according to our faith; all things are possible to him that believeth; all things we ask in prayer, believing, we receive; we are commanded to have faith in God, to believe in God, to be full of faith; little faith is rebuked and great faith praised, and they are warmly commended who considered the difficulties of their natural situation without being weakened in faith)—one is inevitably set to asking, How can I reach that largeness of attainment in this matter which is so blessed? In other words, What are the conditions of great faith? What are the principal helps to its possession? We mention

three things which seem to us to be the most essential.

1. *Absolute submission.* If there be the slightest controversy between God and us on any point, however minute, it will inevitably hinder faith. This is what keeps great multitudes back. There is something, intrinsically small, perhaps, of no account it may be thought, and yet of large account if it constitutes a barrier to our freest intercourse with the Lord. Even a very small matter is sufficient to involve a very large principle. There are estates in England held on a peppercorn rent—an annual payment of that which in itself is worthless, but which nevertheless concedes the point of ultimate ownership. It will not do to have this point left at all in doubt as relates to God and us. We can not feel that freedom and confidence with God which is desirable if we are conscious, or even half-conscious, that there is anything at all kept back or only half-surrendered. A little cloud no bigger than a man's hand, or finger, will effectually spoil the perfect serenity of the spiritual sky. And God, with the utmost good will, can not safely do for us what he wants to do unless all is clear in this



matter of mastership. This, then, is the very first thing to be considered in regard to faith, its groundwork. There must be thorough preparation in this particular before it is worth while even to attempt to believe. "How can ye believe," said Christ to the Pharisees of his day, "who receive glory one of another, and the glory which comes from the only God ye seek not?" In the same way he would say to us, How can ye believe in God who prefer your own will to his, and are so blinded as to suppose that any gain can come from holding on to your own foolish, childish plans in opposition to his perfect wisdom?

2. *Resolute will.* A resolute will is a necessity to perfect faith or great faith, because of the persistency with which doubts sometimes intrude. They will not listen to reason. Though argued down and beaten off, back they come, poking up their ugly heads with impudent leer as who should say, Here we are again, and what are you going to do about it? The thing to do about it is to summon up all one's powers of will and resolutely eject the intelopers, turn them out neck and heels, bag and baggage, lock and bolt the door behind them, and set one's self against it. No little

vigor and vehemence is needed. It is not a case where there can be any parleying or consideration of terms of truce. Promptness of action is demanded, and great determination, long continued. Doubts of God's power, wisdom, and love have no business on our premises; they know it, and we know it. They deserve no mercy, and will have none if we are wise. Half-way measures with them will not answer. Leniency is thrown away. But to carry out this strenuous policy consistently and continuously needs a will of no little power. Happy he who possesses it, or can by careful cultivation acquire it. We see not how he can very much get on otherwise. We are disposed to make much allowance for those constitutionally lacking at this point, constitutionally lazy; and to make large requirements upon those well equipped. With a will like steel, anything can be done; and if traitorous doubts are not sent off and kept off, there is a manifest fault.

3. *Vigorous understanding.* We do not deem this third condition quite so essential and important as the other two, but it is a very considerable help,—for this reason: there are certain doctrines not altogether easy of complete comprehension

having very close affiliations with faith, and he who understands the doctrines will have less difficulty in exercising the faith. We refer more particularly to two great thoughts, the immanence of God and his supreme sovereignty. To hold the immanence without detriment to personality, and sovereignty without imperiling free will, has given trouble to many. A weak mind may be disposed to give it up, or at least be thrown into dire confusion and perplexity in the attempt, with manifest harm to his faith. We see not how faith can attain its largest proportions unless God is clearly perceived to be present at all times, in all things, both animate and inanimate, the one moving principle and power with whom we come in contact every moment; for only thus can we best hold converse with him without interruption, and thus increase our trust. And the omnipotence of God, his untrammelled reign in the realm of material things, wherein are brought about the various events which meet us and threaten our peace,—this must be held firmly if faith is not to be overthrown and put in jeopardy almost every hour. An understanding of the dictates of philosophy and science which will make

this doctrine fully intelligible and deliver it from any collision with the fact of our free moral agency, is a wonderful assistance to a reasonable and intelligent faith. He who has no such understanding is subjected to some temptations from which the other is free. It is not necessary that he be defeated, but he must make up at other points that which he certainly loses here. He is brought under a greater strain. Happy he who has this mental cognizance of God to re-enforce his will!

Where these three conditions are fully met, great faith becomes a very simple matter. The believer, resolutely thrusting away every suggestion of Satan to the contrary, and clearly apprehending the complete reasonableness of entire trust in the Heavenly Father who knows his wants and is well able to supply them, kept back by no suspicion that he may not be wholly willing for God's plans concerning him to be carried out, finds it very easy to accept all the words of God and rest in perfect peace because of them. Supremely blest his lot! Trouble disappears. Disappointment is destroyed. Sorrow is turned into joy. Affliction is welcomed, because of the

love which sends it and the spiritual gain which attends it. So earth becomes heaven, and paradise is here.

## X.

## FORTY YEARS OF FULL SALVATION.

It is well to keep anniversaries. A review of the past furnishes the best vantage-ground for greater gains in the future. It is also well to share with others whatever one has reaped in the fields of good. Indeed, no other course is right. And where there have been four decades of uninterrupted devotion to the highest ideals of Christian living, does not he to whom God has granted this rare privilege owe it to the great Giver, as well as to his fellow-men to put on record some of the results of his researches and experiences during this extended period? Not for himself alone have such large favors been accorded. He must lay aside the natural shrinking from the publication of private, personal matters, and set down, as if he were writing of some one else, that which may, in God's mercy, benefit many. Hence one's own improvement, love for one's fellows, and

gratitude to God, all seem to combine in prompting the present paper. And such a contemplation conveniently divides itself into two parts: The past—what does it teach? The future—what does it promise?

It was in 1860, at Eastham Camp-meeting, that there came to me this revelation of Divine truth and impartation of Divine grace, which I have deemed it fitting to call full salvation. I gave it other names then,—names more technical and theological, which have not commended themselves to my mature thought. I can only say that my consecration was greatly deepened, made complete, indeed, up to the measure of the light at that time vouchsafed, and I was enabled, in consequence, to lay hold of Jesus by faith as the all-sufficient empowerer for every possible duty, so that my heart, long disturbed, was entirely at rest, and a very sweet peace filled every nook and cranny of my soul. It was a new starting-point for growth of the very greatest value. After the lapse of forty years I am as much convinced as ever of the large importance of just such new starting-points. I am confident that most people need something of this sort, something that has

the nature of a crisis, an epoch, at which a definite break is made with the old, unsatisfactory, half-way Christian life, and a definite departure taken on a higher plane of action,—a plane where all known duty is promptly done, all known sin resolutely refrained from, and entire loyalty to Christ becomes the motto of each day. I am also strongly of the opinion that this crisis or epoch, sometimes called the second blessing, fails, in the case of most who pass through it, to lead to the best results, because not sufficiently guarded at the time by wise instruction as to the special dangers that attend it and the best way to take advantage of it. No point in connection with this second spiritual epoch needs to be insisted on more firmly than that there will be other subsequent epochs, not perhaps in all cases as marked, but quite as essential to progress; and that yet deeper consecrations will be demanded at intervals, varying in different cases according to the degree of enlightenment which God, in his wisdom, as people, are fitted to profit by it, graciously and gradually supplies. Where this is kept in mind many blunders are avoided, and the way is opened for a steady advance.

Several such subsequent epochs of blessing—sometimes called baptisms of the Holy Ghost, but better, perhaps, termed more definite apprehensions of larger privilege in Christ, or, with St. Paul, “visions and revelations of the Lord”—have come to me during the last forty years. There were none that I recall in the first decade, for I was then much hampered by the incorrect teaching in which I had been brought up, but from which God, after a time, mercifully delivered me. In the second decade, however, there came wonderful enlargements. They followed pretty closely on the sundering of home ties and the devastation of early ambitions involved in the acceptance of a distinct call to India. There had to be, to meet that call, a very decided deepening of the consecration—though it had, up to that time, been supposed to be complete—and very rich outpourings of the Spirit came in consequence. My private journals for 1874 and 1875 contain such entries as the following: “My life flows on in endless song, for I am sure that nothing happens out of His will, and his will is the dearest thing in the universe to me;” “My soul is as a watered garden, delighting itself in fatness;” “Such a



fortnight—all the time in God's immediate presence; there seems to be a spirit of praise and a habit of peace in all things;" "Jesus all the day long is my joy and my song;" all the hours are spent with him in intimate fellowship inexpressibly sweet;" "I understand perfectly what St. Paul meant when he said that he gloried in tribulations and took pleasure in distresses;" "I would so willingly lay down my life for Jesus at his slightest word, and count it a very little thing to do for him;" "There is unclouded contentment with the present will of God;" "I seem to be creeping up a little closer into his bosom."

In 1879 there came another special revelation and appropriation of privilege. It was at the Dasahra Camp-meeting, which has been held in Lucknow annually from 1871 to the present time, and is always a season of power. The particular blessing then received was a deliverance from some hampering fetters of self-consciousness, an accession of simplicity and directness in the apprehension of Christ as a supplier of power to work, a sweeping away of the subtle temptation to count it presumption to suppose that God could speak through my mouth, a breaking up of the

fountains of the great deep, and a letting loose, in larger degree, of the waters of refreshment for others that the mighty One intended to furnish by my speech, a greater confidence in his authorizing of the word that, after prayer, was given, and in his accompanying it with beneficent effect.

But far more marked than this was a very wonderful baptism of love received at Shahjehanpore in 1882, after many weeks of special prayer and thought, and several hours alone with God upon my knees in strong crying unto him, with tears. It was a victory whose glory has never faded; its hallowed influence abides to-day. Many pages would be needed to relate in detail the particulars of the conflict and triumph. It may suffice to say that it settled many troublesome questions, removed all that stood in the way of the happiest relations with people most unhappily constituted, relegated to God the whole business of judgment and punishment, left me nothing to do but to admire or to pity, and filled every avenue of my being with so sweet and precious a flood-tide of affection for everybody that earth was turned into heaven.

Perhaps but once since, in 1886, has there come

any uplift comparable to these already instanced. There occurred then a period of some months when new possibilities of Divine grace were discovered and most joyfully accepted; when the doing or bearing of the will of God furnished a rapturous delight that no words could in any way express; when the splendor and the beauty of that will was appreciated as never before; when to suffer with and for Christ was accounted the rarest and richest privilege, and Divine union of the closest sort was most blessedly realized. There was a dedication in a new sense to the resurrection life, to the positive pushing of the highest type of religion, to intensity in goodness, to louder praises and more boldness in the blessing of the holy name, to a more thorough sinking of self out of sight, and a more absolute contentment with Providence. Faith meant more, wholeheartedness in Christian living meant more, there was a prompter recognition of God's will in every smallest event, and a sweeter satisfaction in each of those manifestations of the will Divine that the moments never fail to bring.

But this must suffice for the past. What of the future? What is the outlook for the ten or twenty

years to come? Is there any great experience even dimly hanging on the horizon waiting to be made manifest? Is there any further revelation of Divine grace that can reasonably be expected and suitably planned for? This much is certain: If I knew of anything that God has for me in the way of greater likeness to him, I would at once lay down before him the price, no matter what that price might be. There is nothing that weighs at all with me for a moment in comparison with the glory of God. I am his to-day in the largest, fullest sense that I have any conception of. If he will give me a better conception of what it means to belong to him, I will instantly take steps to realize it. After forty years of close testing I am sure that I know myself to this extent.

But I do not at present see anything before me except a gradual further approximation to the absolutely perfect standard that still stands, and ever must stand, in advance of all actual attainment. A perfect consecration and a perfect faith produce a perfect Christian. Mine is as perfect as I know how to make it now, but further knowledge will undoubtedly bring further attain-

ment. Complete Christlikeness is the ideal that beckons onward every thoroughly loyal soul. All recognized selfishness may be gone, and yet there may be much not now discerned as selfishness that remains to be removed. There is large margin for further growth in the promptitude and heartiness with which the will of God is recognized and rejoiced over in very little things. A passion for that will, in the minute events of daily life, is very rare, and may certainly be increased. Who has yet proved the full power of faith? Who has exhausted the possibilities of progress in regard to ceaseless, fervent prayer, deep thankfulness for all things without exception, uninterrupted recollectedness, and the perpetual, keen sense of the immediate presence of God?

In these and other similar particulars there is opportunity for indefinite advance. The absolute utmost in these directions who has ever attained? The reaching of perfect patience, perfect watchfulness, perfect trustfulness, perfect humility, etc., especially by those who in natural temperament are at furthest distance from these several qualities, furnishes a line of improvement which in

no case, probably, has been as thoroughly followed out as it might be. It is a very great thing to preserve the exact balance of character. It is easy to make striking attainments in directions congenial to us. If, for example, we are endowed by nature with a very sympathetic disposition, if we have much gentleness and geniality, unwillingness to give pain, disinclination to criticise or antagonize any one, it is not difficult to secure large developments on that side, and to become greatly loved and praised, as though a visitant had appeared from the celestial sphere. But the main test of virtue for that particular man in God's sight will be in a wholly different direction, will consist in his putting restraint upon himself in these matters to him so easy, and setting himself like a flint in behalf of righteousness, even when it means the antagonizing of those dearest. It is this combination and interrelation in the workings of nature and grace that fills the practical Christian life with problems not easy to solve and heights very hard to mount. It calls for a prayerful, constant exercise of judgment in the management of the inner world of thought and feeling, as well as the outer world of conduct.

Gifts are very different from graces, but the one are modified by the other. The head strongly affects the heart, and the heart the head. Each one's philosophy molds his experience, and in turn is molded by it. Hence Christian progress by no means resolves itself entirely into a matter of blessing or emotional spasmodic crises, but consists largely in a close study of the mind of Jesus and the application of the principles therefrom deduced to the right settlement of the questions, small or large, that are constantly calling for decision in one's daily walk. We may make a good deal of progress which others watching us wholly fail to apprehend, which they even blame; and we may be retrograding at the time others praise us. Slow, steady persistence, that never lets up or gets discouraged, seems to be the main thing, together with an eager readiness to take advantage of all the special opportunities for advance which the good Lord may put in our way. The removal of the spots and wrinkles and minor blemishes from robes already pretty thoroughly cleansed is a long and delicate matter, where a great deal of pains produces only small outward show. But he who has got well along in the Divine school

has learned to pay very little attention to outward show, has learned to look for his appreciation to more discriminating eyes than man's. It has become his one absorbing purpose to do his very best with the gifts, few or many, which have been allotted him, and to get as near to the perfect life of the Master as is permitted to one with a very imperfect body and mind; to do this, and then commit the result to God.

## XI.

### THE BEST ARMOR.

WE are exhorted by Peter to be armed with the mind of Christ. The expression is somewhat striking and very suggestive. He speaks in the previous chapter of "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," and Paul also exhorts Christians to "adorn themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety through good works." That graces and virtues of various kinds make us more beautiful and attractive in the sight of God and man, is a familiar thought; but that they make us stronger and better fitted to fight, is a reflection of another kind, even more important.



Is there any particular aspect or phase of the mind of Christ which can be regarded as especially referred to in this exhortation and especially fitted for the equipment of the Christian soldier? We think there is. The context shows that "living to the will of God" was what the apostle had in his thought as the express mind of Jesus. And surely nothing more exactly meets the case both in reference to him and to us. How often did he say, "I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me;" "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to accomplish his work;" "I seek not mine own glory;" "I do nothing of myself;" "I do always the things that are pleasing to him." This, then, plainly, was the very mind of Christ—absolute devotion to the will of God, even if that led to the severest suffering. The spirit of the cross was the spirit of Jesus, the spirit of ministry and self-surrender for the good of others.

And is not this the best armor, both defensive and offensive? What will protect us so thoroughly against the ills of life, the strife of tongues, the scorn of men? If we are given up fully to doing God's will, we shall not have

time or inclination to bother about the little slights or spites or smites that may occur in consequence. To one completely absorbed in the greater thing, the lesser thing practically disappears. None of these things moved Jesus or Paul. None of them could penetrate their armor. God's will was so much to them that men's opposition did not count, did not produce the slightest impression on their purpose. And this devotion to God is not only a shield, but a sword. It moves to action; it gives the swing of conquest; it overthrows Satan; it subdues men. There is nothing like it. What better can we do, then, than to listen to the exhortation of the Apostle Peter, "Arm ye yourselves also with the same mind?" Thus armed with the mind of the Master—absorbing devotion to one thing, the will of God—the Church would go forth to marvelous victories, and would subdue the earth.

"Four things a man must learn to do  
If he would make his record true:  
To think without confusion clearly,  
To love his fellow-man sincerely,  
To act from honest motives purely,  
To trust in God and heaven securely."

## XII.

## SWEETNESS AND RIGHT.

WE sometimes hear it said that we are to speak well of every one, or else not speak of them at all. But this precept will hardly bear close examination. It contains a truth, but not the whole truth. In aiming at a very prevalent vice, that of evil-speaking, it overlooks a very important virtue, that of right discrimination and the proper guidance of public opinion. To award praise where it is not deserved is as much a fault as to withhold it where it is deserved. And to be silent concerning a manifest wrong is to be a traitor to the right. Not to punish the guilty is cruelty to the innocent, and not to condemn evil deeds is a plain discouragement of good actions.

We are all, to some extent, on the judgment-throne, and we can not abdicate. It is absolutely necessary for our own protection and guidance, as well as that of others, that we form an opinion concerning those around us. It is, of course, incumbent on us to form that opinion carefully, modestly, with every possible precaution against

injustice. But form it we must; there is no escape. And since we are somewhat responsible for those whom we can influence, the expression of this opinion at proper times and places becomes a plain duty.

To speak well of every one alike is anything but an indication of goodness. It is criminal carelessness and a betrayal of trust. It is putting the wicked on an equality with the righteous, and implying that there is no difference. It plays into the hands of the designing and the evil. There is a woe pronounced upon us when all men speak well of us, because it indicates that we have too much studied what is popular, and not enough regarded strict righteousness, which is never popular. A similar woe belongs to those who speak well of all, because they also are studying what is popular, and not what is demanded by the general good. To pat every one on the back may lead to success in elections, and tend to multiply those who shout for us and call us jolly good fellows. But this sort of business is baseness, and decidedly below the level of self-respecting rectitude.

“A man who makes a character makes foes,” because he refuses to forfeit his integrity by keep-

ing silence in the face of wrong, and does not deem fence-straddling a becoming position. He takes sides because he sees clearly where the preponderance of public benefit lies. He feels that he owes it to himself, as well as to God, to do what may be in his power to bring about a rightful decision in the matter. Such a one will make friends, of course, as well as foes, and he will have the approval of a good conscience and the "well done" of his Lord at the end, which can not be said of those who shirk, or refuse to put themselves where any inconvenience of personal loss might be suffered for the sake of a good cause. It pays in the long run to be bold, to be independent, to be a positive force for good; not a weak nonentity, covering anything and everybody with an indiscriminate slobber of taffy, valueless because universally applied.

"I will say it over and over,  
This and every day.  
Whatsoever the Master orders,  
Come what may,  
'It is the Lord's appointment;'  
For only his love can see  
What is wisest, best, and right,  
What is truly good for me."

## XIII.

## THE HEAVENLY HYMN.

HYMNS about the heavenly place are many. So are hymns which deal more or less delightfully with heavenly experiences. But if one hymn deserves pre-eminently to be called, in this latter sense, *the* heavenly hymn, it is, to our thinking, the one by Frederick William Faber on the "Will of God." From its fourteen verses eliminating two not quite so rich in inspiration, we set forth the remaining twelve as the best-known description of a life absolutely hid with Christ in God:

"I worship thee, sweet will of God!  
And all thy ways adore,  
And every day I live I seem  
To love thee more and more."

Here we have, as the first note struck, a very high one most truly, a steadily-increasing love for all the ways of God. Can there be any better test of growth than this? It is one thing to love God, or at least to think the love exists, and quite another thing oftentimes to adore all his ways; for those ways are not as our ways, and his plans

run not in harmony with all of ours. By this we know that we love him if we welcome whatsoever may be his arrangements concerning us.

“Thou wert the end, the blessed rule  
Of our Savior’s toils and tears;  
Thou wert the passion of his heart  
Those three and thirty years.”

A passionate devotion to the will of the Father is certainly the best sign of likeness to Jesus. “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me.” “I delight to do thy will, O my God.” The Divine will known and done is that which, more than anything else, stamps the fair and fragrant life we all long to lead, but only when this longing amounts to a passion can any important success be achieved.

“And he hath breathed into my soul  
A special love of thee,  
A love to lose my will in his  
And by that loss be free.”

In this we see the secret of true freedom. Through the loss of one’s own will. Blessed mystery! “He whom the Son makes free is free indeed.” He snaps his fingers at circumstances.

He walks the earth with the tread of a conqueror. He is free from all fear, whether of tongues or tempests. He has "nothing to wish or to fear," since the will of God includes all his desires, and that will can not fail to be accomplished.

"I love to kiss each print where thou  
Hast set thine unseen feet;  
I can not fear thee, blessed Will!  
Thine empire is so sweet."

O the sweetness of perfect obedience! All things are indeed lovely that bear traces of the Father's presence. He is in the most barren deserts, turning them into gardens for those who have eyes to see him. "Lo, God is here, and I knew it not," has been the cry of many a startled soul. It is our privilege to know, and thus to make the whole of life one long token of affection from our best Friend. Then, how glorious and beautiful a thing to live!

"When obstacles and trials seem  
Like prison walls to be,  
I do the little I can do,  
And leave the rest to thee."



What simplicity in the close walk! No straining after great effects, no uncomfortable longings to do big things. The only thing of real importance is to feel reasonably sure that our possibilities are being filled out. Responsibility is strictly proportioned to opportunity. And where God limits the latter, as he so constantly does, we are fully justified in refusing to be concerned for large results. We can live at ease without blame, although not much is done, if sincerely conscious that we are waiting on God for orders, and doing our very best to carry out those that come.

“I know not what it is to doubt;  
My heart is ever gay;  
I run no risk, for come what will  
Thou always hast thy way.”

The gayety of full fidelity!—there is nothing like it. No such perennial fount of mirth as this opens itself elsewhere along life's pilgrim pathway. Deliverance from doubt swings wide the golden gate of gladness. In confidence and hopefulness is strength. The upward-glancing eye and the face on fire come from the heart at rest. What peace can equal that which comes from the firm assurance that somehow, in spite

of the many devices of men, the counsel of the Lord shall stand; that counsel which, because of its infinite wisdom and good will, we cordially choose?

“I have no cares, O blessed Will!  
For all my cares are thine;  
I live in triumph, Lord, for thou  
Hast made thy triumphs mine.”

Such are the privileges of complete partnership with the Almighty. Weak and poor in ourselves we can link our fortunes with One who is both able and willing to make up all deficiencies. All things are ours. We can exclaim, as did our elder Brother when addressing the Father, “All things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.” It is a wonderful exchange to give up cares and take triumphs. There is no other bargain like it. Magnificent chance of untold wealth!

“And when it seems no chance or change  
From grief can set me free,  
Hope finds its strength in helplessness,  
And gayly waits on thee.

Man's weakness waiting upon God  
Its end can never miss,  
For man on earth no work can do  
More angel-like than this."

Grief is turned into joy by waiting on God. Many have proved this. Patience does wonders. The power of weakness when it trusts is marvelous.

"When my all of strength shall fail,  
I shall with the God-man prevail,"

sings Charles Wesley. Let the trust be simple, constant, unwavering, and victory is sure, the world will be overcome. Here is the secret of prevailing. In helplessness is strength.

"Ride on, ride on triumphantly  
Thou glorious Will! ride on;  
Faith's pilgrim sons behind thee take  
The road that thou hast gone."

The lesson of absolute acquiescence. It is God's to originate, ours to concur; his to give the orders, ours to carry them out. We are but errand-boys, messengers, private soldiers. We watch the movement of his hand, the glance of his

eye, and leap to obey. In no sense our own, our responsibility is reduced to very simple terms, and the burden of life becomes extremely light.

“He always wins who sides with God,  
To him no chance is lost;  
God’s will is sweetest to him when  
It triumphs at his cost.”

The gain of loss. The road to perpetual triumph. The blessedness of self-sacrifice. Failure forever left behind. Disappointment defeated and destroyed. Circumstances all working in our favor. Success assured. It all comes from siding with God. For that side is sure to conquer. And this is just as true in the smallest things as in the largest, in the minute events of daily life as in the movements of empires. How happy they who grasp this truth and build their days invincibly upon it!

“Ill that he blesses is our good,  
And unblessed good is ill;  
And all is right that seems most wrong,  
If it be his sweet Will!”

Here is the only true test for the facts and events of life. We call them by names that are ludicrously wrong. We count that a good which

gratifies our caprice, tickles our vanity, flatters our pride, ministers to our appetite, affords us ease. How shallow and childish! The only thing that is good is God's will. In spite of all seeming, that, and that alone, is genuinely good. His blessing makes the sole distinction between one place and another. All other differences are of no account.

Such is the hymn which has long been favorite with those most heavenly-minded. How great its teaching! How profoundly it penetrates the depths of self-renunciation! How felicitously it describes the joys of union with the Lord! In wealth of thought and beauty of expression it leaves nothing to be desired. Be it ours to ponder well its meaning, to adopt its lofty ideal, and press rapidly on toward its completest realizations.

“O make me patient, Lord,  
Patient in daily cares;  
Keep me from thoughtless words  
That slip out unawares.  
And help me, Lord, I pray,  
Still nearer thee to live,  
And as I journey on,  
More of thy presence give.”

## XIV.

## PURE, NOT PURITANIC.

THE distance between good and evil is often extremely small; especially when the evil is only an abuse or an exaggeration of the good. There are certain chemical compounds where the elements are so nicely adjusted that a single drop too much of any one of them will radically alter the nature of the mixture. So the ordering of life in the higher ranges requires much wisdom. It is easy to disturb the delicate balance, and to turn what was an eminent virtue into something very like a vice. Too much is as bad as too little. Rightful respect for authority readily passes into slavish adherence to tradition. Proper independence of mind is not far from offensive self-conceit. Carefulness to be just right in little things may become morbid scrupulousness which brings the soul into bondage. There is such a thing as an overstrained punctiliousness in minor matters that negatives freedom and defeats decision. Life is too short to spend a great deal of time in determining which shoe to put on first.

It is scarcely possible to be too strict with

one's self in avoiding sinful or doubtful things, it may be thought; yet one can carry this idea so far as to put fetters on all free expression, and rob the spirit of everything like liberty, and breadth and power. Censoriousness lurks very near to such a habit, and a narrowness of view that rules out a great deal which is entirely innocent and every way beautiful. Large numbers, not satisfied with being pure, have become Puritanic; and what was originally a true holiness has got turned into such a sour, cold, Pharisaic severity toward the unholy that it has no very close resemblance to the Christlike spirit of love. There is pressing need of watchfulness, not only lest our good be needlessly evil spoken of, but lest it be gradually changed into evil.

## XV.

## PRAYING AND LIVING.

THERE is a homely saying to the effect that we should not pray cream and live skim-milk. The meaning, of course, is clear. It is a much-needed warning against the indulgence, on one's knees, in fluent aspirations which are totally for-

gotten when on one's feet; against the voluble, but not valuable, utterances which seem to storm heaven, but really go no higher than the ceiling because not supported by a heavenly life. This sort of hypocrisy—must we not call it?—is quite too common. It is arrant foolishness. Lip prayers are lost prayers. Fewer words and weightier should be the rule. Strength in prayer is better than length in prayer. Depth of feeling is far more important than loudness of voice or readiness of speech. Cold prayers are merely called prayers, but have no right to the name.

But there is a very important sense in which it is not possible for one to pray cream unless he also lives cream. In other words, one's praying is inevitably an exponent of one's living. In spite of eloquent language and carefully chosen sentences and Scriptural phrases and an excellent elocution and seeming earnestness of manner, it is not difficult to detect the hollowness of the prayer which comes not out of a holy life. It does not ring right. It reminds one of the force-pump and not of the fountain. The effort is too manifest. There is a lack of spontaneity and of that familiarity with the Father which nothing



but long hours spent alone with him in secret can give. The unreflective and unspiritual may be deceived by the noise and gush and rhetoric, but to the discerning all this outside glitter and glow only serves to emphasize the painful inward lack which is but too manifest. In nothing perhaps more clearly than in prayer, when it is carefully examined, is the genuineness or spuriousness of piety disclosed.

The connection between praying and living is extremely close. Well has it been said, "You can not wrestle with God and wrangle with your neighbor." Any un-Christian feeling cherished spoils the approach to the throne of grace, and turns it into a mockery. The Savior made this very plain when he embodied in his model prayer the petition, "Forgive me as I forgive others;" and when he bade him who stood at the altar, first go be reconciled with his brother, and then come offer his gift. It is for this reason that prayer is most emphatically the key to the Christian life, because it has both a prospective and retrospective effect. It leads to self-examination concerning the past, and it incites to better courses in the future. He who loves prays most, for he craves in-

tercourse with the object adored. And he who lives most for eternal things, prays most, for he breathes the heavenly atmosphere while he talks with God.

Our prayers should be frequently examined to see whether we are asking for what we really want or only for the things we have an idea we ought to want. There is too much of this unreality and practical dishonesty current both in the closet and the public prayer-room. People sometimes get into quite a glow of pleasurable devotional excitement as they pray; their imagination works finely; they have a good flow of language, and become heated with their own rhetoric, almost eloquent; and as the fine phrases roll trippingly off the tongue, they ask for things which they would not only be much astonished to receive, but actually sorry, in their cooler moments. What we sincerely desire we shall be willing to pay the price for. And there is always a price—that is, a condition—attached. If we want to sit on the right hand of Jesus, we must be willing to drink of his cup. There is much more of poetry than of piety in some prayers. They

sound well, but the Lord who knows the heart does not find satisfaction in them.

It was said of the prayers of Dr. Doddridge that they had an intensely business-like spirit. This doubtless meant that prayer to him was not a reverie or a romance, but a reality. He expected to get something by it. It was a substantial transaction, as much so as when he went to get a check cashed at the counter of a bank. It was a power, as much so as when he set in motion any physical agency appointed by God to produce results in the kingdom of nature. Why should not all our prayers have this air of business—all, at least, that are chiefly occupied with petition? Our petitions should be exceeding definite. "Ax him summat, man, ax him summat," was the rebuke given by an old Scotchman to one that had been long going round and round in a form of words without seeming to come out anywhere or reach any point.

Coleridge is said to have remarked that he thought the act of praying to be in its most perfect form the very highest energy of which the human heart is capable. Paul gives countenance

to this conception when he commends Epaphras to the Colossians as one who "labored fervently for them in his prayers," and also when he asks his converts to "strive together with him in their prayers." We ought certainly to be on our guard against indolence in prayer. Lazy postures of body should be avoided, and lazy habits of mind. Clear and vivid thought precedes intelligent and profound feeling. To form impressive conceptions of God, heaven, eternity, and other spiritual things, and that without aid from the senses, is not easy, especially to untrained minds. But the steady effort to do so will have an educating power, even as the careful study of the Bible is no mean discipline. A thoroughgoing Christian will have an active mind.

The words we use in prayer ought certainly to be our own. Many who would never think of reading their private prayers from a book might about as well do so, so far as any real employment of their own mind in the exercise is concerned. They float along on a current of stereotyped phrases and dead words which have become so familiar by long habit that no thought is awakened, no energy put forth, no impression

produced. It is the laziest of performances, empty of any definite meaning or actual benefit. If we have fallen to any extent into this vicious custom, we should bring ourselves up with a round turn, and make a change. We should carefully and deliberately choose expressions that mean something to us, that bear the stamp of our own intellect, that originate with the need of the hour. It is better to say ten words in this way slowly, hesitatingly, than to pour forth one hundred in the fluent fashion that indicates neither feeling nor reflection.

Nevertheless, there should surely be heart in prayer. One of its effects should be to kindle our emotions. It is not fitting that the great themes which pertain to our relations with God should be treated simply in a cool, didactic way, as we might discuss a point of scientific interest. Our sensibilities should be aroused. There should be some feeling to start with, and this feeling should increase as the prayer progresses. It would be better to sacrifice something in clearness of thought than to have no heart shown forth. He from the depths of whose soul something comes hotly welling up that can scarcely find utterance

will be of more help to a meeting than the learned professor from whose well-ordered mind a neat disquisition calmly proceeds. It is well to have something of effervescence. The Psalms are a better model of style at such times than the Proverbs.

## XVI.

### BE TRUE.

MANY people are half true, true at certain points, or when there is not too much pressure; but the number of those who are all true, in hard places as well as easy, in little things and large, true at all hazards and costs, is extremely small. They belong to a very choice grade of nobility. The quality of their manhood is exceedingly rare. There is "nothing so royal as truth." But few that have occupied earthly thrones have possessed this uncourtierlike accomplishment. To speak always and everywhere only the truth requires a courage that nearly all soldiers have failed to exhibit. Yet it is within the reach of the humblest, and has been gained by some whom the

world regarded with scorn. Indeed, truth-speaking and truth-living is not the way to gain the praise of men. It is the lust for human favor that mainly draws men off from loyalty to truth.

Over against each other stand these two—popular applause and faithfulness to duty. He who chooses the latter walks up Calvary carrying a cross. The test is too difficult for most. They take the lower path where honors and emoluments are proffered. But here and there a wise, strong man stands forth and says: "I will be true! Let others take the comforts and the compliments; give me the truth. I will not equivocate, nor prevaricate, nor manipulate. I will not resort to indirect methods. I will throw prudence to the winds rather than be false in the smallest particular. I will leave the shows of things and hold to the realities. I will not measure my success by the standards of this world. I will be scrupulously, unalterably, universally true, and leave the result with God." Such a man, brave, resolute, independent, straightforward, "true-hearted, whole-hearted, faithful and loyal," not solicitous to shine or to please, to get gain or escape trouble, caring only for approval from on

high and the sanction of the voice within, is made of hero stuff. He does not stand near the top of the list when votes are counted here below, but at the final reckoning, by and by, his place will be secure.

## XVII.

## A MORNING PRAYER.

GLORIOUS Redeemer, Lord of all worlds,  
Bend to thy suppliants, hear their complaints!  
Throned in the heavens, thy power and thy grace  
Comfort and strengthen the least of thy saints.

Helpless are we till thy help cometh down,  
Nothing to boast of, nothing to plead;  
Give us, O Jesus, abundance of life!  
Thou alone knowest the depths of our need.

Fill us with steadfastness, fill us with might,  
Make us to triumph in every assault;  
Satan may menace, but thine is the power;  
Keep thy imploring ones free from all fault.

Save us from trusting in creature defense;  
Vain is the arm of flesh, vain its delight;  
Only thy love can illumine the soul,  
Only thy presence make day out of night.



Sanctify, fructify, each moment's toil;  
 Let not our labors no harvest afford;  
 Work in and by us, our service receive;  
 Do what thou canst through thy servants, O Lord!

Guide in perplexity, show us the path;  
 Guard against perils that threaten defeat;  
 Thou art the Way and the Truth and the Life;  
 Leave us not shelterless, shade from the heat!

Thus shall we come to the cool of the day,  
 Laden with blessedness, joyous and free;  
 Thus shall our hearts, when the night closes round,  
 Raise hymns of praise, precious Savior, to thee!  
—J. M.

## XVIII.

## EVENING PRAISE.

AGAIN, O God, the night shuts down,  
 Again I kneel to praise!  
 Thy wisdom, love, and truth, and power  
 Have long made glad my days,  
 And, now, with added gratitude,  
 An evening hymn I raise.

I take the attitude of prayer,  
 But not for gifts to plead;  
 Thy bounty, far beyond desert,  
 Has more than met my need;  
 So, well content, I worship thee  
 In thought and word and deed.

## THE LAND OF FAITH.

Thou bidst me ask if I'd receive,  
And seek if I would find;  
But surely thou wilt not condemn  
A heart to trust inclined.  
Give what is best, thou knowest all;  
How blest the quiet mind!

I praise thee that in all the hours  
And moments, as they glide,  
Thy providence enfoldeth close,  
Thy blessings rich abide;  
And thou dost keep in perfect peace  
Those who in thee confide.

I praise thee for what seemeth good,  
And for what seemeth ill.  
Appearances are vain deceits;  
Above them stands thy will;  
By faith, not sight, thy children walk,  
In hottest fire hold still.

Accept the off'ring that I lay  
In gladness at thy feet;  
My heart o'erflows with keenest joy,  
With ecstasy complete,  
Because, in all vicissitudes,  
Thy constancy I greet.

Thou wilt not cease to love me well,  
Nor fail to hold me fast;

Though pain may come, it can not harm,  
My care on thee is cast;  
For future good he'll surely send  
Who sent so sweet a past.

Praise waits in Zion, Lord, for thee,  
Praise runs the world around;  
And so this little heart of mine  
Shall ne'er in gloom be found,  
Rejoicing that all days and nights  
May with thy praise resound. —*J. M.*

## XIX.

SOME SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF THE  
CHURCH.

THAT the Church has other needs besides those which are spiritual, need not be gainsaid, but their subordination must be firmly maintained. When other matters—social, financial, intellectual—usurp a place not theirs by right, degeneration ensues and destruction is not far away. Even Christian fellowship, sweet and precious as it is, must be accounted only a means to the great end of Christian conquest; for the Church was organized, it can not be doubted, to bring all

men as swiftly as possible to the feet of its Master. Spiritual needs, then, should take precedence of all. And among these, three may be mentioned as of peculiarly pressing importance.

1. *A deeper hatred of sin.* "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." We look far too lightly upon that which slew our Savior. We are too tolerant of what God abhors. We are too ready to make terms with that which ought to call forth undying hostility. A negative, non-committal attitude toward wrong is fearfully prevalent. Much, it is now found, can be said in favor of almost everything which it has been the custom of good people in the past to denounce. The laxity of the age tends to dull the keenness of our judgments, and to steal the fire out of our words, the strength out of our strokes, when we come to deal with unrighteousness. That unrighteousness is popular and powerful; it is strongly intrenched behind a bulwark of money-bags; it has the press on its side, and it can make things very unpleasant for those who set themselves conspicuously against it. So the arms are apt to weaken, and the legs to tremble, and the Church stands irresolute, tongue-tied, faltering, paltering.

There is need of a more sensitive conscience about little sins. With reference to a vast number of matters which displease the Savior, grieve the Holy Spirit, and draw off spiritual strength, multitudes are prone to cry out, "Is it not a little one? Why be so Puritanic and particular and strait-laced? What harm is there in going here, going there?" Alas! the harm is plainly seen in the neglected closet, the comparatively empty prayer-room, the abandoned class-meeting, the lack of relish for the Bible, the indifference to the salvation of friends and neighbors. Surely everything is harmful which dims the fine gold of devotion, and brings a cloud over the sky of communion with the unseen. The piety which is not harmed by these things has already fallen so far below the standard of the New Testament as to be unworthy of the name.

2. *A clearer apprehension of the proper relation between the Church and the world.* Few, if any, now believe that Christ wishes his disciples to be hermits or recluses, with an austere and somber type of religion. Nevertheless, he said, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." And his apostles commanded, "Be not conformed

to this world," "Love not the world." All of which shows that there is a decided distinction between the world and the Church—a distinction, however, which seems in no little danger of being entirely wiped out. Yet is it not very clear that these texts still have pertinency, and can not be altogether whiffed aside as relics of the bygone age? It is abundantly evident, we think, that the Church is suffering from conformity to the world. A clarion call should be sounded for a separated life, a spirit-filled life, a fully-surrendered and wholly-consecrated life, on the part of all who claim to be followers of Jesus. Then these chosen and chastened warriors can go forth, not after the hermit, but the hero fashion; not into the deserts or mountains, but into the midst of the densest populations, with a holy mission. The highest lives have ever been the deepest divers. Those parted from the world in the trend and aim and object of their lives, are the very ones to influence it most powerfully for good, as they mingle freely, safely in its scenes. It is only those who dare to lead a lonely life, so far as the prevailing influences around them are concerned, that can most effectively be a purifying principle among those who should be helped and rescued.

3. *A warmer, keener loyalty to Christ.* Paul said, "I am ready to die for the name of the Lord Jesus," "To me to live is Christ," "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," "This one thing I do," "The love of Christ constraineth me." John Wesley showed this same intensity of zeal. Some of his mottoes were, "Live to-day," "Up and be doing," "There is another world," "I believe in eternity, I must arise and go," "Leisure and I have taken leave of one another," "The moments fly, and must be accounted for." And when he came to die, his language was, "Christ is all," "There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus."

This persistency and whole-hearted enthusiasm, which cries out with David, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee," "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times," "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee," ought to be more frequently seen. We may not reach these great ideals, but we could get much nearer them than we do. We are content with a stunted and stunted salvation, when marvelous things are pro-

vided for us. We are indolent, and we call it humility. We are not ambitious, as the great apostle declared he was, "ambitious to be well-pleasing unto the Lord." We fail to see the close connection between the sanctification of our lives and the salvation of our souls; or, being measurably sure, as we think, of the latter, we pay but little attention to the former.

A new view of Jesus Christ would do wonders for us, would lead to fresh views of allegiance, would bring us into closer touch with his plans for the renovation of the earth. We must fall in love with him over again; get a love that is deeper, higher, broader, warmer than ever before—a love that is dearer than life, stronger than death, more enduring than time. It comes through meditation, consecration, exertion. It is found of those who seek it with all their hearts. And it contains a blessedness beyond words. That Church which gains it will prosper in the truest sense, and will be victorious over the world, the flesh, and the devil.

"My sorrows have not been so light  
Thy chastening hand I could not trace;  
Nor have my blessings been so great  
That they have hid my Father's face."



## XX.

## COMMENDABLE AMBITIONS.

ALTHOUGH ambition has been variously stigmatized as “mad,” “vaulting,” “swollen,” and “ill-weaved,” and inveighed against as the sin whereby the angels fell, it must be that it has a good meaning somewhere about it after all, for no less an authority than St. Paul three times either declares himself to be ambitious or exhorts his converts to be so, using a Greek compound which stands distinctly and unequivocally for the love of fame. This does not appear in King James’s version; for other words—study, labor, strive—are taken with which to translate the original, and no hint is given of the intenser term. Even the revisers were apparently afraid to bring out the truth too bluntly, and do not quite venture to put into the text the plain “Be ambitious.” But they do insert this word in the margin of each place, with a mark indicating that such is the Greek. It behooves us, then, to inquire what are these rightful ambitions on which the great apostle puts the stamp of his strong approval. We can do little more than to briefly name them:

He urges upon the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iv, 11) that they "be ambitious to be quiet and to do your own business." In so doing he places a high encomium on quietness. Is it not, when properly viewed, a really great attainment? To be quiet in one's mind, perfectly peaceful amid outward commotion, undisturbed by external bustle, by the fears and threats and storms of life, because trusting so implicitly in the strong and loving Father—this achievement might well attract the gaze and fire the ardor of one filled with a holy ambition to excel in all goodness and likeness to Christ. It would be an eminently wholesome exhortation to be poured into the ears of many an uneasy youth who has come to feel that he can not be happy unless he is in a bustle, and is making the multitude conscious of his existence. He needs to hear the words of the prophet: "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength;" "Their strength is to sit still;" "Be still, and know that I am God."

Paul declares (2 Cor. v, 9), "We are ambitious to be well-pleasing unto Him." And surely an ambition of this sort might well become

any man. To be smiled upon and taken into close companionship by the King of kings is the highest possible distinction. He who has a sweet sense of God's entire satisfaction with him does not much mind how many or how fierce may be those on the other side. Determination is called for, lofty purpose, strength of will, patient perseverance, high courage, unalterable firmness, and nobleness of spirit, to pursue under all circumstances the path that will be well pleasing in the sight of the All Holy. No small man, no weak man, can do it. Hence "ambitious" is not an inappropriate word to use of those who win the highest successes in this line. Though they may be wholly unknown to the present world, by angel trumps their fame is blown, sublime their heavenly lot.

The apostle again affirms (Rom. xv, 20) that he is "ambitious so to preach the gospel;" to preach it, that is, in places where Christ had not been before named. His consuming desire was to extend the bounds of the kingdom, to open up new regions. Does he not in this rebuke our apathy and listlessness, our willingness to settle

down in comfortable places, our shrinking from self-sacrifice? There is with us far too little of this ambition which impelled Paul to push out among the neglected and lay himself a willing offering on the altar of consecration to the destitute and the ignorant and the sinful. Those who can not go in person can show as much devotion by generously sustaining the work. Some business men (alas! how few!) have drunk deep of this splendid ambition, and have toiled with a single eye, not to their own aggrandizement or enrichment, but to that of the needy millions. Theirs will be no small part of the glory of the evangelization of the nations.

Ambitions of this sort can not be too firmly cherished or too largely multiplied. Let the evil kind be flung away, for they are indeed of the devil. But those which St. Paul so fitly names are truly noble. The more of them the better.

“In full and glad surrender we give ourselves to thee,  
Thine utterly and only and evermore to be!  
O Son of God, who lovest us, we will be thine alone,  
And all we are and all we have shall henceforth be  
thine own.”

—*Miss F. R. Havergal.*

## XXI.

KEY-WORDS TO THE TRIUMPHANT  
LIFE.

CONDENSATION and amplification have each their uses. It is well sometimes to expand an idea; it is also well quite often to concentrate it. A compact statement greatly commends itself to busy men. A small package can be carried more conveniently than a large one. An active mind gets more stimulation from a paragraph fruitful in suggestiveness than from one where each point is wearisomely and exhaustively elaborated. We append, therefore, a few key-words to the triumphant life, the life which it is the privilege of all God's children to live; the life where constant victory crowns each day, and every assault of the tempter is foiled.

*Faith.* Faith is not only fundamental, it is also coronal in the Christian temple. As no one can go below it, so no one can rise above it. And at all intermediate stages of progress it is equally essential. In spite of all that has been written for the purpose of emphasizing it, probably each

person has to find out for himself how immensely important it is. And the discovery comes to him somewhat as a surprise. He wonders that no one had really told him before that without faith it is impossible to please God and impossible to make substantial advances in genuine godliness. It is by faith he gets into touch with God, and keeps in that blissful condition. By faith he brings the unseen into view, and delivers himself from the thralldom of the world. By faith he puts an end to care and fear, since he thus joins himself in trust unwavering, in confidence complete, to the almighty Giver, who is full of wisdom, love, and power. Cloudless communion is his who steadfastly believes. He is content with whatever comes; for he sees the hand of his Heavenly Friend in each moment's bestowment. He gives thanks for all, not doubting its source. He enjoys the Divine presence without cessation. All this is accomplished through faith. Is it not manifest, then, that whoever has full control of this key-word, and can employ all its magic ministries, is master of the whole situation, and need lack for nothing?

*Loyalty.* That Christian who deeply real-

izes that he belongs to an army and has a Captain to obey, that he is under a Sovereign to whom strict allegiance is due, will take a very different view of life from the one who considers himself his own master. His constant thought will be of him who has called him to be a soldier, of him whose commands he has learned to love. A personal element comes in with great efficiency. It is not a cold, hard sense of obligation, such as one might feel for law in the abstract. It is rather the warm devotion which the loyal subject freely tenders to his king; the king who can do no wrong; the king whom it is an honor and a joy to serve even in the post of death. All the sentiments and associations that cluster round an adored general or an idolized monarch find more than their counterpart in the feeling of some Christians for their Savior. He is the King of their souls. He is the Captain of their salvation. They have set out to follow him. Under that leadership, pain is pleasure; nothing is difficult; there is no sacrifice; duty is transformed into delight. They would be ashamed to be found wanting when he says, "Advance upon the enemy;" they count it a privilege to lay down their lives

for him. We call this loyalty. It means separation from all other masters and devotion, out of fervent, grateful love to this one Leader. Is it not a word to conjure with? The Christian Church will be strong and victorious in proportion as it is swayed by this sentiment.

*Simplicity.* John Wesley, quite early in his career, after reading Kempis, said: "I saw that simplicity of intention and purity of affection, one design in all we speak or do, one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed the wings of the soul, without which she can never ascend to God. I sought after this from that hour." He sought and found. He permitted no by-ends to distract him from the ruling purpose of his life. His aim was single. So was St. Paul's—"This one thing I do." What a motto! It has inspired the noblest lives, has led to the most signal successes. It is a component part of that childlike spirit which the Master held up to his disciples for imitation. It is, of course, the opposite of duplicity. It marks a nature free from guile or concealment, unfolded, all exposed to view. How beautiful! It delivers us from a thousand snares. It contributes to a compact efficiency that overcomes a



thousand obstacles. Freed from affectation and artificiality, from the realm of show and sham, from all that is crooked and crafty, he who is simple and single in motive can not but be a conqueror. He deals directly and always with God, not with subordinates; and this of itself is enough to make his life blissful and sublime.

*Activity.* It is recorded of Jesus that he "went about doing good." Such must be the record of all his followers who are not providentially prevented or sovereignly excused. They must not sit down in idle reverie to nurse their own beatific experiences. And when on the move they must constantly look for opportunities. Unselfish devotion to the welfare of humanity is one of the marks of a consistent Christian, for thus it was with the Founder. Love for others stamps the truly good. Our light will shine forth before men if it has been really kindled at the right quarter. Only he who is "careful to maintain good works" need be without care as to his standing before God. D. L. Moody was quite right when, in his brusque, practical, common-sense way, he expressed his doubt as to the perfection of the man who could show no trophies won for Christ. Not

all, it is true, are called to be active in the same way. Some enthusiastic revivalists make the mistake of discrediting everybody who has not gifts similar to their own. There is a variety of gifts under the administration of the same Spirit. But we must see to it that we are busy for the Master; and, on the whole, "O to do something," something for him who has died for me, something to show forth my love to him in the face of a gainsaying world, is a wholesomer song than "O to be nothing!"

*Undisquieted.* Although busy, we need not be bustling. If the King's business requires haste, it does not require hurry and worry and flurry. There is a stillness of soul in the midst of outward commotion which it is of great consequence to cultivate. We may inhabit the chambers of peace at the very time that we are most active in promoting every good cause. In spite of strenuous exertion for the production of results the righteous man is restful. Spiritual recollectedness is of primary importance. Without it who can be sure that, in the midst of his energetic labors, he is not doing about as much harm as good? Who can be certain of keeping in touch with God,

and doing a divine work in the divine way? We can not think of God as otherwise than calm. It is an attribute of power. Fussy impatience is a mark of weakness. Serenity stamps the strong. Self-control must on no occasion be lost, for its possession really shows that some one higher than self is in control. There is a holy indifference to be sought as well as a careless, torpid indifference to be shunned. The latter comes from laziness, the former from a will at one with God's, and so unruffled by the changes which God keeps within his own guidance. He can not have a triumphant life who permits himself to be disturbed by any or all of the thousand and one matters which perpetually cross his pathway as they work out the grand designs of the Sovereign of the universe. But he conquers in every strife who holds himself above the strife in that

“Rest where pure enjoyment reigns,  
And Thou art loved alone.”

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“Forever in their Lord abiding,  
Who can their gladness tell?  
Within his love forever hiding,  
They feel that all is well.”

## XXII.

## A THOUGHTFUL LOVE.

ONE of the sweet singers of our modern Israel mentions "a thoughtful love" as that which she would especially ask of God. It is a suggestive and instructive phrase! Is there any other love fully worthy of the name? We think not. There is much that passes for love, even styling itself perfect, which is mixed with so little intelligence that the judicious can but grieve at the perversity of the profession and the harm of the habits indulged. True love has an inseparable relation to truth, if indeed the two be not in the last analysis identical. Love can never be divorced from knowledge, for only he who knows the law will fulfill it, and, other things being equal, he will fulfill it in proportion as he knows it. The extent and correctness of the knowledge will control, condition, and guide the love. The person who knows God imperfectly can not love him perfectly. Many a man with a very small knowledge of God has imagined he loved him perfectly, but fuller revelations showed him a side

of God's character with which he was not in complete harmony. In a soul normally constituted perfect love would be perfect knowledge, and perfect knowledge perfect love. It is the inharmonious blending of the elements of love and knowledge, some defect on the one side or the other, that puts souls out of tune. All complete characters are thoroughly developed on both sides.

Henry Jones, professor of Logic and Metaphysics at St. Andrew's, Glasgow, in his recent excellent book on "Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher," noting with regret the change which came over the poet's faith in his later years, says: "The fundamental error of the poet's philosophy lies in the severance of feeling and intelligence, love and reason." Before this time of decadence he fully recognized that "growing knowledge was an essential condition of growing goodness. Hardly any conception is more prominent in Browning's writings than this of endless progress towards an infinite ideal. Love perfect in nature can not be linked to an intelligence imperfect in nature; if it were, the love would be either a blind impulse or an erring one. Both morality and religion demand the presence

in man of a perfect ideal which is at war with his imperfections; but the ideal is possible only to a being endowed with a capacity for knowing the truth. Both sides of man's being are equally touched with imperfection, his love no less than his reason. Perfect love would imply perfect wisdom, as perfect wisdom would imply perfect love. The absolute terms are not applicable to man who is ever on the way to goodness and truth, progressively manifesting the power of the ideal that dwells in him, and whose very life is a conflict and acquirement."

Very similarly Phillips Brooks, speaking on the mind's love for God, without which no love can be complete, says: "There are ignorant saints who come very near to God, but none the less for that is their ignorance a detraction from their sainthood." We see not how any one can doubt it. That character must be seriously defective which, as Paul expresses it, "is without experience of the word of righteousness," and has not its "senses exercised to discern good and evil." Such babes in knowledge can not be very far advanced in the Christian life, or have a love that can be spoken of in the superlative degree. They

do many things that are wrong, come far short of the full mind that was in Christ, and walk not accurately after the Divine Pattern. They are in grave error as to a number of duties, their zeal is ill-judged, their conscience but partially developed and not "void of offense" either toward God or man. As Mr. Wesley says: "There is so close a connection between right judgment and right tempers, as well as right practice, that the latter can not easily subsist without the former. Some wrong temper, at least in a small degree, almost necessarily follows from wrong judgment."

All this goes to show that he who would reach the largest attainments in piety must concern himself not merely with his motives, but also with his actions. It is extremely easy for a person to be deceived as to his motives. He is very apt to take an over-favorable view of them. A needful check upon this tendency to think too highly of ourselves is found in a close comparison of our smallest deeds and words with the one Model. There alone is supreme excellence to be found. It is better, so far as the practical effect is concerned, that we underrate ourselves a good

deal rather than overrate ourselves a little. The chief thing is that a continual spur be applied to our endeavor, so that we settle not down in a self-satisfied state as though we had already attained all that was needful. And, concerning profession, the counsel of the founder of Methodism can hardly be improved upon: "Avoid all magnificent, pompous words; give it no general name; rather speak of the particulars which God hath wrought for you; speak in the most inoffensive manner possible." Thus will a true humility be promoted, the peace of the Church conserved, and speedy progress toward real Christlikeness increased.

### XXIII.

#### THE BRIGHT CLOUD.

SUFFERING is remedial when rightly received. Troubles are the tools by which God shapes us into beauty and usefulness. Sorrow is Mount Sinai, where one many talk with God face to face if he will not be afraid of the thunder and lightning. The black threads in the loom are as



essential to the perfection of the pattern as are the white. Trials are the rough file to rub the rust off our virtues; they are the sharp, whirring wheels that cut and polish the jewels of character; they are the fiery furnace, purging away the dross that the pure gold may appear; they are the medicines, bitter but healing, that cure us of our moral maladies. Sanctified afflictions are the shadows of God's wings. They show us our weakness, and drive us to Christ. They wean us from the world, and draw us toward heaven. Hallelujah for the cross! The truest philosophy and the purest Christianity are one.

## XXIV.

## THE BLESSED SECRET.

HE who heartily accepts that blessed will of God which comes to us each moment through events has mastered the secret of a perfectly happy life. This is a very comprehensive proposition, and, in order to its better apprehension, may well be broken up into several subordinate statements. One of them would be this:

*God does everything for the best.* That is to say, there are no mistakes in the Divine government. Any other conception of Deity is manifestly unworthy of him and of the human mind. It is distinctly unreasonable and every way unsatisfactory. If we form to ourselves in our thought an unjust or an unkind God, we have done ourselves a harm and him a wrong. Everything which points to the fact that there is a God at all convinces us that he is a perfect God. This has the nature of an axiom, to question which is a sign of mental unsoundness. Only the intellectuality incompetent, one may say, will construct the image of a God who is incomplete or defective in his attributes. An imperfect God is really no God at all. A perfect God must do all things well. The Scriptures declare that he does; and events, on the whole, confirm it. What seem exceptions it is far more reasonable to explain by reference to our own shortsightedness, ignorance, and folly. We are not competent to determine what a perfect God would do under all circumstances. His administration commends itself as far as we have any right to expect it so to do, considering our little fitness to judge. Our own fallibility is plain

—God's infallibility we must assume as an essential part of his being. He does, then, not some things, or most things, but *all* things for the *best*, for our highest good,—not for our temporal gratification or our merely secular satisfaction, not for our pleasure or our pocket, but for that which is really best in the long run and in the highest sense.

*His will is made known to us through circumstances.* In other words, his will about our daily life comes to us daily; it has to, in order to serve for our guidance. Mere general statements and abstract principles in a book will not suffice for the individual leading which is essential; something more specific is called for. Events must all come from God, at least in the sense that he has control and supervision of them, so that they could not occur without his permission. Hence they convey to us what is, all things considered, his will concerning us, something to do or bear, something to be met by our acceptance or refusal. We say yes or no to God when we accept or reject the events which he sends us. Fretting at circumstances, when they are inevitable, is fretting at God, and complaint at such is sin. Being cross

with things because they do not go to suit us—the weather, for example—is being cross with Him who orders things. And people, so far as pertains to their external actions, are as much under God's control as inanimate matter. There are no accidents. To talk of luck is foolishness. The so-called happenings of life would much better be termed providences, for such in very truth they are without exception. Nothing affects our happiness more closely than a right mental attitude toward circumstances, for they surround us continually and touch us on every hand at every moment. If we recognize God's will in them—God's will with all its tender implications of perfect love and wisdom—we shall be greatly helped to conquer them; if we do not, we are pretty likely to be conquered by them.

*Perfect peace and constant happiness are the believer's heritage.* They are the birthright of every child of God, and, if he is without them, he has been robbed or cheated. The happy, peaceful God must design that his sons and daughters, partakers of his nature, made in his image, should resemble him in these most desirable qualities. They are clearly promised in the Holy Book;

they have been fully experienced by many in actual life. Their possession is entirely compatible with not a little of that "grief and pain" which is a part of every human lot. We can be "sorrowful yet always rejoicing," we can triumph in tribulation, exult when men persecute us. The starlight is not destroyed, although effaced to our consciousness by the mightier sunshine. Death is an indisputable fact, but it may be swallowed up in victory.

Hence we are authorized to say that *whoever lacks this perfect peace and constant happiness which belongs of right to every believer, is guilty of rebellion and distrust.* If these words seem too harsh, let it be remembered that all privileges are duties. This does not appear to be sufficiently understood. Many confine the word duty to disagreeable things, as though God were continually planning unpleasant tasks for us and contriving to lay upon us heavy burdens. This is a mistake. One of our prime obligations is to be happy. We misrepresent God's service when we are not. Happiness comes inevitably from trust in him and acceptance of his will. Therefore unhappiness is a sin. Anxiety means lack

of faith. A will in full accord with God's brings rest and joy. A will out of harmony with his is the very essence of rebellion and folly. Do we know better than he what is best for us?

These four particulars are substantially included in the proposition with which we began. If they be received, that must follow. We repeat it, then, and earnestly commend it as most blessed truth to the careful consideration of all who desire that the largest success shall wait upon their endeavor. He who heartily accepts that blessed will of God which comes to us each moment through events, has mastered the secret of a perfectly happy life.

## XXV.

### A COMPELLING TRUST.

A VERY pretty incident, related in the *London Life of Faith*, the organ of the Keswick movement, has so helpful a lesson that we are moved to condense it and make it the prelude to a few observations on trustfulness.

A gentleman walking by the seaside at an English watering-place came upon a fine little lad of seven, faultlessly attired in Highland costume, standing on a stone wharf-like projection, sailing his boat with white sails. The boy, taking a bright, swift survey of the stranger who had stopped beside him, opened the conversation.

"The tide will soon be up: in less than half an hour."

"O, you know all about the tide, I see! Are you a Scotch laddie, may I ask?"

"No, I am an English boy. My name is Leonard ——." Then followed his age, the information that his parents were sitting on the parade above, and various other items. Then, turning his attention to his pretty craft, he added: "You won't go, will you? I do so want you to stay and see me sail my boat."

I assured him, says the gentleman, that I should be most pleased to do so: and suggested he should not wait longer, but throw his boat gently out the length of the cord, as a little girl friend of his was doing with hers: reminding him there was no risk of its being drawn out to sea as the tide was coming in. Very seriously he

looked down at his treasure, shook his head, and said: "No, I think I will keep her here"—"here" being a depth of water of less than half an inch.

Eying his craft I saw that the cord was affixed to the wrong end, and asked the reason why. "Because," said he, "she can not go so fast tied this way, and I am so afraid the tide would carry her out too far."

Looks, words, actions—all proclaimed that this boat was a most valuable treasure. Suddenly, squarely confronting his new friend, and with a penetrating gaze, he said: "I am going to ask you to take charge of my boat, as I want to go and speak to my father. I am quite sure I can trust you."

The tones were exceedingly impressive with which the closing sentence was uttered, and as the gentleman took the cord into his hands and felt that the boy had absolutely confided to his keeping what was to him worth so much, he said: "I am so glad you can trust me." "Yes," said he, and away he ran.

Ah, the sacred gladness of being wholly trusted! To disappoint that child's sweet, whole-hearted confidence would have been entirely im-



possible. Who does not see it? And will our Heavenly Father feel at all otherwise concerning us when we have put all our interests implicitly into his hands? It can not be. No, "how much more." Certainly he is worthy of our uttermost confidence. The secret of resting in the Lord is being "quite sure" that we shall not rest on him in vain. We may each look up into the face of the Lord with the same satisfaction as rested on the face of the child gazing up into the face of the stranger whom he trusted, and we may be as happy as we go away to attend to other matters in the completest assurance that what we have committed to his care will not be forgotten.

There are at least three elements in perfect trustfulness. It must be universal, covering all that there is of us—body and soul, time and money, person and family, influence and reputation. It must be unwavering or perpetual, not subject to fits or dependent on circumstances—now strong and clear, now weak and dim, according to moods and surroundings. It must be unreserved or exclusive, implying utter distrust of self and of all creature good, a complete turning away from everything that is not God.

There are at least three great encouragements to perfect trustfulness. The first and chief is the absolutely trustworthy character of our God and Father. All that the tender relationship of Father means he contains and exhibits. Being what he is, and has in every way made himself known to be, trusting him seems to all who become really acquainted with him the most natural and reasonable thing in the world. The second encouragement is the promises, exceeding great and precious, with which the sacred volume is filled. Two out of the many which make trust amazingly easy and give it abundant ground to stand on, are, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly," and "How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" His liberality and ability are so fully set forth in a great variety of specific assurances that trust has no excuse for faltering. And it receives still further help, in the third place, from experience—our own and that of good men in all ages, conveyed to us for our own comfort. Thus the promises are proved and the character is tested.

The results that follow perfect trustfulness are most blessed, and are so well known that they do

not call for much enlargement. Freedom from all anxiety is the certain portion of him who wholly trusts. He is kept in perfect peace; he has true rest of soul; he is without agitation or disturbance of spirit. He is also delivered from fear, not only with regard to the future, but with respect to present foes. His language is, "The Lord is my light: whom shall I fear?" "The Lord is my helper: what shall man do unto me?"

Many trust the Lord in part and self in part, or trust at certain times, when the seas are calm and the winds are still. Few trust without reservation or cessation. Yet only they are governed by reason, and only they exhibit the fruitfulness which God desires.

"O for the peace of perfect trust,  
That looks away from all;  
That sees Thy hand in everything,  
In great events or small;

That hears thy voice—a Father's voice—  
Directing for the best;  
O for the peace of a perfect trust,  
A heart with thee at rest!"

## XXVI.

## DO NOT LOWER THE STANDARD.

THE Rev. John MacNeil has done well to call attention in his suggestive little book, "The Spirit-filled Life," to the superficial nature of some people's idea of sin. Many have been led astray at this point, even considering that they had no need to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses," because, forsooth, they were conscious of no trespasses. As if their consciousness was amply sufficient to judge in the case! Paul at least did not think so. "I know nothing against myself," he cries, "yet am I not hereby justified." He recognized that there was a much higher standard than that, and that being delivered from conscious sin was by no means the same as being delivered from all sin. Our whiteness may look very satisfactory until we bring it into contrast with God's whiteness, then we see the difference. The more we compare ourselves with Christ, and not with one another, the better chance we shall have of reaching a true humility. To be blameless is one thing; to be faultless, or without blemish, is quite another.

## XXVII.

## THE FAITH FACULTY.

THERE is in all men the capacity to believe in things, to hope and trust, and have confidence in a bright, successful outcome to effort. The development of this capacity is one of the most important tasks given to mortals. The man of faith believes in himself, believes in his fellows, believes in God. He believes that he can accomplish that to which he gives his mind with concentrated purpose and which he feels called to perform. He believes that men in general are well disposed, with more good in them than evil, and will, as a rule, do what they say. Above all, he believes that there is One on high whose word is perfect truth, whose love never fails, whose power is without limit, and whose wisdom is infinite.

It is by the men of faith that the world's work is done. They are the men of power, of definite and notable achievements. The difficult circumstances and hard conditions of life are mastered only by those who have robust and positive convictions. Faith is the essential principle of suc-

cess in all enterprises. It is the mainspring of human progress. It brings an abiding enthusiasm. It lifts up the soul with high expectation that things that are desirable can be brought to pass; that whatever ought to be, will be. It produces courage; not that kind which is shown in a single spasm of heroic daring, but that which manifests itself in a continued and resolute purpose not easily turned aside by perils or even temporary defeats. Joy is closely allied with it; that joy which is itself strength, because to work happily is to work effectively, that joy which fills life with radiance and so with readiness to do.

Faith has been called "that supreme energy by which the soul attaches itself in vital union with God." It is the upward gaze toward God, with a passionate desire to know and do his will. It is a committal of one's whole being to supreme truth and right. It is ability to perceive things not seen or known through other faculties. It is the sight of the ideal. It is wide openness of the whole life to God, so that his vitality passes into ours without obstruction, and our mind and will become one with his. It is pre-eminently the faculty of religion, underlying it, indispensable

to it, supplying the elements which enter essentially into its composition. To those who have faith the unseen realities are the most evident facts of life. Theirs is the vision divine. They behold God, and the record of that which he reveals to them constitutes the books best worth reading, the Bibles of mankind.

It is an elect companionship, the highest and choicest anywhere to be found, this society of the men of faith. Happy is he who makes it his own. It is the privilege of all so to do. The germ of faith given to each may be so cultivated as to become a giant plant, or so neglected as to disappear altogether. There are, then, all grades and degrees of faith, from the faintest, weakest glimmer to the fullest, strongest glow. Whatever dims or weakens faith must be evil. Anything not done as the result of faith, the apostle declares, is sin. Doubt, if it be willful or even careless, demoralizes and degrades; only when it is made a stepping-stone to surer faith has it any rightful mission.

It seems to us idle to inquire which is more important and higher in rank, faith or love. Neither can properly be separated from the other.

Both last on; both are unspeakably important and imperishably precious. Faith is surely the parent of love; for we can not love a being whom we do not know, and it is by faith that we know Him. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is." It is by faith that we live, that we stand, that we walk. To be full of faith is to be full of the Holy Ghost, full of God; is to be one with whom all things are possible; is to be one with God himself, with whom also all things are possible. If love is in some respects pre-eminent, faith also has its points of superiority. If John was the apostle of love, Paul was the apostle of faith. Yet there was with them no conflict or collision in the matter; for Paul it is who writes in highest praise of love, while John it is who declares that faith is the victory, the triumphing trait, the quality which gives the conquering tread. He who masters its secret has secured an achievement second to none in its power to glorify his life.

"O thou so weary of thy self-denials,  
And so impatient of thy little cross,  
Is it so hard to bear thy daily trials  
And count all earthly things a gainful loss?"



## XXVIII.

## THE GARMENT OF PRAISE.

IT is a most comely and comfortable garment, warm and winsome, serviceable, seasonable, and resplendent. A person may be robed in righteousness, and clothed with humility, and have put on the cloak of zeal; yea, he may even have, in addition, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and bind mercy and truth about his neck; nevertheless there is something lacking if he be not decorated with praise. This dress is becoming to all. If youth does not have it, it seems to have forfeited or abandoned its birthright, and old age without it appears to very poor advantage indeed. If our material investiture be somewhat shabby, this spiritual apparel, available to every one, makes ample amends for the other deficiency; and if our worldly gear be gorgeous, its very brilliancy makes lack in this other direction all the more noticeable. So, above all things, put on praise.

Another phrase for it is, keep right on smiling. It may be that things have not been going alto-

gether well with you so far as outward matters are concerned. Success has not attended your business efforts; you have had to draw on the savings of past years to make both ends meet; your surroundings are not satisfactory; self-denial has had to be practiced of late much more than was agreeable; rivals have passed ahead of you; friends have been neglectful; much has occurred to humiliate; plans have gone wrong; expectations have not been met; disappointments have multiplied; pleasures have decreased—nevertheless, keep on smiling. It is a good habit. It will make you much more agreeable to others. It will materially help in making things brighter both within and around you. Sing the doxology often, whether you feel precisely like it or not. There is abundant reason for singing it when you come to think it over, and so no hypocrisy is involved. It is somewhat in the nature of an aid to digestion, or an outward appliance made use of to expedite the motion of the inward currents. Sing and give praise, smile and laugh, and be of good cheer!

A forced hilarity, you say, seems insincere; and so in one sense it is. But, after all, it is chiefly a question of methods. How can we best

cast out the intruding demons of unrest and discontent? How can we best overcome the too oft prevailing tendency to gloom? We must lay hold of all helps. We must put ourselves in touch with brightness wherever we find it. We must exorcise the evil spirit of complaining by all spells within reach. Hymns are good. Let "thanksgiving and the voice of melody" abound. On the wings of a lively tune many a mood of depression has taken its flight. Our song-writers are great benefactors. Their music is mostly in the key of joy. Although we may not feel just at first in accord with the words of exultation which we take upon our lips, they will soon sink in, and the heart will keep time with the tongue. Our wills have something to do in the matter. We can say "Begone" to the devil of doubt, and he will flee. He can not make lodgment in our heart without our consent. Why should we give it?

It is well to count up our mercies and brood over them. There was a dear old lady, we are told, who kept a pleasure book. In it she set down every day some item that called for thanksgiving. A few of them were as follows: "Saw a beau-

tiful lily in a window ;” “Talked to a bright, happy girl ;” “Received a kind letter from a dear friend ;” “Enjoyed a beautiful sunset ;” “My husband brought me home some roses ;” “My boy out to-day for the first time after the croup.” Such an example is to be commended, especially to those who have got into the way of whining and repining. They water their miseries and hoe up their comforts, and refuse to see any token of God’s goodness. When the case gets to be as bad as this, desperate measures are needed, or the life will be utterly spoiled. Pen and paper for such a one is a good prescription ; and it would be a benefit to any to take more notice of the multiplied blessings that crowd the days.

The song of little Pippa that Browning has immortalized—“God’s in his heaven ; all’s right with the world”—may be changed a trifle to make it more personal. Let it read, “God’s in my heart, and all’s right with me.” He must be a penurious soul, it has been said, to whom Jesus is not enough. He who is downcast and despondent, though professing to love the Altogether Lovely and to be loved by him, can not really understand what riches there are in Jesus, and how abso-

lutely impossible it is for him to want any truly good thing while he trusts the All-Provider. What the world calls trouble, the Christian calls a help to grow in grace. What the world mourns over as an evil, the Christian rejoices over as a special token of his Father's love. Everything depends upon the point of view. It is not so much things in themselves that disturb us as it is our thoughts about the things. If we control our opinions—and we ought to be able to do that—we control our feelings.

“A merry heart is a good medicine,” the Holy Book says. Shall we not carry it to as many sick-chambers as we can? “Look always on the bright side,” is an excellent motto. The Word of the Lord re-enforces the proverbs of the world and the maxims of the wise. What better and more seasonable texts for us to ruminate over than these: “I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth;” “O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever;” “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord;” “Every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused if received with thanksgiving;” “In everything

give thanks;" "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, Rejoice."

"For all that God in mercy sends :  
For health and children, home and friends,  
For comfort in the time of need,  
For every kindly word and deed,  
For happy thoughts and holy talk,  
For guidance in our daily walk,  
For everything give thanks!"

## XXIX.

### ZEAL AND KNOWLEDGE.

WHICH is better, zeal without knowledge, or knowledge without zeal? There is much to be said on behalf of each of these two prime elements of a strong character. Zeal without knowledge is frenzy and folly; it is like haste to a man in the dark, or to a man on the wrong road; the faster he goes, the more likely he is to do himself a harm; and the farther he goes, the worse he is off. To put spurs to one's horse, simply to dash into more trees or plunge into more pits, is anything but wisdom. Zeal is like fire; it needs both

feeding and watching; if it gets out of hand, if it breaks bounds, it is turned from a blessing to a blasting; it is a good servant, but a bad master.

On the other hand, knowledge without zeal means inefficiency and stagnation. It is only where there is zeal—that is, fervor, earnestness, enthusiasm, heat—that anything of consequence has been accomplished. All those who bring things to pass are examples of zeal. He who lacks it is lukewarm, than which, we have good authority for saying, there is nothing more disgusting to the Lord. Not to be zealous in a good cause is to be a shirker, and the shirker is a coward, a criminal, and a cumberer of the ground; yes, the shirker is very plainly a humbug and a hypocrite, a sham and a shame, a fraud and a failure, getting no respect from anybody else, and being very hard put to it to respect himself.

Considering the matter from the standpoint of practical life, it would seem that if one alone of these two excellencies were to be possessed it would better be zeal, since that is so closely connected with every great achievement. But looking from the standpoint of history, and seeing the horrors that have sprung from ignorant or blind

zeal we feel disposed to lay the main stress on knowledge. Blind zeal has been at the root of all the persecutions that have devastated the earth and plunged millions of mankind into misery. It is well known that the best of men have been exposed to the worst of treatment, all in the name of religion and by people very zealous to defend the truth. The careless and indifferent never persecute. It is always the zealous, those filled with a zeal not according to knowledge, those ignorant both of the will of God and the nature of man. And furthermore, we are disposed to attribute the scandal and shame of the unreasonable multiplicity of sects in this country—the number is not far from one hundred and fifty—to the same cause, ignorant zeal. There can be no real call for such a puerile splitting up of the forces of righteousness. It is a reproach against our sanity, it accuses the good sense of the population, it is a wholly needless waste of the time, strength, money, and friendliness of the children of God. It indicates much zeal, no doubt, but a zeal that has lost its wits, that has thrown off the guiding reins of judgment, that has magnified unimportant particulars of individual fancy into



essential principles of generally binding force. If there should come to be, through the spread of knowledge, fewer sticklers for minutiae that have no significance in any well-balanced mind, there will be fewer denominations.

Looking, then, at all sides of the subject, it seems clear that the only safe way is to insist upon both knowledge and zeal, and to labor for the enlargement of both. The increase of knowledge requires no special directions here. It is well understood that, by reading and study, by conversation and observation, by experiment and experience, one may increase his stores of information, and by continually turning them over in his mind he grows wiser. But the method of increasing zeal is not, perhaps, quite so manifest. Two pertinent recommendations may be made. To increase zeal it is necessary to increase our grasp on the truths which feed it, and our association with the men who embody it.

No words are needed to show that zeal is contagious; that when one man who is thoroughly on fire is put among a number who are cold, the latter are likely to become heated, especially if they are with him much or with him

closely. Hence it is plain that those who wish for zeal should frequent the company of the zealous, getting physical contact with them where that is possible; and where it is not, improving the opportunities of the printed page which sets forth their deeds and illuminates their character. But still more important, if we are to acquire a zeal that shall burn with steady, all-consuming flame, is the use of the other means that was mentioned. Where the will is to be put into vigorous assertion for the doing of great deeds, the intellect must be wrought upon, and the food of the intellect is truth. Let a tremendous truth get a firm grip on a man's mind, and he is obliged to act. If he becomes really convinced that he is going in the wrong way, he will turn around and go some other, unless he is a fool or a madman. They are zealous in the cause of science who have come to see the immense importance of scientific truth, who have had visions of what the development of that truth means to the welfare of mankind. They are zealous for God who have taken in deeply the wonderful facts of God's being and doing, who have seen him and known him. Then they are set on fire. And the more they muse on

the mighty truths that concern him, the hotter the fire will burn. It is the thoughtless and inconsiderate that are inactive and apathetic. Think, *think*, THINK, is the best prescription for zeal. Thinking leads to feeling, and feeling compels action. The man of thought will be a man of zeal. He will be a man of knowledge also. Hence he who thinks carefully, steadily, closely, broadly, is not likely to go wrong, or to be lacking at any important point.

Of course a man may think on wrong lines, and arrive at wrong conclusions, because of some defect in his affections. The heart leads the head as often as the head leads the heart. But if there be a sincere, deep-reaching, all-controlling purpose to serve God back of the thought, the needful guidance will not be lacking, so far as essentials are concerned. In other words, rightly-directed zeal helps the thinking no less than the thinking helps the zeal. No two things could be more closely allied, more dependent on each other, more essential, each of them, to the best character. The man who is zealous for nothing can not be loved. The man who always shirks, it is impossible to respect. And it is much the same with

him who does nothing but blunder through culpable blindness. Neither horses that dash to destruction nor oxen that only crawl are the ideal means of locomotion. Well-guided and instructed zeal we certainly must have for the best results in both Church and State, in religion and practical secular life.

## XXX.

## CROWD IT OUT.

LIFE is very much a matter of emphasis. Just as some books, according to Bacon, are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, while some few should be chewed and digested, so it is with objects of interest and pursuit. Some things may without injury slightly occupy us, which would inevitably degrade us were we to become wrapped up in them. If men would sit down quietly with their conscience and settle on the things of primary importance, and then pursue those things with all diligence, letting other matters fall into the background, the occupation of the preacher would be gone. If men would edit their lives with

half as much painstaking as a good newspaper is edited, crowding out and crowding in according to a fixed ruling principle instead of following the whims of the hour, we should see better results. They would care less about conditions and more about conduct, less about dollars and more about duties, less about pleasures and more about principles, less about fortune and more about faithfulness, less about trouble and more about truth.

## XXXI.

## PERFECT TEMPERANCE.

NOT so much has been written about this as about some other features of the Christian life; but it is one of the most important. Paul gives it a place among the nine fruits of the Spirit, putting it in close connection with meekness and gentleness with which it is plainly allied. Peter names it in his enumeration of the graces that are to be added one to another in constructing the complete character. Titus is told that a bishop must be not only just and holy, but also temperate.

And in I Corinthians ix, 25, we are informed that "every man that striveth in the games is temperate in all things," with the added intimation that only as we "so run" can we obtain the incorruptible crown.

What is the meaning of temperance and temperate in these passages? It is worthy of note that in each case where the word "temperance" occurs, the revisers have put in the margin as the alternate, expository reading, "self-control." This more accurately gives the force of the original, a word which Professor Thayer says expresses "the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions." Similarly the section on temperance in the Methodist Discipline explains that this virtue "in its broader meaning implies a subordination of all the emotions, passions, and appetites to the control of reason and conscience."

Perfect temperance, then, may be defined as the perfect control of the lower self by the higher self.

In reference to this it may be remarked that there will always be, in this life at least, a lower self to be controlled or governed, or restrained and denied. They plainly err who imagine that any

amount of Christian grace or growth or purification will eradicate any of the natural appetites or passions, or so fundamentally change their nature that all one's spontaneous impulses and inclinations can be unhesitatingly followed. This can not be. The will may be perfectly identical with God's, and so not the faintest shadow rest upon the soul, but the human feelings will remain, nevertheless. Human nature, whatever the state of grace, is still human nature, and subject to suffering and pain. The desire for happiness, rest, and things agreeable, which is what we mean by self-love, is perfectly innocent, and indeed necessary; but that desire must sometimes be trampled on in the path of duty. Even as Christ endured the cross, suffered from temptation, and shrunk with keen anguish from the bitterness of a shameful death, so we shall never part company from this class of emotions. The friend who kindly points out the faults of one he admires and loves, the Christian who reproveth a brother, the parent who corrects a darling child, will all of them, however holy, suffer pain in so doing, and hence find occasion for self-denial. Always, to human nature, approbation is sweet and friendship pleas-

ant—alas for that man to whom it is not—and so, when the call of duty requires one to forfeit friendship and incur blame, as it often does, the cross must be manfully taken up and the promptings of self denied. Hence it is clear we can never get wholly beyond what is properly termed self-denial. The appetites blindly clamor for indulgence whenever certain states of the body provoking that action exist. But whether they can be righteously gratified or not, the reason must in every case decide.

If the verdict goes against them, then the will must execute this verdict, and the lower self must be denied, which, of course, it will not like, and its protests will produce some suffering. But the higher self must sublimely disregard the suffering, and find its compensation in the Divine approval. The suffering, however, greater or less, as the case may be, is a positive fact not to be ignored.

What does this perfect control of the lower self by the higher imply, and when may it be regarded as reached? It implies a complete deliverance from the last remains of depravity; for depravity is simply that twist or dislocation of hu-



man nature whereby the lower powers have received a greater degree of strength than rightfully belongs to them, making it much more difficult for the higher powers, reason and conscience, to maintain their proper sway. Therefore depravity is to be considered as destroyed when this original supremacy is fully restored, when the lower powers have merely their normal degree of strength, and the higher powers both easily and promptly hold them in subjection. Hence we may estimate our approach to perfection by the increasing ease with which, when the judgment has pronounced the indulgence of any appetite or passion unlawful or unwise, this verdict is executed by the will.

In the earlier stages of the Christian life such judgment is carried out with great difficulty, oftentimes only after a very considerable struggle. In the later, maturer stages it is very different; there is, as a rule, little or no trouble, little or no interval between the decision and the execution. When the self-control is really and in the strictest sense perfect, the obedience of the lower part being immediate and unquestioning, like that of a soldier who turns cheerfully to carry out every

command the second it is received, then it would seem as though the original twist received by the race in Adam's fall had been, for this particular person, untwisted, and perfect harmony between all his powers was entirely regained.

Let the reader measure his progress by testing himself along this line of perfect temperance or self-control as applied to the common things of life;—such as food and drink, sleep and dress, play and work. Has every indulgence in any of these directions have been brought to the bar of a sanctified judgment and a keenly-aroused conscience? And have the conclusions thus carefully, prayerfully reached been unhesitatingly carried into practice? Is there neither too much nor too little sleep? Some err in one way and some in another; and some err by giving no heed to the matter and letting it go at haphazard. This can never be right, for everything has a moral quality. It is the same with our table habits. Do we take only that quality and quantity of food or drink, so far as we are able to procure them, which we have proved, or conscientiously decided, to be really best for us? Do we work enough, as much as our strength will permit? Do we work too

much, beyond our strength, and so gradually commit suicide? Do we spend everything, or anything, for mere show; for the gratification of vanity and pride?

It is by considering with all honesty, in the light of divine truth and the judgment-day, these and many other such questions, that we may ascertain how far we have advanced toward perfect temperance. These may seem to some like trifling matters, to which it is folly to pay attention. But perfection is not a trifle, and we can not get even within hailing distance of it unless we look after small derelictions and disobediences as well as large. The conscience of one who walks close with God becomes extremely sensitive as to what will please him.

“Art thou afraid His power shall fail,  
When comes thy evil day?  
And can an all-creating Arm  
Grow weary or decay?”

“I welcome all Thy sovereign will,  
For all that will is love,  
And when I know not what thou dost,  
I wait the light above.”

## XXXII.

## THE UNHAPPY DESIRE OF BEING GREAT.

THE litany of the Moravian Church is said to contain the suggestive and significant petition, "From the unhappy desire of being great, good Lord, deliver us!" And Dr. Edward Payson, in one of his letters, after referring to two prominent characters who bore testimony that they had never been happy until they ceased striving to be great men, adds that most of his own sufferings and sorrows had been occasioned by his unwillingness to be the nothing that he really was, and by a constant striving to be something. There is a lesson here as to the close connection of happiness and humility that many would do well to take to heart. The humble man is ever thankful and full of praises for the mercies which he deems beyond his merits. Being thus given to song, it is impossible but that he should be happy; while he who is consumed with the curse of a selfish ambition can never be content. There is still great

need of Jeremiah's godly and sensible counsel: "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." But to attempt great things for God—ah! that is another matter.

## XXXIII.

## A FORWARD STEP CONTINUALLY.

THIS is the only method of a prosperous and wholly satisfactory Christian life—to keep taking forward steps. There is no time in that life when such steps are not possible and urgently demanded. There is no way in which the fullest measure of God's grace can be more steadily, solidly, successfully reached and held.

The chief cause of failure in religion—failure both partial and total—is the tendency to take it easy. To indomitable persistency all doors, in this department of being, readily open. As soon as a person cherishes the idea, or even unconsciously acts upon the idea, that he can rest a little upon past experience, and sit down measurably contented with what he has gained, he loses. The

forward look and step all the time are indispensable, both for the youngest convert and the oldest saint.

The latter class, those who are at least moderately mature in Christian experience, who are looked up to as examples, and who feel that they have advanced beyond the mass of believers, are in no little danger of forgetting the stringent need of progress. Perhaps some one has whispered to them that now, since they have been saved from all sin, they only need to watch against a relapse into their former state by a return of the expelled evil, and so can devote their spiritual energies almost exclusively to helping others. Perhaps a false theory has taught them to call the many points wherein they still come short of perfect likeness to the Savior, only infirmities, from which no one can be free, and hence their conscience is quieted concerning them. Perhaps they have got into a way of looking down upon the Church instead of looking up to Christ; comparing themselves with those around them instead of with the one model; blaming or pitying others instead of applying the spurs to their own sides and remembering how much greater things

God will require of them to whom he has given so much.

Hence, many are content with better things instead of pressing on to the best. They fail to note that their lack of mounting from where they are, just as much condemns them in God's sight as the similar fate of others lower down the hill, whose indolence and unfaithfulness they are probably denouncing in good round terms. It is those who have themselves come to a stand-still who are most apt to berate their brethren; or, as Fenelon expresses it: "If we were faultless, we should not be so much annoyed by the defects of those with whom we associate."

Contentment with what we are is as bad a fault as discontent with what we have. To have reached one's ideal of what a Christian should be is a calamity indeed. Stagnation and decay must surely result. There is no safety but in an ever-advancing ideal. Methodist writers have been accustomed to oppose very strenuously the statements made by Calvinistic theologians, that the nearer a person got to God, the more conscious he became of his own unworthiness, the more evil he found in his own heart, and the less he

felt like calling himself perfect. While not accepting in all cases the exact words in which our opponents have expressed themselves, let us admit that they have suggested a truth of the utmost importance. The more a person comes to know God, the higher will be his standard of excellence; the depth and height, breadth and length, of God's requirement will vastly grow upon him; the possibilities of grace will open before him in a way unimagined before, and the slightest infractions of the ever-expanding law will come to seem unspeakably heinous. A moral quality will begin to be recognized in things which not long ago appeared indifferent. Modes of speech once indulged without thought will be scrutinized and altered. Lines of reading and reflection will perhaps be changed. Habits of prayer will take on new phases. There will be far greater sensitiveness to the voice of the Spirit. The will of God in the little things of daily life will be more promptly recognized and more heartily accepted. There will come a deeper delight in obedience, and a keener exultation in sacrifice. The Word of God will open up in wonderful ways. There will be greater simplicity and sweetness in the dis-



position, and a fuller fervor of affection thrown into every one of the smallest actions of life, all of which are offered thankfully to him.

However far one gets in this way of Divine love, he sees the path stretching ever on before him. It is a life-work, the grandest and sublimest possible, to travel and explore it. Even if he abides in the full enjoyments of the land of Beulah, he should be discovering every day lovelier paths, and gaining more unrestricted intercourse with the heavenly visitants. Only as he thus traverses fresh fields and takes constant forward steps will he fully apprehend that for which also he was apprehended by Christ Jesus.

## XXXIV.

## IS GOD ALL TO US?

THE expression is common enough both in prose and poetry. How are we to understand it? When our hymn-writers put into our mouths such language as,—

“Thou, O Christ, art all I want.  
More than all in thee I find;

“Nothing on earth do I desire  
But thy poor love within my breast ;”

“Grant me the visits of thy grace,  
And I desire no more ;”

“Thou from hence my all shalt be,  
Christ is all the world to me,”—

and many other similar lines, are we to consider them as simply indulging in poetic rhapsody, or as really meaning what they say? Would they not have us infer that this experience is at least attainable and reasonable, even if not usual? We speak of God being our all, being enough for all our needs, of doing all things in God and for God. With Paul we say, perhaps, that to us to live is Christ; that we no longer live, but Christ liveth in us; that we have forsaken all, and are dead to all but Christ. These certainly are great words. Have we much comprehension of what they include? Do they stand out distinctly before us as living things, grasped and mastered? Or do they rather partake of the character of misty ideals in the dim distance, toward which we but faintly aspire?

The expression, “God is my all,” conveys the idea of the utmost possible transformation of the

natural man, the completest conceivable expulsion of self and substitution of the divine principle of being; for, to the natural man, wholly apart from Divine grace, God is nothing and self is all. He never willingly hears or thinks or speaks of God, never consults his wishes or takes him into account at all. He is self-centered, self-absorbed, self-worshiping. All his desires and efforts are bounded by this life; thoroughly worldly tempers rule undisturbed; earthly passions glow; carnal appetites rage; the celestial is ignored; every suggestion of a hereafter is banished; the spiritual nature is extinct; the soul is dead. Absolutely to reverse all this, implies a revolution so vast that, had it not been actually done, it would not be considered possible.

But it has been done, and it can be done again. There have been those who could say with perfect truth, in entire simplicity and sincerity, that to them God was all. They regarded not the person of man, consulted not with flesh and blood, not even their own, but fixed their eyes unalterably upon the throne of the Eternal. They listened at all times for the whispers of God's voice, watched incessantly for the beckoning of his hand,

the glances of his eye. Pain and novelty were nothing accounted of, neither were ease and worth. Whichever came with God's sanction was eagerly welcomed. Equal joy was found in the praise and the blame of creatures, if the one was seen equally with the other to be accompanied by the smile of the Creator. No shred of clothing, no morsel of food, no atom of gold and silver, was reckoned as a personal possession whose removal could be considered loss or a sufficient call for grief. The presence or absence of these things was wholly immaterial. Honor and dishonor, evil report and good report, fame and obscurity, were alike, so that they were in God's order. He was the spring of all their happiness and satisfaction. When they rejoiced, they rejoiced "in the Lord." When they rested, they rested "in the Lord." When they gloried, they gloried "in the Lord." And whether they ate or drank or whatever they did, they did it "to the Lord." Their work was directed to the single end of accomplishing his will and glorifying his name. Their play was in strict obedience to his direction for the proper maintenance of health

and strength. And so in all the other departments of life.

It should not be supposed that they to whom God is all take no interest or pleasure in the ordinary pursuits and affairs of men, or that they can not consistently share in the innocent joys of life. Their outward activities may not be very strikingly different from those of other people. The distinction is chiefly in the inward spirit. They do not court singularity. They lay hold of all common relationships and occupations, and lift them to a higher plane by the purity of the motive with which they enter into them. They turn them to good account as means of usefulness to their fellows, or of increasing their own acquaintance with God. They find him in all, as well as all in him. And the moment anything before enjoyed ceases to carry the stamp of God's approval, that moment all satisfaction in continuing it ceases. If ever a serious doubt prevails, its attraction is gone and its abandonment is sure.

Happy, happy they who have learned that God is quite enough, who have made, with all their souls, this deliberate, irrevocable choice, "Christ

for me." God will make it his supreme care to see that never for one moment do they repent of that decision. He will exhaust the resources of his universe sooner than they shall find any want unmet. He will so pour himself round about them that they shall be wrapped in an atmosphere of inexpressible bliss. They who have thus chosen God are lifted completely above the power of circumstances or the possibilities of loss. No changes can affect the object on which their hearts are set. They can smile serenely at the utter impotence of man and devils. Their peace is unassailable. Their song never ceases.

Is God all to us? Why not? Is it not wise and every way best that he should be? Are we putting forth every energy to put away all that interferes with this concentration, and reach as quickly as possible this summit of spiritual growth? These are momentous questions, worthy of severest thought.

"The world is wide in time and tide,  
And God is guide; then do not hurry.  
That man is blest who does his best,  
And leaves the rest; then do not worry."  
—*Deems.*

## XXXV.

## THE BELIEVER'S HERITAGE.

No CARE can come where God doth guard,  
No ill befall whom he doth keep;  
In safety hid, of trouble rid,  
I lay me down in peace and sleep.

I wholly love thy holy name;  
I hail with glee thy glorious will;  
Where'er I go, 't is joy to know  
That thou, my King, art near me still.

Thy power immense, consummate, grand,  
Thy wisdom, known to thee alone,  
Thy perfect love, all thought above,  
Make me a sharer in thy throne.

With thee abiding, none can fear,  
Nor lack, of every good possessed;  
Thy grace avails, whate'er assails,  
And I in thee am fully blest.

Then leap, my heart, exultant, strong,  
Cast every doubt and weight away;  
Give thanks and praise to God always,  
For he will guide to perfect day! —*J. M.*

## XXXVI.

## HAVING NOTHING.

THE prayer to "be nothing," embodied in one of our excellent spiritual songs, has been strenuously objected to by some, who have set over against it the petition, which seems to them preferable, "O, to do something!" It is, of course, a mere matter of taste in terms. For there is a true sense in which we ought to be nothing, and the expression is, in a way, Scriptural, for Saint Paul declared (1 Cor. iii, 7), "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth." But still more explicitly and emphatically does the great apostle put his approval on the words at the head of this article. At the close of a long catalogue of glorious antitheses, graphically describing his own state and that of those like-minded, he writes as the climax of the whole, "Having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. vi, 10.)

What did he mean by having nothing? The words are deep and not easily fathomed. But to the present writer they have come to stand at least



for three things; namely, nothing to boast of, nothing to worry about, nothing to complain of. In these three departments we are very certain that the true Christian has no possessions.

As to boasting, that is excluded by the law of faith. Good works, we of ourselves have none; virtue, we have none; wisdom and power, we have none. They all come from Christ the Lord. All is of grace.

“No strength of our own, nor goodness we claim,  
Our trust is all thrown on Jesus’ name.”

We are his bond-servants, his slaves; and certainly a slave has nothing, owns nothing. He is owned by the one who has bought him. Any sort of pride of possession would be intensely foolish if found in a slave. It is indeed out of the question in the nature of things. The most absolute dependence, the most complete indebtedness imaginable is ours. It is well expressed by the words, “having nothing.”

That the same thought renders any worry impossible, is evident when we consider that anxiety always hinges on the pronoun my. What I am troubled about, if trouble of this useless and need-

less sort I have, is my property, or reputation, or family, or usefulness. When that word *my* is ruled out of the vocabulary in this connection, and God takes its place, solicitude departs. How the burden of responsibility lifts as soon as we realize that all has been made over to him, and that it is not ours any longer to command, but only to obey the orders he issues! There is no simpler, plainer test that we are wholly the Lord's than the utter absence of anxious care. We are ready then to sing with Charles Wesley, "Away, my needless fears."

"If what I wish is good,  
And suits the will Divine,  
By earth and hell in vain withstood,  
I know it shall be mine.

Here, then, I doubt no more,  
But in his pleasure rest,  
Whose wisdom, love, and truth and power,  
Engage to make me blest."

Complaint also, in all its shades and symptoms, disappears from the fully consecrated soul. He who has nothing of his own can never feel that anything which belongs to him has been kept from him. There is plainly no place for murmuring or

grumbling. Such a one has learned Paul's secret, in whatsoever state he is to be therein content. Having freely surrendered all rights of ownership in himself and in everything else, he feels that to require anything as by right from God is out of the question. What God chooses to give him is far better than he deserves, and is to be received with thankfulness.

These three things cover the past, the future, and the present—no boasting of what these hands have done, no fretting as to what may be, no complaining as to what is. They correspond very closely also to Paul's triple precept to the Thessalonians, "Pray without ceasing, rejoice evermore, in everything give thanks." For if we are always in the spirit of prayer, that implies a confession of absolute dependence on God; if we are rejoicing evermore, there can be no place for worry; and if in everything we give thanks, surely we shall find nothing to complain of. To the Philippians also he says, in substance, "Be prayerful for everything, be anxious for nothing, be thankful for anything."

And these three are also one. For they mean unitedly the uttermost destruction of self; that is,

self-will, as opposed to the Divine will. They mean a perpetual amen to every syllable that God utters—a state of simple, unquestioning obedience from moment to moment.

How delightful, how Divine, how full of peace and bliss, such a life! It is indescribably glorious, unutterably precious. It is worth all possible effort in the attainment. It does indeed “possess all things.” Here is a chance to be wealthy beyond the dreams of the most far-reaching avarice. The billionaire is not to be mentioned in comparison. How strange that so few seem to have any very strong desires in this direction!

### XXXVII.

#### HOW TO WALK WITH GOD.

WHAT is it to walk with God? The expression is, of course, figurative; it indicates companionship and sympathy. Two can not walk together unless they be agreed, nor will they choose each other's society unless there is mutual harmony and love. The degree of intimacy attained will generally depend on two things—first, the

mutual compatibility of the parties, and, second, the amount of opportunity for cultivating the acquaintance. In the case under consideration, this second element is the all-important one, because God's perfect adaptation to meet all the wants of the soul of man is beyond question, and it is plain that he will be apprehended and utilized in that capacity precisely as the soul grows in acquaintance with him.

But what chance of thorough acquaintance is there between man and God if the points of contact are few and far between; if they meet only on Sundays, or on stated occasions of social, family, and secret prayer? Most Christians, it may be safely said, hardly give God a thought except at these isolated times. The intervals, which cover nearly the whole of life, are spent away from his presence. What hope in such cases that the highest possibilities of fellowship shall result, that the life shall become "hid" in God, and that to them "to live" shall be "Christ?" It is while we "behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord" that we "are changed into the same image;" it is by seeing him that we become like him; it is the power of personal contact, the principle

of assimilation, that transforms us by the renewing of our mind.

It is, then, of the utmost importance that the contact be continual, and the perception, so far as possible, without a break. The influence is intensified manifold where such is the case, while it is counteracted and neutralized to a most damaging extent where such is not the case. To make the contact continual, to make the recognized presence of the Lord a perpetual thing, the doctrine that God's home is in his providences, that he makes there the fullest and most immediate manifestation of himself, so that he who perfectly corresponds with God's providences perfectly corresponds with his will, is absolutely essential. It more than quadruples at once man's opportunities of converse with his Maker.

He who has not formed the habit of seeing God in all the situations, modifications, and events of life, is evidently shut out most of the time from any special communion with him. His thoughts are occupied with other things, and nothing reminds him of his Creator. In short, so far as the great purpose of existence goes, most of his time is wasted. He is like a sailing ship trying to cross

the ocean in the face of almost constant head winds or calms. His progress is slow at best, and sometimes ceases altogether; many days, and perhaps weeks, go by in which nothing is done. How different with the man who can neither walk abroad nor sit at home without beholding abundant tokens of his Father's presence and power, without seeing God manifest in earth and sky, in cloud and flower, in river and plain, as well as in all that occurs through inanimate agents, whether they be brutes or men. He is like the strong steamer which loses little time for storm or calm, but speeds steadily on her way across the deep. He is like a sagacious merchant in whose hands everything turns to gold, and with whom nothing can come amiss or be wasted.

It does not require very much thought to see that theoretically there is no other safe standing place; that the promises and the threatenings of the Bible are laid waste right and left by any other theory, leaving to faith no firm basis for her feet. But it is in practice that the chief difficulty comes. The human heart, while it harbors the least pride and self-will, is not inclined to get into such close quarters with God, or to acknowl-

edge itself in his hands. And a way of looking at things so directly contrary to that which prevails in every worldly or semi-worldly circle, is not easy to adopt.

But all such as are in dead earnest to find the nearest and shortest way to the fullest union with God will care nothing for any obloquy or reproach that may fall upon them because of their unlikeness in this manner to those around them. They will devote their utmost efforts to obtain a clear comprehension of the doctrine of God's allness, and, having obtained this, will with no less carefulness and persistency set themselves to make its daily and hourly realization the familiar habit of their lives. To those who do this there can be nothing but swift advance and glorious enjoyment. "Every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"—that is, every creature and event, every arrangement of the Divine will—will give them sustenance and life, strength and joy. This is the only true way to live—"not by bread alone," not simply by detached hours and special occasions, and set times of eating, "but by every word of God."

To walk, then, with him, not simply to be with him once in a while, but to have him for a close



companion all the time, and thus grow daily into a more thorough knowledge of and likeness to him, it is indispensable that we behold him in all things, and all men, and all events, without the smallest or slightest exception. Supremely blest are the few who have learned this secret and mastered this practice.

## XXXVIII.

## JESUS THE BEAUTIFUL.

THERE is no friend like Jesus,  
I've proved him o'er and o'er ;  
His love is like no other love ;  
How could he love me more ?  
He always does the best for me,  
Whatever may betide ;  
And so I trust him fully ;  
He will provide.

There is no king like Jesus,  
The monarch of the sky ;  
How glad I am to serve this Lord !  
How sweet for him to die !  
His army never knows defeat,  
His power no foe can face ;  
And so I'm sure of victory  
In every case.

## THE LAND OF FAITH.

There is no sin in Jesus,  
The spotless Lamb of God ;  
The rough and thorny paths of life  
With holy steps he trod.  
He bids me follow where he goes ;  
Full strength comes with each day ;  
And so I 've no temptation  
From him to stray.

There is all joy in Jesus,  
All gladness and delight ;  
He turns my sorrow into song,  
He makes my darkness light.  
Through all earth's thick entanglements  
He leads, my perfect Guide ;  
And so I cling the closer  
To his dear side.

There 's none so good as Jesus,  
Truest, tenderest, best,  
All preciousness, all excellence ;  
Fast folded to his breast  
He holds me still, safe kept from ill,  
No care can intervene ;  
And so in him I glory,  
On him I lean.

I love the words of Jesus,  
Sublime, transcendent, pure ;  
Their strength and sweetness suit my soul,  
For every ill a cure.

What surer source of fullest life?  
They meet my deepest need;  
And so beside still waters  
I calmly feed.

I love the cross of Jesus  
On which he died for me;  
And gazing there with streaming eyes  
His matchless grace I see;  
The cross rebukes my selfishness,  
It helps me hate my sin;  
And so I vow before it  
My crown to win. —*J. M.*

## XXXIX.

## THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL.

It is the business of every Christian to learn to live according to Christ. Perfect Christlikeness is the Christian's ideal. But just what this implies or covers under present conditions is not so easily settled. It is certain that a literally exact reproduction of the life of Jesus of Nazareth would not at all answer. Nothing can be clearer than that he would not live to-day in America precisely as he lived of old in Galilee. If he were

here he would adapt himself to the changed aspect of the age. Both his conduct and his teaching would be different in many respects, for it would be wisely fitted to the times and the present needs of the people.

Hence the problem set us is to form a correct conception of what he would do were he now in our place. We have to transpose the melody of his life, without impairing its beauty, to a different key—the key of our own day. We have to translate the ideas that underlay his deeds into another tongue, so that they shall equally underlie our deeds, although those deeds can not be at all the same as his. It will at once be seen that this is very much more difficult than the slavish copying of a pattern. It is the infusion of a spirit. It is not mechanical, but vital, and will task our powers to the utmost. The same filial dependence on God, the same unwavering trust in the Father, the same calmness in awaiting the exact time for action, the same heavenly-mindedness, the same deep compassion for the sufferings of men, the same intense devotion to ministry and works of love, the same unbroken obedience, prayerfulness, and faith that were in him, are to be repeated in

us; but the forms in which these high qualities will find manifestation can not be absolutely the same in any two individuals. Therefore there will be abundant opportunity for personal variations and an endless call for the exercise of private judgment.

It is on this account that emphasis must be put on learning to live according to Christ. The formation of an ideal is indispensable. As well might the sculptor think to make greater speed by dispensing with the clay model and attacking the marble at random, as for the carver of character to pay little or no heed to his mental model. Ideals are created by imagination out of materials furnished by the faculties of observation and reflection. Noting carefully what Christ did while here on earth, and getting, by sufficient thought, firm grip upon the principles which lay back of the practice, the motives from which sprung the deeds, judgment and imagination are brought into play, and by their combined action a vivid picture is formed of how a perfect being would acquit himself amid the surroundings of this generation.

Evidently each man must create his own ideal. What is to one the supremely beautiful life, to

another with more highly cultivated faculties will appear at many points imperfect. In proportion as our powers of moral discrimination are developed, in that proportion our ideals will be elevated. The better the training the keener the appreciation of fine points, as well in morals as in music or painting. Those on a low plane of life can not perceive the real ugliness of the life they are living. They think it is all right, and fondly call it by the largest, highest names; but to those on a higher plane, with a different ideal, their deficiencies will be abundantly clear.

It follows, also, that our ideal should be ever advancing. As knowledge enlarges and life unfolds, as powers develop and wisdom increases, as observation furnishes more facts, and reflection combines them more judiciously, and imagination gives them completer form there will certainly be a great enlargement of the ideal. Each advancing realization leads to a higher idealization, and thus perpetual progress is insured. Alas for him who is entirely satisfied!

We see from all this that there are different grades of perfection in the Christian life. That is perfect, in a very true and proper sense, which

corresponds to the ideal. What is perfect to one who is not yet capable of forming the loftiest ideal, because of the small development of his powers of moral perception, is very imperfect to another.

Toward higher perfections, greater degrees of approximation to complete Christlikeness, every loyal follower of Jesus Christ will be pressing. And the directions of his growth will be two: There should be a progressive realization of the ideal he has already formed; there should be a continual advance in the ideal itself. In other words, his conception of the possibilities of humanity should gain in clearness, fullness, and strength, while at the same time the gap between his conception and the practical daily life should be steadily closing.

In this way there is provision for endless progress, for growth without cessation straight on from the moment of the new birth. There is no point at which the Christian stops and says: "I have attained; I have gained it all; I know it all." His conscience is growing ever more sensitive to slight departures from rectitude; he becomes ever better able to detect little infractions of the

perfect law ; and he is increasingly scrupulous as to the purity of his motives and the fervor of his quick response to all God's calls.

## XL.

### HOW TO MAKE A HEAVEN UPON EARTH.

YES, a heaven upon earth. What constitutes heaven? A constant vision of Jesus, and perfect oneness with the will of God. These at least are the essential things. The physical joys and immunities which we sometimes associate with a state of perfect bliss are not primary, but secondary. They may be possessed, and quite frequently are, without conferring any genuine happiness, whereas, in the midst of temporal privation and pain, the all-conquering soul has risen superior to its bonds and asserted its glorious supremacy. Heaven is not chiefly a matter of outward circumstances, but of inward condition. The physical figures of speech which we so often employ for the portrayal of heaven are but attempts to indicate spiritual states. That the soul



when it reaches its fullest development and largest liberty will shape to itself a fitting investiture may be freely admitted; but the soul it is that rules evermore, and heaven is nothing but a matter of its moods.

When we know and do the will divine, always, in everything, without reservation or hesitation, swiftly, easily, exultantly, heaven has dawned for us. The chief thing is to stop all contention with God. Surely this is within our power. When one has no smallest controversy with Him at any point, perfectly satisfied with all his arrangements and appointments, what is this but Paradise? It is a mistake to direct the attention to anything else. Those who are on the stretch for the highest possibilities of grace and the largest spiritual attainments will find it to their advantage to concentrate thought and endeavor on this one point. For if this is gained, all is gained. It is often said that there is nothing higher than love, and this may be allowed. But the only safe test of love is obedience, and an obedience carried to the furthest conceivable limit indicates the intensest kind of love. To say that one loves perfectly while there is palpable

lack in the promptitude or heartiness of the obedience is to speak a vain thing. Only the completest sort of love will produce this kind of obedience. And this kind of obedience is the only measure of that sort of love. It is impossible to separate the one from the other. But since the action is more palpable than the emotion, it evidently furnishes a better gauge of our progress, one less likely to lead us astray.

To do all things, little and large, for God alone, out of love to Jesus, with a pure motive, in simplicity and all sincerity—this is heaven. Very many miss it because they fail to understand that God has a will for his people in all the smallest details of daily life, and that there is nothing, absolutely nothing, which need be, or properly can be, exempt from the sweep of this inclusion. Unless God appears to us each moment, unless we form a habit of associating him with all events, and welcoming them all because they are certainly his, and, in an important sense, are himself, there will be serious breaks in our communion with him, and we will not become as rapidly assimilated as we might. God's place is in his providences, and he can not rightly be separated

from events. Only those who clearly apprehend this have found the secret of swiftest advance.

His heaven has already begun in all its most important elements who sees God in everything and with the whole fervor of his soul embraces the Divine will as it meets him moment by moment, refusing nothing, complaining of nothing, desiring nothing except that which it pleases his loving Father to give. This is the true ideal of the highest life. He who has a little of it has a little heaven; he who has a great deal of it has a great heaven. He has a pure and perfect faith, an absolute contentment, a joy profound which no man can take from him, a peace which nothing can destroy. A constant vision of the Christ is his, for nothing interrupts that communion with the Master over common things which makes ordinary life sublime. He has nothing to wish or to fear. He is a multimillionaire. He has found the philosopher's stone which turns everything into purest gold. All who are willing to pay the price may have it.

“I like the man who faces what he must,  
With step triumphant and a heart of cheer ;  
Who fights the daily battle without fear ;  
Sees his hopes fail, yet keeps unfaltering trust  
That God is God,—that somehow, true and just,  
His plans work out for mortals ; not a tear  
Is shed when fortune, which the world holds dear,  
Falls from his grasp ; better, with love, a crust,  
Than living in dishonor ; envies not,  
Nor loses faith in man ; but does his best,  
Nor ever murmurs at his humbler lot,  
But with a smile and words of hope gives zest  
To every toiler ; he alone is great,  
Who by a life heroic conquers fate.”



1912

JAN 20 1912

APR 28 1912

