

Who knows that some who witnessed the stoning of Stephen, and saw in the martyr face the face of an angel, did not experience a saving influence from this heaven-illumined countenance? At the coming of Easter, there are all over our land hearts that will go down into the graves of trial and sorrow, and the forces of separate souls must determine how far the illuminating power of the resurrected Christ has helped them to cast off these grave clothes, and to put on the newer garments. Among the multitude will there not shine the Easter light upon faces never before so glorified? The risen Christ would have it so.

Easter Lilies.

WHEN the gray of evening creeps upon the glories of the sky,
And the clouds begin to gather at the closing of the day,
Then the robin in the elm-tree whistles out his parting lay
As the shadows grow and deepen, and the cool wind rushes by.

When the earth is wrapt in slumber in the midnight calm and still,
And the sick man counts life's ebbing by the ticking of the clock,
In the barn some dream of victory stirs up the sleeping cock,
And he crows a lusty war-note, triumphant, loud, and shrill.

When the chill of night is coldest, and the darkness very dark,
And the silence broods and presses like a weight upon the world,
Comes a tremor in the heavens where the heavy clouds are curled,
And the shadow of a light, as if behind them were a spark.

Growing ever bright and brighter till there shoot great sparks of fire
Through their black and sullen masses,
And the heavens are unrolled
In a many-tinted banner, sown with azure, red, and gold,
And the day-break flames upon the cross that tops the tall church spire.

In a chamber, on his death-bed, at the closing of the day,
As the shadows grew and deepened, and the wind began to blow,
Far from all the city's turmoil, in the peace of Fontainebleau,
The great painter Leonardo, the far-famed Da Vinci, lay.

As the laboured breath came shorter, and the death-dews decked his head,
And the sunken hand grew feebler, and all closer came the Night,
Once again the scene he painted seemed to rise before his sight,
The disciples, and the Master, and the Paschal supper spread.

But the Master's eyes were lifted, and beneath their tender sadness
Shone the gleam of foreseen victory, as clouds at break of day
Veil, yet half disclose, the secret of the fast approaching ray
With its promises of life and light, and heraldings of gladness.

So the Master sat before him, and the sorrow in His eyes
For the loved ones that denied Him, and the traitor that betrayed,
And the men that jeered and smote Him, seemed to hold beneath its shade
The full joy of finished labour and the dawn of Easter skies.

As he gazed upon the vision, all the chamber seemed aglow
With a blaze of sudden splendor, and he saw, as in a dream,
Through the open door a wondrous field of golden lilies gleam,
Raising up their lovely bells upon a field of driven snow.

And they nearer drew, and nearer, till he saw them wave and glance
Close beside him, and around him, and above the dying head,

Till he felt them drooping, lowering, bending downward to the bed,—
All the glorious golden lilies of the Oriflamme of France.

And before him stood famed warriors and fair ladies in a ring,
All unmarked, for round his wasted form his Master's arms were pressed,
And his heart grew very joyous, then forever was at rest
'Neath the golden bells of France, and in the arms of France's King.

So before that fading sight, for all life's duties fairly done,
Earthly King and Heavenly Master in the dying chamber met,
Met to cheer him and sustain him ere his eyes in death should set,
And the golden lilies rise above a field of battle won.

Nor alone for task accomplished, nor alone for ended fight,
Come to men the lily-vision and the promise that they bring,
Come the clear eyes of the Master, and the presence of the King,
As the glories gild the cloudlets at the fading of the light;

But to eyes grown dim with sorrow, and to breasts dead-sick with sin,
All the Master's loving sadness, all the Master's victory,
Bring the Oriflamme of Heaven with its lilies from the sky,
Droop them down upon the sinner, and enfold the heart within.

Till the burden drops from off it, and the weary soul, at rest
From its errors and its sinnings, enters into holy peace,
Finds its Resurrection morning as its carnal struggles cease,
Passes out from death to life, clasped to its Master's breast.

—JOHN J. PROCTER, in *Montreal Witness*.

The Power of a Kiss.

BY A. D. WALKER.

SOME years ago, and before the Woman's great temperance movement, there was, in one of our large cities, a temperance society organized, and it originated from the following incident: A good minister who was deeply interested in the poorer classes, was one day accosted by a woman who said:

"Mr. L——, I don't know what to do with my mother."

"Why," said the minister, "what is the matter with her?"

"She is a common street drunkard and pawns everything for drink. Since Saturday night she has drunk two wash-tubs and a boiler."

"Is that possible?" said Mr. L——

"Why, she is a sort of an alligator-woman; what do you mean?"

"I mean that this is my stock in trade, and she has sold it all for drink; can you help me?"

Mr. L—— talked encouragingly to the poor woman, and promised to aid her if possible.

And now he went to the drunkard, endeavoured to impress upon her a sense of her guilt, and she promised to do better; but she minded her promise only while he was present, and it was broken before the day was done.

Again and again he pleaded with her, and she at each interview promised to abstain from drink, and yet drank daily.

Others became interested and a temperance society was organized and the poor creature was one of the first to join it.

We have been informed further regarding her, but will relate a story truthful and interesting, of another intemperate female.

This same good minister told us the following story. Said he:

"There was in our city, a few years ago, one of the hardest cases I have ever met in the form of a woman. She would drink at morning, noon and night, and drink made her like an infuriated beast. Why, I have seen her led along by two policemen, one not daring alone to lay hands upon her. She wholly lost her self-respect, and was the most degraded object that could be met anywhere.

"After the temperance society, of which I have spoken, was organized, one good lady said to another: 'I am going to call upon poor Mrs. W——, and see if I can do her any good.'

"Do not go! I beg you not!" said the other frightened at the thought.

"And why not, pray?"

"The reasons for not going are strong. She will not heed you, or if she does she will kick you down stairs. She is a perfect brute when in liquor, and my advice is to stay away from her; and you will do well if you listen to my warning."

"I must go and see her, and try to aid her," answered the benevolent woman, whose mind was fully made up on the subject.

"And go she did, intent on doing good. She reached the place, and mounted the rickety stairs that led to her miserable room, groped her way to the door, and peeped cautiously in; and in the far corner of the room she saw what seemed to be a great bundle of rags; going over to the spot she found it was the poor wretch she was seeking, and she laid her hand upon the inebriate's shoulder without speaking a word. The fallen woman raised her face, and oh! what a face it was, bloated, scarred, red and vicious.

"The benevolent woman silently leaned over, and kissed that truly repulsive face, still without speaking.

"What did you do that for?" eagerly questioned the poor creature.

"Because I love you and want you to do better."

"Heeding not the answer, the drunkard rocked back and forth, still repeating the question, 'What did you do that for? I have never had a kiss like that since I was a child—a pure little child, not a vile drunkard. Oh! what did you do that for?' and she broke into sobs, uncontrollable sobs.

"The good Samaritan assisted her to rise, helped her down the stairs, and led her to her own house, where she was decently clad, and when evening came she willingly went with her benefactor to a religious meeting, a meeting where the poor outcast was welcome. The good minister who led the meeting was pastor over a church situated in a locality where vice grew like weeds, and he laboured willingly as a missionary among the poor and degraded, feeling that such was his Master's work for him.

"After service, it was his wont to ask any that felt their need to stand up for prayers, and on the evening above referred to he followed his usual custom, and up before his view arose the drunkard, Mrs. W——.

"Ah!" thought he, 'now here is trouble; there will be a row raised; for well he knew the vileness and strength of the fallen woman.

"What do you wish, madam?" he politely asked, hoping to quell her rage.

"I wish—to—be—prayed—for," she stammered.

"What do you wish?" repeated the pastor not believing his senses.

"I want—to—be—prayed for," she again answered, looking him full in the face from out her bleared eyes.

"He was just about fulfilling her request, when the poor wretch added, 'But I want her to pray for me,' and she pointed to the good woman at her side.

"What could I do?" said the pastor; it was against the rules of our church to ask a woman to speak in meeting, but I could not heed rules under such circumstances, and I said Madam, here is a poor soul who wants your prayers—pray for her. Down knelt the good sister, and she earnestly prayed. The prayer was not eloquent, neither lengthy. It was simple, these words: Oh, Lord, help her to do better; she wants Thy help. Do come and help her to do right, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

"They arose and went their way, but God hears prayer, and that was the commencement of better things for the poor, degraded Mrs. W——.

"Two years after this, there was in the same church a great temperance meeting, and the women marched in the procession. At their head came a large, handsome woman, bearing a blue silk banner on which appeared the words: 'Woman's work for woman's weal.' The good pastor had a friend with him in the pulpit, who asked:

"Who is that large, fine-looking woman?"

"That is Mrs. W——."

"And, pray, who is Mrs. W——?"

"The pastor then related the story we have here told.

"And what wrought a reform in one so base?" asked the friend in surprise.

"It was the power of the Gospel, sir," answered the pastor.

"And how did the Gospel reach her?" was asked. "Was it through your preaching?"

"I think not, but let us call her and ask her," and the pastor beckoned the woman to come forward. She modestly advanced, and he asked: "Mrs. W——, what wrought your reformation?"

"It was the power of a kiss," and she again repeated the story we have told, and added: "Ministers of the Gospel had talked to me of my degradation, and told me how dreadful the life was I was leading; other men had upbraided me, and told me that I ought to be ashamed, a woman making herself such a spectacle, and sternly bid me to do better. This did no good, nor influenced me in the least; but when that good, dear, angel woman came to me and kissed me, my hard heart was softened, and when she told me that it was because she loved me, I was melted to the soul, and she, under God, was the means of my reform."

"And now, Mrs. W—— to-day is leading the life of a Christian."—*Christian at Work*.

The Right Rev. Dr. Ryle, Bishop of Liverpool, is endeavouring nobly to solve the problem, "How to reach the masses." He preaches in the open air, in the great ship-building yards at the noon intermission, and among the 14,000 carters with their wives, children and babies, and to the men employed at the large freight stations, oftentimes from 2,000 to 3,000 being in one assembly.