

A Little While.

By Rev. Theodore L. Cuvler, D.D.

In our Lord's last conversation with His disciples before his betrayal and crucifixion he said to them, "A little while and ye shall not see Me; and again a little while and ye shall see Me, because I go unto the Father." Before them was the bloody tragedy on Calvary, and forty days after that his ascension through the vernal air to heaven. They would see him no more in earthly form. But in another little while—in fifty days thereafter—he would come again by His Holy Spirit in the wondrous baptism of power at Pentecost. He was then to be glorified by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of His disciples. Jesus Christ is with His people now; for did He not promise, "Lo, I am with you always?" Those sweet, tender words, "a little while," have deep thoughts in them, like the still ocean at the twilight—thoughts too deep for our fathoming. They breathe some precious consolations to those whose burdens are heavy, either of care, or poverty, or sickness. If the prosperous can enjoy their prosperity only for a little while, neither shall the mourner weep much longer, or God's poor children carry much longer the pains or privations of poverty. The daily toil to earn the daily bread, the carking care to keep the barrel from running low and the scanty "cruse" from wasting, will soon be over. Cheer up, my brother! "A little while and ye shall see Me," says your blessed Master, "for I go to prepare a place for you." Oh, the infinite sweep of the glorious transition! A few years here in a lowly dwelling, whose rent it is hard to pay, and then infinite ages in the palace of the King of Kings. Here a scanty table and coarse raiment soon worn; yonder a robe of resplendent light at the marriage-supper of the Lamb. Let this blessed thought put new courage into thy soul, and fresh sunshine into thy countenance.

I sometimes go into a sick chamber where the "prisoners of Jesus Christ" are suffering with no prospect of recovery. Perhaps the eyes of some of those chronic invalids may fall upon this article. My dear friends, put under your pillows these sweet words of Jesus—"a little while." It is only for a little while that you are to serve your Master by patient submission to His holy will. That chronic suffering will soon be over. That disease which no earthly physician can cure will soon be cured by your Divine Physician, who, by the touch of His messenger, will cure you, in an instant, into the perfect health of heaven! You will exchange this weary bed of pain for that crystal air in which none shall say, "I am sick;" neither shall there be any more pain.

Not only to the sick and to the poverty-stricken child of God do these tender words of our Redeemer bring solace. Let those words, "a little while," bring a healing balm to hearts that are smarting under unkindness, or wounded by neglect, or pining under privations, or bleeding under sharp bereavements. I offer them as a sedative to sorrows and a solace under sharp afflictions. "A little while and ye shall see Me," and the sight of Him shall wipe out all the memories of the darkest hours through which you made your way into the everlasting rest.

"A few more struggles here,
A few more conflicts o'er,
A little while of toils and tears,
And we shall weep no more."

These words of the Master are also a trumpet-call to duty. In a little while my post in the pulpit shall be empty; what manner of minister ought I to be in fidelity to dying souls? Sabbath school teacher, in a little while you shall meet the young immortals in your class for the last time. Are you winning them to Christ? The time is short. Whatever your hands find to do for the Master, do it. Do it, Aquila and Priscilla, in the

Sunday school! Do it, Lydia, in the home! Do it, Dorcas, with thy needle, and Mary in the room of sickness and sorrow. Do it, Tertius, with thy pen, and, Appollos, with thy tongue! Do it, praying Hannah, with thy children and make for them the "little coat" of Christian character which they shall wear when you have gone home to a mother's heavenly reward.

Only think, too, how much may be achieved in a little while. The atonement for a world of perishing sinners was accomplished between the sixth hour and the ninth hour on darkened Calvary. The flash of divine electricity from the Holy Spirit which struck Saul of Tarsus to the ground was the work of an instant, but the great electric burner of the converted Paul has blazed over all the world for centuries. A half hour's faithful preaching of Jesus by a poor itinerant Methodist exhorter at Colchester brought the boy Spurgeon to a decision, and launched the mightiest ministry of modern times. Lady Henry Somerset tells us that a few minutes of solemn reflection in her garden decided her to exchange a life of fashionable frivolity for a life of consecrated philanthropy. Why cite any more cases when every Christian can testify that the best decisions and deeds of his or her life turned on the pivot of a few minutes? In the United States Mint they coin eagles out of the sweepings of gold dust from the floor. Brethren, we ought to be misers of our minutes! If on a dying bed they are so precious, why not in the fuller days of our healthful energies? Said General Mitchell, the great astronomer, to an officer who apologized for being only a few minutes behind time, "Sir, I have been in the habit of calculating the tenth part of a second!"

Our whole eternity will hinge on the "little while" of probation here. Only an inch of time to choose between an eternity of glory or the endless woes of hell! And as a convert exclaimed in a prayer meeting, "it was only a moment's work with me when I was in earnest." May God help us all to be faithful—only for a little while; and then comes the un fading crown:

"A little while for patient vigil-keeping
To face the stern — to wrestle with the strong,
A little while to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest song.
"A little while to keep the oil from falling,
A little while faith's flickering lamp to trim,
And then, the Bridegroom's coming footsteps hailing,
We'll haste to meet him with the bridal hymn."
—Christian Work.

A Prayer.

By John Henry Newman.

O, Lord, I give myself to Thee, I trust Thee wholly. Thou art wiser than I—more loving to me than I myself. Deign to fulfil Thy high purposes in me whatever they be—work in and through me. I am born to serve Thee, to be Thine, to be Thy instrument. Let me be Thy blind instrument. I ask not to see—I ask not to know—I ask simply to be used. Amen.

Are you tempted to irritable, censorious speech or violent deeds, think not of the present only, but of the future. At leisure, how often have men repented of what they did in haste! How often have they recoiled in mortification and bitter distress from the opponents they had prostrated! How often has the cold corpse of a human being taught them, too late, that compassion which His living presence could not! Now so forbear and forgive that you may see looking at you, through the mists of the grave, only the faces which, before they went, you clothed in smiles.—C. A. Bartol.

No Better Than the Roman Catholics.

In the Dominion Presbyterian of Oct. 21 is the following: "Many of the churches held their Thanksgiving services last Sunday" (Sabbath).

The Roman Catholic, as is well known, pay no attention whatever to Thanksgiving Day. For this we often condemn them. We say that they have as much reason to thank God for His goodness to us as a people during the closing year as we have. Their bishops could invite them to observe a certain day as one of thanksgiving to God for His goodness to their land, appointing the same day as the one appointed by Government. I have seen the same view expressed in Tarte's paper.

But what better are those Protestant churches above mentioned. They practically treated with contempt the day of Thanksgiving appointed by Government. I suppose they did so that their people might have the whole of Thanksgiving Day for work or diversion.

When our rulers invite us to do what is quite proper, and without threatening to punish us if we do not comply, we ought to honor them by a cheerful compliance. A day of public thanksgiving is a most becoming thing. There is no punishment inflicted on those who do not observe it.

God's favors to us as a people during a year are truly of little account if they are not worth our spending, in publicly thanking Him for them, a part of one of the days which He has given us "specially for our own employment."

Woodbridge, Ont.

T. FENWICK.

A Common Prayer.

By Marianne Farningham.

Friend of all in sorrow,—
Thus I prayed,—
Those who of to-morrow
Are afraid,
Lift their eyes to meet Thee
In the night;
O, to me be gracious
And give light.
When my hope is darkened
Like the days,
And my heart too heavy
For Thy praise,
Do not Thou forsake me,
But at length
Teach me hope and courage
Through Thy strength.
Lord, I crave Thy pity;
I am weak,
Yet art Thou so gracious
To the meek
That I will not clamor
To be strong,
Only pray to serve Thee
My life long.
In the time of trouble
Be my stay;
Let Thy presence brighten
Each dark day;
Grant me what Thy wisdom
Knows is best,
And within Thy kingdom
Give me rest.

"Take heed, therefore, how ye hear."— Luke 8:18. It is a solemn thing to preach the Gospel, but remember it is also a solemn thing to hear the word preached. Take heed, therefore, how ye hear. A lady who was present at the commemoration of the Lord's Supper, where the celebrated E. Erskine was assisting, was much impressed by the sermon. Having inquired the name of the preacher, she went the next Sabbath to his own place of worship to hear him; but to her surprise, she felt none of those strong impressions she experienced in hearing him before. Wondering at this, she called on Mr. Erskine, and, stating the case, asked what he thought might be the reason of such a difference in her feelings. He replied: "Madam, the reason is this: last Sunday you went to hear Jesus Christ; to-day you came to hear Ebenezer Erskine."