

hard and wages low. He had such faith in them; and in better days coming they could not leave him. When his old friend, the head of the house, was long dead, and he too was old, and on cold days covered his thin hair with a scarf, he loved to meet a boy that laughed and sang in spite of rags and hunger. And his change-pocket was never empty, though his fingers were taking something out of it most of the time.

When at last he could walk no more in the streets, softly whistling to himself and patting with his cane the children he met, when the hand of death laid him low, and friends shrank at the sight of his suffering, a happy smile was always on his trembling lips, and his last words were, "Oh, the good, good time that's coming—the best time of all!"—*Sunday School Times*

A NEW YEAR'S HYMN.

The old year's winged hours,
From day to golden day,
With winter snows and summer flowers,
Have sped upon their way,
To come no more again,
With hopes and tears, and joys and tears,
And gifts for men!

What priceless boon, O Time
To the New Year is given?
Oh, may it help our feet to climb
The narrow path to Heaven,
Where, on the sapphire floor,
God's sons shall stand at His right hand,
For evermore.

Vain, vain is all beside!
Nor gold nor love can save
Our glory from the rolling tide
Which sweeps us to the grave,
Where though all else decays,
God's Word is sure, and shall endure
To endless days.

Oh, while the New Year rolls
To join the darkening past,
Teach us, dear Saviour of our souls,
Our cares on Thee to cast,
To know, as we are known,
Till angel throngs shall join our songs
Before Thy Throne.
—Ven. Archdeacon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S.

"THANK HIM."

AFTER one of the hard-fought battles of the war, a Confederate chaplain was called hastily to see a dying soldier; taking his hand, he said, "Well, my brother, what can I do for you?" He supposed, of course, the young fellow would want him to cry to God for help in his extremity; it was not so.

"Chaplain, he said, "I want you to cut a lock of hair for my mother;

and then, chaplain. I want you to kneel down and return thanks to God for me."

"For what?" asked the chaplain.

"For giving me such a mother; oh, she is a good mother! Her teachings are my comfort now. And then, chaplain, thank God that by His grace I am a Christian. What would I do now if I were not a Christian? And thank Him for giving me dying grace; He has made this hard bed feel 'soft as downy pillows are.' And O, chaplain, thank Him for the promised home in glory—I'll soon be there."

"And so, said the chaplain, "I knelt by his bed with not a petition to utter; only praises and thanksgivings for a good mother, a Christian hope, dying grace and an eternal home in glory."—*Selected.*

"THE PRINCE OF LIFE."

OF all the names attributed to Christ in the Scriptures, that is the most fitting in which He is designated "The Prince of Life." This He is, not only in virtue of His resurrection, but also from the fact that He is the great kindler and sustainer of the life of God in the human soul. The opinions of men may differ with regard to His person or His claims, but none can deny that a spiritual power so sublimely creative as that which He wielded, and still wield, was never before or since manifested to the world. Other teachers have given precepts; Christ gives not precepts merely, but life. He differs from the moralists in this, that while all that they can do is to assert that righteousness is an imperative pursuit of the soul, He by His inbreathed power renders it a practicable pursuit. It is not enough for us to know the right. We know much better than we do. The words which Ovid puts into the mouth of Medea, "I see and approve the better, and yet I pursue the worse," are the formulæ of universal experience. Speaking of one seeking purity of life in his own strength, the poet says:

Each morning hailed a new Endeavour's birth,
Each evening wept its pitiful corpse before.

We have all tasted this bitterness, and sighed for a power within us, a soul within our soul, which would make virtue possible to us. Such a power Christ imparts. Of old it was said concerning Him, that "to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to

become the sons of God," and that olden miracle is continually repeated to-day. The spirit of life in Christ Jesus frees men from the law of sin and death. A vital inspiration of goodness, of faith, of purity, of love, and of self-sacrifice streams into the soul united by faith to the living Christ, imparting to it a true salvation by delivering it from the sin which is its great curse and its real damnation. To quote the words of Fichte: "The lapse of time serves only to confirm the everlasting miracle, that in all who come unto God through Christ Jesus a new heart is created; and until time expires, all who enter into the Kingdom of God must enter by Him; and until the end of time, all who truly know themselves in their relation to Him will bow down to acknowledge the incomparable glory of His manifestation." Jesus Christ does that which no other being who ever trod the earth has been able to do. He raises men from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; He wakes the dormant eternity in their hearts; He nerves them for battle with evil angels and with evil men; He strangles the serpents of vile habit which, as in Dante's awful vision, had become incorporate with their blood and life, and flings them to the dust; He kindles within them love, and pity, and joyous self-sacrifice; He energises their will with the inbreathed power of God. He is the vine rooted in God, and they are the branches; and as the life of the vine pulsates through the branches, so by their union with Christ the life of God pulsates through them. This is the grand open secret of Christian experience, Christ in the soul forming it into a new creature. This is the abiding miracle of the Gospel rooted in the consciousness of every true Christian, and secure against all assaults of unbelief from whatever quarter they may arise.

Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound, nor doubt Him, nor deny;
Yea; with one voice, O world, tho' thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

Rather the earth shall doubt when her retrieving
Pours in the rain and rushes from the sod,
Rather than he for whom the great conceiving
Stirs in his soul to quicken into God.

—*Selected.*

MAKE life a ministry of love, and it will always be worth living.—*Robert Browning.*