

brace, when he beheld upon her haggard features a look that stabbed him to the heart. She said nothing, although her lips moved as in speech, but her soul went into her eyes, and thence cried out inaudibly: 'My son, my son, my heart will break this day!'

Instantly there came a strong revulsion into John James's mind, and throwing his arms about his mother's neck, he sobbed rather than said: 'I won't go, mother; as long as you live.' To that resolution he adhered in spite of the torrent of appeal, argument, ridicule, and finally abuse that Angus Cameron poured into him. The coach delayed a few minutes in case he should again change his mind, but he held firm, and it went on without him, Cameron sending back the Parthian arrows of his scorn until he was out of hearing.

There was no happier household in all the land than the Mackintosh's that evening. William Alexander was at home, and Charlie had come out from the village to comfort the parents upon his brother's going away. Mr. and Mrs. Mackintosh seemed to grow many years younger, and John James, relieved of the mental burden which had been oppressing him, showed himself in a new light.

The pledge given his mother he faithfully carried out. As the years went by the management of the farm more and more fell upon him. By adopting new and improved methods of agriculture, and by going in for stock-raising and poultry-keeping on a practical basis, he prospered steadily, and was enabled to add field to field until he became one of the most extensive and successful farmers in the country. They called him the 'Squire' then, and he had many gratifying tokens of the favor of God and man, but life brought to him no sweeter reward than the blessing of his parents as they closed their eyes in infinite peace in the old house which he had preserved for them.—'The Christian Advocate.'

How They Kept the Lord Out of Lower Town Church.

(Edward A. Steiner, in 'Womankind'.)

The Lower Town church stood upon a sandbank, though its theology was founded upon a rock.

At the foot of the hill the broad railway yards stretched their sinews of steel, and the clang of bells, the hanging noise of switched cars and the shrill whistles of passenger trains, drowned many a time the noise of the feeble church organ; and the lusty notes of the singing congregation were lost over and over again in this pandemonium of noise. At such a time, the Scotch preacher grew red in the face, trying to lift his voice, in a long meter tune, above the short meter puffing of a passing freight train, and the minister's sermon, too, was often nothing but a pantomime.

The church people of Lower Town were in one respect like the Israelites escaping from Egyptian bondage. There was a cloud of smoke either in front of them or behind them, depending upon the direction of the ever-blowing wind; and the locomotives were very much like Pharaoh's pursuing chariots. Yet in spite of the shifting sands which often disturbed the balance of the building, in spite of smoke and noise, the church of Lower Town might have fulfilled a large and difficult mission.

It stood in the midst of a densely populated district. Boarding houses by the dozen were upon every street, in which men tried to live and only half-way succeeded. Saloons innumerable opened their yawning doors to swallow up men's savings and men's souls. Under the shadow of the church were misery and woe enough to make the air heavy with sighs; but Sunday after Sunday the people went to church and came from church, hearing nothing but the rattle of the cars and the puffing of the engines, although louder than those was the cry of mothers whose sons were in the throes of death, the wailing of wives whose husbands lay in drunken stupor, and the cry of the children for love and for bread.

Yes! the people heard nothing and saw nothing, though the slain were thick upon the soot-streaked pavement, though the sun and the moon were darkened, and the keepers of the house did tremble, and the strong men bowed themselves, and many a silver cord was loosed and precious bowls were

broken, and pitchers, were broken at the fountain, and wheels broken at the cistern.

Yes! one saw, and one heard. The Lord in Heaven, the Lord of power, the Lord of love. He heard and saw and had compassion on the multitude and He came down from Heaven to save.

He wanted to make the wilderness glad, and the desert rejoice, and the faded rose to bloom again. He wanted to say to the blind, See; and to the deaf, Hear; and to the mourning, Weep not; and to the sinners, Sin not. He came!

He went to the man who was to preach the glad tidings, to the minister of the Lower Town church 'Young man.' He seemed to say, 'for what purpose are you here in Lower Town? Are you here to serve and to save in my name?'

'Yes Lord.'

'How do you serve, and whom do you save?' the Lord seemed to ask again.

The minister tremblingly answered, 'Lord! I preach twice every Sunday to my people, but most of the time I spend in going after them to urge them to come to thy house. This wearies me so, that I have no time to go after the lost, to save them.'

Hardly had the minister spoken these words, when a song seemed to come floating into his heart:

'There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold,

But one had wandered far away

To the desert so lone and cold;

Away to the desert so wild and bare,

Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

'Shepherd, hast thou not here thy ninety
and nine?

Are they not enough for thee?

But the Shepherd made answer, 'Tis one
of mine

Has wandered away from the fold;

Away on the mountain rugged and steep;

I go to the desert to find my sheep.

'But none of the ransomed ever knew

How deep were the waters He crossed,
Or how dark was the night the Lord passed
through

Ere He found the sheep that was lost.'

Instantly the minister caught the rebuke which came upon the wings of the song, he realized that he had spent his time and strength in looking after the ninety and nine, but there was one, no, there were a thousand in Lower Town, who never heard his message or felt his tender touch. He also realized that his church had been self-centred, that his people had thought only of their debt and their own set, never of God's lost people, and that he and they must be aroused to go after the lost sheep of Christ's fold.

The minister had a burden upon his heart which he could not roll off, and as he stepped out of his home the world looked darker and drearier than ever. Lower Town was always black with the soot of falling smoke, but now it seemed as if a funeral pall had fallen upon it, and above the din and noise of the traffic of the town, he heard the voice of men, women and children, crying, 'Lord, save us! Lord, pity us and save us!'

How weak he felt those days! All his achievements seemed as nothing, and all his preaching like empty prattle. The sermon he had prepared for the next Sunday, lay unfinished upon his desk, and never was finished, for he went before his people, heavy with 'the burden of the valley of vision.'

'Oh, my people,' he cried, 'I can not bear it alone; it crushes me. Come with me into the valley of vision and see; underneath, around us is death and damnation. Come and hear them crying, "God save us! Lord pity us and save us!"'

Yes, the people heard, but they understood not what he said. One man said: 'The minister must be getting ready to resign.' Another thought that he had the dyspepsia, and still another suggested that there might be some domestic trouble weighing him down.

'Yes, none of the ransomed ever knew

How deep were the waters crossed.'

The minister went with his burden to the trustees' meeting. They looked in astonishment at him. 'Why, don't you see your congregations are increasing and Mrs. Oversensitive and Mr. Undersensible praise your sermons? They say they have never been so well entertained before in this church.

You mustn't come down so heavy on us; give us the kind you used to give us.'

One of the trustees suggested that the minister had been giving them a little too much doctrine lately, and that the Rev. Gollightly of the neighboring church, who preached last Sunday night on 'How to Go to Heaven on a Pneumatic Tire' had drawn all the young people to hear him, and unless the minister would keep up his reputation as a popular preacher, there would be a deficit at the end of the year.

The minister left the meeting with the great burden still on his heart, and as he stepped out into the street, he heard on one side of him the 'Well done' of his people, but straight ahead of him and in the great darkness underneath him he heard the cry of the great multitude, 'Lord save us! Lord pity us and save us!' and the minister knew not which way to turn.

One afternoon soon after, he went to the meeting of the Ladies' Aid society. He found the women busy sewing tidies, painting shovels and planning for the coming bazaar. Many of these women were mothers, who bore burdens which nearly crushed them. Some of their sons were drunkards and some of their daughters were wayward.

Some of them had Godless husbands, but all of them were thinking only of the bazaar and the minister found none of them ready to help him bear his burden.

These poor women were overworked and over anxious. Young people had to be drilled for the Dairymaids' festival, there were to be tableaux, and marches and dialogues.

Yes, indeed, these things have to be, but woes unto us because they have to be. That church which lets the Lord in will have no debts and no need for bazaars, because the Lord will own the hearts and the wealth of his people.

So the burden stayed on the minister's heart while the house of God was filled by earth's earthiest; while men bought and sold, and sang cheap songs, and bought dear goods, and played poor theatricals. And the men and women and children of Lower Town were still crying, 'Lord pity us and save us!'

Finally, after much waiting, the Lord had knocked at the door of the church. Some were praying and eager for His presence, and were listening for His voice. One night in prayer meeting, the spirit of God seemed ready to come into our hearts, and into this church, but I think that He wishes us to humble ourselves before Him, and confess our sins, and forgive one another and be forgiven.

There were confessions of sin from the men and women who were already like unto saints; they asked forgiveness for their past misconduct; they had spoken harshly of one another, and now really wished to forgive and be forgiven, so that the Lord might come in and fill the church with power. It seemed as if Pentecost was to repeat itself, for many hearts were burdened, and many were praying for pardon and confessing their sins to one another.

Yes, the Lord was ready to come, but there were three people who stared Him in the face and said: 'We will not let Thee in.' One of them said, 'It isn't our business to go after anybody else; we have enough to do in the church, and we will never build up the church by running after the poor people around here. Anyway,' he continued, 'he had noticed that the minister spent too much time going after outsiders when the insiders needed so much attention.'

Another one, a good man, arose and said: 'I think that our minister is on the wrong track; we need to keep our heads high in the air, for the more you think of yourself, the more will others think of you. If we had more things going on, more concerts and cantatas and carnivals, the people around here would take pride in this church. Give them something to look at, something to do; take them into the choir.'

The third one said: 'I am perfectly willing to be forgiven, but I don't think that Brother McDonald did right by Mr. Brown seven years ago, and the church will never be blessed until Deacon B. takes his walking papers.'

They said this, and stared the Lord straight in the face as he stood by the door of the Lower Town church, and he turned away, weeping as he went for he loved these selfish, worldly, unforgiving people, and he heard the cry of the unsaved coming up against them at the last day