

"Where are the Nine?"

And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? These are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.—S. Luke xvii: 17, 18.

"Of whom what could He less expect Than glory and benediction, that is, thanks?—

The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense

From them who could return Him nothing else."

Ten miserable lepers had come as near the Great Healer as they dared, crying aloud for the help which only He could give them. Their piteous prayer was granted, and the hideous disease, which had cut them off from all fellowship with healthy men, was cured. How full of delight they must all have been, but only one took the trouble to hurry back and thank the Good Physician. And our Lord's sad question, "Where are the nine?" shows how this thoughtless ingratitude hurt Him. Anyone who has read that wonderful description of leprosy in "Ben Hur" must feel that such a cure of a poor outcast leper would be almost overwhelming in its relief from misery. But surely we have far more reason to be thankful that we do not know, by terrible experience, anything of leprosy. If we had been blind for even a week, how thankful we should be to anyone who should cure us; but we have far more reason to thank God if we have been blessed all our lives with the sight of the sunshine. If, for a few months only, we had been helpless and had been forced, reluctantly, to have everything done for us, how we should rejoice when our own feet and hands could again obey the bidding of our will. Then let us thank God all the more if we are strong and well, if our lives are pleasant, if we have plenty of good food, fresh air and sunshine, warm clothing and good friends.

Canadians have especial reason to be

thankful for what we call "common blessings," just because they are common to us, though they are by no means so common in every other country. Good harvests are "common" here too—should we not keep our Thanksgiving Day all the more heartily, because the word "famine" is absolutely meaningless to the average Canadian farmer. But when the Giver of our many bountiful harvests looks for crowded congregations on Thanksgiving Day, does He find a larger proportion of men coming to "give glory to God" than were found in the company of lepers? How is it generally in your part of the country? I have never seen the church crowded on that day.

Oh, we are ready enough to grumble when God lets us see how easily He can withhold from us the good things we are so apt to accept with cool indifference and without a word of thanks. One who sleeps soundly every night will probably never think of thanking God for restful sleep. But let him experience a few years of broken rest, and then he will learn to thank God every morning for the very "common"—common gifts are very valuable—blessing of sound sleep.

Anyone may be rich if he will. Now, don't think I am talking nonsense—I don't mean that anybody who chooses may become a millionaire. Millionaires are by no means always rich; in fact, they are often terribly poor in deepest reality. Of what use is it to be able to handle a lot of gold if you cannot have happiness with it, and happiness can never be bought with gold. "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it," says Solo-

mon. A ship with a cargo of Spanish dollars once struck on the rocks off the coast of Brazil. Some of the barrels of coin were brought on deck, but the ship was sinking so quickly that they had to be abandoned. As the last boat pushed off, a man was found on deck with a hatchet in his hand. He was breaking open the casks and heaping the money around him. When urged to give up his mad task, he only answered: "I have lived a poor wretch all my life, and I am determined to die rich." We can see the utter folly of such conduct as that, but is it not really just as foolish to spend our lives in the business of heaping up money, so that we may apparently "die rich," but really go out of this world desperately poor, because all the treasures we have been so busily gathering together must be left behind. At least, let us not be so busy that we can't spare time to thank God for all the health, happiness and, most of all, the love He has showered down so freely on us. Try to grow even one grain of wheat without His help, and you will find it is impossible. All the men in the world could never turn one seed into two real, living seeds. Your part is not very difficult—to put the seed into the ground—but God is the working Partner, and without His active co-operation not one seed could increase. If a farmer really worked, without God to help him secretly and silently, he would soon find that the words of the prophet Joel were true: "The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted. . . . the harvest of the field is perished. . . . the seed is rotten under their clods. . . . the corn is withered."

And when we come to thank God, let us show our gratitude by a real thank-offering. Hosea complains that Israel is "an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself." May God never have to say that of Canada. His command, repeated over and over again, was: "None shall appear before ME empty." When a heathen captain was healed of his leprosy, he not only went a considerable distance to thank his deliverer, but he also "urged" him to take a valuable present as some token of his gratitude. Surely we should be much more grateful, because we have never been afflicted with such a terrible disease—and for all our other good things—and we also should present our thank-offering not grudgingly but joyfully. A poor blind woman in France once went to a missionary meeting and put twenty-seven francs into the plate. When asked how it was that she could afford so much, she said it was because she was blind. Her fellow workers spent that sum every year on oil for their lamps, while she could work in the dark. If she could find a season for thankfulness, even in blindness, how much more thankful should we be for our sight.

Indeed, we have good reason to thank God, not only for the things which seem good at the moment, but also, perhaps, even more, for the trials which brace our souls and keep us close at His feet.

"Thanks for the disappointments
That oft our hopes assail,
They teach us to look forward
To joys that cannot fail.
We thank thee for the shadows
That often cloud our way.
Our hearts are prone to wander,
Our feet are prone to stray.
Our trials keep us humble,
We feel the need of prayer,
While bending at Thy footstool
We find a blessing there.
And so, though tears are falling
O'er joys forever flown,
We thank Thee for the sorrows
Our human hearts have known."

HOPE.

The Lil' Brack Sheep.

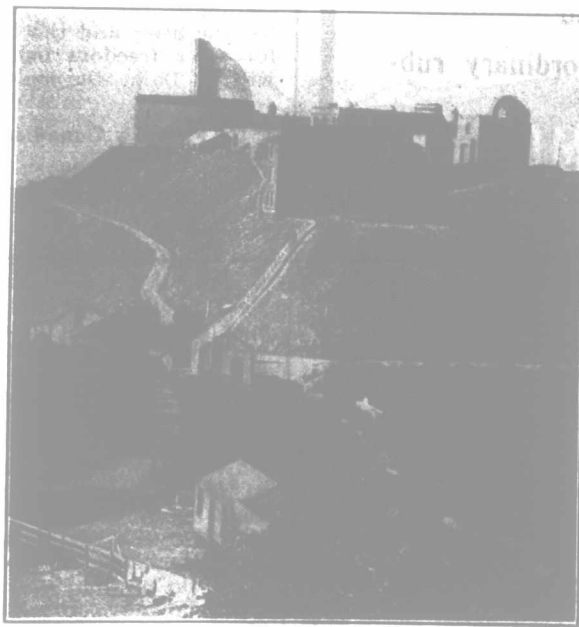
During one of the regular London song services which are held at the conclusion of each afternoon meeting, says The Christian Guardian, Mr. Alexander said that he had heard a darkie version of the famous song, "The Ninety and Nine," which had brought a blessing to many, and which he and his wife had printed on a little card, and sent to many of their friends. He then requested his wife to come upon the high red dais and recite the poem to the audience. This she bravely did, and in her clear, soft voice recited, as follows, the beautiful poem:

"Po' lil' sheep dat strayed away
Done los' in de win' an' de rain—
And de Shepherd he say, 'O hirelin',
Go fin' my sheep again.'
An' de hirelin' say, 'O Shepherd,
Dat sheep am brack an' bad.'
But de Shepherd he smile, like dat lil'
brack sheep
Wuz de onliest lamb he had.

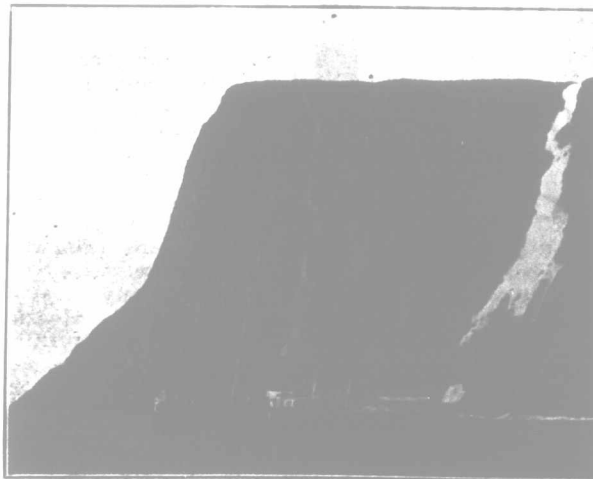
"An' he say, 'O hirelin', hasten,
For de win' an' de rain am col',
An' dat lil' brack sheep am lonesome
Out dere, so far f'um de fol'.
But de hirelin' frown: 'O Shepherd,
Dat sheep am ol' an' grey!'
But the Shepherd he smile, like dat lil'
brack sheep
Wuz fair as de break ob day.

"An' he say, 'O hirelin', hasten!
Lo! here's de ninety an' nine;
But dere, way off f'um de sheepfol',
Is dat lil' brack sheep ob mine!
An' de hirelin' frown: 'O Shepherd,
De res' ob de sheep am here!
But the Shepherd he smile, like dat lil'
brack sheep
He hol' it de mostes' dear.

"An' de Shepherd go out in de darkness,
Where de night was col' an' bleak,
An' dat lil' brack sheep he fin' it,
An' lays it agains' his cheek.
An' de hirelin' frown: 'O Shepherd,
Don't bring dat sheep to me!'
But the Shepherd he smile, an' he hol'
it close,
An'—dat lil' brack sheep—wuz—me!"



Lick Observatory.



North Cape.

Lick Observatory.

On Mount Hamilton, twenty miles from San Jose, California, is the celebrated Lick Observatory. James Lick, of San Francisco, who left \$700,000 for its erection, is buried in the foundation pier of the telescope. Some of the most important astronomical discoveries of recent years have been made here. The object glass of the telescope is thirty-six miles in diameter, the largest in the world. The view from the Observatory on clear days embraces the Sierra Nevadas, the beautiful Santa Clara Valley, and the distant Pacific Ocean.

North Cape.

This huge rock on the Norway coast, rising abruptly out of the Polar Ocean to a height of nine hundred and sixty-eight feet, is the famous place where travellers go in the month of June to see the Midnight Sun. The twenty-first of June is the best day of the year on which to witness the spectacle. Not being accessible by rail, the trip is done by voyage from England, the tourist steamers working up the Norwegian coast, taking in the magnificent fjords and picturesque little fishing villages, until they reach this northernmost point of land. They anchor close to the cliff, allowing three hours for passengers to make the climb. A well-cut path, with guiding ropes on iron stanchions, and plenty of resting seats, makes the undertaking comparatively easy. It is commonly the practice on these tourist ships to furnish fishing lines for the passengers. Cod and haddock at the base of the rock are plentiful. Crowning the summit of the Cape is a granite obelisk, erected to commemorate the ascent of King Oscar II. in 1873. The view from the precipice, extending far away to the north over Arctic solitudes, is one of impressive grandeur.

"Gracious, Elsie!" exclaimed the girl's mother, "why are you shouting in that horrible fashion? Why can't you be quiet like Willie?"

"He's got to be quiet, the way we're playing," replied Elsie. "He's papa coming home late, and I'm you."