

Sunday Reading.

THE SOURCE OF TROUBLE.

An Able Sermon on Trouble by Rev. Mr. A. B. Carpenter.

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."—St. John xiv. 1.

There is no life that does not experience what we call trouble. I do not mean to say that trouble is equal in all lives and all experiences. There are some to whom trouble seems to come in greater quantity, in greater intensity; while there are others whose lives seem to pass comparatively untroubled through the world. Yet, if we could analyse the lives and feelings of our fellow men, if we could get deep down into their very heart and soul, we should find that there is no life, however untroubled it may seem on the surface, that does not encounter what we call trouble. It falls to the lot of all mankind to have trouble sooner or later. The child that lies helpless in our arms, we know that if the life of that child be spared to old age, one experience among others it will have—the experience of trouble. If you and I think for one moment we shall see that trouble in itself is not of necessity an evil. The life of man would have been very different if it had not been for the influence and action of trouble.

There are three things that may come out of the experience of trouble. Does not trouble help to develop human character, human ingenuity, human power? Would men collectively or individually have grown in such strength and power and ingenuity, if it had not been for the presence of trouble? Just as man is called upon to encounter the difficulties and troubles of his life, his character is tested, just as he braces himself to overcome trouble does his character grow in strength and greatness. And, besides that, is not trouble one of the means which brings us into sympathy with our fellow men, having that softening, that charity-inspiring influence which enables us to enter into the troubles of others and thereby to draw closer to them? And does not trouble make us look beyond the clouds of the present, giving us just that element of dissatisfaction, which sets the heart and soul craving after something greater than ourselves. It brings home to us a sense of our weakness, sends us into the darkness asking for one greater than and beyond ourselves that makes for righteousness. The troubles of this world often make us feel that this life, cut off from all else, does not give us satisfaction, which is only to be found in faith in God and the conviction of the immortality of the soul. Here it is we may say that trouble has its advantages.

There is one danger. It may upset our plans, but this is not the danger of trouble; the real danger is when it enters into the life, and the man or the woman grows disheartened, and the strength of resistance becomes weakened, and the tides of trouble overwhelm him. If that be so, surely you and I need some help by which we may face the troubles of life, that will give us that strong and great heart and soul which can look within and face a very sea against us, and yet maintain the courage and endurance and faith of our souls. It is just such a faith and courage which Jesus Christ would give us. You hear the words coming to you that have come to troubled humanity throughout eighteen hundred years, the words of the Master spoken so calmly and with such assurance—"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

We ask who was it spoke these words and to whom did He first address them? He Who dared, knowing what life was, to tell His fellowmen not to let their hearts be troubled or afraid, was He one Who had never felt the pinch and press of trouble Himself? Nay, He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; He was one Who had been thrown into the very vortex of adversity, knowing what the conflict of trouble and sorrow was in the world. Was ever a life more troubled in its external environment than that life of Jesus Christ Who knew what trouble was from day to day? And those to whom He spoke these words, who were they? Were they some of Heaven's favourites sheltered off from the blast of adversity, from the trouble and experience of life? As the Master looked upon them He knew perfectly well what trouble lay in store for them. He knew that He would be taken from them, and He knew that all the brunt of the new movement would fall upon them—persecution, imprisonment, misrepresentation—that even death itself would be the lot of some of them. His eye could see what was in store for them, and He never hid it from them. He told them to count the cost, He told them they would be regarded as the off-scouring of the world, that persecution and trouble was to be their lot in life, and yet He spoke to them and said, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

He did not mean then that some external peace was to be theirs, that men of like passions with ourselves were to be made so hard that they would not feel the pinch and press of trouble; He did not mean that life's pathway should be miraculously smoothed for them, that they might glide with ease along the way of life. No, men

of suffering, men persecuted, men full of trouble they would be, and yet in the midst of a very whirlwind of trouble the Master bade them keep a heart of peace and faith and assurance, a priceless treasure which the world of trouble could never take from them.

And how was it to be done? By faith in Him. 'You have had that larger faith in God. I have brought you a fuller revelation of God; believe also in me. Take my life, My teaching, My acts, My words, take Me as I stand in your midst and let your faith gather round Me, if you would have that faith which will make you strong and peaceful in the midst of the violent disturbances of life; you will find in Me the great antidote that subtle poison of trouble which would seek to take away from you, to suck away from you the very foundations of your strength and peace. What then has Christ done to give us this peace, this untroubled heart?

Look and see what are some of the sources of trouble which come to us in life. Until we know from whence to expect the great shadow of trouble on our lives we shall not understand fully what Christ has done for us, to bring us peace in the midst of trouble. There are three great sources from which a man may reap trouble. There are those little ups and downs in life. You find that, somehow or other, things will go exactly as you would like, you see that life itself is far too restless an animal ever to get it to go just as you like, the days do not come just as you desire; other's interests clash with your's; sorrow and pain come sometimes roughly and rudely upon you, and you are inclined to think that the whole of life is a boiling vortex of uncertainty and disappointment. And what does Christ say to us under those circumstances? 'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.' The trouble of life may come to us because we do not understand the meaning of life. If you and I cross the threshold of the world and imagine that life is intended to be a scene of ease we shall misunderstand it. But supposing this thing we call life is the great sphere for the manufacture of human souls and characters, the great throbbing machinery that is intended to turn out, under the guidance of God, heroic men and tender women, noble-hearted women, tender-hearted men; that all the meaning of life, the richness of life, the success of life is not that the hand should be full of the good things of this world, that the heart should be allowed to sleep in the cool gentle zephyrs of perpetual prosperity, unmoved by the shocks of time. That is what Christ taught us. He came and lived the troubled life Himself. He had not where to lay His head. He did not scale the heights of ambition. He cared not two straws what the world said of Him; He had his own mission and His own message and steppe out bravely in the world and spoke out the truth God had given to Him fearless of all results and consequences. He would sooner have parted with life itself than part with a single particle of truth and justice and reality and honesty. And He said to his disciples, as He has said to the world ever afterwards: 'You mistake the meaning of life if you think it is intended only for ease and comfort and wealth.' Just as you understand that God's purposes to you are something loftier than you have been dreaming of you will cease to wonder if providence crashes in upon you and destroys your plans. You, who thought to build your nest high up in the rocks where you will be safe from the discomfiting of life—that you would make a palace of art in which you could live in selfishness, your rock is swept by the torrent and you are sent down again into the midst of your fellowmen. You are intended to live amongst your fellowmen, to be one with them in sympathy. When we find in this life that we save this perpetual example and the perpetual friendship of Jesus Christ then I think the little worries and troubles of life begin to afflict us less than they did before. We brace up the nerves of our souls to face them, and we say "We will not be conquered by the troubles of life, but we will conquer them, and though the troubles seem overwhelming, crushing down the physical life within us and scattering all our plans, we have that within us, greater, grander, nobler still; we will draw the development of our characters from the life of Christ." Here, therefore, the faith in God and faith in Christ, the eternal fatherhood of God working through all plans for the training and education of His children, invite you to leave yourself in all courage and in all obedience in the hands of the Father; to mould your characters according to the experience of life; to follow on close to the footsteps of Jesus Christ Himself, following Him and learning that God hath got something in store for us; even by means of the disappointments and troubles of life, training our characters till we become in heart and soul the children of the Most High, fit, prepared, for the better life He may have in store for us.

Look once more and see how great a trouble it is when we reflect on the follies and failings of our character, and ask ourselves whether sin is not after all the bitterest source of trouble. There are two ways in which men feel trouble from sin. There is the coward, the man who shrinks from the punishment of his sin. Such men have been so anthropomorphic in their ideas of God that they have argued from their own experience of men what is the action and nature of God. They see a man here caught by the throat and shaken and due retribution awarded to him for his misdeeds and they argue that it must be so with God. 'When we do wrong,' they say, 'His gathering wrath shall break in vengeance on our heads.' And men have been cowed at the sense of their sins because they have been afraid of the wrath of God. But nobler souls have not thought so much of the consequences of God's wrath; what has troubled them has been that they are unworthy of the favour of God. They have done wrong, and have cried out to God and striven to do better in the future. It is not fear of punishment that troubles our hearts, it is our infirmity; it is the trouble lest I, having once done wrong, who knows? I may repeat the transgression. It is the discovery of the weakness, the baseness, the meanness of the sin within us, the leprosy of the soul within. This is the thing which troubles us, and we would by the gift of worlds get back or get into the strength which shall enable us to overcome sin. And the answer has come, the revelation of the fatherhood of God has once more swept away the cringing fear of the wrath and the punishment of God, and has been the manifestation of a power in itself to overcome sin, the revelation of a power to help men. Faith in Christ is an actual spiritual power that is implanted into the soul of man, and by it he is victorious over sin. He who feels 'I am not alone in the conflict with sin here; I cannot here tell my sense of sin, words will not express it. I need a friend within the tabernacle of my own heart and soul to speak there with me in the loneliness and the solitude of my being.'—he finds that such an one has come in Christ. He knocks at the door, He enters, He reigns and rules, and we find in this perpetual companionship the power that makes for righteousness within.

And has there not been a third source of trouble? I mean that dark shadow of death which hangs over every life, and sweeps down early on some, comes later upon others, but gathers all at last into the garner. The most heroic souls have felt trouble at the contemplation of death and felt the desire to cling to life. What is the good of striving against temptation if it is the end? If death ends all things, is life worth living? And you know the answer of Jesus Christ to that, how He has told us that the training and discipline and the hard fight are not in vain; they are not all to end in dust and ashes in the grave as it the whole tragedy of human life were one great failure at the end. He has pointed to the Father's house of many mansions that lies beyond the narrow strait of death. You have mistaken death when you have cried out at its presence. There is no such thing as death. Look you by the eye of faith across the narrow stream into the pasturage of that eternal home, the Father's house of many mansions. Wherever your Father's house is that must be your home. Death is but a going home, it is the opening of the doors, to receive the wearied-out child of God who has just managed to fight on to the last, and then is called home. The doors are rolled open to receive the strong and the heroic and the tender ones, those who have worked for God—the doors are rolled open to receive those, too, who, fallen back into utter despondency, have dreamed there is no God, no heaven, no hell, no rest, the outcasts of the world, but not, thank God! outcasts from the eternal home of the Father Himself. This is the faith that makes us strong, strong to bear all things, strong to be true to our convictions, strong to be true to the service of life, that gathers around Jesus Christ and says, 'Be not afraid of sin; you have that power within that shall overcome the sin; be not afraid of the adversities of life; you have the power to mould these for good; be not afraid of death; it is the entrance to the joy and peace beyond.' This faith will make individuals strong. Would to God we had more of that faith.—Rev. B. A. Carpenter, M. A.

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THE BOY AND THE MAN.

A Student Who not Tolerate Suggestive Songs or Stories.

Coleridge Patterson—a scholar at Eton, one of England's famous historic schools—was a high-spirited lad, and a great favorite in the cricket eleven of the school, for he was an uncommonly good player.

At the club suppers 'Coley,' as the boys called him, was disturbed by the questionable jests and stories of some of the members, and at length declared publicly that he should protest against anything like indecency in the conversation or in the songs that were sung.

Notwithstanding this, at the next meeting one of the boys began to sing a saucy ditty, and Coley rose indignantly to his feet.

'If this sort of things goes on I shall leave the room,' he said.

The singer continued, and Coley marched out. The next day he wrote to the captain of the eleven, and assured him that unless he received an apology he should quit the club.

He was too important a man to lose, and the apology was sent. The trial of feeling to the young fellow who made it could have been no greater than the trial of demanding it and risking a refusal; for, like all enthusiastic cricket-players, Coley was passionately fond of the game. But he loved character better than cricket, and the outcome was a victory of principle.

Here was the kind of boy of which martyrs are made. The spirit that emboldened him to resent villainy sent him afterward to present Christianity to a pagan people. A group of islands north of New Guinea in the South Pacific became the brave man's field of labor, and there he laid a victim to heathen cruelty.

But death has not erased from the memory of earth his example of manly courage and royal cheerfulness. The story of the boy of Eton and 'Martyr Bishop of Melanesia' is told here—and will be told for many a year to come—to kindle fearless virtue in other minds, and impress a noble lesson on Christlike sacrifice.

The Ocean of Eternity.

Some poet-mind has fancied that all the sound waves born on land escape to the ocean at last. They jostle and crowd each other above solid ground, but the sea has room for all, and they are rocked in billow cradles into harmony with the voice of the deep—the voice that speaks the language of all emotion. So it is with the warring, discordant, crowded feelings of earth-life. They escape from the narrow bounds of time, from its distortions and unrest, to find free play on the ocean of eternity. It is a mistake to think that the life of heaven is like the unrippling monotony of the sea of glass. The emotions that here are confused by circumstances, frozen by lack of sympathy, bound by selfishness, shall be as free as the airs that kiss the bosom of the sea, or the voices of the deep, that call and change unceasingly. Heaven is not the abode of insipid goodness. Emotion does not need the taint of sin to render it interesting. Happiness and purity in heaven go hand in hand, with full-orbed power to be, to do, to enjoy, with the liberty of thought and feeling the world cannot contain.

The Influence of Appearance.

A seeming to be is a temptation to be. The Scripture injunction to avoid the appearance of evil is not merely given to us in the interest of others who might be misled by our example, nor is it merely in our interests as a protection against our being misjudged or falsely accused. It benefits us more directly than that. To get into the habit of appearing evil is to grow accustomed to such appearance. A man's appearance becomes, as it were, his second self, upon whose evil countenance he grows accustomed to look without remonstrance. His nice sense of moral judgment is thus blunted. He gravitates unconsciously to being what once he only seemed to be. It is not only safer for others, then, that we avoid the appearance of evil, but safer for ourselves.

Do Not Procrastinate.

What thou doest, do quickly. There is only one niche into which your effort will be forever as those unfinished pillars at Baalbeck, which only show that somebody was criminally behind time. A benevolent man once discovered that a minister's family was in great distress. He gave a deacon fifty dollars, saying: 'Give it to them in a way becoming their standing; do it ingeniously, lovingly, but do not mention the giver.' The deacon said: 'Yes, I will do it the first thing in the morning.'

TRY

SATINS,

The Finest Molasses Chewing Candy in the Land.

GANONG BROS., L'td., St. Stephen, N. B.

'No, said the benefactor, 'do it to-night before sunset, before the dew falls. Who can tell the importance to those sad hearts of a night's sleep untroubled by the wolf of want!'

Testimony of Eminent Men.

It is well for all to keep in mind that Franklin gave as his last and most earnest testimony:—'Young man, my advice to you is that you cultivate an acquaintance with and a firm belief in the Holy Scriptures—that is your certain interest; that Diderot said: 'No better lessons than those of the Bible can I teach my child; that both Descartes and Newton said: 'No sciences are better attested than is the religion of the Bible—not even the mathematical; and that Jesus said: 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.'

A VERY USEFUL BABOON.

An Animal That Was Trained to Work Very Intelligently.

Certain wild animals can be trained to act very intelligently as servants of man, and even to exceed the dog in power of thought and action. Le Vaillant, the African traveller, says that he had a tame baboon which was not only sentinel, but hunter and purveyor of food and water. This monkey, by sheer force of brains, took command of the dogs which protected the camp, and used and directed them just as the older baboons command and direct the rest of the tribe.

By his cries, says Le Vaillant, he always warned us of the approach of an enemy before even the dogs discovered it. They were so accustomed to his voice that they used to go to sleep, and at first I was vexed with them for deserting their duties; but when I had once given the alarm, they would all stop to watch for his signal, and on the least motion of his eye, or the shaking of his head, I have seen them rush toward the quarter where his looks were directed.

I often carried him on my hunting expeditions, during which he would amuse himself by climbing trees, in order to aid us in the pursuit of game.

When he was thirsty he used to hunt about and discover some succulent taber which was as effectual, under the circumstances, as a watermelon. One might say that he was not more clever than a terrier dog; but though the dog can find a root he cannot dig it up.

The baboon did both, having the advantage of hands: though he used these, not to extract the root, but to adjust his weight so as to use the leverage of his teeth to the best advantage.

He laid hold of the tuft of leaves with his teeth, pressed his four paws on the earth, on all sides of it, and then drew his head slowly back. The root generally followed. If this plan did not succeed, he seized the root as low down as he could, and then throwing his heels over his head, turned a back somersault and came up smiling with the root in his mouth. It was easy to teach him that it was a part of his business to find these roots, and that his master must 'go staves.'

HE GOT THE CHECKBOOK.

How the Tables Were Turned on a Would-be Swindler.

It is always gratifying to one's sense of justice to see the tables turned upon a would-be swindler. Mrs. J. G. Jebb tells the story of a young Englishman who was travelling in Mexico. One Don Manuel represented to him the immense value of a certain silver-mine, with which circumstances compelled him to part. But his friend should see and judge for himself! The two men were accordingly lowered a short distance into the shaft and the Englishman was so pleased with the appearance of the ore that he gave his check for half the purchase price. Later, he felt moved to explore his investment farther, and going alone to the mine, hired an Indian in the vicinity to lower the cage. He speedily discovered that the mine was full of water!

Putting into immediate action a plan of reprisal, he sought Don Manuel and expressed his desire to visit the shaft again, to which the Mexican reluctantly yielded. The Indian was again hired to lower the cage, Don Manuel, at the Englishman's instance, giving the requisite instructions. The Englishman then politely motioned the older man to be seated.

Hardly had he done so, when the Indian, in obedience to a gesture from his secret patron, began turning the windlass. In vain Don Manuel entreated and threatened, till his voice arose faintly from far below. Then the cage was drawn up to within a few feet of the surface and the Englishman demanded of its drenched occupant the surrender of his check. Evidently the young man meant business, and without a word, Don Manuel yielded.

IN CASE OF FIRE.

Your house takes fire. What burns first? The lightest and most inflammable stuff, of course—furniture, doors, shelves, floors, panelling, and other woodwork. If it is a stone or brick house the walls will probably remain standing—a melancholy sight. Were not this a principle of universal application Mr. Meddings would never have compared himself to a skeleton, as he does in the letter to which your attention is now invited.

'In the autumn of 1891,' he says, 'I fell into a low, weak state of health. My ordinary energy appeared to have gone out of me. I always felt tired and languid, and couldn't account for it. Nothing seemed to rest me. I was as tired in the morning as when I went to bed. I had a bad taste in the mouth, my appetite was poor, and after meals I had a pain in my chest and left side.

'I was in this condition until the 14th of March, 1892, and then I had to give up work. The reason was, I was too weak to work. In fact, I was so weak that it was about as much as I could do to walk across the floor. Besides this I had a dry, hacking cough; and at night I sweat to the bedclothes were wet. Sometimes during the day, clammy sweats would break out all over me.

'I lost flesh rapidly, until I was like a skeleton. My muscles seemed to be shrunken and withered. There was no feeling of warmth in me; it was as though my blood had gone cool and thin. I was too feeble and helpless to wash or dress myself, and people said I was wasting away, as though they expected to see the end of it presently.

'I consulted two doctors and they gave me medicine, but it did me no good. One day my aunt, Mrs. Banton, of Francis Street, Walsall, called, and in the course of talk she said that the medicine that did her good when she was ill was Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. Although I didn't look reasonable to believe that it could cure a case as bad as mine, nevertheless my wife got me a bottle from Mr. Groves, the chemist in Park Street, and I commenced taking it. In a few days I found myself much better; my appetite was better, and I had gained a little strength.

'To make the story short, I kept on taking the Syrup and continued to get better. As soon as I could digest my food the night sweats and the cough abated, and in a few weeks I was able to go back to my work. This is two years ago, and since then I have been in good health for which I have to thank Mother Seigel's Syrup. (Signed) Arthur Thomas Meddings, 155, Farringdon Street, Walsall, March 6th, 1894.'

In a fire, as we said, it is the light, inflammable stuff that burns first. That's why Mr. Meddings got to be so gaily thin. The flesh or fat is the fuel of the body. In health it keeps up the warmth and furnishes the power. And to keep up the fuel we must eat.

Now, disease is a conflagration; it tries to burn the house up, and often does it. And it often burns the flesh up, more or less of it. The fat goes first, the muscles, &c., afterwards. That's the way of it. About that time the tenant moves out.

Our friend was well on towards that point. But it wasn't lung disease that ailed him, albeit he had the cough and the sweats. They go also with indigestion and dyspepsia—his real and only malady. He got feeble and thin because his disease wouldn't allow the stomach to digest the food. Hence he consumed all the flesh he had stored up, and then (luckily for him) he began to take Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, which set his stomach and liver right, and gave his vitals a chance to feed him.

All the same, it is dangerous to let a fire get headway. When it is your body quench the first spark with Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup.

Ineffectual Trick.

An amusing example of two souls with but a single thought is the following, furnished by one of the participants:

'Many years ago,' he says, 'I was in camp with a friend of mine in Canada. Toward morning I awoke shivering with cold. The fire was very low. My companion was sound asleep.

'Well, it isn't nice to get out of a warm blanket to haul frosty logs to the fire, so I gave Wyndham a kick, and then pretended to be asleep.

'There was no response, and by and by I tried another kick. Then the old scoundrel burst out laughing.

'I did the same thing to you fifteen minutes ago,' he said. 'That's how you came to wake up.'

'Then we both turned out, and soon had a fire going.

BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.

For 25 Years, Says Mrs. J. D. Stoddard of Asbury Park, N. J., and Two Bottles of Dr. Agnew's Cure For the Heart Restored the Lost Treasure.

For twenty-five years I have been a great sufferer from heart disease, palpitation, dizziness and severe headaches. I saw Dr. Agnew's Cure for the Heart advertised, and determined to try it. Two bottles have done wonders for me. The dizziness and palpitation are gone, the headaches have disappeared. I never cease telling my friends the wonderful benefit this great cure has been to me, and I cheerfully recommend it any and everywhere.