

THE QUIET HOUR

HOPE'S QUIET HOUR

"Enquirer's" questions about "Saints" have already been carefully answered by our readers, and space can no longer be reserved for discussion of that subject. In regard to her question about the Scriptural authority for the title "Reverend," as applied to ordained ministers of God, it is impossible to find room for all the answers received. The general impression of the writers seems to be that the title is only rightfully given to God, of Whom it is written, "Holy and Reverend is His Name,"—Ps. cxi, 9, —and that it is giving His glory to a creature to apply it to a man.

And yet, when St. Paul says: "I magnify mine office," he is really glorifying God. He evidently thinks that to be an ambassador of God, sent by Him, is a far more honorable position than any merely earthly dignity. As for the statement made by some of our correspondents, that God "never delegated His honor to another," what then does our Lord mean by saying, "He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth HIM that sent Me."—S. Luke x., 16. If you will look up the context of that mysterious and tremendous assertion, you will see that it was not addressed to the Apostles (though the same statement had already been made about them,—S. Matt. x., 40), but it was part of the commission given to the seventy disciples who were sent "before His Face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come."

One of our correspondents objects to the usual token of respect being used, saying: "A minister is not any more holy than any other saint." But the title of honor has absolutely nothing to do with the question of personal character; it simply shows that God's ambassador is treated with the respect due to one who is sent by the King of Kings. Any messenger sent by King Edward would be treated with honor here in Canada—I hope. At least, any failure in respect to him would be a sign that we either did not honor our Sovereign, or did not acknowledge the commission of his ambassador. The traitor, Judas, was one of the men sent out by Christ, and to him, as well as to the others, these words were spoken: "He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me."—S. Matt. x., 40.

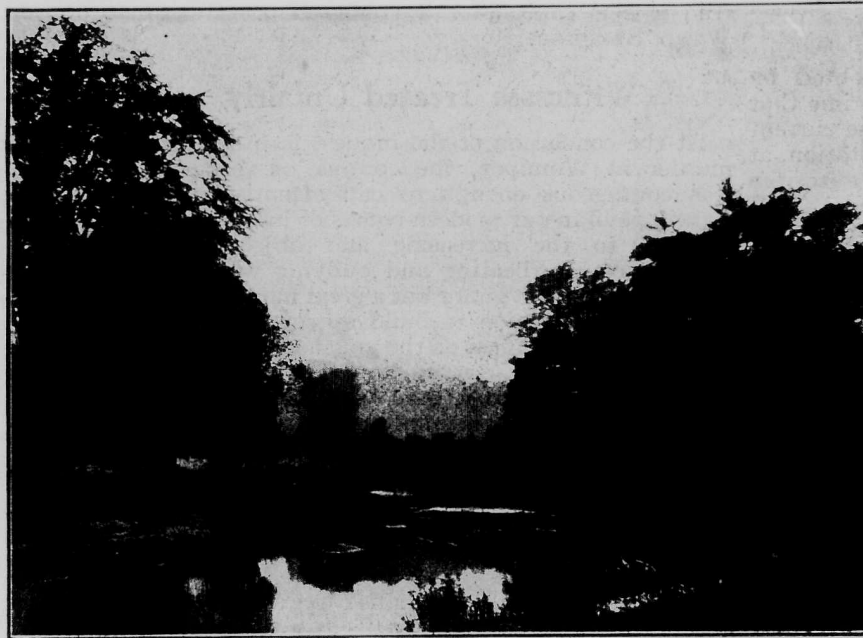
The ministers of God are constantly called "elders" in the Bible, and that title of respect is much the same as the modern "Reverend." The Bible authority is, however, seldom required for such titles as "Mr., Mrs., Esq., etc." yet few people refuse the usual expressions of civility on that account. In fact, we are bound to follow the customs of our country, to a considerable extent, translating the spirit of an injunction into its modern equivalent. For instance, because the Bible commands men to remove their "shoes" on holy ground, they don't remove their shoes, but their hats—in this country. In some countries, travellers are expected to remove their shoes even yet, and there they do it as a matter of course.

Another of our readers asks a question about the life after death, whether a soul in bliss "will miss dear ones who are shut out." Our Lord, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, shows that even a soul which has grown hard, by years of selfishness, will after death be eagerly anxious about the spiritual welfare of brethren out of sight. Is it likely, then, that one who has been living a life of love should forget dear ones? If death could kill love, it would indeed be the King of terrors. "But how can a loving soul rejoice while a loved one is in pain?" God only knows. He, Who is Infinite Love,

is also the God of Joy—although the souls He loves are suffering. Surely it can only be because the suffering is itself a proof of undying Love. If anything can destroy God's perfect love for a soul He has made, then His Name is not rightly called "LOVE," for His love must have limits. A soul that really trusts Him can trust all dear ones in His care, also, knowing that He still loves them and is always doing what is wisest and best for them. Is God's love weaker and poorer than the love which He has poured into the heart of a mother for a wayward child? Is He less willing to save to the uttermost?

"I would help him, but cannot, the wishes fall through, Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow, grow poor to enrich, To fill up his life, starve my own out, I would— Oh, speak through me now! Would I suffer for him that I love? So wilt Thou—so wilt Thou!"

Another correspondent asks about the possibility of reaching a soul through prayer, and says: "If I pray to Him to reach this wanderer, and trust Him, will He do the rest? Can it be possible that God can save



THE PLACE FOR A HOLIDAY.

this precious soul by my asking? If I pray to God for my friend to become a Christian any time before he dies, I'll have patience to wait that long. Oh, if I thought that one prayer would be answered, I'd die happy to-night."

The power and value of intercessory prayer is a great mystery. We know that God loves any soul we may be praying for, with a love which drowns our poor affection as the sunlight drowns a candle's flickering glow, we know that Christ ever liveth to make intercession for each of us; and yet our prayers are mighty to help—if offered with and through those of our Elder Brother. They may be very poor and imperfect, and yet they are never overlooked or despised when offered "with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar" before the Throne of God, because "much incense"—the prayer of the Great High Priest—is mingled with them.—Rev. viii., 3, 4.

If your friend should die, apparently unrepentant, what need is there for despair? The mother of the penitent thief might have thought her son had died impenitent, if that wonderful appeal from the cross of shame had only been whispered from the heart of the dying man into the ear of his listening Father. How many souls, who show no outward sign of trust in Christ, may have heard His voice saying: "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." The seeds

of holiness may have taken root in the soul, even though men know nothing about the hidden growth—and there is all eternity ahead. Do you think souls cease to grow when they step out into God's nearer presence? If "to depart and to be with Christ" means to cease growing into His likeness, then I should think it would be far better to stay here, where progress is possible. Why did our Lord, after His death, preach to "spirits in prison"—spirits "which sometime were disobedient" ages before—(1 St. Peter, iii., 18-20)—if they were in a hopeless state? St. Peter says that there was a good reason for preaching the gospel "to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh."—iv., 6. Of course, we know that we are on probation in this life, while the opportunities which may lie before us after death are not revealed. It is only at our deadly peril that we treat carelessly the offer of salvation held out before us here. God is not mocked—we must expect to reap the harvest which we are sowing in ungodly or in prayerful fashion. But those other souls are not ours to judge. They belong to the son of Man, Who loves them. We are not to doubt His love, nor to despair of His power. Neither are we permitted to question the wisdom of His dealings with any soul. "We can always trust."

I cannot tell you how prayer can help the friend you long to see strong and noble—but I do know that it is

THE WIND AND THE RAIN AND I
The wind and the rain have come for me.

They have found me here in the city room.

They have come from the open plains for me.

To take me back where the wild things bloom.

The hard, steel ways are strange to us,
And noisy and bare to our vagrant feet;

Here rain must run in just one way,
And the wind must follow the long straight street.

The wind from off the barren grounds
Is pausing under my prison eaves.

The naked rain from the northern marsh
Stops here with me and with me grieves.

I have lived my years with both of them.

They have taught me the freedom that they know;

So now I love the pathless wilds
Where I can go the way they go.

—DOUGLAS ROBERTS.

PATIENCE

What is patience? Can you tell me,
Bonnie blue-eyed little maid?

"Bide a wee and dinna weary,"
These the artless words she said.

O maiden fair from Scotia's strand,
From the north or from the south,

I'd love to grasp thy dainty hand,
Love to kiss thy rosy mouth.

Thou'rt sent into our weary hearts
A glint of heaven's brightest ray.

So, though the road be rough and long,
We'll hum the Scottish maiden's lay,

"Bide a wee and dinna weary!"
Sing the sweet words o'er again;

"Bide a wee and dinna weary!"
Is like sunshine after rain.

In Patience we'll possess our souls
Though clouds may frown and skies look gray;

With loving heart and kindly hand
Help our brothers on the way,

Continuing still in doing well,
Guarding feet that fain would stray,

Striving always to excel
And live out life's little day.

"Bide a wee and dinna weary!"
Short and simple all she said;

Yet in our hearts we'll sing them ever,
And bless the little Scottish maid.

—MRS. LEYDEN.

THE GREEN LADY

A lady sat singing alone in the mire:
"The New Year must come, and the Old Year retire;

But I the Green Lady,
Smell lilacs already,

And I hear in the tree-veins the sap rising higher."

The wind was as sharp as the fang of a snake,

But the Lady's warm fingers bade snowdrops awake.

"I saw you, I heard you,
When no vision stirred you

Of bursting your buds for the Green Lady's sake."

The lady went smiling with rain in her face,

And the puddle she trod turned a beautiful place,

Where thirsty birds, drinking,
Might sudden be thinking

Of downy broods warm in a feather-lined space.

She passed, the Green Lady, and with her and after

A beam of clear sunshine pierced heaven's cloudy rafter;

It struck to earth's bosom,
And there it bade blossom

The rapture of roses, the hyacinth's laughter.

NORA CHESON.

DORA FARNCOMB.