

is claimed that the man who tells us to be good for the sake of the good itself, to be honest for honesty's sake, to be pure for the sake of purity, is appealing to a motive far nobler, far loftier, far more elevating than that of the Christian. It is asserted that the heathen emperor of ancient Rome enunciated a principle far higher when he wrote: "What more dost thou want when thou hast done a man a service? Art thou not contented that thou hast done something conformable to thy nature, and dost thou seek to be paid for it, just as though the eye demanded a recompense for seeing, or the feet for walking?"

Now, the question is, How can we meet such objections? Is the hope of reward, after a certain manner of life, a low motive to appeal to? Are we, as Christians, merely using man's selfishness as an incentive to a Christlike life? The answer to such questions as these is found in that which constitutes the reward.

What is the Christian's reward? Surely it is not to be found in the thanks and good will which sometimes follows a service rendered. Poor and worthless would this reward prove in many a case. If this were all, many, no doubt, can recall service upon service for which no such recompense was given; service after service for which they have received but coldness and indifference. Nay, more than this; many a soul has had for kindness only harsh words; for deeds of service, sneers of hatred; for good things bestowed, the cutting rebuke which springs from an ungrateful heart.

Then, again, this reward is something more even than a future state of bliss and happiness, something which we are to receive when we have passed through the valley of the shadow of death. "The crown of righteousness" is the reward for a life of Christian service; but this was for the apostle, when he had fought the good fight, when he had kept the faith, and finished his course. It is true that this aspect of the Christian's reward is open to the objections mentioned above.

Now the noblest purpose of this life of ours, so full of strange surprises and apparently unsolvable mysteries, is the formation of character; the building up of that which some one has likened to the image and superscription on the coin. This peculiar stamp, this character which each one of us bears, is the result of many forces working silently and unknown, but all contributing something to the result. It is the sum of the forces of this life, for, says Goethe:

"Talent forms itself in solitude,
Character in the storm of life."

Slowly and surely this has been formed, each thought, each word, each deed, has added its portion. An illustration will serve to make this clearer. In the Vatican there is a famous piece of statuary known as the Apollo Belvedere, which for beauty, grace, and symmetry of form was held, until recently, to surpass all known pieces of statuary. Let us imagine we sat beside that unknown sculptor the first day he began his work upon that mass of marble fresh from the quarry. He begins, what seems to us, an almost hopeless task. Under his patient and enduring labor we have seen the outline of the figure gradually appear, till at last we stand transfixed by the beauty of the result. Each day's work has contributed something towards that beauty of form. Each stroke of the hammer, each cut of the chisel, has added something towards the grand result. The smallest line did something towards the perfection produced. Thus it is with the formation of character. Thus it is that every Christlike act brings with it a sure and certain reward. This reward is what we *become*, and not only what we *get*; what we are after such actions rather than what we will receive, i.e., we are brought, even by giving the cup of cold water, nearer "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." The smallest service rendered in Christ's name contributes something towards attaining this noble ideal; adds something to the formation of that character which approaches somewhat to the perfection of our manhood found in our Lord Jesus Christ. What nobler, what more elevating, what more idealistic reward can be set before any man? Thus it is, as Christians, we appeal to man, not as a brute beast, but as one capable of being influenced by the method of motives. We call him to become a Christian, not so much that he may escape the torments of hell, but rather that he might become more like that great, good man, Jesus, the carpenter of Nazarus, who was none other than "the Christ, the Son of the living God." We find, therefore, that "the motive power lies not so much in what shall be given, but in what we shall be. If we are faithful we shall enjoy the peace and companionship and delights of heaven; but the more blessed fact for us is that we shall be found worthy of the vision of God, capable of the intensest, divinest happiness."

C.S.S.

GOD'S WAYS ARE BEST.

BELIEVE, tired heart, God's ways are best,
To make His will thine own brings rest.
Endured the weary day of pain,
Bright as the sunset after rain,
Shall dawn with smiling skies, to-morrow,
Ending the long black night of sorrow.

Obscure to our earth-blinded vision,
The steps that lead to heights elysian,
We see the thorns that pierce us so;
Why we were wounded we shall know
When sodden fields and briery path
Shall vanish in the aftermath.

— Nina R. Allen, in *New York Observer*.

FOR PARISH AND HOME.

A MISSION INCIDENT.

It was the second night of the mission. We had announced that we proposed remaining in the church after service, and would be glad to speak to any on spiritual matters, but the large congregation had dispersed and none remained behind.

"Well, the Lord was here, though we are not to have an after-meeting," said the rector.

"Yes, I believe He was. Shall we go for a short walk before going home?"

We went out and turned down the street. Presently two ladies hurried past us, going toward the church.

"They have evidently forgotten something," said the rector. "I wonder if they will be in time, or are the lights out already?"

We turned to see, when suddenly they also stopped. "Is that you, Mr. R——? I have been hurrying back in the hope that I might see you before you left for home. I was at the service to-night, and want to speak to you."

We turned in the direction of her home, as by this time the lights in the church were out and the doors locked. The Lord was going to let us have an after-meeting after all.

The lady was evidently much in earnest, and began the conversation at once.

"You spoke to-night as if you knew all that was in my heart. Do you remember saying that there was something in our hearts which cried out for the knowledge, the assurance that our sins were forgiven? You said that we could have no doubt of our sinfulness; of that we could be quite sure, and for that reason we could not be satisfied without knowing that we had forgiveness."

"Yes, I said that. Is it not true?"

Without replying to my question, she hastened on:

"I cannot tell you how miserable I am. I looked forward to this mission, hoping to