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Ottawa, Wednesday, 3rd April, 1901.

"BUT THEIR EYES WERE HOLDEN."

Grief and disappointment prevented them from recognizing the very One on whose account they were sorrowing. The stranger who was walking more rapidly, who could easily have passed them, but who was evidently interested enough in their sad faces to suit his pace to theirs and engage them in conversation, was but a stranger to them. Even when he took up the thread, of their interrupted conversation and carried it out of the personal into the historical, shewing them the large place the One of whom they thought only as a beloved Master, had held in the religious life of their nation, they only saw in the speaker a well-learned stranger. Personal disappointment makes us wonderfully blind.

Again the Eastertide is near, and many of us are coming up to it with hopes blighted, and the future clouded. Again One walks beside us and would talk with us, and shew to us the drift of the training through which we are passing. And again the eyes of many of us are being holden; and though our hearts may glow when the Master's vision unfolds itself, we think again of the personal and present disappointment, and still our hearts are sad. How the hearts of those disciples would have bounded that first Easterday had they recognized in the pleasant-spoken stranger, their Lord. But they thought of Him as still in the tomb of Joseph, and of the future as utterly dark for themselves.

To how many of us has the thought of the risen and ever present Christ come helpfully during the past week. "Christ is Risen" we say and sing, but what meaning has it for us. That He is in heaven, at the right hand of the Father; that He is far removed from men and from us; that what concerns us most at the present moment is of no consequence to Him! How the heart of the Christian would throb with eager expectancy this

coming Easter Day were he only to realize that Christ is not only risen and exalted, but that He is present, that indeed thinking upon the sadness and darkness that has fallen upon the life of one of His followers He has come to talk it over, and to make the way more clear?

In many homes there is anxiety this Eastertide. Sickness has entered, sometimes death has come in. From one home the mother was taken; soon after the daughter, who was looked upon to take the mother's place followed. To-day the home is dark. But One walks beside the stricken one and would make life a little more clear for him. But the eyes are holden. Grief has closed them, or blurred their vision, and the sufferer does not see the Christ.

Some would not see Him. Their eyes close willingly when they think Him near. Life that was meant to be of such service to Him, life that He had redeemed from its bondage to sin, is being spent selfishly. We know He has a claim upon it. We know He has bought it back again when we had sold it foolishly, and that we owe it to Him to use it for the purpose for which He sought it again for Him- self. We know He has entrusted it to us, laying no restraint upon us but that of love. Yet as He comes near us we deliberately close our eyes, and will not see Him. What mockery it is for us to take part in the glad Easter song. Do we care that He has risen! Do we realize that He is gazing upon us in our foolish wanderings that we call liberty!

For some it is a sense of failure that holds the eyes so that they do not see Him. If these but knew the tenderness of the Master to one who has tried and failed they would quickly look up. One who has learned this truth has put her lesson into a song that will live in many another disappointed heart:

"With empty hands I shall rise to meet Him,
And, when he looks for the fruits of years,
Nothing have I to lay before Him
But broken efforts and bitter tears.

"Yet when He calls I fain would hasten—
Mine eyes are dim and their light is gone;
And I am as weary as though I carried
A burden of beautiful work well done.

I will fold my empty hands on my bosom,
Meekly thus in the shape of his cross;
And the Lord who made them frail and feeble
Maybe will pity their strife and loss."

It seems probable, according to news- paper report, that we are to go once more to Scotland for one capable of filling a Chair in one of our theological colleges. We have always advocated the selection of one of our own men, but the men who have the matter of choosing in their hands are quite as anxious for the College to be well equipped as we can be. Whatever the choice let all give to him hearty support.

The Irish Presbyterian, published monthly in Belfast, is a welcome visitor to our table. It is a magazine for the home and furnishes a choice quantity of religious reading for the family circle. It may be ordered from the office, 119 Royal Avenue, Belfast, Ireland; and half a dollar will pay for a year's subscrip- tion.

THE READING SALOON—AN EXPERIMENT.

Some of our sturdiest young men go out to the lumber camps in the winter time. The work is hard, the conditions of life are primitive and the temptations to sin are always present. With the lum- bermen and miners go some of our best young missionaries. They share the iso- lation of the men among whom they work, and, if they are of the right stamp, they soon win the confidence of some of them.

During the past season an interesting experiment has been begun, and as far as it has been put into operation, it promises well. Mr. Fitzpatrick, one of our young ministers, is seeking to introduce reading camps among the lumbermen and miners in Algoma. The Companies will build an extra shanty, if books and papers are forthcoming to stock it. Three of these are already in operation, and are much appreciated by the men. The reading camp forms one of the most effective anti- dotes to the saloon that has yet been found. Men are welcome to come in and make use of the papers and books, and spend an hour in any one of the games provided.

Mr. Fitzpatrick has been successful in interesting the Legislature to the extent of a small grant for this work, but the amount is entirely too small to assure the success of the work. Others have inter- ested themselves; but the plan deserves more attention than it has yet received. Out of his meagre salary Mr. Fitz- patrick has spent a very considerable sum for the purpose of providing papers for his reading rooms, and still they are not well stocked. Would it be asking too much that, for a few years at least, our leading newspapers should donate each a copy to the rooms that have been established? The men want the latest news, and that is but natural. Your week-old paper, from which you may have clipped something you wish to pre- serve, is not valued. But the daily or weekly visit of a good fresh newspaper, which they know comes fresh from the office, and which donated by the office for their benefit, would be greatly appreciat- ed. Incidentally, we might remark, that we believe Mr. Fitzpatrick has applied the proper remedy for the saloon curse, not only for Algoma but for all Canada.

Instead of discussing what we would like to have in the matter of Sabbath School equipment, suppose we discover what it is possible for us to secure at once, and then work for it. Two things are urgently needed—better trained teach- ers, and better Sabbath School equip- ment. These are available. Secure them this year, then forge ahead next year.

Much harm is done by giving expres- sion to a hastily formed judgment. Make a mental note of the number of times when you would have given much to re- call an opinion hastily expressed, and it will help to keep the lips sealed in future.