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Poetry.

WHAT MUST IT BE TO BE THERE!

We speak of the realms of the blest,
Of that country so bright and so fair,
And oft are its glories confess'd;
But what must it be to be there;

We speak of its pathways of gold,
And its walls decked with jewels most rare;
Of its wonders and pleasures untold;
But what must it be to be there!

We speak of its freedom from sin,
From sorrow, temptation, and care;
From trials without and within;
But what must it be to be there!

We speak of its service of love,
Of the robes which the glorified wear,
Of the Church of the First-born above;
But what must it be to be there!

Then let us, 'midst pleasure and wo,
Still for heaven our spirits prepare;
And shortly we also shall know,
And feel what it is to be there!

AXON.

Christian Miscellany.

"We need a better acquaintance with the thoughts and reasonings of pure and lofty minds."—Dr. Sharp.

Prayer.

Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.
Men ought to pray. The holy angels need not pray. They have all their wants supplied. Wicked angels need much; but they are in despair; they know that God will not hear them. *Men*, that is, people on earth, should pray. The saints in glory are like unto the angels, and sinners in hell are like lost angels. But let all on earth pray. The aged who never prayed before, the aged who have long served God; the middle-aged, pressed with cares, or flushed with success; the young, so unsuspecting, so excited with passion, so full of bright visions, and so poor in experience; the little child, so helpless, so dependent; these, all these should pray. Yes,

Men ought to pray. Nature teaches the feeble to cry to the strong for aid. All nations have held prayer a duty. Besides, God commands us to pray. He invites us to it. He has promised to hear it, and his word cannot fail. Jesus Christ spent whole nights in prayer. We are weak and poor and sinful and guilty. God is strong and rich, and full of grace and mercy. Let us come to him. Good men have always loved prayer. It is certain that prayer is efficacious. God has said so, and good men know it to be so. They have often gotten their petitions. Therefore,

Men ought always to pray. They should pray in prosperity, lest they be proud and forget God; the day of darkness may come. They should pray in adversity, that they may not murmur nor despond. They should pray in the morning, for every day has its trials. They should pray in the evening, for none can say that he may not die before morning. They should pray at home, for God's blessing is needed in every house. They should pray abroad, for God only can preserve the stranger. Men should pray in health; that they may not live like atheists, and in sickness, that they may be able to say, "Not my will, but thine be done, O God!" Men should pray *always*.

But what is prayer? It is calling upon God. It is adoring him for what he is, thanking him for what he has done and promised, confessing our sin and misery before him, supplicating his rich and unmerited blessings, and filling our mouths with arguments drawn from his word. It should be sincere, otherwise we mock God. It must be humble. Praying is the act of the poor; and to be both poor and proud is monstrous. It is better to die crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," than to die exulting in

any false logic. "A proud heart and a lofty mountain are never fruitful." Prayer should be in faith. The stronger the faith, the surer the answer. Faith among the graces, and prayer among the duties, hold a very prominent place. Without faith it is impossible to please God in prayer or in any other duty. Prayer should also be fervent. Languid petitions are but little worth, because they are not the fruit of the Spirit. A prayer that moves not us will not move God. True prayer is accompanied with groanings which cannot be uttered. Prayer should always be importunate. To this end Christ spoke two parables: "*Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.*" The word translated to faint, means to despond, to be timid, to play the coward, to remit attention to duty. Prayer must also be in the name of Christ, with faith that relies on his merits alone, as a reason why we should be heard and answered. If men ought always to pray and not to faint, then, it is very wicked not to pray at all. It is better to have no home than no prayer, to be a praying prisoner than a prayerless king. He who does not love prayer, does not love God. No man is more to be pitied, no man needs more solemn warnings, no man is in greater danger than he who never prays.

How foolish are they who pray only occasionally. Some pang of conviction, some sore affliction, some apprehension of evil, may stir up even the hypocrite to this duty; but "will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?"

Those who pray always with all prayer, are safe. Nothing shall harm them. They are princes, and have power with God and prevail. Christ himself prayed much and fervently. "In the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, he was heard, in that he feared." Pray as he prayed, and overcome as he overcame.—*American Messenger.*

"Ye did Run Well; Who did hinder You?"

Yes, ye did run well. Ye began the Christian race with zeal and spirit. The little band of disciples felt their hearts cheered within them when they saw you starting in the good way, and marked the alacrity and apparent heartiness with which you gave your aid to the cause they so much loved. None were more regular in their appointed place in the sanctuary; none more punctual in the hour of prayer and social intercourse; none more ready to speak a word for Christ. Yes, ye did run well; most cheerfully do we give you this commendation. But, alas! this is all that can be said in your favour; ye did run well; we may not say, "Ye do run well." A change, a sad, fearful change hath come over you. Something hath evidently hindered you, turned you back. Your seat is now often vacant on the Sabbath, and seldom filled at the evening prayer-meeting; and when you do venture in where those that fear the Lord speak often one to another, you choose a retired seat, (is it from humility?) and your voice is no longer heard encouraging your fellow-pilgrims to press onward. Why is this? who hath hindered you? Who? Was it your brethren? No, they rejoiced when they saw you running well. Was it your Pastor? He feels too deeply the need of all the fellow-helpers he can get for the truth, to lay a straw in the way of any, even the weakest of the flock. Was it good angels? There was joy amid the angelic throng when they saw you set your face heavenward. Was it God the Father? He placed heaven, with all its glories, at the end of the race, and bid you run. Was it Jesus? He died that you might run, and so run as to obtain. Was it the Holy Spirit? He first waded you

from the broad way of destruction, into the straight and narrow way of life. O no! the thought is blasphemous: it could be none of these. All good men on earth, all glorified saints and angelic spirits in heaven, and, above all, the infinite and incomprehensible Godhead, combined to cheer you on in your course, to influence you to continue to run well. Who, then, hath hindered you? Certainly an "enemy hath done this." No one that desired your happiness for this life, or that which is to come, would have sought to turn you back, or laid a stumbling-block in your pathway to life.—Yes, whoever it was, be assured it was an enemy. O, find him out! Give not sleep to your eyelids, until you have found out this enemy that is surely compassing your ruin: and, having made the discovery, show him no mercy, for he deserves none; if he hath hindered you in your way to heaven, he is your deadliest foe; whatsoever may be his pretensions, cut him off for ever.

And now remember, if you had not stopped to parley with the foe, you had not been hindered: with all good men and holy angels, and God himself, on your side, no one, not the arch-enemy himself, could turn you back, without your consent. Remember this when you begin the race anew.

Above all, consider how much precious time you have lost, while thus hindered.—Indeed, what better off are you than if you had never started? You are nearer the judgment; but that you are any nearer the victor's crown may well be doubted. O, arouse thee; start anew in the Christian race! Let nothing hinder, nothing turn you back again; you cannot afford it, you have no time to waste thus. The race is still before you. Time flies with lightning speed. Night, the night of death, comes on apace: soon its shadows will close around you, and you will stumble to rise no more.—*Herald of the Praries.*

Has the Church obeyed the Command of Christ?

Let the thousands in our own land from which the means of grace are withheld, answer; let the savage tribes of our western wilderness, answer; let benighted, injured Africa, the hundreds of millions in heathen Asia, the vast numbers who follow after the false Prophet, and who worship the Beast, the islands of the sea, the two millions of unconverted seamen, answer; and, from the whole, will be heard the melancholy response,—No! the Church has not obeyed the high mandate of her great Head. She sits at ease, with the dying shrieks of millions ringing in her ears. In vain does the heathen world unroll before her the sad picture of its degradation; in vain does the Missionary, as he toils alone amidst the wide wastes of Paganism, call for more aid. Vain, as yet, the burning, heart-sarring appeals of those who, with broken-down health, have visited their native shores.—She loves her gold, silver, merchandise, goodly apparel, and luxuries of life, more than the souls of men, and will not listen to her duty. I know that something has been done; but, alas! how feeble our efforts, compared with the magnitude and urgency of the work! A few rays from our churches have streamed across the wide waters, upon darkness so dreary and immense, that, like the flickering light of a taper in a gloomy cavern, they serve little else than to make the darkness more visible.

Anecdote of Father Sewall.

The recent death of this good man, reminds me of an incident I heard of him several years since, which is too good to be lost. He had been employed by a Baptist church in the State of Maine, as a stated supply, during a season when they were unable to support a settled pastor. His fervent piety and faithful labours, won their Christian confidence, and even veneration.

At length, desiring to commemorate the Lord's Supper, they obtained a Baptist clergyman to come and administer the ordinance;—a measure in which Mr. Sewall very cheerfully concurred. When the season arrived, the brethren were much embarrassed about Mr. Sewall. He was present, and would probably partake of the Supper, unless forbidden. But how could they forbid such a man—their own preacher, under whose ministry they had sat with so much delight and profit? No wonder their best feelings revolted at the ungracious task. They however mustered courage to signify to him, that according to the rules of the Baptist Church, he could not be permitted to commune with them, on that occasion. "What," said he, "is not this our Father's table?" "Of course, it is," they replied. "Do you not then regard me as a child of God?" "Certainly," they answered, "we have far more confidence in your piety, than in our own." "If then, I am a child of God, why may I not come to my own Father's table?" More confused and embarrassed than ever, they could only reply, that it was contrary to the rules of their Church. "Well then, said the old gentleman, if you will not let me come to my own Father's table, I will go and tell my Father." He rose from his seat and moved toward the door, when the Baptist brethren, overcome by the obvious and irresistible force of so simple an argument, begged him not to "tell his Father," and they would receive him to the table.—*Puritan Recorder.*

The Soldier and Officer.

A poor soldier was mortally wounded at the battle of Waterloo. His companion bore him to some distance, and laid him under a tree. Before he left him, the dying soldier entreated him to open his knapsack, take out his Bible, and read for him the twenty-seventh verse of the fourteenth chapter of St. John. The words are these: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." After his companion had complied with his request, the dying soldier said, "I die happy. I desire to have peace with God; yes, I possess the peace of God which passeth understanding." A little while after, one of his officers passed him, and asked him how he did. He answered, "I die happy: I have peace within which passeth understanding," and then expired. "The officer left him, went into the battle, and was mortally wounded. Surrounded by his brother officers, full of anguish and dismay, he cried out, "O! I would give ten thousand worlds, if I had them, to possess the peace that gladdened the heart of a dying soldier whom I saw lying under a tree; for he declared that he possessed the peace of God within, which passed understanding. But, alas! I know nothing of this peace. I die miserable; for I die in despair!"

The Thrasher's Definition of Truth.

"Walking in the country," says the Rev. W. Jay, of Bath, "I went into a barn, where I found a thrasher at his work. I addressed him in the words of Solomon, 'My friend, in all labour there is profit!' But what was my surprise when, leaning on his flail, he answered, and with much energy, 'No, Sir; that is the truth, but there is one exception to it. I have long laboured in the service of sin, but I got no profit by my labour!' 'Then,' answered I, 'you know somewhat of the Apostle's meaning when he asked, 'What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?' 'Thank God,' he replied, 'I do; and I also know, that now, being freed from sin, and having become a servant unto righteousness, I have my fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.'"
—*Wilson's Scripture Doctrines Illustrated.*