

Church Observer

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"ONE FAITH,—ONE LORD,—ONE BAPTISM."

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Poetry.

THERE COMES A TIME.

There come a time when we grow old,
And like a sunset down the sea,
Slope gradual, and the night wind cold
Comes whispering sad and chillingly;
And locks are gray,
As winter's day,
And eyes of saddest blue behold
The leaves all weary drift away,
And lips of faded coral say,
There comes a time when we grow old.

There comes a time when joyous hearts,
Which leaped as leaps the laughing main,
Are dead to all save memory,
As prisoner in his dungeon chain;
And dawn of day
Hath passed away,
The moon hath into darkness rolled,
And by the embers wan and gray
I hear a voice in whisper say,
There comes a time when we grow old.

There comes a time when manhood's prime
Is shrouded in the midst of years;
And beauty fading like a dream,
Hath passed away in silent tears;
And then how dark!
But O! the spark
That kindled youth to hues of gold,
Still burns with clear and steady ray;
And fond affections, lingering say,
There comes a time when we grow old.

There comes a time when laughing spring
And golden summer cease to be;
And we put on the autumn robe,
To tread the last declivity;
But now the slope,
With rosy hope,
Beyond the sunset we behold,
Another dawn with fairer light;
While watchers whisper through the night
There is a time when we grow old.

Family Circle.

AS GOD HE SITTETH IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

On Christmas day I was in Rome, and, of course, at St. Peter's. It was a great day; long did we wait, in that vast church, for the great procession. At last it came, grand, long, imposing. Soldiers were there, an army of them: conspicuous among the Swiss body-guard of the pope, in their striped uniform of red, black, and yellow, their halberds shining—unholy weapons in the temple of peace; and cardinals were there, and bishops and priests of every grade.

But the great object of attraction was the pope himself. He too was there, not walking as the others, but seated in an embroidered chair, he was borne on the shoulders of men, as one high above all. When the procession has completed the circuit of the church, and all have seen the pageant, he is let down and seats himself on his throne near the high altar. He takes a part in the celebration of the mass. When the sacrament is administered all receive it on their knees, all save one: the pope; when the officiating priest approaches him with the elements, he does not change his position. He alone sits while he receives the bread.

"Why does he not kneel?" exclaims a fiery Italian, a fervent catholic, as he witnesses this ceremony for the first time. "When all others bow, does he in this temple sit as God to receive the body of our Lord?"

That a man, and especially one professing to follow in the steps of the meek and lowly Jesus, should thus exalt himself above his fellow-men seemed to him incongruous. But he did not know that in expressing his indignation, he was using the very language of prophecy. Paul, in speaking of the man of sin, says, "so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." In our day, how exactly are these words, spoken eighteen hundred years ago, fulfilled. Were no such prophecy on record, our faith might be shaken, our fears might be aroused when we see millions upholding the man who with such audacity puts himself in the place of God. But the fulfilment of this first prophecy assures

us that that other prophecy—those words of doom that follow this vivid description, will certainly, in their time, be accomplished. Wonderful indeed is the forbearance of God. Yet the day of the man of sin approaches. He shall not always deceive the people. He shall not always sit in pride. God hath said, and he will do it. "The Lord will consume him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness—shall consume him with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming." How appropriate the exhortation that follows, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast."—*American Messenger.*

COURAGE IN EVERY-DAY LIFE.

Have the courage to discharge a debt while you have the money in your pocket.
Have the courage to do without that which you do not need, however much your eyes may covet it.

Have the courage to speak your mind when it is necessary you should do so, and to hold your tongue when it is prudent you should do so.

Have the courage to speak to a friend in a "seedy" coat, even though you are in company with a rich one, and richly attired.

Have the courage to make a will and a just one.

Have the courage to tell a man why you do not lend him your money.

Have the courage to cut the most agreeable acquaintance you have, when you are convinced that he lacks principle. "A friend should bear with a friend's infirmities," but not with his vices.

Have the courage to wear your old clothes until you pay for your new ones.

Have the courage to obey your Maker at the risk of being ridiculed by men.

Have the courage to prefer comfort and prosperity to fashion in all things.

Have the courage to acknowledge your ignorance rather than to seek credit for knowledge under false pretences.

Have the courage to provide entertainment for your friends within your means—not beyond.

THE KEY TO THE HEART.

A hardened Scottish soldier lay on his hospital bed, and refused stubbornly to listen to a word of spiritual counsel from the good minister who visited him. He "knew how to die without the aid of a priest," he said. The most affectionate entreaty seemed lost upon him, and he turned his face to the wall, determined to close the interview.

The minister sat down by his bed, and began to sing a hymn well known in Scotland: "O, mother dear, Jerusalem, when shall I come to thee?"

In a few moments the man turned himself upon his pillow, the hard look all gone, and the eye wet with a tear.

"Who taught you that?" he asked.

"My mother," said the minister.

"And so did mine," he replied; and with these memories surging back into his soul, he was ready and willing to listen to the words of heavenly counsel.

"Though it is certain that true repentance is never too late, it is as certain that late repentance is seldom true."—*Matthew Henry.*

—Nought that you possess belongs to yourself alone. Riches, the gift of speech, your existence itself, you owe all to God, for from Him alone proceed all things. He hath made thee rich, He could have made thee poor. The wealth He hath bestowed upon thee He can take from thee this very hour. He leaves it in thy hands that thou mayest by its means be conjoined with Him in the way of His divine providence. Your very existence is not your own; how can it be, then, that your riches are? Rather belong they to those for whom God hath committed them to thy keeping.—*Chrysostom.*

Ecclesiastical News.

CANADIAN.

DIOCESE OF MONTREAL.

The following valedictory sermon was preached at St. George's Church in this city, on Sunday morning last, by the Rev. Canon Bond:—

John iv. 21.

"Jesus, saith unto her, woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father."

The Samaritan worship, on Mount Gerizim, originated with a son of Joiada, the High Priest, in the days of Nehemiah, a schism produced by that ever fruitful cause of evil, personal resentment.

You remember that Nehemiah found a prevalent disregard of the Divine law against intermarriage with the heathen, and that some of the chief of the people were notoriously guilty. These, Nehemiah chased away, and Manasse, of whom I speak, and who had married the daughter of Sanballat, the Persian ruler of Samaria, fled to his father-in-law, and established the new worship on Mount Gerizim. This led to a bitter controversy between the Jews and Samaritans, which extended, as such controversies generally do, and with little recognition of the merits of the question, to all ranks of the community.

Nevertheless, an interest in such subjects as where men ought to worship, is not altogether to be set aside, as unworthy of consideration. There may be right and wrong involved in the question, and it is always safe to follow that which is right, while it is equally dangerous to hold the wrong. Mount Zion was unquestionably the place where men ought to worship, and when the Samaritan woman, with real feeling, perhaps with a warmth somewhat assumed for a purpose, put the question to our Lord, He answered it with fullness and decision, teaching us that where God has revealed His mind, it is not for every one to do that which is right in his own eyes, but to seek to know the mind of God.

Now, for example, do you not feel that it is right to have places set apart for the worship of God?—Is there not in you a consciousness of the duty of having a sanctuary consecrated to the service of the Deity? It might be said, as it has been said, "I can worship in the solitudes of the grand mountain tops. I can commune with God in the terrible majesty of the vast ocean, but I can pray always with inner devotion best of all, and be alone with God wherever I pray." That is true, and yet, like Jesus, such a one will descend from the mountain top, to participate more eagerly in the services of the great congregation, and come from the wonders of the great deep with fonder joy, to the quiet and accustomed place where he was wont to pray; and from a secret life in the Divine presence with quickened gladness to the common prayer and the public ministrations of the house of God. There is a testimony, within the heart of man, as well as on the pages of God's word, that there is a peculiar power and solemnity gathered over the spot where God has been pleased to reveal Himself to the soul, where God has been often, very near to our spirits, which give to the house of God a warm place in our affections. Therefore, it is not to be wondered at; it is not a mere sentiment that there is emotion—with some profound emotion—as we bid farewell to this house of prayer, wherein, for so many years, some of this congregation have worshipped and learned to serve the Most High. There are present those who have sought its courts week after week, since its doors were opened twenty-eight years ago. He who now speaks to you has given the prime of life to ministrations within these walls, teaching from October, 1848, to October, 1870, twenty-two years, and many more have for years bent in solemn service within this sanctuary. Who, then, can be surprised, as the day draws near when we shall no longer see the old familiar place, as our house of God, that many hearts are moved with strong and saddened feelings, as we prepare to seek another spot where to worship, even though it be more suitable and more beautiful?

Our thoughts linger round this scene with fondest clinging and almost every part is eloquent with memories speaking to heart and conscience.

I believe there are many here who can say with me, "Some of the happiest hours of my life have been spent within these walls, communing with God and eternity, my soul feeding on Jesus, at that table, in this seat, the strongest feelings of my heart drawn out in hope and joy by the revelations of the love and mercy of my God, my whole being absorbed by the contemplation of the promises of that spiritual existence for which we are preparing." I believe that even now there is visible to the eye of God, in various parts of this congregation, this language of the heart:—"Yes, here, long, long ago, I was dedicated to God in baptism, by dear and praying parents; here, I had proof that God's way is in the sanctuary, for here the spirit of God pierced my heart by a conviction which left me no

peace until I found it at the foot of the cross; and here, in the various ordinances of religion, I have been strengthened and refreshed in the trouble and trial of life; and it is like tearing one away from something to which he has clung with fond and trusting affection."

But there seems ever to be an inexorable law evermore pressing on human hearts. "This, this is not your rest." There is always something reminding us "here we have no continuing city." And so it now. By the exigencies of the day, we are forced from our old church endeared to us by so many fond associations; we have been compelled, for many years, to perceive that the tide of resident population was sweeping past the old church in two streams, composed of rich and poor, and leaving the church, like a stranded ship, unable to meet the high demands for which it was constructed; and no alternative was presented but that of following to a position where still the great work of saving souls, in which God has been pleased to greatly bless this church, may be effectually prosecuted. And so, as when old friends are called to separate, we have to say, with sad regrets, "Good bye, we shall never forget our pleasant and profitable intercourse; we shall never forget thee." Nor shall we. Again and again will recur to ministers and people, services, sermons, Sunday school work, work on behalf of the poor, seasons of prayer, seasons of sadness, seasons of joy—a multitude of memories giving life and reality again to old and by-gone scenes, and quickening us in faithfulness and duty. And in eternity (for we shall never forget the old church in eternity) we shall remember with painful remorse where we have been unfaithful, with joyful gratitude where we have humbly sought to do our duty; the time we have spent here, the services we have been permitted to attend; the example we have set the human beings with whom we have been associated; many and many a thing for the present covered by the stream and interests of time.—I say we shall never forget the old church. O, may it be with the consciousness that we have therein, in some degree, humbly endeavoured to glorify our God. Our minds are directed, however, by the text, to that devotion of the spiritual worshipper who finds a temple everywhere—who, like Jesus, worships on the mountain sides, by the placid lake, in the secret recesses of the soul as well as in the beautiful temple, who worships there until that new Jerusalem is reached, of which St. John says: "I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof." A wondrous thought! Everywhere a manifestation of Deity. God above, below, around, felt, visible yet invisible, enclosing us—a magnificent temple, in whom we worship, as well as live and move and have our being. But, until we reach that glorious consummation we must worship in temples made with hands. Still, however, with spiritual worship. With these complex natures of ours we ever need external aid appealing to the senses. The accustomed spot, whether in pew or quiet corner; the usual form and posture; the melody of some sweet tune, associated with feelings, it may be of hope or joy, or peace in believing—all these things, and many more, quicken and help these mortal and sluggish bodies; still, it may not be the worship of the spirit. It may be merely the mechanical action of an instrument—a finely prepared and beautifully perfected instrument, on which the soul can make melody pleasing even unto Deity, but of itself a dead and earthy thing, fit only for mortality and corruption.

You perceive I do not undervalue these outward things. I can understand the feeling of David when he said, as he was about to raise an altar to the Lord, "I will not offer that which doth cost me nothing." I can sympathize with Mary as she felt that nothing was too costly to devote to Jesus, and brought, to anoint Him, the alabaster box of very precious ointment. Our old cathedrals, where the beauties of architecture have been strewn with the most lavish hand, are not too splendid for the service of God. The grandest melody of the sublimest music, ascending on the breath of the swelling organ strains, cannot by any possibility be too glorious to accompany the praises of Jesus. Besides there is a power in the order and beauty of the sanctuary to preserve in the spirit, calmness and quietude. There is an energy in the sublime strains of melody to elevate and attune the soul for praise. There is an effect in the solemn pile and chastened light which sobers the mind and subdues the feelings, and helps materially to bring the worshipper into the attitude of spiritual worship. Still, they have not the power to render worship spiritual, nor when the spirit is lacking, to be of any use excepting so far as God may be pleased to bless them. That which God seeks in all this is spiritual, truthful worship. Through the weakness of our mortal nature the highest worship will be surrounded by imperfection; but I can understand a spirit in the body so communing with Deity that every earthly thought is forgotten, and the whole soul, with its every power, is fastened on the Father of Spirits in humble adoration. I can understand a spirit in the body, so absorbed in communion with God that St. Paul's experience would well express the feeling, "Whether in the body, or out of it