

The Provincial Freeman

Published under the direction of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Eastern British America

Volume XII. No. II.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 1860.

Whole No. 557.

Religious Miscellany.

Trust in God.

"What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee."

The billows round me rise and roll,
And feareth the boom fill,
The storms of worldly care
Beat heavily upon my soul.

And shroud me in despair;
Forsaken, comfortless, betrayed,
With none to succor me,
Father! what time I am afraid,
Then will I trust in Thee!

As feeble as the braided reed,
Infirm to will and do;
Of working out the ungrateful deed
I were better to be dead.

How were the sinking-soul dismayed,
Could it not cry to Thee,
Father, what time I am afraid,
Then will I trust in Thee!

When hope is faint, and faith is weak,
And loaves the boom fill,
And I a strong assurance seek
That Thou art gracious still;

I rest upon Thy promise-word,
To Thine own truth I flee;
Father, what time I am afraid,
Then will I trust in Thee!

When faintly pleasure marks my face,
And dizziness fills my eye,
And, hoping only in Thy grace,
I lay me down to die;

Thy entering in the vale of shade,
Nor sun nor star I see,
Father, what time I am afraid,
Then will I trust in Thee!

God Slow to Anger.

By T. OUTHRIE, D. D.

"He executeth not judgment speedily against the workers of iniquity." He does not; He shall punish; with reverence He is spoken, He must punish. Yet no hand of clock goes so slow as God's hand of vengeance. Of that, the world, this city, and this church are witnesses; each and all speaker and hearer, are living witnesses. It is too common to overlook this fact, and overlooking the kindness, long-suffering, and warnings which precede the judgment, we are apt to give the punishment our exclusive attention. We see his kindness impressed on all his works, and the lines groups, before he springs the snake strikes, he leaps her rattle.

Look, for example, on the catastrophe of the deluge. We may have our attention engrossed by the dread and awful character of this judgment, as to overlook all that preceded it, and see nothing but this devouring waters.

The waters rise till rivers swell into lakes, and lakes into seas, and along the fertile plains the sea stretches out her arms to seize their flying population. Still the waters rise; and now, mighty as the sea, the terror has tamed, men climb to mountain tops, the flood roaring at their heels. Still the waters rise; and now each summit stands above them like a separate and seaward isle. Still the waters rise; and now crowding closer on the narrow spaces of their lessening tops, men and beasts fight for standing-room. Still the waters rise, and the waters rise, till the last survivor of the shrieking crowd is washed off, and the head of the highest Alp goes down beneath the wave. And now the waters rise no more; God's servant has done his work; he rests from his labor; and all land drowned, all life destroyed, an awful silence reigns, and the shores ocean rolling, death for once has nothing to do, but lies in triumph on the top of some giant billow, which, meeting no coast, no continent, no Alp, no Andes, to break upon, sweeps round and round the world.

We stand aghast at this scene; and, as the corpses of gentle children and sweet infants are floating by, we exclaim, "Has God forgotten to be gracious? Is his mercy clean gone forever? No, assuredly not. Where, then, is his mercy? Look here; look at this ark, which, like Noah's, is built upon a shelf, and within walls which are pitched upon board and within, she holds the coiled freight that ever sailed the sea. The germs of the Church are there—the patriarchs of the old world, and the fathers of the new. Suddenly, amid the awful gloom, a ray of light descends from heaven, and a grating sound is heard; she has grounded on the top of Ararat. The door is opened; and beneath the sign of the olive branch they come forth from their baptismal ark, like life from the dead,—like souls passing from water into a state of grace, above the saints when they shall rise at the summons of the trumpet to behold a new heaven and a new earth, and to see the sign which these 'gray fathers' hailed, enshrining the head which was crowned with thorns.

Not in this ark, O heavenly Father! thy character is clear to us; and I must remind you that ere mercy flew, like the dove, to that asylum, she had swept the world with her wings. Were there but eight, only eight saved? There were thousands, millions sought. Not is it justice to God to forget how long a period of patience and preaching and warning and compassion, preceded that dreadful deluge. Long before the lightning flashed from angry heavens; long before the floor and solid pavement of this earth, under the prodigious agencies at work, broke up, like the deck of a leaking ship, and the waters rushed from below to meet the water above, and sink a guilty world; long before the time when the ark floated away by tower and town, and those crowded hill-tops, where frantic groups had clustered, and amid prayers and curses, and shrieks and shouts, urged out their signs of distress—very long before this, God had been calling an impatient world to repentance. Had he any warning, in Noah's preaching? Was there nothing to alarm them in the very sight of the ark, as story rose upon story; and nothing in the sound of those ceaseless hammers to awaken all but the dead? It was not till Noah's arm grew weary ringing the warning bells, that he used the words of my text, God "poured out his fury" on them. I appeal to the story of this awful judgment. True, for forty days it rained incessantly, and for one hundred and fifty

days more "the waters prevailed on the earth"; but while the period of God's justice is reckoned by days, the period of his long-suffering was drawn out into years; and twenty years between the first stroke of the bell and the first crash of the thunder—Noah grew gray preaching repentance. The ark stood useless for years; a huge laughing stock for the scoffers; it stood till it was covered with age, and its builders with the scum of the world; and many a sneer had these men to bear, as pointing to the serene heavens above and an empty ark below, the question was put, "Where is the promise of his coming?" Most patient God! Then, as now, thou wert slow to punish—"waiting to be gracious."

Did.

"This woman was full of good works and alms deeds which she did."—Acts ix. 36.

Did is a very expressive word. We all, most wonder that the English language has such a word as *did*, when we might speak as forcibly and well as properly, of a person's *deeds*. This is particularly true in the work of benevolence. Many persons who are called charitable, generous, never actually *did* any thing to lift up the fallen, and carry Christ to the perishing. They have put their hands into the pocket and collected something when a collector has called, and that is all. They never *did* any thing directly to apply the remedy to the ills that flesh is heir to. Their money will accomplish nothing without vigorous, self-denying efforts to apply the remedy for which it pays, and here lies the great part of the doing. It is easier to give than it is to do. There is little self-denial practised in all the giving of the present day; but there is a great deal of it practised by those who carry the gospel to sinners who need it.

It is here that the character of Dorcas (the woman spoken of in the above passage) appears to the best advantage as a Christian. She was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did. She had not a mere reputation for benevolence, but she actually *did* something for the needy. She worked with her own hands for them. We read of the "costs and garments which Dorcas made." She did not get them made, but she made them herself. Perhaps some rich ladies gave her money to buy the cloth, and that was a gift to the Lord, and a good one too; but Dorcas made them, and that was *her deed*. Many have only gifts to present to God, while the few have deeds to offer. The wealthy ladies of Joppa gave their money to the poor, and Dorcas *did* the work. She gave her money to buy the cloth, and she made it into the Cow Bays and Five Points, to find the needy, and clothe them with the garments she had made. The poor might have fared severely without the self-denials of Dorcas; for the rich women would give for their costly garments, but by *breaching the dirty lanes* of mercy. If some one, who has *deeds* instead of gifts for God, had interest enough to solicit their aid, it was well; otherwise the poor might have lacked food and clothing.

It is *deeds* that make this distinction between gifts and *deeds*, and it is *deeds* that make the gift of money to the needy, as to be a gift to the Lord, and a good one too; but Dorcas made them, and that was *her deed*. Many have only gifts to present to God, while the few have deeds to offer. The wealthy ladies of Joppa gave their money to the poor, and Dorcas *did* the work. She gave her money to buy the cloth, and she made it into the Cow Bays and Five Points, to find the needy, and clothe them with the garments she had made. The poor might have fared severely without the self-denials of Dorcas; for the rich women would give for their costly garments, but by *breaching the dirty lanes* of mercy. If some one, who has *deeds* instead of gifts for God, had interest enough to solicit their aid, it was well; otherwise the poor might have lacked food and clothing.

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