

## CLEAR SHINING AFTER RAIN.

By Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D.

One of the numberless touches of exquisite poetry in the Old Testament is that which describes the "tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." The verdant grass plot which gladdens the eye is the result of a double process—shower and sunshine. Both are indispensable. We find in this beautiful expression a type of our deepest and richest spiritual experiences. It is a type of the most thorough work of conversion by the Holy Spirit.

Over every impenitent soul hangs the dark cloud of God's righteous pleasure; His holy word thunders against sin and His threatenings beat like a storm of hail. Repentance and faith in Christ sweep away this cloud; the thunders cease; the face of the atoning, pardoning Saviour looks forth like the clear, blue sky after a storm; for there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. No two cases of conversion are exactly similar; yet in every thorough work of grace the darkness and dread which belongs to a state of guilt give place to the smile and peace of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

What is true in the beginnings of the most thorough Christian life is often realized in the subsequent experiences of the believer. Rain and sunshine both play their part in developing godly character. It ought to be a comfort to such of my readers as are under the heavy downpour of trials to open their Bibles and read how it fared with some of God's most faithful children.

Abraham toiled on his sorrowful way to Mount Moriah under a dark cloud of apprehension, but the clear shining came when God approved his faith and spared the beloved son Isaac to the father's heart. The successive strokes of trial that burst on the head of Joseph only made his exaltation the more signal when he became prime minister of Egypt. There are forty-one chapters of the book of Job, through which beats the tempest which smote the four corners of his house, but in the forty-second chapter comes the clear shining after the rain, and the blaze of restored prosperity. The biographies of Elijah and of Daniel prove that light is sown for the righteous; and the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews is a meteorological record to show how faith paints rainbows on thunder clouds.

In our day God often employs stormy providences for the discipline and perfecting of his own people. He knows when we need the drenchings. Every rain drop has its mission to perform. It goes right to the roots of the heart, and creeps into every crevice. Not one drop of sorrow, not one tear, but may have some beneficent purpose. The process is not joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness and purity and strength. Christ's countenance never beams with such brightness after a beauty as when it breaks forth after a deluge of sorrow; and many a Christian has become a braver, stronger, and holier man or woman for terrible afflictions; there has been a clear shining after rain.

This principal has manifold applications. Sometimes a cloud of unjust calamity gathers over a good man's name; his darken the air, and it pours falsehoods forty days and forty nights. But when the shower of slander has spent itself the truth creeps out slowly but surely from behind the clouds of defamation, and the slandered character shines with more lustre than ever. The same storm that wrecks a rotten tree only roots the more firmly the sound tree, whose leaves glisten in the subsequent sunshine.

All ye children of God who are under the peltings of poverty, or the downpour of disappointments, or the blizzards of adversity "think it not strange as though

some strange things had happened unto you." Millions have had the same experiences before you. No storm ever drowned a true believer, or washed out the foundations of hope. The trial of your faith will be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Two things ought to give you courage. One is that our Lord loves to honor and reward unwavering faith. He permits the storm to test you, and then sends the smile of His sunshine to ward you. Another thought is that the skies are never so brilliantly blue as when they have been washed by a storm. The countenance of Jesus is never so welcome and lovable as when He breaks forth upon us—a sun of consolation and joy after trials.

Long years ago, on a day of thick fog and pouring rain, I ascended a mountain by an old bridle path over the slippery rocks. A weary, disappointed company we were when we reached the cabin on the summit. But toward evening a mighty wind swept away the banks of mist, the body of the blue heavens stood out in the clearness, and before us was revealed the magnificent landscape stretching away to the sea. That scene was at the time, and has often been since, a sermon to my soul. It taught me that faith's stairways are over steep rocks; often through blinding storms; but God never loses his hold on us, and if we endure to the end he will yet bring us out into the clear shining after rain.

"So it's better to hope though the clouds run low,

And to keep the eye still lifted;

For the clear, blue sky will soon peer through,

When the thunder cloud is rifted."

Brooklyn, N.Y.

## WHEN THE SOCIETY RUNS DOWN.

When your society runs down, do not send for some one to come and wind it up. No one can wind the society up again but its own members.

At the same time, get all the good advice you can; and especially, learn and put into use the newest and best methods of work. Sometimes a new plan is the very best of keys with which to wind up the society.

Remember that there is only one possible reason for the running down of a society, and that is the religious degeneration of the individual members. It is impossible for a society to run down if its members are religiously in earnest.

Therefore the essential thing is to get in earnest about something worth while. Set out to do something. It may be a mission-study class. It may be a class in evangelistic work. It may be the establishing of a town reading room. It may be to recarpet the church. Societies that live for themselves are sure to run down. That fate never yet befell a society that was in earnest about helping others.

The Chinese Government is having a great deal of trouble with the Lalai Lama, of Tibet, who fled from his bleak capital when the British punitive expedition was sent into the country. He finds the land of China greatly to his liking, and has been traveling about in it ever since. He has to be entertained, with his numerous retinue and baggage animals, and his prolonged visits entail great expense on each place he visits. He is having the time of his life, while the Chinese authorities are striving to find some way to get him back into Tibet.

Selfishness steals all the beauty out of life. Only the beauties and blessings that we share do we really enjoy. Hoarding hurts the heart, and selfishness sips all the sweetness from the soul.

## HEALTH.\*

## Some Bible Hints.

What awe would you feel if you stood in a temple where you could actually see the Shekinah! So should you regard your body (v. 19).

Your body is not your own because you did not make it, nor earn it, and you have only a short lease of it (v. 19).

The price at which we are bought is God's infinite condescension in coming into a human form and dying the death of a man (v. 20).

How is our body glorified by this indwelling of God! Then let us glorify God with our bodies (v. 20).

## Suggestive Thoughts.

Those that are careless of their health are careless of their character and of their work, which so largely depend upon their health.

Health depends upon proper food, sleep, exercise, and thinking; and the last is the chief.

One is not responsible for being perfectly healthy, but for being as healthy as one can be.

Upon your health depends not your health only, but often also the health of others.

## A Few Illustrations.

The body is only the workman's tools; but what can he do if they are rusty and broken?

Health does not carry us into the land of success, but it is a passport allowing us entrance; invalids are obliged to fight their way in.

Health is a balance in the bank of life; a sickly man lives on each day's salary.

Time spent in getting and preserving health does not show; neither does time spent in obtaining a foundation for a house.

## To Think About.

Am I careless about the body with which God has taken so much pains?

How much time daily do I give to the preservation of my health?

Am I growing more or less efficient?

## A Cluster of Quotations.

A sound mind in a sound body; if the former be the glory of the latter, the latter is indispensable to the former.—Edwards.

In these days half our diseases come from the neglect of the body in the overwork of the brain.—Bulwer-Lytton.

Health is the greatest of all possessions, and a hale cobbler is a better man than a sick king.—Bleekerstaff.

Half the spiritual difficulties that men and women suffer arise from a morbid state of health.—H. W. Beecher.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

M., Aug. 3.—Our bodies are sacred. Lev. 19: 27, 28.

T., Aug. 4.—They should be kept pure. 1 Cor. 6: 12, 13.

W., Aug. 5.—Temples of the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 3: 16, 17.

Th., Aug. 6.—Cheerfulness and health. Prov. 17: 20-22.

F., Aug. 7.—A triumphant life. 1 John 5: 4, 5.

S., Aug. 8.—A good conscience. 1 John 3: 20, 22.

Sun., Aug. 9.—Topic—Why and how to be healthy. 1 Cor. 6: 19, 20.

To meet the remarkable growth of the city St. Paul's was organized in 1896, Dufferin avenue in 1901, Elmwood and Norwood in 1903, St. John's, Riverview and Sherman street in 1904, Home street in 1906 and Clifton in 1907.

\*Y.P. Topic, Aug. 9.—Why and how to be healthy. 1 Cor. 6: 19, 20.