

her preacher of righteousness was to be a girl of her own age, though very far from her own sphere of life.

They were to have a gathering of neighbors at Clifton on the evening of Ruth's eighteenth birthday, and the young guests staying in the house were busy adorning the rooms with flowers and wreaths.

"If we only had some of those lovely water-lilies we saw the other evening!" cried one of the committee on decoration. "Wouldn't they look too sweet here in the fountain?"

"Why, that's a good job for me," said Ruth. "You won't let me do any work; I'll just get in the canoe and go after them."

It was rather pleasant to get out on the river, away from the chatter and confusion of the house. The heat of the sun was tempered by a fresh breeze that blew over the water, and Ruth enjoyed the light dancing of her boat as she paddled herself down to the little cove, where in half-stagnant water the great yellow globes unfolded a whole bed of bright petals.

Some one was there before Ruth, but not for the lilies; a tall, sun-burnt girl stood on the bank with a fishing-rod in her hand and a basket beside her. She watched with pleasant curiosity the approach of the young lady in the canoe.

"I am afraid I have scared away you fish," said Ruth in a pleasant voice.

"I expect you have," answered the girl frankly; "but it ain't much matter; I've had 'mazin' good luck today. I have. See here!" and she held up by the tail a great flat-headed creature in a dark, dirty shell.

"Oh, what is that?" cried Ruth, in some disgust.

"Don't you know?" asked the other incredulously. "Now, I call that queer. I make no doubt you know a lot of book stuff, but seems you ain't acquainted with a river turtle when you see him," and her tone was by no means complimentary.

"What are you going to do with him?" asked Ruth, amused at the girl's candor.

"Ah! now you are on the track," said her talkative acquaintance. "I'm Mrs. Benk's hired girl, I am, and I have Thursdays, after dinner, to myself, so today I am after a basket of fish for Johnny Coy to take to market tomorrow, and you bet his eyes will shine when he sees this here turtle. You don't know Johnny Coy's folks, do you?"

"No," said Ruth; "who are they?"

"Well, they're monstrous poor folks, Mike Coy, he got hit on the head by a brick when he was buildin' a house, and died right off, and left Mike Coy with a powerful sight o' children to see to. They've had hard times, I tell you, but the children are gettin' big enough to help some now, and I'm thinking, with a little help from the neighbors, they'll pull through."

"I'd like to help a little, too," said Ruth; and pulling the canoe up to the water's edge, she tossed some silver pieces over on the grass. "Won't you please put these in the bucket with Johnny's fish?" she said.

The girl picked up the silver, but not as readily as Ruth had expected.

"Perhaps you think Mrs. Coy wouldn't like to take this little help from a stranger?" she suggested.

"La, yes, poor body!" said Mrs. Coy's friend; "she will be glad enough; but I was just thinkin', if I was a rich lady with silver to carry about in my pocket, I could help folks a better way than that."

Ruth was entirely surprised; she had surely expected Mrs. Benk's hired girl to admire her ready generosity.

"Why, how would you help them?" she asked, somewhat flustered.

The plain sunburnt face glowed with an enthusiasm that was beautiful to see.

"Maybe I'll have money enough to do it some day," she said, eagerly; "I'm lookin' for it. Why, for one thing, I'd go to town and buy a whole piece of nice checked gingham, strong and easy to wash, and pretty, too; then I'd get a sewing-machine—one of those fellows that go like lightning—and I'd make all my stuff up into little aprons and shirts and dresses; then I'd sell 'em to busy poor folks for just what the stuff in 'em cost. My, but it would be a blessin' to some of 'em—Mrs. Coy for one."

"Why not give them away?" asked Ruth, much interested.

"No, no! that would never be the same," said the other. "You've never had things give to you, so you don't know how no count it makes to have things always bein' give to 'em. But work don't count; you may sew for 'em—or," she added, with a hearty laugh, "fish for 'em—and it don't hurt anything. I know 'bout folks; I've been there myself."

While Ruth listened to these homely, sensible words, a great longing surged in her unoccupied young heart, why was she not helping to do some part of the great world's work? And there floated through her memory those solemn words, "I was naked, and ye clothed me not." Her cheeks flushed, her eyes grew bright with an eager purpose.

Don't put the quarters into the bucket," she said; "you buy the gingham and get some patterns. Can you borrow some little clothes, do you think, to show us how to do it? And you must come up to my house—Clifton, you know, up the river—next Thursday afternoon. I'll have the machine ready, and we'll begin a sewing society—just you and I—right away. Maybe we can do some more of our plans after a while. Will you come?"

Mrs. Benk's girl readily waved a good-bye to her acquaintance. She turned for a parting glance as she rounded the bend, and saw the tall, strong-looking figure, clear-cut against the red evening sky, seeming almost as tall as the line of trees that formed the background.

The birthday party was a great success and Ruth enjoyed its bright gaiety; yet when the lights were out and she sought her pillow, it was not to dream of the pleasant speeches of the evening. Her visions were a strange medley of little gingham pants and petticoats, of canoes and water-lilies and fisher girls, fading off finally into a picture of the red evening sky, the rows of trees on the river-bank and rows of turtles coming up out of the water. But the Thursday afternoon sewing society with its membership of two was no dream. Nay, during the months that followed many a hard-faring, overpressed mother found it a blessed reality.—Christian Observer.

EDITOR

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All communications for this department should be sent to Rev. W. L. Archibald, Lawrencetown, N. S., and must be in his hands at least one week before the date of publication.

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Daily Bible Readings.

Monday.—Characteristics of an accepted worshiper in the Old Testament dispensation. Psalm 15: 1-5.

Tuesday.—Characteristics of the subjects of the Messianic reign. Matt 5: 1-12.

Wednesday.—Who are the happy? Psalm 1: 1; 32: 1, 2; James 1: 12; Rev. 14: 13.

Thursday.—Messiah the Comforter. Isaiah 61: 1-11; Luke 4: 17-21.

Friday.—Contrast between the poor in spirit and the proud. Luke 18: 9-14.

Saturday.—Jonathan the peacemaker. I Samuel 19: 1-7.

Sunday.—Suffering as a Christian. I Peter 3: 8-18.

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Prayer Meeting Topic, March 1.

What Christ teaches about Blessedness. Matt. 5: 1-12.

The initial word of the Sermon on the Mount reveals the divine thought for us. "Blessed!" "Happy!" There is no thunder or tempest on this mount, all is calm as a summer's day. Sorrow, pain, disappointment may come in the Father's discipline, but they are means to an end. That end is blessedness. It is a strange coincidence that happiness is also the commodity for which all men are seeking. Thus the supreme will of the Father, according to the teaching of the minister, and the desire of the entire family of man, according to the testimony of human experience, all tend toward the same good, which is enshrined in the Saviour's word, "Blessed."

Since blessedness is the Father's will and the children's desire, why do not the entire family of man live in a state of bliss? In three verses the Master reveals the answer. To the average man happiness consists in possessing and performing, in having and doing. According to the theory of the "multitude" who heard the Sermon on the Mount first hand and the "multitude" who listen to its echoes today "doing" some great thing or "having" some great possession, constitutes the sum total of human blessedness. "Blessed are the mighty for they are in heaven; blessed are the rich for theirs is the kingdom of glory; blessed are the famous for theirs are the trumpets of eternity; blessed are the noble for the angels are their servants." But he who came from the Father sweeps all this away. The "multitude" who first heard these expected a Messiah who could stand upon the shore at Joppa and bid the sea pour out its treasures at his feet and who will clothe his followers with scarlet and jewels and feed them with a sweeter manna than the wilderness had known. But Christ reveals another Messiah and another law of happiness, a happiness neither of acquisition nor possession but a happiness of "being." Being is everything. One's happiness depends upon what he is in himself.

"Disciples" and "multitudes" need to come to him again to hear this teaching that happiness does not depend so much upon condition as on character; not so much upon the treasure we have laid up without as that which we have laid up within. We need also to have him remind us that the blessings promised are now in possession. "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." "Now are we the sons of God." Heaven is not all reserved for the future. When we see God with pure heart we are there.

As of old

He walks with men apart,
Keeping the promise as foretold
With all the pure in heart!

Frederickton, N. B.

J. H. MACDONALD.

每日新聞

Clarence, N. S.

As Clarence B. Y. P. U. has not been heard from through the B. Y. P. U. columns for some time, probably it is well to report. Our Union has long since passed the experimental stage and has become to the church almost as close a relationship as the sunshine is to the plant. We are one of the oldest in the Province having been organized in Sept. 1894 with 60 active members and 30 associate. Several changes have taken place since, but our membership remains about the same. While some have dropped out yet I find that on examining our records that the greater number who were then associate members are now active. Our monthly missionary meetings are still maintained and prove very helpful and interesting, keeping the members in constant touch with the work of our missionaries in their respective fields. We feel deeply the loss of our late Pastor Steeves but are trusting that the Lord in his wisdom will send us a shepherd in the near future. Our retiring President, F. W. Jackson, has proven himself worthy of the office which he held,

nor do we expect less from the present staff of officers which are, Miss Rita Elliott President; Vernon Leonard, Vice-Pres.; Miss Cora B. Elliott, Sec'y.; A. J. Wilson, Cor.-Sec'y. With the committee having at their head earnest workers, we hope to accomplish much during the next six months. A. W. ILLSON, Cor.-Sec'y.

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The Sermon on the Mount

Spiritual conditions he named that bring blessings. Instances of persecution that has brought blessing. Our examples under persecution, and our reward.

Jesus at once sets up a new set of standards, and claims the first place for a new body of principles. Upon a material, selfish, secular, competitive age like ours, the first words of the Sermon on the Mount break with the force of a judgment. Men count certain possessions the essential and valuable things. Jesus wipes things clean out of the account. He turns attention away at once from all things to moral qualities. The Sermon on the Mount opens with the fundamental assumption of Jesus' teaching filling the whole field, namely, the supremacy of the spiritual. He speaks of the inheritance of the earth by the meek, but even there he doubtless means the moral sovereignty of the world in comparison with which bonds and stocks and fashionable raiment are too pitiable to be conceived. The true blessedness is inward, and its secret is outward. Whoever finds this will have all things, food, raiment, and shelter, added in their place and time.

The whole Sermon on the Mount and all the teaching of Jesus becomes more intelligible to us if we hold fast to this conception of them as designed not to embody exhaustive legislation, but to suggest great ruling principles. There can be no blessedness on earth without nourishment of the body. Yet Jesus does not speak in these verses on blessedness of nourishment as he would have had to do if he had been proposing a complete code of life for human contentment. What he is doing is to fling out into light great moral principles underlying all else, assuming the common facts and ordinary material conditions of life. He comes to food later, and he deals with it then in the same suggestive way, sharpening the spiritual principle of trust which underlies all our physical living.

Here he deals with the blessed principles of true life, and finds them in humility, seriousness, meekness, spiritual desire, pity, purity, peaceableness, unswerving obedience to principle, and a fellowship with the tragedy of life. The pure life is the life that has felt itself and known its meaning. Pride and levity and haughtiness and strife, and an easy escape from the real struggle and drama of living, shut men out from the true peace and blessedness of the great life.

Jesus looked right into the heart of life, and knew it and spoke to it. These words of his may not appeal to easygoing people who live for pleasure, whose yachts and carriages and sports and journeys constitute their life, and who live for the present world alone. Jesus is speaking to the deeper experience, to those who have learned that life does not consist in things, and who have sought the secret of the deeper peace and of the eternal path.

The people to whom Jesus spoke were a broken people. They were not "drunk with sight of power." They were not in control of the trade of the world. Wealth and authority and material possessions did not dazzle them. They were humble, downtrodden, toiling people, who looked daily on the under movement of the life tragedy. We too easily content ourselves with admiring these words of Jesus, without testing our own lives upon them. We are rich and proud and strong, and we take all the earth we want without meekness. The Sermon on the Mount is today the most admired and the least practiced document in the world.

But when we confront the seriousness of life, when judgment strikes down prosperity, and we see that life after all, is not in possessions when we go back of the scenes to the secrets, then we realize the Lord's understanding of life, and return to his way to blessedness.

How many of the Beatitudes have you tested in your own life?

The greatest things in life after all are comfort, mercy, and the vision and sonship of God in the kingdom of heaven.

We are in a sense masters of our own destiny. "Blessed—for." If we fulfil the first, God will fulfil the second.—Selected.

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By rooting out our selfish desires, even when they appear to touch no one but ourselves, we are preparing a chamber of the soul where the Divine Presence may dwell.