

## Pastor and People.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### GUIDE THOU MY FEET.

BY W. H. M., BRAMPTON.

Guide Thou my feet as thro' life's maze I tread,  
Some times by good and oft by evil led;  
When dim the pathway grows, and terrors meet,  
Oh Lord, be at my side to guide my feet.

At each weak step so many paths I see,  
Some smooth, some rough, some fraught with mystery,  
Some kindly bloom, and some are wrapt in night;  
I cannot choose; guide Thou my steps aright.

Earth's friends attend but for a little while,  
Earth's joys and hope serve only to beguile;  
Eternal Friend, of joy the fountain head,  
Guide then my feet, when hope and friend are fled.

Soon lone I'll toil, and faint and sore distressed,  
Will wander foolish ways, and find no rest;  
To Thee I cry, the only sure retreat,  
Be at my side, oh Lord, to guide my feet.

Not e'en a sparrow falls, and Thou not know;  
For Thy forgiving power not one too low;  
Whate'er betide I hold this comfort sweet,  
That Thou, Great Love, wilt surely guide my feet.

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### CHRIST THE LIFE.

BY REV. JOHN FRASER, A.M.

The great truth in the wonderful story told in John xi. is that Christ is the Life.

Yonder is a village—Bethany; two miles or three, about from the city, by a road that winds its track up and down among the hills. In the village a house with a shadow on it. A brother is gone; a loved and only brother. We know so well the change in a household after the dead is taken out, and the funeral is over, and all is over. A few kindly neighbours are within, for sorrow's sake, to weep with them that weep. The potency of grief.

Martha rises abruptly, and goes out. Intelligence has reached her, a soft whisper in her ear where she sat. "Lord, if Thou had'st been here, my brother had not died."

There is faith in the exclamation, but not without despondency. It is faith in the power of the Lord if only Lazarus were still alive, not in His power to bring him back again from the dead. It had not the aspiration, the strength of wing to rise so high.

Still she had hope, a fluttering hope—what may He not do after all? The heart in a struggle with its fears. Will she venture?

"Whatsoever Thou shalt ask of God." The Lord had raised the daughter of Jairus to life, and the widow's son at Nain. Martha knew it. It was not so long ago. Only about a year. Those miracles would now be often in her thoughts. Naturally so; leading her to cherish the expectation that He might do again, and, for her, what He had done so wonderfully before. But Lazarus is dead so long, That corruption! It seems a bar to all hope, to all possibility.

Her knowledge was at fault, so, accordingly, was her faith. She thought that His miraculous power was from above, like that of the old prophets—a communication. She knew not that He Himself is that power—Omnipotence—where He stood.

Martha believed in the resurrection at the last day—a solemn, mysterious truth. But mark the simplicity of her faith. "How are the dead raised?" What of corporeal identity? The doctrine has its problems, but they did not trouble her, and they need not trouble us. The Word of the Lord solves all. There are places, as one says, on the surface of the earth higher to stand on than the mound of the grave, but none from which, in the light of an everlasting hope, we can see so far.

The Lord tells her that the power to raise the dead is here now, here in Him. Lazarus may be raised at once, to-day. Does Martha believe? If she does, she shall see wonderful things—a living brother and the Lord in a majesty, a glory, in which He had never appeared to her before.

He tells her that to all who believe in Him, Lazarus for one, He is the source of a life that survives and rises triumphantly above the dissolution of the body, a life that shall never die.

What life is it? Not mere immortality, in the sense that death is not the annihilation of the soul,

nor even of the body; but a life which is the property of those who believe, and comprehends all that a believer is now in the love and similitude of God, and all that awaits him in the resurrection and in heaven for ever—everlasting union with Christ. "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

Bethany is still on its ancient site, a slope or terrace of the hill. Around it an intermingled shade of olive, fig and vine. The city, although so near, is not in sight; nor is the Mount of Olives. An intervening ridge cuts off the view. A quiet hamlet, a scene of sweet meditative beauty, where the eye delights to rest. Gentle Bethany.

There is truth in what Dean Stanley says of sacred localities in Palestine. They bring the scene vividly before us; but after all they have no real connection with Him. As we gaze there is a sense of vacancy, of desertion. "He is not here; He is risen." The value of these memorials is imaginative, not religious.

### BISHOP HANNINGTON'S CONVERSION.

His first charge was the curacy of Martinhoe, where he lived a rough, jovial, friendly life, riding over Exmoor with his prayer book in one pocket of his shooting jacket and medicines for the sick in another, holding up his manuscript sermon to his eyes in presence of sleepy audiences, whom he awoke every now and then by a violent sermon on immorality or excessive drinking. The picture of this part of his life is both unpleasant and commonplace, making it almost incredible that God could have chosen such a man to be a vessel to the Gentiles.

But after a year, when he was twenty-seven, after he was ordained, when his nearest friends thought he was wholly given over to the world, he was converted—converted as plainly and forcibly as any reprobate, as swiftly and indisputably as the apostle Paul. We wish that his biographer had not been prevented by modesty from describing more minutely this crisis in Hannington's life. The immediate causes were a letter from an unnamed college friend, obviously Mr. Dawson, sent with a book entitled "Grace and Truth," by the late Dr. Mackay, of Hull. The light broke upon him in reading a chapter upon the forgiveness of sins. He was in bed at the time reading. He sprang out of bed and leapt about the room, rejoicing and praising God that Jesus died for him. Thereafter he had his periods of darkness and fear; but he went straight forward, nothing wavering; and although his old life every now and then asserted itself, he gradually made his ground sure, and followed the leading of God's Spirit to the duty that lay nearest him. Certainly there were points in his after career at which his views would be shared by few of our readers. It is unpleasant to read that he blamed his brother missionaries at Frere Town for being too "dissenterish"; it is almost comical to read how, when the supply of surplices ran short on one occasion, he rigged out one of his clergy in a sheet. But those blemishes are very rare. The impulses that stirred and guided him came straight from the cross. Devoted he may have been to Episcopacy, loyal to his Church, hampered occasionally by ritualistic fetters, but he was a servant of the Church of Christ, worthy of praise and honour from all who profess and call themselves Christians.

From the time of his conversion, the methods of his work and life were absolutely changed. He began by setting aside his inseparable pulpit companion, the sermon case, and after some floundering learned to preach vigorously, directly and persuasively. But the chief mark of the change was a new concern for the souls of his hearers and parishioners. The word of life was now always on his lips; and the little church at Martinhoe was crowded with audiences which felt and responded to the change. A few months, however, opened out to him a larger sphere. At his father's request he accepted, with much hesitancy, the vacant charge of his proprietary chapel at Hurst; and after spending some months with an experienced clergyman, near Derby, in becoming acquainted with the varied work of a well-ordered parish, he was inducted in November, 1875, as incumbent of Hurst—a position which he occupied till he left England, seven years afterward, and resumed in the interval between his African expeditions.

The story of his incumbency is one of those records which show us the power of the Church of England at its very best and purest. He had no stipend, and his moderate private resources were dedicated without

reserve to maintaining and extending the Christian agencies of the parish. A keen rider, he soon sold his pony, and turned the stable into a mission hall. We find him following drunkards into public houses, nursing small-pox patients, pressing the Gospel upon criminals in the county prison, gathering young men in his house on Christmas Day to keep them from temptation.

### CHOKED CHRISTIANS.

Mark tells us, in his version of the parable of the sower, that the "cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." It would seem, then, that there is a double danger of being choked by these thorns; a danger that lies in wait as we enter in—that is, a disposition to enter upon the Christian profession without deliberately forsaking all wicked ways; and a danger that threatens us—the peril of these things entering in our lives after we have entered into the kingdom.

It is a dreadful thing to be choked. Those who have either by accident, or design, suffered partial strangulation tell us that it is one of the most dreadful experiences. It must, to the all-seeing eye of God, be a dreadful thing to behold so many of His children gasping for a breath of life, being choked by the evil weeds, thorns and tares, indigenous to the flesh, or diligently planted there by the enemy of souls while they sleep. It is a sad thing to see the corners of a corn field left unrecaped during the harvest (because the grain growing there among the thorns is not worth reaping) afterward reaped down and bound in bundles and burned, the thorns and choked product of a good seed together. It is a sadder thing to behold the lives of not a few Christians all overgrown and choked with thorns and weeds just ripening for the fire of destruction, because they are shrivelled and choked and not fit to be gathered into our Lord's garner.

Perhaps it will be well to suggest the things which do most choke these weedy professors. Our Lord gives a list of them: "The cares of the world," "the deceitfulness of riches," "the pleasures of this life," "and the lusts of other things." Look at this catalogue list of deadly thorns. "The care of this world" has swallowed up many a thousand professors, who have forgotten that they were the children of God, and have given themselves to anxious care about what shall be eaten and wherewithal shall the body be clothed; more who have "made haste to be rich," or have made riches their goal of life; while others have given themselves up to the pleasures of this life; and still others, who in general allow the lusts of the flesh and of the eye to dictate to them in all their earthly life. Let us be warned by these very suggestive pictures and teachings of our Lord, and look to our lives, and see if there be any of these evil thorns "springing up" or "entering in," to mar and hinder the work of God, and choke His good seed.—N. Y. Independent.

FAITH, though weak, is still faith—a glimmering taper, if not a glowing torch. But the taper may give light as truly as the torch, though not so brightly.

It is estimated that the University of Cambridge has now no fewer than 400 Nonconformist and Methodist undergraduates amongst its resident students.

In the New York Independent a reform in the manner of giving out notices from the pulpit is advocated by Dr. Charles F. Deems, pastor of the Church of the Strangers. Dr. Deems prepares the reading of his hymns and his Scripture lessons as carefully as he does his sermons, and is trying to see whether he really cannot make the reading of the notices to some a "means of grace," as he knows it is to others a "hope of glory." He strives to make each Scripture lesson a sermon, so that if any one should fall asleep or be called out after it, he would have got his portion in due season. He strives to make every hymn the same. Now and then he has a prelude to the sermon which seizes some current event, and squeezes all the milk out of it. Why, he asks, can I not take up a whole batch of notices, of all kinds and colours, and pack these words down into a cheese? He objects, however, to his pulpit being transformed into a gratuitous advertising medium, and he suggests—probably sarcastically—whether churches with large congregations should not establish a tariff of rates. It might in some cases be a source of income, and obviate the necessity of bazaars.