

forget. A few gathered around us—the firemen, engineer, brakemen and conductor of the train, and some of the passengers lifted their windows as the class sang together.

“Here we meet to part again,
But when we meet on Canaan's shore,
There'll be no parting there.”

“As the train moved out of the station the teacher, pale-faced, stood on the platform, and, with his finger heavenward, he said:—“I will meet you yonder;” then the train disappeared from view.

“I went to my business next day; but I could not get interested in my work. I had tasted something better. What a work had been accomplished in those ten days. Some of the members of that class were among the most active Christians we had in the schools for years after. We had a blessed work of grace in the school that summer; it took me out of my business and sent me into the Lord's work. If you hear God calling you to-day into his work, do not leave this building until you have decided to respond to the call.”

A Blind Ruffian Tamed.

There was in one of the villages of China a perfect villain. As a punishment for his misdeeds, his eyes were put out. But he could still, as a blind beggar, blackmail his neighbors, and the shopkeepers had a horror of him. On one occasion he found his way to an oilshop, demanding money. When it was refused, he swung his thick staff and hit out blindly, breaking the earthenware pots containing the oil; and as they broke and the oil ran out, he took up the broken pieces of pottery and cut himself with them, and then went to the magistrate complaining of the ill-treatment he had received. The shopman was fined \$10. He was also a heavy opium-smoker, and an old lady begged him to come to the medical mission hospital to be cured of the habit, her ulterior hope being his conversion. He came, was cured, and also found Christ. And now it is his delight to sit in the waiting-room and prove the power of God by pointing to himself. That is evidence none can gainsay. All know what he was, and that no man was ever changed in that way by the worship of idols.

An Aftermath of Joy.

(Cora S. Day, in the 'American Messenger'.)

“What is it, William?”

The white-haired old man raised his head and tried to smile bravely into the questioning eyes of his wife, in whose face he saw reflected the trouble from his own.

“A trifle—a foolish little thing over which I am weak enough to be disturbed. And yet”—his voice faltered a little—“it is not quite pleasant to feel that I have outlived my usefulness.”

“Why should you feel so? Tell me about it.” And his wife crossed the little study and stood close beside his chair. Many times she had helped him through trial and trouble and discouragement with her brave cheerfulness and steady faith.

“I have served the Lord in this place for forty-five years,” he began slowly, “and he has blessed me. But it has come to me over and over, of late, that I should make way for a younger man in my pulpit. Perhaps the people feel this, too. I do not know; they are very kind to me always. My lot among them has, indeed, been a pleasant one. But there are young people growing up in the church—it is only natural that they should desire a younger pastor:” and he paused thoughtfully.

“Something has been said—” began his wife.

“Not to me. They are too considerate for that. It was only a chance remark on the street the other day, by a young girl to a companion; something about the desirability of having a progressive young minister at the head of the church. She did not know I overheard. And it was, after all, but the voicing of my own feeling.”

There was a little flush of indignation in the usually placid face before him.

“A foolish school-girl! What does she know of the needs of the church? And after your lifetime of work for this church and for this place!”

“Never mind that,” he answered gently. “We must not evade the question, Margaret. It is simply this—have I ceased to satisfy the wants of my people, and do they wish for a younger, more active pastor? I must think over it, and pray over it, and seek to find the truth. I know the Lord will help me to do his will for the good of his people.”

There was nothing further to be said in answer to that reasoning, and his wife left him alone with his problem. As the days passed she could see that he was deeply troubled over the matter, yet patient and willing to do whatever was best. It was not an unusual case, after all—a minister grown old in his charge, a young, progressive element in the church, and a desire, entirely natural, for a minister more in sympathy with new ideas and methods.

At last the decision was reached. Kneeling beside the old chair in the study where he had penned so many messages of hope and love and invitation to those people, the old minister laid his life-work down at the feet of his Master, and said tenderly, “If it is thy will, oh, Lord, let it be done.”

The next Sabbath he read to his congregation the resignation over which he had spent so many days of thought and almost heart-broken sorrow.

It came as a complete surprise to all; but was received by different ones in widely different ways. To the older members, after the first shock of astonishment, came a feeling of sorrow almost as deep as that of the pastor at the step which he considered it his duty to take. Most of the younger members shared this feeling; but a few thoughtless ones felt that it was the opportunity they desired to secure a new, brisk, active young worker.

There was an unwonted hum of undertoned discussion at the close of the service; and it was not long before the pastor was surrounded by the officers of the church with requests for the reasons of this unexpected step. He gave them simply and briefly, and there was a little silence when the explanation was ended. Then they vied with each other in assuring them that his feeling was utterly unfounded.

“Think it over,” he answered them all, shaking his head, but smiling a little more cheerfully at their earnest, sincere words. “I have thought it over for a long time. It is but just that you should have time to consider it carefully.” And so the matter was left.

One of the officers of the church had said rather less than the others, but it was evident that he had been thinking rapidly.

“I should like to have a word with you after the congregation goes,” he managed to whisper here and there to officers, leading members and young people active in the work of the church. So they lingered until the pastor was gone; and then the one who had asked them to stay stood up and said:

“I hope I may never again feel so conscience-stricken as I do at this minute. And not for

anything I have done, but for something which I—which all of us, it seems, have left undone. Here is our pastor—the man who has spent his life in this quiet little place for love of us, when we know well that he had opportunities offered him over and over again, in his younger years, to go forth to other work—work better fitted to his splendid abilities, and work that would have brought him larger financial compensation; our dear old pastor offers us his resignation because he feels that we are tired of him—has, in fact, heard a desire expressed for a younger man in his place.

“Friends, this old man has nurtured us in the fear and admonition of the Lord. He has listened to our marriage vows; he has helped us put away our dead. He has been with us in joy and sorrow, and has never failed us, never wearied in doing for us all and more than we asked; while we—we have been so cruelly careless, so slow to thank him and to show our love and gratitude, that he thinks that we would prefer another in his place. I wish now to offer one or two resolutions.

“First, that our pastor's resignation be rejected. Well, all in favor will please say—”

“Aye,” came the ready response.

“Second, I propose that so long as our pastor has health and strength and power to stand in our pulpit, he be urged to do so.”

This resolution was unanimously carried.

“Third, I suggest that a testimonial be prepared, setting forth our affectionate regard for him and his life-long faithfulness to us; that it be signed by every man, woman and child old enough to write who is an attendant upon the services of this church; and that it be presented to our pastor next Sabbath.”

There was no need to put this suggestion to a vote, for everybody began at once to plan how to give the greatest possible number an opportunity to sign the testimonial before the next Sabbath, and the speaker and his little audience went home bubbling over with enthusiasm. It was a busy week for those in charge of the testimonial, but the work was done by Saturday night.

We will pass over what the pastor did and said when the decision in regard to his resignation was handed to him, accompanied by the cordial expression of the desire that he remain with them for the rest of his days. But when the testimonial was presented—and he saw well up in the long list of names that of his youthful critic—he said softly, as he laid the document aside on the pulpit and clasped his hands over the worn old Bible:

“I thank you all, dear friends, for this expression of a love which I should never have doubted. But I thank the Lord, too, for the doubt which has brought forth this aftermath of joy.”

Lord, make me one with Thine own faithful ones,

Thy saints who love Thee and are loved by Thee;

“Till the day break and 'till the shadows flee,
At one with them in alms and orisons;

At one with him who toils and him who runs,
And him who yearns for union yet to be;

At one with all who throng the crystal sea;
And wait the setting of our moons and suns.
—Selected.

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