

pleasure. She was very beautiful in her dazzling robing. The gleam of pearls and the lustres of silk and lace vied with each other to enchain her loveliness, but even as she came sailing into the room, with smiles upon her young, red lips, and a welcome in her words, there came, too, floating noiseless at her side, the presence of that angel child. The better feelings her innocent presence had awakened were warm yet, and before he knew it, the young man said quickly and earnestly.

‘Does you love God?’

‘What do you mean?’ exclaimed the young girl, with a start of surprise.

‘I was thinking as you came in, of a lovely child I saw yesterday,’ he replied. As I was in the act of leaving the coach she suddenly looked up and asked me that question.

‘And what, pray, put it into the child’s head? What did you answer?’

‘I am ashamed to say I was not prepared with an answer,’ replied the young man, casting down his eyes.

That night pleasure had no gratification for him. His feet trod languidly the mazes of the dance, his smiles were forced, and more than once it was said of him: ‘He does not seem himself.’

No, he was not like the gay, thoughtless self of former years. There was a still pool lying in his bosom, the waters of which had never before been disturbed.

Now a little child had dropped a pebble in, and the vibration was to go on through eternity.

#### THE DANGER OF HALTING.

What is it you are wavering between? Dust and ashes, and “a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” On your right hand is Christ, heaven, and an immortality of blessedness; on your left hand is disobedience, rebellion, discontent, remorse, despair, and an immortality of misery. Between these you are halting! While you halt the “gulf” is forming that will soon be “fixed;” the character is deepening that will soon be stereotyped for ever. Indecision becomes decision; you decide for hell while you waver about heaven. And how imminent the peril of those that are wavering? It is now, or it is never; it is here, or it is nowhere. The door will soon be shut that can never be opened, and the dark abyss set that can never be crossed. O! that I could bring home to every halting man the position that, as a sinner without Christ, he occupies!

Some will remember a touching tale mentioned in one of the little periodicals published for the laboring classes. It was published some years ago. It narrates how a poor man on one of the rocky coasts of our country, that got his bread by gathering sea-fowls’ eggs, went out one morning on his perilous adventure, and looking down a terrific steep, he saw midway a ledge abutting from the rock, covered with a cluster of the sea fowls’ nests. He fastened his rope to a tree above the cliff, and lowered himself down till he trod upon the ledge. In his eagerness to grasp the spoil, he unwittingly dropped the noose of the rope by which he had descended, and it swung as it appeared, far beyond the reach; and there he stood on that narrow ledge, above him a fearful height he had no hope to scale, below him a terrific precipice with the sea dashing at its base. It was a moment of unutterable anguish. In intensity of dismay, by a desperate effort, he sprang upward. It pleased God he should grasp the rope. He drew himself up to the summit, trembling with transport and terror. Every one of us can realise the peril of that fellow creature. But how akin to this, but intensely more awful, the condition of every waverer! He stands on the narrow ledge of life; above him is the terrific mountain of his guilt that he has no power in himself to scale; below him is the fearful abyss of death, with the death that never dies. There is but the breath in his nostrils between him and the bottomless pit. O, awake, fellow-sinner; awake to thy true and perilous position! It is late, but not too late. There is yet hope that hangs from the cross of Jesus, or rather from the throne of God; that hope can lift thee over the mount of thy guilt, and land thee on the brink of the shore of eternal safety and peace. O leap and live? “Fly for refuge, and lay hold of the hope set before you,” and as God liveth, your soul shall live! He is slow to anger and plenteousness in mercy.” “As I live,” saith the Lord God, “I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live. “Turn ye, turn ye; for why will you die?”—*Rev. Hugh Stowell.*

“Before you enter into prayer ask your soul these questions: To what end, O my soul, art thou retired into this place? Art thou come to converse with the Lord in prayer? Is thy business slight? Is it not concerning the welfare of thy soul?”