

The Family Circle.

SORROW AND JOY.

Sorrow so long had laid his hand
Upon her tender heart,
At last scarce could she understand
Joy made of life a part.

And when with sudden strength and might
Across life's chords it swept,
Echoing along the staffless night
Sweet tones where she had wept,
Her soul from out its depths of bliss,
Tremulous with its new birth,
Could only murmur faintly this:
"O, easier were life's dearth!"

And when at last in calmer hour,
She felt the new life thrill,
As toward the sun some tender flower,
Her heart oped upward still.

And richer for the past of pain,
The anguish of the years,
Her life like one long sweet refrain
Soothed others' griefs and tears.

—Lisa A. Fletcher.

TROUBLE AND DELIVERANCE.

The Rev. Rufus S. Green, D.D., of Orange, New Jersey, has written a book about his son, Ralph Robinson Green, who was drowned in 1892, near Bala, Ontario, Canada, and A. D. F. Randolph & Co. have handsomely published it. The author describes AN ALL-AROUND BOY, and the book is full of good reading for young and old. We copy one chapter for the sake of the religious lessons which are so well taught in it.

A STUNNING BLOW.

The morning of Wednesday, August 3, 1892, I passed into my study, planning a sermon for the following Sunday. The subject had particularly interested me. The evening before the theme for the weekly prayer-meeting of the church had been "Trouble and Deliverance." There was a deep spiritual tone to the services which impressed all present, and led me at the close to say: "Let us remember, dear friends, that the blessed truth upon which we have been dwelling we shall all have occasion sooner or later to test. To some of you trouble, deep and dark, has already come; and with it has come also sure deliverance from the hand of the Lord. You know the secret meaning of a subject like this. Others of us have journeyed along life's pathway with scarcely a cloud to darken the heavens above us; but it will not always be so. Trouble is sure to overtake us. Even now some of us may be sitting under the shadow of a great grief about to fall with crushing weight upon us. God grant that when it falls we shall know where to find deliverance!"

The meeting made such an impression on me that Wednesday morning I decided to put aside the subject previously selected for a sermon, and pursue the line of thought suggested by the discussion of the previous evening. Thus the morning passed in arranging my thoughts and preparing a plan for the sermon.

In the afternoon I seated myself at my desk to begin the work of composition. I wrote the text, 2 Cor. 1:3—"The God of all comfort."

Before another word was written there came a knock at my door, and a telegram was handed me. It read as follows:

BUFFALO, N.Y., Aug. 3, 1892

"My son telegraphs me from Bracebridge: 'Ralph gone over Squaw Shute Falls,' which makes me fear he is drowned. Leave for Bala this evening." "E. W. E."

The crushing grief had fallen. While I was speaking the evening before, the lifeless body of my boy—my only son, my pride and joy—was lying beneath the cruel waters of the Muskosh river.

I shall not attempt to describe my emotions. I could not do it, if I desired. With a pain around my heart, and a stunned feeling which only those who have passed through similar experience can understand, I made hasty arrangements to take the first train to Buffalo and thence to Canada. Leaving the poor broken-hearted mother, I hurried away. By arrangement with the operator, telegrams were repeated to me along the route; but they contained no further news—only a hope, to which I clung with desperation, knowing all the time that it was useless so to do.

Arriving in Buffalo early Thursday morning, friends were waiting at the station to do

all in their power to comfort and aid me. There was nothing to do but wait for the train to Toronto that afternoon. Mr. E— telegraphed from Bracebridge that he could learn nothing additional. The telegram had been sent there from Bala, twenty-five miles away across the lake, by boat—the only means of communication.

How hard is it to do nothing when every instinct prompts to action! But at last the time came to start for the station. A friend who had taken me to his home, then said that as he had business in Toronto, he would accompany me there. He knew by my looks—I could say nothing—how glad I was of his company. For years we had been the warmest friends. As a trustee of Lafayette street church, of which for nine years I had been the pastor, I had learned to prize his wise counsels and generous friendship. Two years before we had travelled together in Europe; and only the year before I had been permitted, though not then pastor of the church, to be with him when with breaking heart he laid forever from his sight one of the sweetest and noblest women whom God ever gave to be the wife of any man.

At Toronto he bought two tickets for Bracebridge. Plainly enough I saw that he had no intention of leaving me to take the remainder of the sad journey alone. Such kindness seemed to me too much. I could not feel that it was right for him to leave his business for my sake.

But protestations were in vain. "If it takes a month to find Ralph," he said in a tone which admitted no contradiction, "I shall stay with you." God be praised that there are such friends!

We reached Bracebridge at 4 p.m. on Friday. At six the boat sailed for Bala. Mr. E—and Ed were waiting there on the dock. But the body had not been found. For two days willing hands had dragged the river in vain. Again the only thing to do was to wait—for the body to rise.

The drowning had occurred some eight or nine miles below Bala. I could not rest until I had seen the place. Accordingly, with Ed and a guide, I started down the river in a canoe. As we stood on the shore opposite the awful place, Ed told me the sad story in substance as follows:

"After setting up our tent over there, and getting everything ready for the night, we thought we would come back on this side and do some fishing. It was then about six o'clock.* You know that last summer we boys had our camp on this identical spot, and we crossed and recrossed the river hundreds of times—the guide saying there was no danger.† We got into the canoe to paddle across; and suddenly, I don't know how or why, it collapsed. We were both thrown into the water. As we came up, Ralph grabbed me. He was strangling and evidently thought he was going to drown. He got me around the neck, and we both began to go down. Not a word was said, but he saw what the result would be, and on his own accord loosened his hold, leaving me free to help him, with himself aiding. We should both have been drowned but for his own voluntary relaxing his hold upon me.

"Far quicker than it takes me to tell it, we were struggling in the rapids you see there. My aim was to get out of them into the stiller water, and then we could easily reach land. But do what I could, we couldn't escape the clutch of the current. I held on to Ralph until we were within thirty or forty feet of the falls. There was no longer a hope of saving him. It was a question if I could save myself. I let him go, and got to land myself I don't know how. I only remember that I was utterly exhausted, and lay there for some time—I don't know how long—unconscious. Then I crossed the island on which I had landed, swam the other branch of the river, roused some Indians living near by, sent them to search the river, and started on foot for Bala, which I reached about two o'clock in the morning."

Every word of the story went through my heart like a knife, yet I would not have missed a word for thousands of dollars. "Ed," I

* Tuesday evening, Aug. 2nd, 1892.

† Ralph was not with them on that trip.

‡ The fatal mistake this time was that the water was about one and a half feet higher than the previous summer, which made the current much stronger.

said, "I want you to know, first of all, that I do not blame you in the least." "Thank you, O, thank you for saying that!" the noble fellow replied; "I have been hoping, O, so anxiously for just those words!" and he burst into tears. "And more than that," I continued, "I want to thank you with all my heart for your noble effort to save my darling boy!"

We went below the falls and paddled up and down the river, but all in vain. The waters were peaceful and uncommunicative as though my heart's treasure was not beneath them.

I arranged with some neighboring Indians to have two booms stretched across the river to prevent the body, when it rose, from being carried down stream. They also agreed to patrol the river day and night, and start with the body as soon as it was found, for Bala.

Ed volunteered to stay down and oversee the work. This I wanted to do myself; but the fear of bad news from Ralph's poor mother led me to accept Ed's offer, and accordingly I returned to Bala, the guide paddling me up.

As I reached the hotel, Mr. E— was about to start for the boat, having decided that it was better for him to go, that he might arrange for sending up a metallic coffin. This could not be found nearer than Toronto. From there it was sent under the care of a special messenger, to avoid the possibility of any delay through the carelessness of railway employees.

It came none too soon. At eight o'clock Saturday morning Ed went over the patrol; and there just below the falls was the precious body floating round and round in an eddy. The Indians were quickly notified, and the start up the river was made. It was a hard trip, with its seven portages, and it was not till half-past two in the afternoon that Bala was reached.

At half-past five the boat came in with the casket upon it. There was doubt whether it would wait for us to do the necessary work before embarking. We had therefore engaged a "tramp" boat which had come in just before the regular steamer. At seven we started reaching Gravenhurst at 9:30 Saturday evening. There was no train for twenty-six hours.

We may omit the trying experience which followed. It is enough to say that on two different freight trains and by riding all night we reached Toronto about ten o'clock Sunday morning, in time for the express train for Buffalo.

It is due to the officials of the Grand Trunk railroad at Gravenhurst, Allendale, and Toronto also, to say that they showed courtesy and did everything in their power to aid us, making up a special freight train at Allendale for our accommodation.

Just one incident on the way from Toronto to Buffalo should be recorded. On the Canadian side of Suspension Bridge the train halted for a moment. A lady sitting opposite me in the parlor car said to her husband: "Isn't it wonderful that this vast volume of water pours, year after year and generation after generation, over these falls and never stops? Still, I suppose physical laws are sufficient to account for it. There is no need of believing in a personal God. As I look at it, Ingersoll is much nearer the truth than the preachers who have so much to say about God."

From the moment that fearful telegram had reached me on the previous Wednesday, a fierce battle had been going on in my heart—a battle to save my faith in God. Possibly, had it not been the text, "The God of all comfort," on which I had spent the morning, the conflict would not have been so severe; but then the victory would not have been so complete. At noon, on Wednesday, I thought I had proved conclusively that God was the God of all comfort. The telegram shattered my proofs, as a stone shatters glass. I cried out for comfort, but there was none. My experience was proving the text false; and if that text was false, many other passages of Scripture were false. What dependence, then, could be placed on any part of the Bible? And if God was not the God of comfort, how could I be sure that he was a God of love and grace?

For the thousandth time I was going over this subject, as in the quiet which followed the stopping of the train at Suspension Bridge the words quoted above fell upon my ear. Their effect was something wonderful. I can

never forget it. They seemed like a flash of lightning in a dark night, revealing to me the hideous precipice of unbelief near which I had been wandering, and over which I had been in danger of falling.

There was a little boy by the lady's side. Without premeditation, and scarcely knowing what I was doing, I said to her: "Will you pardon me if I ask you a question?"

"Certainly," she replied.

"I want to ask if the little boy by your side is your son," I said.

"Yes, my only child," she answered.

"I thought as much," I continued. "Would you be interested to know that my only son, or what is left of him to me, is in a coffin in the baggage-car ahead of us? He was drowned last Tuesday, and I am taking him home for burial. I cannot tell you how dear he was to me. My heart is breaking. The time may come—I trust it will not, but it may come—when you will be following your only child to the grave. If it ever does come, what comfort do you expect to find in physical laws or in the teachings of Ingersoll? You will want then a personal God who can comfort you. Out of depths which no tongue can describe, and which no one who has not experienced them can appreciate, I want to tell you that I believe in God—a God of infinite comfort for all sorrowful souls that will look to him."

It was a strange way, but it was God's way of revealing the truth to me. I was speaking more for myself than for the woman. Let us hope that my words were a blessing to both. With tears in her eyes, she came to me later, giving me opportunity to impress the truth still more deeply on her heart. And as for myself, it was the breaking of the light. As I recall the incident, I doubt if I felt fully all that my words implied. But at that moment it is certain that the tide of battle turned; and when a month later I preached to my people on "the God of all comfort," though the pain around the heart had not ceased, the enemy had been routed. It was not the sermon I first planned. I had learned something about the text since that Wednesday morning.

THE RELIGIOUS PAPER.

We recently read the following:

1. A good religious paper makes Christians more intelligent.
2. As knowledge is power it makes them more useful.
3. It leads to a better understanding of the Scriptures.
4. It increases interest in the spread of the gospel.
5. It places weapons in the hands of all to defend the truth.
6. It affords a channel of communication between brethren.
7. It throws light upon obscure questions of practical interest.
8. It cultivates a taste for reading among parents and children.
9. It awakens interest for the salvation of souls.
10. It gives the more important current news of general interest.
11. All this is furnished at a very small cost compared with its value.

THE BRIGHT SIDE.

Cheerfulness can become a habit, and habits sometimes help us over hard places. A cheerful heart seeth cheerful things.

A lady and a gentleman were in a lumber yard situated by a dirty, foul-smelling river.

The lady said: "How good the pine boards smell!"

"Pine boards!" exclaimed the gentleman. "Just smell this foul river!"

"No, thank you," the lady replied; "I prefer to smell the pine boards."

And she was right. If she, or we, can carry the principle through our entire living, we shall have the cheerful heart, the cheerful voice, and cheerful face. Wealth cannot give it, nor can poverty take it away.—Miss Huslock.

Can dyspepsia be cured? Yes! K. D. C. is a positive cure, "a safe cure," "a complete cure," "a marvellous cure," "the best cure," "a thorough cure," and a guaranteed cure. See testimonials.