

The Man Who Was Afraid.

BY THEODORE L. CUTLER, D.D.

The grace of God and a good conscience have made heroes. Sir has made many a man a coward. One of these men whom a troubled conscience made cowardly was Felix, the Roman governor of Judea.

Paul's address was a two-edged sword. One edge of the blade was "righteousness," or rightness, and it cut sharply into Felix's notorious unjust and cruelty.

The effect produced upon the Roman ruler by this trenchant personal preaching is described in the Bible by one simple Greek word. Our translators have most incorrectly rendered it "trembled."

But what frightened Felix? Certainly not the plain, unarmed old man who stood before him. Paul could not hurt a hair of his head. The countenance of the aged prisoner must have been radiant with love, and every sharp word was spoken in love.

On thing told powerfully against Felix, that ought to be noted here. It was a fact full of warning. Felix was in bad company. The voluptuous Drusilla by his side was another man's wife, whom she had corrupted, and she was a partner in his sin.

Other striking lessons cling to this powerful episode of Paul and the frightened Felix. It teaches the ministers how to preach the truth boldly and in love. If the truth convicts men, it is not our fault. To conceal the truth would be no.

Fear does not save a sinner. It did not save Felix. But fear is often most salutary, when it is followed by prompt, wise action. The alarmed sternness often "puts up his helm" just in time to save his ship from a crashing collision.

God's spirit means death. And that is the lesson of this story of courageous Paul and cowardly Felix, which we leave our readers to think about.

Domestic Products.

To appeal to the women of the country to come to the relief in the present financial troubles may at first seem absurd; but there is a reason for it that more specious calls have not. It is not asked of them to be more economical; to save money, and contribute it to the poor; or to change their expenditure to a whit; but to turn their monetary brooklets into a different channel.

So, if the buying of imported goods be the source of so much trouble, would it not be well to refrain from buying them, and keep the gold we need, instead of sending it abroad? There is no need of leagues and clubs and much palaver to make this a practical movement.

The sacrifice will not be so great or so difficult as might seem. We manufacture elegant skins, only less beautiful than their French and Belgian competitors. We make as fine ribbons and flowers as are made anywhere. Our alpaca and other stuff goods are not excelled; while all our cotton fabrics are world-renowned.

We do not suppose the Treasury Department will immediately resume specie payment because of our little suggestion; but we do believe that if it were widely acted upon, it would greatly lessen the monetary troubles of the nation.

The American Gentleman of Leisure.

Did the reader ever see a lost dog in a great city? Not a dog recently lost, full of wild anxiety and restless pain and bewilderment, but one who has given up the search for a master in despair, and has become consciously a vagabond?

We do not know how it may be in trans-Atlantic countries. It is quite possible that in Constantinople, where dogs are plenty and masters scarce, the canine vagabonds keep each other in countenance. There is a sort of self-respect among human thieves, if only enough of them get together.

The American man of leisure is a sort of lost dog. The people are so busy, they have so long associated personal importance with action and usefulness, that it is all a man's life is worth to drop out of active employment.

There was good sleighing in the vicinity of Austin, Minnesota, on Monday last. A member of Parliament of Denmark is a wood-splitter, and when not engaged in looking after the affairs of the nation, takes a job wherever he can find it.

leave them again till sickness or death or old age removes them from the theatre of their efforts.

In Europe we know that the case is widely different. The number of men who live upon their estates,—estates either won by trade or inherited by rich ancestors,—is very large, while those who have small fixed incomes, which they never undertake to increase, is larger still.

It seems impossible to conclude that the man of leisure can ever hold a desirable position where labor holds its legitimate position. We wish the American could have more leisure than he has. It would, in many respects, be well for society that men who have property enough, and ten times more than enough, should retire from active life to make place for others, rather than go on accumulating gigantic fortunes which become curses to their owners and the community.

We are glad, on the whole, that every American deems it essential to belong to somebody, to belong to something, to sustain some active relation to some industry, or enterprise, or charity, to be counted in at some point among the useful forces of society.

Death of the First-Born.

This beautiful extract, from Dr. Holland's new book, "Arthur Bonniclaie," will be read with deep and tender interest by many whose experience it truthfully portrays.

"I stand in a darkened room before a little casket that holds the silent form of my first-born. My arm is around the wife and mother, who weeps over the lost treasure, and cannot, till tears have their way, be comforted. I had not thought that my child could die—that my child could die. I knew that other children had died, but I felt safe. We lay the little fellow close by his grandfather at last; we strew his grave with flowers, and then return to our saddened home with hearts united in sorrow as they had never been united in joy, and with sympathies forever opened toward all who are called to a kindred grief.

"Ah! this taking to one's arms a little group of souls, fresh from the hand of God, and living with them in loving companionship through all their stainless years, is, or ought to be, like living in heaven, for of such is the heavenly kingdom. To no one of these am I more indebted than to the boy who went away from him before the world had touched him with a stain.

"The little graves—alas! how many they are! The mourners above them, how vast the multitude! Brothers, sisters, I am one with you. I press your hands, I weep with you, I trust with you, I belong to you. These waxes, folded hands; that still breath, so often pressed warm to our own; these sleep bound eyes which have been so full of love and life; that sweet, unsmiling, alabaster face, and we have all looked upon them, and they have made us one, and made us better. There is no language which the angel of healing troubles with his restles and life-giving wings so constantly as the fountain of tears; and only these can lull and lull and lull and lull the blessed influence."

Phmsoll, the British Member of Parliament who has denounced the fraudulent sinking of ships, spent \$10,000 defending himself in two actions.

Several chiefs of the Kaffirs, in South Africa, recently visited the Colonial Secretary and pathetically implored him to prevent the licensed sale of liquor among them.

The Spanish steamship Murillo, which was seized for running into and sinking the emigrant ship Northfleet, has been condemned, and will be sold.

A Talk About Sleep.

I once asked my little boy what the word sleep meant, and he answered, "It means to go to bed and stop thinking all night." This will do very well for a boy's definition. I doubt if Webster's is much better. Let us see. He says sleep means "to take rest by the suspension of the powers of body and mind." Well, you can take your choice of the definitions. One thing is very certain, if we did not sleep we should soon die. To be kept awake all the time would be a terrible punishment. How many one feels after lying awake all night! Young folks rarely keep awake all night, but older ones do. Indeed, it is very hard work for a child, or a boy or girl, to lie awake very long after going to bed.

The brain in sleep is not so full of blood as when awake. If it were, it would keep on thinking all the same. The veins seem to have power to contract their walls in sleep and drive much of the blood out, and then the heart does not send so much there—at least this is my opinion, though people may differ about it.

Sometimes we dream in sleep; but healthy children do not dream much. When there is a little too much blood in the brain it begins to act as if awake, and for a moment or two it, or a part of it, begins to act in a conscious and sometimes in a very queer way. Dreams, however, are not of long duration. Two or three minutes is long enough to dream of going all round the world. I suppose most dreams last but a few seconds. I have heard people say they dreamed all night long. Such persons are deceived; or if they do dream all night they have a hard time of it.

Children need to sleep a great deal. For this reason they should go to bed early. Don't be tempted by any thoughtless, naughty person to be out late nights; but go to bed early, so you can get up early. This is all I have to say in this lesson.—Herald of Health.

The Riches of Christ.

God does not want his children to commence business on credit. It is true our debt is large, our sins are many; but it is God that justifieth; and he giveth more grace—enough of grace to pardon all at once; not only that, but he gives a good stock in hand to begin life. We are not to live on the mercy of the devil and his children, and begin business on trust. The trade is to be true; all our debt is paid, and sufficient in hand to carry on; we have enough to meet the bills. Blessed be God, as thy day is so shall thy strength be.

I expect to make a better fortune than the Rothschilds, or the East India Company, or all the merchants of London, Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham—yea, than all the world. Glory to God, for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. It is better merchandise than that of Egypt, Ethiopia, or the wealth of Peru. "Godliness is great gain."

Who would envy the rich of this world? Who would envy their palaces, their castles, their parks, their fish ponds, their coaches and hounds, that has all his consolation and happiness in God? If the Father, Son and Holy Ghost be your portion, don't quarrel with the dogs of this world about the bones, let them have them. You belong to the treasures of eternity. "Lay hold on eternal life. I think I should faint before I left this place if I had no hope that I possessed something that will be with me in every storm in this world, in the deep waters of Jordan, in the last judgment and forever. Glory to God, I almost thank friends, I shall not faint against God Almighty and I are united together. We are partners, glory to his name. Here is a firm that will never become a bankrupt. There are thousands of poor in it, but there is One sufficiently rich to keep the credit of the firm, not only in this world but in eternity.—Morgan Howells.

A curious story is told in regard to M. Ernest Renan. He was recently in search of apartments in Paris, and having found a suite to his taste, and being told by the concierge that references were required, he gave the names of some of his friends and took his departure. Upon calling the following day he was told that he could not have the rooms. "Why?" he demanded, with much surprise. "Oh, this is a very quiet house, and we are told that your works make a great deal of noise!"

A Brave Old Woman.

It was winter and the ice was firm. Then Hasmer determined to hold a grand festival. The tents were pitched, and young and old, the whole city, indeed, gathered together without. Those who preferred, went on skates; others followed on sleds. Music resounded in every tent, and while the dancers kept time gracefully, the old people sat and drank together at the table; but the jubilee was only just begun.

Of all the old women in the city, only one old woman remained alone. She was sick and feeble, and could no longer use her feet; but where her small house stood upon the bank, she could look from her bed out on the ice beyond. When it drew toward evening, she perceived, while she looked out over the sea, in the west, a small white cloud, that rose ever from the horizon. Soon she felt an infinite fear. She had in earlier days been with her husband upon the sea, and understood well the wind and the weather. She reckoned thus: in a little less than an hour the flood will reach them, the storm will break upon them, and all will be lost. Then she called and lamented as loud as she could, but no one was in her house, and the neighbors were all upon the ice. Nobody heard her.

Even larger meanwhile grew the cloud, and gradually blacker. Yet one minute and the flood must reach them, the storm break. Then she gathered all her little strength together, and crept on hands and feet out of bed to the stove. Luckily she found yet one brand, and slung it into the straw of her bed, and hastened as fast as she could to get herself into safety. In the twinkling of an eye the little house was in bright flames; and when the fire light was seen from the ice all rushed to the conflagration. Soon the wind sprang up and swept up the dust in clouds. The heavens were dark. The ice began to crack and swing. The wind grew with the storm. And when, even the last one, set foot upon dry land, the tent was torn up, and the flood washed upon the strand. So the poor old woman rescued the whole city, and gave all her possessions for its deliverance.—From the German of V. Mullerhoff.

That Kiss of my Mother.

George Brown wanted to go somewhere, and his mother was not willing. He tried to argue the matter. When that would not do, instead of saying, "I should really like to go, but if you cannot give your consent, dear mother, I will try to be content to stay," he spoke roughly, and went off slaming the door behind him. Too many boys do so. George was fourteen, and with his fourteen years' experience of one of the best of mothers one would have thought better of him. "But he was only a boy. What can you expect of boys?" So say some people.

Stop, hear more! That night George found thorns in his pillow. He could not fix it any way to go to sleep on. He tarred and tossed and he shook and patted it; but not a wink of sleep for him. The thorns kept pricking. They were the angry words he spoke to his mother. "My dear mother who deserves nothing but kindness, and love, and obedience from me," he said to himself. "I never do enough for her; yet how have I behaved, her eldest son! How tenderly she nursed me through that fever!"

These unhappy thoughts quite overcame him. He would ask her to forgive him in the morning. But suppose something should happen before morning? He would ask her now, to-night, this moment. George crept out of bed, and went softly to his mother's room.

"George," she said, "is that you? Are you sick?" For mothers, you know, seem to sleep with one eye and ear open, especially when the fathers are away, as George's father was.

"Dear mother," he said, kneeling at her bed side, "I could not sleep for thinking of my rude words to you. Forgive me, mother, my dear mother, and may God help me never to behave so again!"

She clasped the penitent boy in her arms and kissed his warm cheek. George is a big man now, but he says that was the sweetest moment of his life. His strong, healthy, impetuous nature became tempered by a gentleness of spirit. It softened its roughness, sweetened his temper, and helped him on to a true and noble Christian manhood.

Boys are sometimes ashamed to act out their best feelings. O, if they only knew what a loss it is to them not to do so!—Mother's Magazine.

Estimate of a Pastor.

In one of the most popular of the recent publications we find the following just sentiments. The author had unquestionably been benefited by a pastor's instruction and influence, and the acknowledgment of it is thus beautifully made:

Who can estimate too highly the blessed influence of a good pastor? While we are forbidden to give to them the love that belongs to God only, we are told to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake; and truly should; for is not their work a blessed employment? Co-workers with God in man's salvation; guiding the tempted, cheering the sorrowful, comforting the dying, sanctifying the nuptial tie, committing the dead to the silent tomb. How varied! How intense the labors of a faithful minister! How endless the demands upon his time and strength! Who needs so much the forbearance of his people, and their faithful prayers? Could those who take pleasure in censuring their pastors, only know of the demands of one single day, instead of blaming, how often would their unkind, unreasonable words be turned into prayer!

The average salary of Methodist ministers in California is said to be about \$992 per year; that of Congregational ministers about \$1,100.

There is some excitement in San Francisco over the report that a Roman Catholic priest, the Rev. Father Dugan, is to publicly abjure his old faith, and embrace Protestantism.