

CHRIST'S POWER TO FORGIVE SINS!

"Son be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."—*Mark 9: 2.*

"And they came unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four."—*Mark 2: 3.*

One summer's day I walked  
A good thing happened to me  
Along the streets, I saw a thickening crowd  
Winding its way toward a mountain height  
And followed it. I found the multitude  
Were hastening to the place where Jesus was  
I had heard of Him, and I was glad  
To see Him for myself. But as He spoke,  
My heart went out to Him. So good He was,  
So wise and tender, and so gracious too!  
That I confessed, as at the Queen of Sheba,  
The gift had not been sent me. All this day  
I listened to His sermon on the mount,  
And then a wish arose within my soul:  
"If I could bring my friend unto Him,  
He would restore him to his home."  
He told the joyful tidings, "Truly, I hasten home  
To check his bed." "Aunt," I hastened home  
But when I thought of Christ, the more I longed  
That he should know I am. And at last there came  
A happy thought to me. If some bright day  
The neighbors we, and assist me, we might take  
The helpless man to be where Jesus was.  
The days pass on. And then the good news came  
That Christ was teaching in a house. At last  
My friend should have his blessing! Eagerly  
I went to three o'clock, and found the man  
And brought him strength. With gentle voice  
I spoke to him on his bed, and bore him forth  
Laid on the street, and let the sweet fresh air  
Far his hot temples, that his eyes looked  
The full face of the pale, pathetic eyes,  
And he spoke cheerily to make him hope  
In Christ the Healer, till we reached the door.  
And saw the throng that gathered at the door.  
"Press through the crowd," I said. "But men  
stood close."  
And could not if they would make way for us.  
I said, "For pity's sake, let us through."  
But they were so intent upon the words  
The Master uttered, that they did not hear.  
"We cannot pass, so we must take him home,  
And try another day," said one to me.  
But a deep groan escaped the sufferer's lips.  
And I, made strong by pain of sympathy,  
Said, "No, we will not. We will find a way."

With busy hands we raised the covering  
Above the court, and passed the roof, and then,  
Under the house, we passed the roof, and then,  
We waited not to hear the Saviour's words,  
But whispered to our friend, "Do not afraid,  
The Lord is merciful," and let him down  
Above the crowd, before the Master's face.

I wish you could have seen the Saviour's smile!  
He did not know the sick man in suspense,  
But called him "Son," and gently said to him,  
"Be of good cheer, thy sins are all forgiven."  
Oh, then the sick man's heart leaped for joy,  
And the tired eyes were filled with happy tears,  
And the whole temple began to applaud his name.  
The people murmured, "But the paralytic man  
Was filled with perfect peace. He would have  
died."  
If Christ had willed it. But the Master said,  
"I say to thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and  
Go into thine house." I saw him go  
In swift obedience, and in perfect health,  
And hastened forth to meet him. What a change  
Those few short moments with this Lord had  
made!

I scarcely knew my friend. His radiant face  
Had lost all trace of sorrow. He was saved  
And healed; what more had he to wish  
But that through time and all eternity,  
He still might serve the Lord who made him  
whole?

Oh! have you friends who suffer and have  
sinned  
And have not carried them to Christ the Lord?  
I pray you do not love another day.  
But show your love by taking them to Him,  
For Jesus is ready to befriend the sinner,  
And knows so well the sympathy of love,  
That He will give them too His wondrous gifts  
Of healing and forgiveness.

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

disparaging and defying the divine govern-  
ment or the Divine name. They had wit-  
nessed enough, as they said, when upon  
they could for all this serious and capital  
charge, for in their hearing He had dis-  
tinctly intruded upon the Divine province,  
and as distinctly assumed the Divine pre-  
rogative. In looking at the matter from  
this standpoint, we must confess that in  
certain aspects of their case, the Scribes  
and Pharisees have our sympathy and our  
regard. We ask them, "What evil has  
Jesus of Nazareth been doing?" the answer  
comes as immediate as it is indignant, "He  
has been pretending to forgive sins, to blot  
out that man's transgressions from that book  
of God's remembrance, to alter that man's  
relations to the entire government of God,  
and to supersede all His tendencies and  
abilities as an enemy of God, into all the  
tendencies and liabilities of a friend of God.  
Why do we condemn him? Listen to that  
and tell us if it be not enough, and if we are  
not right in the decision to which we  
come." I say again that, looking at the  
matter from their standpoint, and regard-  
ing it as they regarded it, the Scribes and  
Pharisees for once were right, and that in  
forgiving this man's sins, or in saying that  
they were forgiven, our Lord had assumed  
a power and a prerogative which were di-  
vine. They clearly had hold upon what in  
its principle was indisputably and univer-  
sally right. Now, see, they had not brought  
out their cogitations into words, little imag-  
ining that what they were thus cogitating  
our Lord knew, but what they had not  
brought out in words He brought out for  
them, unwrapped before their own eyes,  
showed His entire mastery of their souls  
and of all their thoughts within. Thus you  
see that whilst their principle was right,  
their application of it in this matter was  
 unquestionably wrong. Their conclusion  
no doubt was a right and sound one. The  
obliteration of the record of a man's sins  
could only come to pass through the inter-  
position of God Himself. The cancelling  
of the guilt of a man's sins, the prevention  
of the consequences of a man's sin, who  
can do that but God only? Although the  
Lord had said to them, "You are perfectly  
right, but now why do you go on reasoning  
about my blasphemy, or conclude that I  
have blasphemed, for do you not know that  
I am God? Your promises are sound, your  
conclusion is unsound. Nobody can forgive  
sins but the Lord alone. Do you not know  
that I am the Lord?" He thus shuts them  
up exactly there, and then gives them proof  
of the divine prerogative which He claims  
for Himself. He says, "Which is the  
easier, to say unto the sick of the palsy,  
'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' or to say unto  
him, 'Arise, take up thy bed and walk?'"  
There was the man whom his friends had  
brought into that place, the man whose case  
was to be the subject of the grand experi-  
ment. Now let them all look at him, for  
there he was a paralytic beyond any doubt.  
They were all convinced that he was a par-  
alytic. Our Lord now deals with them on  
this wise, To say that I have pardoned his  
sins is an easier thing than to say I have  
healed his paralysis, because the healing of  
the paralysis can be submitted to examina-  
tion, can be put to severe and scrutinizing  
test; it is, therefore, the harder thing of  
the two. My affirmation about his pardon  
cannot be submitted to investigation. My  
declaration about his cure can be submitted  
to it forthwith." And in all His Majesty,  
as simple as it was sublime, He said,  
"Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thy  
house." Now came the issue. "This done,  
and as they looked it was even so. That  
poor paralytic was on his feet immediately,  
was rolling up his mattress, and laying it  
upon his shoulder, walking away home, a  
witness that our Lord had done the more  
difficult of the two things to which He had  
been referring, and that now the inference  
might be drawn and the conclusion might  
be reached. There was to be no doubt re-  
maining in the minds of men at that time.  
There was to be no doubt remaining in the  
minds of men to the end of time about the  
Son of man having power on earth to for-  
give sins.  
E. W. W.

The Aesthetic of Romanism.

Romanism powerfully appeals to many  
men by its cordial relations with all the fine  
arts—with music, painting, sculpture, archi-  
tecture; with whatever impresses and most  
delights the senses and the taste.

Its cathedrals are the wonders of the  
world—mountains of rock-work set to ma-  
sic.

Its elaborate, opulent, mighty masses  
make the common hymn tunes of Protest-  
antism sound almost like the twitter of  
sparrows, amidst the alternate triumph and  
wail of commanding winds.

Its ritual is splendid, scenic, impressive,  
to the ultimate degree, and all is exqui-  
sitely pervaded and modulated by the doc-  
trine which underlies it, every gesture,  
every posture of the officiating priest, and  
every vestment which he wears being full  
of significance.

Its liturgical forms have not merely been  
arranged by studious men, with apt and  
practiced gifts for the office. They have  
some of them been born of those immense  
crises in personal or in public experience  
when intensity of feeling, surpassing all  
poetic impulse, infused spiritual fire into  
the sentences. Not only reminiscences are  
in them, therefore, of perils passed and  
victories achieved; their present utterance  
is that of the faith which soared upward from  
the flame, or looked from the damp dark-  
ness of dungeons and beheld the heavens  
opened. And architecture cannot be too  
majestic to echo such voices. The tone-  
speech of music, in its most tender or ju-  
bilant strains, becomes their meek and glad  
handmaid.

Nothing, therefore, is too ornate or mag-  
nificent to be incorporated in the superb  
ceremonial of this immense organism. It  
marches, as it fights, an army with banners.  
It would copy, if it could, the very cere-  
monial of the Temple above. The King's  
daughter is all glorious within and her  
raiment must be of wrought gold.

To one who wants his whole aesthetic  
nature gratified and educated in his wor-  
ship, while it shall be also and always sub-  
ordinated to spiritual attainment—who ac-  
cepts this nature as from God and feels its  
thrilling and sweet impulses demanding  
a lawful and large domain—there is here a  
constant and vast attraction. Other more  
strictly intellectual services appear to him  
barren and frigid in comparison. He seems  
to himself to be honoring God with a wor-  
thier worship, while gaining for himself a pe-  
culiar delight, by making the sanctuary a  
poem in stone, and then bringing into it the  
purple and the gold, the veil; of silk and  
fragrant incense, by hanging it with pictures  
and paneling its walls with significant mar-  
bles. It is not the understanding alone or  
the moral nature which that worship is de-  
signed to enlist. The imagination is to be  
reached by it and profoundly stimulated.  
The most secret sources of feeling are to be  
searched; the most delicate and fretting  
sympathies. The whole soul is to be suf-  
fused with its subtle influence, as the at-  
mosphere of the church is struck through  
with golden or crimson lights, till holy me-  
mories arise within one; till he is wrapped  
in sweet ecstasy of reveries; till he is con-  
scious of undefined and transporting ex-  
pectations, and almost waits to hear around,  
upon the charmed and perfumed air, the  
rustle of angelic plumes.

The apostles worshipped well and truly,  
not at all in this way. The Saviour made  
no suggestion of this to the woman of Sa-  
maria when he taught her how to offer her  
devotions. Our fathers found delight in  
praise and were heard in their prayer,  
though offering it in the rudest forms, under  
bleakest skies, because intense stirred them  
and the gorgeous vestments seemed to them  
dipped in the blood of the saints. We do  
not maintain the passion of their reaction;  
but we, too, are afraid of that sensuous  
pleasure which may be easily confounded  
with worship, while wholly dissimilar, which  
may leave the soul intoxicated with joy,  
while utterly wanting in the divine love  
which links to God and in the faith which  
conquers death.

But the convert to Romanism delights  
himself in this service, so rich and tender,  
so various and so ancient, with a passionate  
fondness; while the occasional attempts of  
ambitious High Churchmen to emulate that  
which the blending genius of so many cen-  
turies and lands has produced are to him  
simple ludicrous—like building another  
equal to St. Peter's of scantling and boards,  
or reproducing Warwick Castle in cake and  
sugar.

The Joy Set Before Us.

Our Divine and suffering Lord in the  
deepest anguish of Gethsemane and Cal-  
vary, had a "joy set before Him." Per-  
haps a multitude of joys, but there was one  
that we are perfectly sure of. He foresaw  
the fruit of his sorrow in the redemption of  
precious souls.

He foresaw a child of sin fleeing from  
under the just wrath of God. He hears that  
penitent's cry for mercy. He sees that  
contrite soul confessing sin, and coming to  
be washed in the cleansing blood that puri-  
fies and saves. Faith has saved him. He  
rises up from before the Cross a new man,  
and leads a new and a noble and a holy  
life. He triumphs over temptation, and  
after the victory over death, is translated to  
glory. If there was but one solitary soul  
saved from hell, and exalted to such an  
"exceeding weight of glory," the antici-  
pation of it would have brought a joy be-  
fore the dying eye of our dear Lord when  
He endured the Cross and despised the  
shame.

But we must multiply this one by myr-  
iads of millions. We must take into the  
estimate all the happy hours of all the holy  
lives that were born at Calvary's Cross; we  
must reckon all the tears that have been  
shed, and all the deeds of love that have  
been kindled, and all the endless procession  
of blessings that have streamed from that  
Cross clear on to heaven's harp of praise  
and hallelujahs! Then we must multiply  
all these glorious results by the word eter-  
nity. Do we wonder then that for "the  
joy set before Him," the Man of Sorrows  
endured the stripes, the agonies, and the  
shame of Golgotha?

With what bitter price bought He our  
ransom! But He shall be repaid when He  
beholds heaven thronged with the trophies  
of His sufferings. If even an earthly moth-  
er lusher her robes and sufferings amid  
the anguish of the birth-hour "with the joy  
that a man-child is born" into her bosom  
and her home, how much more might the  
infinite Jesus bear the fearful anguish of  
the spiritual birth of his "peculiar people,"  
born to an everlasting glory! His own  
Cross was yet to change into His crown.  
The brow that bled with the thorns is to  
wear the diadem.

Here is a sweet lesson for every one of  
Christ's disciples. Life's daily crosses are  
to be borne with a constant fore thought  
of the joys that are to come after. Hard  
work is to be performed, and sacrifices  
made, with the inspiring expectation that  
none of these things shall fail of the final  
reward. The self-eviled missionary to the  
heathen endures his lonely lot for the joy  
set before him of winning some souls to  
Jesus here, and of winning at last the ap-  
proval, "Well done, good and faithful  
servant!" Many an ill paid, toiling laborer  
in his frontier cabin says to himself "Don't  
murmur, don't lose heart; my Master had  
not where to lay His head; there is a  
crown for me yet, if I endure to the end  
without flinching." So he puts on his old  
threadbare coat and trudges off to his  
distant preaching-station, singing as he  
goes

"Give me the wings of faith, to rise  
Within the veil and see  
The saints above, how great their joys,  
How bright their glories be."

For the joy set before him, he endures  
cheerfully his rough and rugged lot. Ah!  
brethren, life would be a dark and a lone-  
some march to a great many of you if you  
could not sing to yourselves of the "Sweet  
by and by." Never forget that the dear  
Master never lays on you or me a heavy  
cross, but there is a joy set before it. With-  
out the cross is without the crown.—*Rev.  
Theodore L. Cuyler.*

One Thing Needful.

Let every one who would not suffer ship-  
wreck on the great voyage of life, stamp  
seriously into his soul, before all things, the  
great truth of the Scripture text, "One  
thing needful. Money is not needful; pow-  
er is not needful, cleverness is not needful;  
fame is not needful; liberty is not needful;  
even health is not the one thing needful;  
but character alone—a thoroughly culti-  
vated will—is that which can truly save us;  
and, if we are not saved in this sense, we  
must certainly be damned. There is no  
point of difference in this matter, where a  
man can safely rest, saying to himself, if I  
don't get better, I shall certainly not get  
worse. He will unquestionably get worse.  
The usefulness part of his nature, if left un-  
cultivated will, like every other neglected  
function, tend to shrink into a more meagre  
vitality and more stunted proportions. Let  
us gird up our loins, therefore, and quit us  
like men; and, having, by the golden gift  
of God the glorious lot of living on for all,  
let us endeavor to live nobly.—*Blockie's  
Self-Culture.*

Then Shall we Know.

The cloud that veils full knowledge "is a  
cloud of love." Many things about our  
great future, and almost everything about  
our earthly future, is concealed from us.  
If we look back, with a thoughtful heart,  
we can not but feel how wisely and kindly  
He has unrolled the volume of life, and  
stood by and strengthened us when we had  
hard things to read in it. Events that  
would have seemed intolerable have hap-  
pened, and lie behind us with a softened  
light shed over them. We may be grateful  
that they were not foretold, and grateful  
still more if we have been carried through  
them, not by having our hearts made hard,  
but our souls made strong.—*Rev. John  
Kerr.*

The World Reconciled.

An unpardoned world would be like earth  
in the days of the deluge, when it was  
wholly covered with a black and stormy  
night and when the darkness of the sky  
corresponded to the darkness of the abyss.  
It is not so now; pardon has caused a  
brighter light than that of the rainbow to  
shine amidst the terrible gloom, divine  
love irradiated the awful scene. The waters,  
it is true, still cover our shores and fold  
them in a sombre winding-sheet. Affliction  
moves on like a wave that breaks upon  
every bank; but then on this sea there falls  
the rich light of a clear sky. Let us never  
forget that we no longer inhabit a world  
subject to the curse; the sentence has been  
blotted out. It has pleased God to recon-  
cile all things to Himself, by the blood of  
the cross.—*Pressense.*

A Revival Incident at Dundee.

According to a local paper, a scoffing  
young man recently attended a revival  
meeting in that town, and at the close  
stayed behind to attend the "anxious in-  
quirers'" meeting—not from any worthy  
motive, but simply to find material for the  
amusement of himself and his associates.  
With this ignoble end in view, he anxiously  
inquired of one of the ministers "whether  
he could work a miracle or not." He had  
not to wait long for a satisfactory reply, for  
the reverend gentleman, seizing him firmly  
by the shoulders, replied, "We cannot work  
miracles, but we can cast out devils," and,  
smiting the action to the word, pitched his  
young friend bodily outside the church  
door, which was immediately closed in his  
face. The anxious inquirer disappeared  
rapidly in the darkness.—*London Noncon-  
formist.*

Thoroughness.

One of the great defects of the present  
day, especially in our own land, is a want  
of thorough knowledge and a disposition to  
attain it. There is no lack of pretenders,  
but when culture or finished men are  
sought for, it is almost impossible to obtain  
them. We do nearly everything in a  
rush. We generally live too  
fast. We imagine that we are old, while  
we are still youthful, that we shall be  
behind the times and remain unknown if  
seven or ten years, or more, are spent in  
solid preparation for life's duties. A com-  
plete course of study is already abridged,  
from the mistaken view that time is too  
valuable to be employed in developing and  
strengthening the powers of the mind. We  
are in too great a hurry to enter upon the  
duties of an active life,—"to make our  
pile,"—or to engage in any other pursuit  
than that of learning, if it promises even a  
possible realization of our hope. . . .  
There is a strength derived from a liberal  
culture of the mind that can be obtained  
from no other source. It makes men and  
women stronger, no matter what positions  
they may afterwards fill. It is not by the  
physical, but by the mental powers of man,  
that the world is being subdued. It is  
through the intellect that the subtle forces  
of nature are made to do our bidding. But,  
however priceless strength of mind may be,  
we have not attained the full zenith of our  
power until this be supplemented by sound  
moral principles and the courage to main-  
tain them. It is just here that multitudes  
fail to achieve noble ends. There are too  
few possessed of this moral energy, needed  
to meet the sneering laugh or the studied  
coldness of their associates; too few who,  
knowing that they are in the right class  
maintain it, and leave the issue with Him  
who smiles only upon the brave and true-  
hearted.—*The Minnesota Teacher.*

Mr. H. M. Stanley has addressed a letter  
to a gentleman at Nottingham in answer  
to the question whether he is of the same  
opinion as the late Dr. Livingstone respect-  
ing the use of spirituous liquors by travel-  
lers. Mr. Stanley replies to the effect that  
a man who needs the support of such  
liquors is unfit to travel in Africa, and that  
a druggard cannot stand a tropical cli-  
mate.

About Testimonials.

We have a word to say concerning the  
custom of scholars and teachers giving and  
receiving testimonials. It may seem like  
checking the promptings of true gratitude,  
or disparaging the exhibition of affection.  
But after what we have seen, we are ear-  
nest in our protest against the custom of  
school presents.

When gratitude can possibly be "a lively  
sense of favors to come," or acts of affection  
can serve as a bribe for favor or be prompted  
by fear of disfavor, present-giving becomes  
a sham.

The custom brings burdens to the purse,  
and envy and rivalry. It is often a cruel  
injustice to those who, though poor in  
money, are rich in love, and opens a way  
for intrigue that offers a strong inducement  
to those ambitious of favor. The sorry  
figure cut by such as collect assessments  
for testimonials from those whose political  
preference depends on the favor of those  
who are to receive the "spontaneous exhi-  
bition of good-will," and the more than  
questionable propriety shown by many an  
official in receiving an indirect bribe, and,  
finally, the blackmail levied on underlings  
by those who use power only for plunder,  
serve to show to what a height of evil so  
little and seemingly innocent a matter at  
last may grow.—*N. Y. Christian Intelli-  
gencer.*

An elevated purpose is a good and en-  
nobling thing, but we cannot begin at the  
top of it. We must work up to it by the  
often difficult path of daily duty.

Take Me on Shore.

A godly minister had a careless and idle  
son, who left his home and sailed to a for-  
eign land. His sorrowful parents could  
only pray for him, and send him good ad-  
vice. The ship which bore the boy reached  
a distant port and was waiting to take in a  
fresh cargo, when the sailors went on shore,  
and brought back with them a native  
boy, who could play some curious kind of  
music.

He amused them for a long time, but at  
last he said, "You must now take me on  
shore."

The sailors told him he must not go  
yet.

"O, indeed, I cannot stay any longer,"  
replied the little black boy; "and I will  
tell you why. A kind Christian missionary  
has come near the village where I live.  
From him I have learned all I know about  
Jesus Christ. This is about the hour when  
he meets us under a tree to tell us more; I  
want to go and hear him."

The sailors were overcome by the  
boy's entreaties, and at once rowed him  
ashore.

The minister's thoughtless son was struck  
with the words of the little heathen boy.  
He felt condemned by them. "Here am  
I," he said to himself, "the son of a min-  
ister in England, knowing far more about  
Jesus than that poor boy, and yet caring  
far less for Him! That little fellow is now  
earnestly listening to the word of life, while  
I am living quite careless about it."

In this great distress of mind he retired  
that night to his hammock. There his  
father's instructions came back to his  
thoughts, and reminded him how he might  
seek and find that salvation he so much  
needed. He became a sincere Christian;  
and great was the joy in his English  
home when the happy tidings reached his  
parents.

The authorities of the Chapel Royal, St.  
James, appear to have been taking action  
against Ritualism; for, as we gather from  
an indignant paragraph in the *Church  
Herald*, "the Rev. Thomas H. Moore,  
Priest in Ordinary and Master, was request-  
ed by the Dean either to refrain from adopt-  
ing the eastward position at the altar, as  
has been his wont, or to relinquish a great  
part of the emoluments of his office and sub-  
mit also to a degradation of his official sta-  
tus. As a matter of course conscientious  
obedience to the laws of the Church com-  
pelled Mr. Helmore to submit to the in-  
iquitous decision of the state officials."

Troubling for Fun.

Remnants of the barbaric love of torture  
are not rarely to be seen. The torture in-  
flicted is of a most delicate and refined sort.  
A father holds his little one at arm's length  
over a balcony and apparently enjoys the  
contortions of countenance and limbs the  
terror occasions in the child; a husband  
drives close to the edge of a steep embank-  
ment, sure he will not go over, but giving  
his wife a frightful opportunity of proving  
her devotion by repressing the shriek and  
keeping her seat; a young man—for it must  
be confessed that, like fishing, this sport is  
largely monopolized by the masculine part  
of humanity—a young man will rush about  
on the edge of perpendicular cliffs, lean  
over and reach down, jocosely threatening  
all sorts of horrible leaps, till his frantic  
mother quite disgusts him with her child-  
ings. Of course little boys brandish real and  
mock weapons fighting misses and  
smaller boys, with a gusto which proves  
that "it is their nature too."

Probably the adult perpetrators of this  
unkindness have not analyzed the motives  
of their actions and might be ready to con-  
tradict my judgment, but I am sure that  
mothers will be ready to take the sugges-  
tion that they should train their little boys  
to be sensitive to the feelings of others, and  
to be incapable of finding pleasure in their  
discomfort.—*Christian Weekly.*