

Pastor and People.

Behold This Child.

II. HOW IT CAME TO PASS.

God took to Himself three children from one house, all their parents had, in one day. The black fever, that awful scourge, was passing through the region and leaving one or more dead in almost every home, and it fell upon these three little ones, and there were their dead bodies all in the same room together. In the night the dead-artist came and bore them away. The stricken mother, when they were gone, bowed before the Lord and gave them up to Him, and He turned her thoughts away from the dead-cart on its way to the burial place, and away from the dark-cold ground where their bodies were to be laid away, within the veil to Himself and the glories of the Home to which He had already taken her little trio of loved ones, and she was comforted, nay filled with joy in the Lord.

Then with all her heart, there in that hour, in that room whence they had been taken home to God, she freely and fully gave up to Him and laid over into His hands, as his own forever, her unborn babe. And four months after that the child was born.

Happy would it be if every father and mother, from whose homes upon earth the Lord takes their loved ones to His home in heaven, would give them up to Him and let Him turn their thoughts away from the empty place in the earthly home, to the newly filled one in the heavenly home, and away from the tomb where the body lies, to the throne where the spirit is with the King. And happy, happy, happy would it be for mothers and children, yea and for the church and for the world, if every mother would lay over in the hands of the Lord her child, whether born or unborn, to be held and kept and fashioned by Him in His own way after the image of His own dear Son.

How well the Lord does the work thus committed to Him we have already in part seen in the case of this little girl. O, how Christ-like is her greater delight in giving than in receiving! and O, how like Him too is she in her love for the lost! O! who is so worthy to be intrusted with our children, born or unborn, as the Lord? Who so wise in counsel, so wonderful in working? Is it not better to give them wholly to Him forever, than to lend them while to the world, in the hope that by and by when the world is worn out, the Lord will turn them to Himself, and make it all right in the end?

This night scene is from the mother's own lips, and lets us into the secret of the hidden power by which this little girl has been so quickly and so fully led to accept the beautiful lineaments of Christ.

Side by side with this night scene must be placed a day scene, drawn in rhyme by the pen of the little girl herself, which throws a light strong and rich upon the instrument by which the Lord has fashioned her to His own mind.

This scene is in their little cottage home, and of frequent if not of daily occurrence. It is that of the aged grandmother reading the Bible, hour after hour, aloud to herself, while her daughter and granddaughter listen and catch the word for themselves as she reads.

The grandmother is doubled together by toil and years' and utterly helpless, but can see, and though her articulation is indistinct, she can read aloud. The mother is nearly blind and quite lame, but can work with her hands. The child is busy here and there, quietly moving around in the house work, and both, while engaged in their affairs, are listening intent upon what falls from the old lady's lips.

"Long hours she'll read, God's will to find
Ma can't read much, she's nearly blind
I needs must toll to keep things straight,
With cautious tread no noise to make.
Grandma reads with broken voice,
Still it makes all our hearts rejoice;
Her speech has sadly felt Time's power;
We catch the word, 'cause read before.
Thus God hath us this channel left,
Through which comes love and light and rest."

This is the church in their house, and this is the way in which the gospel is preached in that church. Who shall say there is not as much of heaven in that church, with its undesigned and formless daily service, as in the most elaborate service of pulpit oratory and artistic music in our marble temples? One of the exquisite touches of this picture is that of the significant glancing look of the mother from the daughter to the Book before the aged grandmother:—

"I know the meaning of that look;
It tells on Whom our help is laid
To bear the ills that sin has made.
Sin is the cause of every ill;
Christ our help, God's sweet words reveal.
Ma looks all this without a word,
No breath of sound from her is heard."

With the one Book for their library and the Holy Comforter as sole guide into all its treasures, this little church in the home with its daily Bible-reading is rich indeed, and one can understand how even this little girl, in the back hill country, without a church or minister, or the educational advantages of our villages even, should in such an atmosphere be developed and matured for God and heaven more fully at thirteen than many Christians are at three score and ten.

Another light, quaint but clear, comes out upon this child's character, from her own pen, in the form of Journal jottings, together with other writings.

At twelve she began to write, and the wonder is, not that her thoughts were clothed in home-spun like her person, but that with all she had to do, and only a country district school to attend what time she could, she should be able to write at all. Her first Journal entry was her first attempt at writing, and is in fact her own autobiography briefly given:—

"I am twelve years old to-day.
I was born in —, in the county of —,
and State of —, on the — day of —,
18—."

"I enjoyed the society of my parents until I was five years old, and then my father died, and we moved to this place where we now live."

"I never enjoyed my religious privileges except the funerals of our relatives."

"When I was seven Mr. — came and held a series of religious meetings in the school-house a mile and a quarter from our home, and I attended some. At that time I began to see how great a sinner I was, and how much Jesus loved sinners to die for them. Ever since that, I have desired to love God with all my heart, and to do all I could for His cause, but until a year ago I never dared to call myself really a child of God. All I have ever given for missions is twelve dollars; just one dollar for each year of my life. I must do more; and I will. But what can I—a mere child—do?"

"I can write; and I will. I can write an acrostic on my grandfather's name, and I will; some more."

The acrostic does not appear among her writings though the "come more" does, as we shall presently see. But how distinctly she marks the turning points in the fashioning process of her life and character!

The time and the change wrought, when the light of the Lord was let in upon her, showing herself to herself as a sinner, and revealing Christ to her as a Saviour, needs no comment.

The time, too, when she received the greater light is no less distinctly marked. Four years, from seven to eleven, passed between the two, but for the clear shining forth of that light in her life and words, we must look into her subsequent writings in prose and rhyme.

The wording of the change in this Journal entry leaves no room for doubt, that at eleven she came into the full assurance of her acceptance with God as her Father; but in her subsequent jottings as well as other writings, she expresses an assurance also of the presence of Christ with her all the time as her Saviour from sin, and of the fullness of salvation she always enjoys in Him.

Here, for example, are some lines of hers:—

"I cannot comprehend much change,
When I my final heaven shall gain;
While I am here, I'm wholly blest;
In every state in Christ, there's rest."

Freely Thou first Thyself didst give,
That all might come to Thee and live;
Freely Thou giv'st me faith to see,
That from all sin Thou set'st me free."

"No grief is grief with Christ within;
No sin can reign, where Christ doth reign.
Thy perfect righteousness bring in;
Within our hearts do Thou remain."

In the present living union with Christ expressed in these lines we see a depth and wealth of experimental endowment and spiritual teaching away beyond an assurance of present acceptance and of eternal salvation; it brings a present heaven into her own soul.

How sweetly, the following entries in her Journal, she puts the present rest in Jesus with the future rest with Him!

"Quite snowy. O, how white and beautiful! It is the handiwork of my Father. O He will clothe His ransomed ones with far surpassing robes of righteousness! I feel a sweet trust in God. I believe His every word. He cares for me; yea, me. O, how dear His word is to me! 'Tis food to my soul. I think I understand it better for realizing that its Author is immediately present when I read."

"How sweet is the rest to the weary! O, eternal rest,—to rest endlessly in the presence-chamber of the King of kings! Rest in Jesus here; rest with Him there. Only the moral gets weary: the spirit rests in her Beloved, and drinks in of His fullness. O, the consolations of His Holy Spirit! O, the sweetness of His word; A sense of His actual presence makes it doubly precious. He smiles and enlightens every word."

The same recognition of the present rest with that of the future is expressed in this:—

"Thirteen to-day. What cause for gratitude that I have a Christian mother! Rather than I have a precious Saviour! He has chosen me, unworthy me, an heir of salvation. He saves me with a present and an eternal salvation. He is my righteousness, and He is also the Author and Finisher of the faith that accepts Him, my present and my everlasting Rest."

"A day of rest. Rest? 'Tis all rest—rest in Jesus; every burden, every anxiety, every care. He careth for me. He is all sufficient. Rest in the fullness of His love here, and rest in His unchanging promise of an endless rest above. O God, accept the gratitude I feel!"

The nearness of heaven to her, while yet in the body, is expressed in the following:—

"Sick, all of us, but pain is sweet. God sees it best, and He always shows His beauty so brightly! I ever feel to say, 'If Thou art ready I am'; but if I can do anything to honor Thee I'll gladly stay. What shall I render to my God for all His benefits? Indeed I'll try to honor Him as much as I can. But then this makes matter for more gratitude, for He worketh in me to will and to do. O, how I am in debt! Free grace the past; free grace ahead; free grace all around everywhere! O, I'm wholly lost in free grace!"

This debtorship to grace is again expressed in another day of trial:—
"Grandma lame, Aunt very poorly, cow sick, and I feel nearly sick in body but well in mind, for God never forsakes those who trust in Him. O, what a God we have! The Author and Finisher of our faith, and then rewards us for accepting the rich, free provisions of His grace! O, I'm lost in trying to contemplate God's love to rebel man! O, how I want to show this love to every soul of man!"

Never having united with the visible Church, she thought to do so, and arranged to go on the day set for it to the village four miles away, but was kept at home by stormy weather, and jotted down the following:—

"Have not been to —. No doubt it is best. Our Sovereign Ruler is too wise to err. I'm perfectly happy in God's hands. I wish above everything to promote His glory on earth. My PORTION FOREVER. O, how this vibrates the inner shrine of my poor heart!"

"Rainy, rainy. May God rain righteousness in my soul! Have dwelt much on the theme of Christ's wholly vanquishing sin and Satan for us. Let faith embrace all the gift of God in Christ."

Self distrust, with entire confidence in Christ as her own present Saviour from the dominion of sin, and a clear apprehension that it is not according to feeling, but faith, that He saves, is shown by another of these Journal jottings:—

"Almost as warm as summer this morning. Very cold to night. The sudden changes are fit emblems of my unstable emblems of my unstable heart. One hour I feel as I could do all things; the next how weak my faith; yet not discouraged; my help is laid on One Mighty to save; yea, to save with a present salvation; to wholly save me from the ruling power of sin."

"Another week has carried its record to the Eternal. O, I tremble when I look at self, remembering that 'without holiness no man can see the Lord.' But O, exulting word! Help is laid on One who is mighty to save. Christ's never failing righteousness shall cover me, yea me. O, the fullness of Christ! We may rest in Him. We live in Jesus. He will dwell in us. We may abide in Him. What can separate us from the love of Christ?"

Distinct answers to prayer are noted in her Journal, such as these:—
"Could not go to school, the snow is so deep. Commenced a pair of mittens for Mr. Sayre. Have had a manifest answer to prayer to-day."

Thereupon she breaks forth in the Psalmist's words, "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" and adds, "the Sovereign Ruler notices a worm. The secret this: we are brought nigh by the blood of Christ, that ever-speaking blood. 'I in them, Thou in me: My blood bought their peace.'"

Had the most evident answer to prayer to-day. How can we but have faith! Jesus is the Truth. He says, 'Ask and ye shall receive.'"

One other day's jottings must be given, telling of perfect peace in the threefold trial of sickness, loss, and wanton unkindness from those she had never injured:—

"They shall be kept in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on Thee. My mind has dwelt on this peace all day. I have felt very sick but very happy. How can I but be happy, when God Himself has shown so much interest in my happiness. My day has been fraught with things calculated to vex and perplex me; losses and wanton unkindness from those I have never injured, but God has sweetly verified His word. How calm and tranquil I have felt! 'Bless the Lord, O my soul!'"

The lines given, evidently the outgoings of her heart, not a poetic fancy, reveal a living union between her and Christ in which she "is so wholly blest," that she "cannot comprehend much change" when she shall enter the rest above. The Journal jottings confirm this and speak of her perfect rest in Christ; of instant readiness to go when Christ is ready to have her; of joyous acquiescence in God's will; of faith in Christ as a complete vanquisher of sin and Satan for us; of entire distrust of herself and perfect confidence in Christ; of distinct answers to prayer and of being kept in perfect peace. Without one word to the contrary of all this during the eighteen months that she has been writing down the experiences and events of her life.

One other fact must also be put up with those already given: this little girl never heard one word from mortal lips about another and deeper Christian experience after that of the new birth, until after that she had herself come into it and been living in it for months.

When she did hear about it from others, and was asked her views, she wrote the following, which quaintly enough she introduced by saying, "I was requested by a mother in Israel to write my views on this subject. Alas, I am but a child. May God assist."

COMPLETENESS IN CHRIST.

"How did we receive Christ? Was He not made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption?"

"If we have really put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created him, and abide in Him, may we not adopt this language: 'For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?'"

"God is love." Love is the fulfilling of the law. If God resides in the soul, sin shall not dwell there. "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "I will put my law into your heart, and write it on your thoughts; from all your filthiness will I cleanse you." "Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people, Thou hast covered all their sins." "Bless the Lord, O my soul! who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord."

"Is not God our righteous law-giver? Does He command more than He enables us to perform? He says, 'Be ye holy for I am holy.' 'He that spared not His own Son, shall He not with Him, freely give us all things?' Without Him 'we can do nothing,' but 'we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us.' 'Ask and ye shall receive.' 'He is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to those that ask, than we to give good gifts to our children.' 'Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.' 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.' 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service; and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.' 'Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's.' 'Be

ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

"It was my views that I was asked to write. I view it both a duty and delight to be 'perfect in every good word and work,' through Christ our Great Perfection, and only in Him: out of Him, our best righteousness is as filthy rags. Lord, great in goodness, good in greatness, help."

"Though we're weak He is mighty;
In His strength alone we go;
If we strive to walk uprightly,
Every grace will He bestow.
It is the Lord in whom we trust;
Of ourselves we're all unfitness;
In our God alone we boast."

Behold this child! Behold how the Lord has fashioned her in the image of His dear Son! See in her His implicit confidence, His loving obedience, His self-sacrificing love for the lost, His delight in the will of the Father, in short all the lines of His character in the beauties of holiness, with a perfect knowledge that her completeness is all in Christ, not at all in her own virtues, whether native-born or grace given, all and only in Jesus.

Behold, too, by what simple means the Lord has thus fashioned her,—simple but grand! The Bible and the church in the home, and the Holy Spirit in the heart,—glorious instrumentality! The Word preached too in the little country school-house, together with the daily discipline of the daily life in the atmosphere of poverty and toil enriched and hallowed by love. These, the instrumentalities, blessed the work. By the touch of His hand in these it is that the Lord has caused this little girl to become like a burning bush in the desert, in which He dwells, and out of which He shines and speaks. By these it is that He has made her to do yet more than the poor widow who gave all the living that she had into His treasury; has made her to bring rich revenues to Him out of the nothing possessed by her,—out of her toil, and out of stones, bushes, and trees. Marvellous work, all of God! To Him be glory in the highest.

Some Persons I Know.

I know a woman, a professing Christian, who spends much of her time in reading light and trashy fictions. This person can weep over an imaginary case of disappointed love, and enthusiastically admire the imaginary traits of honorable manhood in a libertine, and yet she can turn away with cold indifference from the homeless orphan, whose bony hand is extended for charity, and whose very rap plead its causes with an eloquence stronger and more touching than words. Nor can she discover anything worthy of admiration in the plain, practical man of every-day life, who labors for an honest support, and who would scorn to trifle with a woman's affections, or betray the confidence of a friend.

I know a woman who professes to be a Christian, and is at the same time a leader in the world of fashion. She studies the fashion plates often and much, but has seldom time to read her Bible. No expense is too great, if only she can attain acknowledged leadership in the fashionable world. This woman, according to her own statement, is however too poor to give one single dollar to aid the church of God in any of its great schemes for the saving of souls.

I know a woman who is so occupied in the instruction of her children and the daily performance of domestic duties, that she reads but few books, and yet reads her Bible every day, and stores her mind with that knowledge which relates to life eternal. She has studied and admired and imitated the character of Christ, until, like Him, she can weep over the sorrows of others, and one of her sweetest sources of pleasure is administering to the necessities of the unfortunate, and the sorrow-stricken.

I know a Christian woman who has endured many and very sore afflictions, God's hand has again and again been heavy upon her; God's willows have again and again passed over her. She lives in most humble circumstances, and labors hard against poverty. Yet, strange as to some it may appear, this woman is happy. She knows little of the busy, bustling world, nor does she share in their excitement. What cares she for fashion, or the glitter of fashionable life. She lives a Christian, performing life's labors without a murmur. She gives of her scanty means, back to Him from whom she receives them. This she does in faith, never once supposing that she is, by so doing, making herself any the poorer. She expects this humble giving to prove a most remunerative investment, and would be most unwilling to withhold her humble offerings. In faith she aims earnestly to do her whole duty, and she leaves the results with God.

Each of these persons described must die. Each must leave this world and try the realities of another. Death and the great judgment are events which no one can avoid.

Very different, we suppose, will be the reflections of the persons described above—very different the reflections of those persons whom they may be regarded as representing—in subsequent periods of existence, with new surroundings, and new objects demanding attention and determining the character of individual experience. Very different will be the character of their reflections, when respectively they look death in the face—when the world is all behind them, and eternity with its solemnities is just before them. Very different when they stand respectively on the right hand or the left hand of the Judge in the great day of final assize and hear the words, "Come ye blessed—because ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me," or "depart ye cursed—because ye did it not unto one of the least of these, yet did it not unto me."—From the Transylvania Presbyterian.

THERE may be joy without faith, and there may be faith without joy. But a constant faith begets a constant hope, and so a constant peace in believing.—Mason.
If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; there is where they should be. Now put foundations under them.—Thoreau.

The Curse that Falleth Not.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Is thy curse of comfort wanting? Rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine, it shall serve thee and thy brother:
Love divine will fill thy storehouse, or thy handfull still renew;
Scanty fare for one will often make a royal feast for two.

For the heart growrich in giving; all its wealth is living grain;
Seeds which midlow in the garner, scattered fill with gold the plain.
Is thy burden hard and heavy,—do thy steps drag wearily?

Help to bear thy brother's burden; God will bear both it and thee.

Numb and weary on the mountains, wouldst thou sleep amidst the snow,
Chafe that frozen form beside thee, and together both shall glow;
Art thou stricken in life's battle? Many wounded round thee moan;
Lash on their wounds thy balsam, and that balm shall heal thine own.

Is thy heart a well left empty? None but God its void can fill;
Nothing but a ceaseless fountain can its ceaseless longing still;

Is thy heart a living power? Self-entwined its strength sinks low;
It can only live in loving, and by serving love will grow.

Random Readings.

My exposition of Genesis I shall pore over and die over.—Luther.

I CONFESS, indeed, that I am not poor; for I desire nothing more than what I have.—Calvin.

I TAKE them to be soul-murders, who silence able, faithful preachers.—Richard Baxter.

God is the builder of this temple—the work is His, and he that does but touch a pebble of his own strength is sure to let it fall and wound himself.

Thy heart that trusts forever sings,
And feels as light as it had wings;
A well of peace within it springs.
Come good or ill,
Whatever to-day or morrow brings,
It is his will!

And so the soul in hope rejoices still.

As the rays come from the sun and yet are not the sun, even so our love and pity, though they are not God, but merely a poor, weak image and reflection of Him, yet from Him alone they come. If there is mercy in our hearts, it comes from the fountain of mercy. If there is the light of love in us, it is a ray from the full sun of love.—Charles Kingsley.

FAITH and hope though distinct, are vitally united. They come from the same source, are sustained by the same evidence, are exercised on the same realities. Faith is the perceiving; hope the anticipating faculty. Faith sees heaven opened; hope says you are on your way to it. Faith comes by hearing; hope by experience. Faith has respect to the truth of the Word; hope to its fulfillment. Faith looks to doctrine and promise; hope to reward. Faith is founded on what is in heaven!—Stanford.

DAVID says: "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice before Him with trembling." Let some one make this rhyme for me: "To rejoice," and "to fear." My little son Hans can do this with me, but I cannot do it with God. For when I sit and write, or do anything, he sings a little song to me the while! and if he makes it too loud, and I tell him so, then he still sings on, but makes it softer, crowing on with a sweet little subdued voice, slyly watching me all the time. So would God have it with us, that we should be always rejoicing, yet with fear and reverence before him.—Luther.

THE Christian World says:—"This failure of Rationalism at Heidelberg University is now an admitted fact. For years the most unevangelical theology has had the field all to itself, and the most extreme views have been freely advanced by Professors of marked ability, among whom the celebrated Paulus held a distinguished place. His influence continued to be felt long after his death. What is the result? Students have more and more forsaken the lecture-halls, and gone to Berlin, to Halle—anywhere to sit at the feet of men of strong, positive convictions—teachers who can offer something better than cold negation. A crisis seems now to have been reached. We are informed that only nine theological students frequent the theological school, scarcely a greater number than that of the Professors! The "Liberal" government of the Grand Duchy of Baden, it is true, still persists in refusing the appointment of one or more Professors of a more Biblical faith, but it is not probable that the recognition of an imperative call for reorganization can long be delayed."

HOLD on! It is dark and you are weak; but life depends on holding fast to your religious profession, your character, and your Christ. Many a man has waited for the Lord a little, when long waiting was required. He despaired early, when he should not have despaired at all. The trials you bear out into your flesh. You say you could stand that, but they also eat into your resolution. Hold on! Nothing will answer. It is a time of trial. Men lose money, and there is danger of losing reputation with it. Men defame them, curse them, laugh at their Christianity. Hold on! Pay all you can now, and pay the rest hereafter. Be sweet, patient, forgiving. You want men to forgive your mistakes; forgive also their reproaches. Get all the help you can. And where can you get most? The closet, the prayer-meeting, the Sunday-school, the sermon—all these will help you to hold on. Increase your diligence, your watchfulness, your zeal for God, and through His service find His helping hand. It is there; so near you though you may not see it; so strong and willing, though Satan may tempt you to doubt it. It is only a little longer. Hold on in darkness, doubt, affliction. The day will dawn, the doubts will fly away, and your "light affliction will work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."