

Transit in God.

BY JOSEPH EVANS SAUNDERS.

"Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne."

The writer of the ninety-seventh Psalm was not an Agnostic. He believed in a God that he could neither see nor understand. The modern philosopher would say, "Clouds and darkness are there. If God is behind them, I cannot see Him; and if I cannot see Him, therefore if there is a God, He is so enveloped in clouds and darkness that no one can see Him, and we may as well give up trying and admit that we do not know."

The Psalmist thought of the times and ways in which God had revealed Himself to His people, and he remembered how often it had been in clouds, and in thunder, and how seldom in the "still small voice." He thought of the darkness that had shrouded God's Spirit when it brooded over the face of the waters, before creation began. He thought of the clouds that enveloped Him and the thunders that heralded Him, on Mount Sinai; and he thought of the clouds and darkness that had so often saddened his heart by hiding God, and then gladdened it by revealing Him.

The Psalmist knew this. It was because he knew that, notwithstanding wrong and oppression, God's throne was established in righteousness and judgment, that he could say that he knew that God preserves the souls of His saints, and delivers them out of the hand of every affliction. Light is shown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart. That ought to be an inspiring as well as a comforting thought to the man who trusts in God. Judgment is applied righteousness in this world, but there is a wonderful lack of judgment. Laws against bigamy, intemperance, the legalizing of murder, and the Dred Scott decision were gigantic mistakes of human government; but no mistakes come from that throne which is established in righteousness and judgment. If the world were to begin again, it would be governed just as it has been. There would be nothing to correct. Nothing can be more righteous than righteousness, and nothing more just than God's judgment. Do not look anywhere else for righteousness and judgment. You may as well look to the stars for a philosopher ever yet brought rest to a weary soul. Men who cannot, without doing violence to the laws of mind, believe in the immortality of spirit, with out a single qualm believe in the sternly of justice. Their faith in his justice bows down to the gods of gold and silver, and says "These created the world," and the philosopher in his laboratory bows down before the hot glowing minerals of the nebular hypothesis, and says "These created the world." He cannot believe that God created the world, but he believes a vibrant atom and a developing cell did. He believes that man has no spiritual nature, that his most noble is the result of development, that his conscience is an accumulated experience, and that it is a creature of chance. There are difficulties would be without merit.

Christ does not promise that thorns in the way shall become roses. He promises that the walking shall be better by and by. He does not promise that we shall be able to see through the clouds; but that by and by the clouds shall break, the darkness be dispelled, and that then we shall see the King in His beauty.—Standard.

planted life's first two milestones. There are conflicts in the heart of which we cannot speak even to our dearest earthly friends. There are times when the clouds are so low rolling and the darkness so deep that we hardly dare hope ever again to catch sight of the throne beyond, established in righteousness and judgment. There are times when duty seems to lead in two divergent ways, when the doing of a right seems to involve the doing of a wrong. The peace of the state is dear to every honest citizen. The right to judge for himself where he shall work, how many hours shall constitute a day, and what shall be the minimum reward of a day's labor; this right is dear to every proud and loyal citizen, and every loyal citizen desires to give this right to every other. But home, wife, children, the right to maintain his family independence, these are also dear, and when the interest of the millions is sacrificed to the interest of the millions, then arises that conflict in the soul, whether it is better for the poor man to suffer the outrageous indignities of unbridled ambition and unjust laws, or to suffer the country's peace and the rights of the individual and of the family.

The other day, in a wretched attic of a tenement in New York, the officers of the law found a man and woman dead. The man, driven from work by impertinent laws, and by the combination of capital, driven nearly by hunger and the sufferings of a wife for whom he was unable to get bread, had died by his own hand. The woman had died of hunger and neglect. A broken table, a stool, a mattress and a quilt on the floor, this was the furniture of the room, on the wall, as if in mockery of human justice, but in the trust of a dark Providence, was the motto, "God Bless Our Home." The motto on the walls of that starvation home may yet be the slogan on the lips of a God-fearing, working people, and the oppressor shall know that beyond the clouds and the darkness that may hide Him for the while, God's throne is established in righteousness and judgment.

"What Was the Text?" "Upon the top of the pillars was hily work," and the minister thus addressed by a layman at a convention held in Cohasset, Mass., was somewhat surprised by this strange salutation from a stranger, until reminded that some six months before he had preached from that text in a town in the State of one of some two hundred who listened to that sermon, the trend of which was that the Christian religion, or growth in it, in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, was a process of refinement until finally, how ever coarse the Christian may have been at first, at the base, at the close, "upon the top" would be "hily work." I do not know of one who heard that sermon that does not to this day remember the text, and it is only necessary to mention the preacher's name to have his text repeated, and this is partly owing to the fact that many times during his discourse he repeated his text and finally closed with it.

This week I asked a young lady, who had just returned from an evening preaching service, "What was the text?" and she at once replied, "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera." It was one of those two hundred who listened to that sermon, the trend of which was that the Christian religion, or growth in it, in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, was a process of refinement until finally, how ever coarse the Christian may have been at first, at the base, at the close, "upon the top" would be "hily work." I do not know of one who heard that sermon that does not to this day remember the text, and it is only necessary to mention the preacher's name to have his text repeated, and this is partly owing to the fact that many times during his discourse he repeated his text and finally closed with it.

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habit is, I have learned that ministers sometimes give the wrong chapter or verse in announcing the text, so that the crowd is so rolling and the darkness so deep that we hardly dare hope ever again to catch sight of the throne beyond, established in righteousness and judgment. There are times when duty seems to lead in two divergent ways, when the doing of a right seems to involve the doing of a wrong. The peace of the state is dear to every honest citizen. The right to judge for himself where he shall work, how many hours shall constitute a day, and what shall be the minimum reward of a day's labor; this right is dear to every proud and loyal citizen, and every loyal citizen desires to give this right to every other. But home, wife, children, the right to maintain his family independence, these are also dear, and when the interest of the millions is sacrificed to the interest of the millions, then arises that conflict in the soul, whether it is better for the poor man to suffer the outrageous indignities of unbridled ambition and unjust laws, or to suffer the country's peace and the rights of the individual and of the family.

The Mission of a Tract.

BY ESS R. JAY.

"I think I will give it all up, Auntie! I do not see that our tract distributing does any good, and what is the use in working on and on at a thing that you never see any good growing out of? Now, it would be glorious work if some one would, just once in a while, come up to me and say, 'Miss Arnold, do you remember some years ago giving a tract to a poor, ragged boy on Water street? I am that boy, and it was the means of my conversion.' As I look up I see before me one of our future statesmen, lawyers, doctors, or better still, a parson, and perhaps one who will devote his life to help some ragged boys as he once was. That sort of thing is always occurring in story books, but never happens in real life, and I grow weary sometimes of the work without fruit. Auntie Roe, say did you ever know of a really, truly good tract that was the means of a conversion, and that the person who gave the tract heard of it and knew that God had thus honored them?"

Long ere this "Auntie Roe" had laid aside her writing and drawn the tired young tract distributor down beside her, and was ready to answer her question. "Yes, dear, I have. Shall I tell you the story of a tract that once made me very, very happy, after causing me a great deal of anxiety? I know it will be good!"

"When I was not much older than you, dear, I went to spend the summer at the extreme east of our Province. The town which I visited was a very beautiful and quiet one, and I met there many kind friends. It may seem strange, but one of my strongest attachments was formed for a quite elderly lady.

"She was the wife of a superannuated Methodist clergyman, and was deeply interested in every good word and work. She was a member of the Ladies' Missionary Society which I enjoyed attending with a friend. It was there I first met Mrs. Burnham. Before the summer had very far advanced, I found myself counting that week incomplete of which I had not spent a few hours in pleasant converse with the dear old lady. I know it will be good!"

"But this charming season soon gave warning that it must make room for autumn, and the gold and crimson signals were hung away out upon the distant hills tops, and the waving grain of the fields was harvested; and still I tarried.

"At length the call home was imperative, and I had to leave the friends I had learned to love so dearly in the short six months I had been with them. She was the wife of a superannuated Methodist clergyman, and was deeply interested in every good word and work. She was a member of the Ladies' Missionary Society which I enjoyed attending with a friend. It was there I first met Mrs. Burnham. Before the summer had very far advanced, I found myself counting that week incomplete of which I had not spent a few hours in pleasant converse with the dear old lady. I know it will be good!"

"I had left my farewell to Mrs. Burnham until the very last. I was trying to make my adieu as bright as possible and was showing her what a veritable Santa Claus I had become, all through the kindness of my friends. While I was exhibiting my gifts, she passed the time to her desk, and taking from it a small package, said: 'I have my mite to add, dear. I never like to travel without a few tracts in my satchel, for I think that way the Father often means for us to help these around us. I have prayed that I might select just the right ones for you child, and my prayers will follow them as you give them to your fellow passengers.'"

"I took the package, dear, but the fun and brightness had vanished. I was to be forth burdened with what had caused Mrs. Burnham anxious thought and fervent prayer. Little did the dear lady dream of the weight she was adding to my satchel.

"At the Strait we had to wait a little while for the train, and in the 'Waiting Room' I saw some forlorn looking boys, with whom I gladly shared my sweets and fruits, but I really had not courage to offer them the tracts.

"The train down to the city was filled. As I opened my satchel for one thing and another, the tracts were always the first thing and the last thing I would see. I used to wonder what the young man or woman who sat beside me and giggled so incessantly would say if I handed them one. I could imagine the horror-stricken look upon the face of the woman across the aisle in the silk gown and furs and nodding plumes if I were to reach across and say, 'Please, ma'am, here is a tract.' Or could I fancy see the stern look deepen on the face of the business man behind me, so engaged in figures, if I were to turn around and say, 'Will you read this tract, sir?'"

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around me who needed the leaflets. Thus trying to console myself, I settled down to quietly enjoy the remainder of my trip.

"In the early evening we steamed into the city. I drove directly to one of the principal hotels, where I found my sister awaiting my arrival. She had planned to come to the city and spend the night with me.

"On rummaging my satchel she came across the tracts and joked about their being there and wondered why I had not chosen more cheerful reading matter for my journey. She did not know that I had been so sorry matter instead of reading matter.

"After a short few minutes alone, a friend called to see us and took us to spend the evening in his beautiful home. Everything was done for our comfort, and the evening was a most delightful one; but once in a while there would appear before me very vividly, the picture of that little bundle of unused tracts, and thus for awhile mar my pleasure.

"That night when the chambermaid came into our room to bring something sister needed, my hands were on one of the tracts to give her, but something said, 'Pearls before swine. She will only use it as bang-paper, and that would be to her.' So the innocent leaflet remained with its companions.

"Early the next morning I took the steamer for home. On board I met very pleasant friends and in their company had nearly forgotten my unfilled mission, when from a distant corner of the boat I heard some dreadful oaths. Here, then, were some people who really needed my tracts and I began to pray earnestly that week incomplete of which I had not spent a few hours in pleasant converse with the dear old lady. I know it will be good!"

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over and hoped much from, all dirty and crumpled and torn on the floor beside the baby's cradle. I was disheartened. But, oh, how this testimony had encouraged and strengthened me. Here was an object lesson. The Lord had signally blessed one tract by using it as the means of bringing a soul to Him. Was He not as willing to bless others? Oh, no, indeed, dear, I would not give it all up, as you expressed it, and I had felt like doing.

"The meeting over, I was busily inquiring about our sexton's rheumatism when I felt my hand grasped in a great rough one and the voice of the fisherman saying, 'You are the lady! I knew it when I heard your voice! Oh, I have wanted so much to tell you and thank you for that tract that was so precious to me! See here it is,' and from his pocket he produced one of Mrs. Burnham's leaflets, crumpled and worn, but oh such a treasure. As I gazed upon it, it seemed to me a very sacred bit of paper.

"Then it was Mrs. Burnham's prayers that had been so effectual. This was only one of the many trophies the Master was continually giving her. How happy I was that night to be able to write her all about it, and happy too that the dear Father had permitted me, as unworthy as I was, to just help a little. Since then, dear, when I go a journey, I must carry that thing put into my satchel in my bundle of tracts, and they have long ago ceased to be troublesome travelling companions, but add much brightness to my trips."

"Oh, auntie, I knew you would help me, and when in the future I am ever tempted to be discouraged, I will remember your story of the tract's mission."

A Captain's Advice.

In advocating the plan of systematic giving to the Lord's cause, the Rev. A. J. Gordon, D. D., of Boston, Mass., relates the following incident of a man who, in his later years, was famous for his munificence.

Many years ago a lad of sixteen years left home to seek his fortune. As he trudged along he met an old neighbor, the captain of a canal-boat, and the following conversation took place, which changed the current of the boy's life: "Well, William, where are you going?"

"I don't know," he answered, "I father is so ill that I must go home as soon as longer, and says I must now make a living for myself."

"There's no trouble about that," said the captain. "Be sure you start right, and you'll get along finely." William looked at the old man and the only trade he knew anything about was soap and candle making, at which he had helped his father at home.

"Well," said the old man, "let me pray with you once more, and give you a little advice, and then I will let you go." The boy knelt down upon the tow-path; the dear old man prayed earnestly for William, and then gave this advice: "Some one will soon be the leading soap-maker in New York. It can be you as well as any one. I hope you may, my dear. Then and only then will you be a good man; give your heart to Christ; give the Lord all that belongs to Him of every dollar you earn; make an honest soap; give a full pound, and I am certain you will yet be a prosperous and rich man."

When the boy arrived in the city he found it hard to get work. Lonesome and far from home, he remembered his mother's words and the last words of the dear old captain. He was then led to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and united with the church of fishermen who trust in His promise to the old captain, and the first dollar he earned brought up the question of the Lord's part. In the Bible he found that the Jews were commanded to give one-tenth; so he said, "If the Lord will take one-tenth, I will give that." And so he did; and his satisfaction of every dollar were sacred to the Lord.

Having regular employment, he soon became a partner, and after a few years his partner's died, and William became the owner of the business. He now resolved to keep his promise to the old captain, and he made an honest soap, gave a full pound, and instructed his book-keeper to open an account with the Lord, and carry one-tenth of all his income to that account. He prospered; his business grew; his family was blessed; his soap sold, and as he grew rich faster than he had ever hoped, he then gave the Lord two-tenths, and prospered more than ever; then he gave three-tenths, then four-tenths, then five-tenths.

He educated his family, settled all his plans for life, and gave all his income to the Lord. He prospered more than ever.

This is the story of Mr. William Colgate, who has given millions of dollars to the Lord's cause, and left a name that will never die.

Dr. Lyman Abbot, of Plymouth Church, delivered his sermon generally with studied dignity and precision. Occasionally, however, he reveals a vein of humor that is relished even by the sedate Plymouth Church worshippers. On a recent Sunday he said: "I can enter the bowels of the earth; says Science, and gather up and utilize the vast resources for man's comfort that have lain dormant and undiscovered since the world began." We thank thee for that, Science. "I can bridge the electricity that flashes through the skies and make it minister to the uses of civilization." We thank thee for that, Science. "I can run railroad trains from Maine to California at the rate of fifty miles an hour." We thank thee for that, Science. "I can explore the heavens and calculate the movements of the celestial bodies to a nicety." We thank thee for that, Science. "I can reach under the ocean from continent to continent and annihilate time and space." We thank thee for that, Science. "I can predict and distribute the news of the world in a single night, and at your breakfast table you can read it in your newspaper." But can you make the papers tell the truth, Science? No, says Science, sorrowfully, "no power on earth, visible or invisible, can make the papers tell the truth."

Of course there is no reference in this to the religious press.

It is better to fall among crows than among falcons; for they only devour the dead, but the others devour the living.—Antisthenes, B. C. 428.

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CENTRAL HOUSE, 73 Granville St., HALIFAX, N. S. Conducted on strictly Temperance principles. Jan 1 MISS A. M. PAYSON.

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YARMOUTH HOTEL, MAIN STREET, YARMOUTH, N. S. W. H. S. DAHLGREN, PROPRIETOR. Jan 1

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