

## DRIFTING.

Downward, downward with the stream,  
Crowds I see, as in a dream.

Floating aimlessly along;  
Now through flowing meads they glide,  
Now behind a mountain hide,  
Now with others side by side  
They are drifting on the tide—  
Drifting as a giddy throng

Onward, onward swift they verge  
Toward that bourne where soon shall merge  
Time into eternity:

Yet, as birds upon the wing,  
Thoughts of ill away they fling,  
While the echoing hillsides ring,  
With the jocund songs they sing,  
In their merry-making glee.

Backward, backward, as they gaze,  
O'er the past a misty haze,  
Hangs along its distant marge,  
While o'ercast in mystic blue,  
Growing darker in its hue,  
Bursts the future into view,  
And from vistas breaking through,  
Opens ominous and large

Upward, upward now the eye  
Wanders vainly to descry  
Objects floating dimly there;  
For the peaks, which they have past,  
On the far horizon cast  
Shadows magnified and vast,  
And which spectre-like at last  
Fill the landscape everywhere.

Seaward, seaward they forlorn,  
Toward that shoreless sea are borne,  
Drifting on without a guide;  
See, the lights along the shore,  
Which of late appeared before,  
Now are past, and, misted o'er,  
Seem receding evermore,  
As adrift at sea they ride!

Skyward, skyward, in the gloom,  
Billows on the ocean loom,  
And portentous shoreward roll;  
Denser gather clouds around,  
Louder booms the thunder's sound,  
Peals from wave to wave resound,  
While earth reeling under ground  
Quakes from centre to each pole.

Landward, landward, tempests lower,  
And they, wholly in their power,  
Now can see no lights astern,  
From the past no glimmers left,  
In the future gleams no rift,  
Never shall its darkness lift,  
On and on they ceaseless drift,  
Never, never to return.

--Religious Herald.

## Our Story.

## THE DRUMMER BOY.

One cold December morning, about eight years ago, a party of tourists were crossing the Alps and a pretty large party, too, for there were several thousand of them together. Some were riding, some walking, and most of them had knapsacks on their shoulders, like many Alpine tourists nowadays. But instead of walking-sticks they carried muskets and bayonets, and dragged along with them fifty or sixty cannon.

In fact, these tourists were nothing less than a French army; and a very hard time of it they appeared to be having. Trying work, certainly, even for the strongest man, to wade for miles through knee-deep snow in this bitter frost and biting wind, along these narrow, slippery mountain paths; with precipices hundreds of feet deep all around. The soldiers looked thin and haggard for want of food and sleep, and the poor horses that were dragging the heavy guns stumbled at every step.

But there was one among them who seemed quite to enjoy the rough marching, and tramped along through the deep snow and cold gray mist—through which the great mountain peaks overhead loomed like shadowy giants—as merrily as though he were going to a picnic. This was a little drummer boy ten years old, whose fresh rosy face looked very bright and pretty among the grim, scarred visages of the old soldiers. When the cutting wind whirled a shower of snow in his face he dashed it away with a cheery laugh, and awoke all the echoes with the

lively rattling of his drum, till it seemed as if the huge black rocks around were all singing in chorus.

"Bravo, Petit Tambour!" (little drummer) cried a tall man in a shabby gray cloak, who was marching at the head of the line, with a long pole in his hand, and striking it into the snow every now and then, to see how deep it was. "Bravo, Pierre, my boy! With such music as that one could march all the way to Moscow."

The boy smiled, and raised his hand to his cap in salute, for this rough-looking man was no other than the general himself, "Fighting Macdonald, one of the bravest soldiers in France, of whom his majesty used to say that one sight of his face in battle was worth a whole regiment."

"I will give our general," shouted a hoarse voice, and the cheer, flying from mouth to mouth, rolled along the silent mountain like a peal of distant thunder.

But its echoes had hardly died away when the silence was again broken by another sound of a very different kind—a strange, uncanny sort of whispering far away up the great white side. Moment by moment it grew louder and harsher, till at length it swelled into a deep, hoarse roar.

"On your faces, lads!" roared the general, "it's an avalanche!"

But, before his men had time to obey, the ruin was upon them. Down thundered the great mass of snow, sweeping the narrow ledge path like a waterfall, and crashing down along with it came heaps of stones and gravel and loose earth, and uprooted bushes, and great blocks of cold blue ice. For a moment all was dark as night; and when the rush had passed, many of the brave fellows who had been standing on the path were nowhere to be seen. They had been carried down over the precipice, and either killed or buried alive in the snow.

But the first thought of their comrades was not for them. When it was seen what had happened, one cry arose from every mouth:

"Where's our Pierre? Where's our little drummer?"

Where, indeed? Look which way they would, nothing was to be seen of their poor little favorite, and when they shouted his name there was no answer. Then there broke forth a terrible cry of grief, and many a hard old soldier, who had looked without flinching at a line of leveled muskets, felt the tears start that that face would never be seen among them again.

But all at once, far below them, out of the shadow of the black unknown gulf that lay between those tremendous rocks, arose the faint roll of a drum beating the charge. The soldiers stared and bent eagerly forward to listen, then up went a shout that shook the air.

"He's alive, comrades! our Pierre's alive after all!"

"And beating his drum still, like a brave lad! He wanted to have the old music to the last!"

"But we must save him, lads, or he'll freeze to death down there. He must be saved!"

"He shall be!" broke in a deep voice from behind, and the general himself was seen standing on the brink of the precipice, throwing off his cloak.

"No, no, general!" cried the grenadiers, with one voice, "you mustn't run such a risk as that. Let one of us go instead; your life is worth more than all of ours put together."

"My soldiers are my children," answered Macdonald quietly; "and no father grudges his own life to save his son."

The soldiers knew better than to make any other objections. They obeyed in silence, and the general was swinging in mid air, down, down, down, till he vanished at last into the darkness of the cold, black depth below.

Then every man drew a long breath,

and all eyes were strained to watch for the first sight of his appearing, for they knew well that he would never come back without the boy, and that the chances were terribly against him.

Meanwhile Macdonald, having landed safely at the foot of the precipice, was looking anxiously around in search of Pierre; but the beating of the drum had ceased, and he had nothing to guide him.

"Pierre!" shouted he, at the top of his voice, "where are you, my boy?"

"Here, general!" answered a weak voice, so faint that he could hardly distinguish it.

And there, sure enough, was the little fellow's curly head, half buried in a huge mound of snow, which alone had saved him from being dashed to pieces against the rocks as he fell. Macdonald made for him at once; and although he sank waist deep at every step, reached the spot at last.

"All right now, my brave boy," said the general, cheerily; "put your arm around my neck and hold tight; we'll have you out of this in a minute."

The child tried to obey, but his stiffened fingers had lost all their strength, and even when Macdonald himself clasped the tiny arms around his neck their hold gave way directly.

What was to be done? A few minutes more and it would have been too late to save the lives of either the general or the child, when the brave fellows above seeing the perilous position, lowered two of their comrades who succeeded in rescuing them from a terrible death.

## A RUSSIAN EVANGELIST.

The expulsion of Colonel Pashkoff from Russia marks an epoch in the history of religious knowledge in that land. The sole cause of his expulsion is that he preaches Christ as "the only name given under Heaven among men whereby we must be saved," and this teaching threatens to disturb the ecclesiastical cobwebs, and remove the dirty crust of superstition, which ages of ignorance and indolence have allowed to defile the Holy Name. No one ever supposes that Colonel Pashkoff, and those working with him, have any connection with revolutionary societies, or political organizations; on the contrary, they are all conspicuous for their devotion to the Emperor, and are absolutely loyal to the Imperial House beyond all suspicion. Colonel Pashkoff expound the Scriptures—that is all. He avoids all questions of Church forms, all matters of controversy, and keeps close to the written word on the one subject of Christ and Christ alone as the Saviour of the world. This—and only this—has aroused the anger of the Church dignitaries, and they have succeeded—at least for a time—in putting a stop to his good work. But in Russia the State has never, since the days of Peter the Great, been the blind slave of the Church, and it remains to be seen, when the present terror arising from the wicked acts of political mountebanks has passed away, if the State will not recognize the value of the movement begun by Colonel Pashkoff, and sanction it with advantages not hitherto given him. At any rate, now that the Government by its decision has brought this subject before the Christian Church, it becomes a matter of *thankfulness* and *prayer* for all Christians in free Christian lands *thankfulness* that our Lord has enabled His servants to begin this work; *prayer*, that the rulers may reconsider their decision to withdraw it, and that the laborers, for a season compelled to rest, may be sustained during the dark hour.

The whole history of this movement is full of encouragement, for it shows that God is working in ways little suspected by us. Russia seems the most excluded of any land in Europe from the benefits of the Gospel; partly from the crushing

power of the Church, and partly from its language; yet within the land there are some twelve millions who dissent from the ruling Church. They are, however, all fettered, and prevented in every possible way from public teaching. The great bulk of the people are compelled to enter the Orthodox Church, as it is called, and then the clergy use their authority to prevent them escaping from it. The dissenters are not allowed to convert to their views a member of the Orthodox Church. Foreigners are not allowed to enter the country and convert members of the Orthodox Church by teaching Scripture truth. The clergy have no desire for improvement; and the laity have no ability to start in search of it. As a matter of fact the higher classes of Russians travel abroad freely, and come in contact with religious thought and activity in other lands. In this way many have found Christ their Redeemer; and they deplore the superstitions of the ruling Church, which practically hide Christ from the people. Among those who in foreign lands have embraced Christ as their Saviour is Colonel Pashkoff; and, when he had found this "Pearl of price," he was anxious to show it to his fellow-countrymen. For some years he has labored assiduously to diffuse scriptural knowledge in Russia; he has been most earnest in working, most liberal in giving; he has translated religious books, attractive tales, interesting tracts, from English and French, into Russian; and as often as the censors would allow the printing, he has published them at such a price as to be easily accessible to the poorest. Often, the censors, in their blindness or fear, have thwarted his plans, by refusing permission to print books which had but one fault, and that only a negative one, viz., that they said nothing of images or saints. Herein consists a great difficulty in the path of improvement. The censors stand at the entrance and resolutely bar admission. At particular moments everything depends on the whim of the censor, who probably has but little knowledge of the thing he forbids, but is acting from fear of, or a wish to please, his superiors. Novels, even of a doubtful character, easily meet with censorial approval, because they please the people; so do scientific books; but moral and religious books are subject to suspicions and worrying examinations, unless they preach up the superstitions and authority of the Church. But Col. Pashkoff has worked with unceasing energy and untiring zeal to secure a better literature for the people. To some extent he has succeeded, but in the prosecution of this noble work he has met with rebuffs and opposition that would have intimidated any man less earnest than he is.

Some years ago he found that several droschky-drivers, as a matter of convenience and economy, had given up Sunday work; but they had nothing to occupy themselves with, and certainly all the after part of the day was simply idle; immediately he gathered them together on Sunday evenings, he taught them, read good and instructive books to them, and always some portion of the New Testament. The men were delighted, many of them have received lasting spiritual good; and the numbers increased so that he had to open more places, and ask friends to help him. As ways opened before him he went on in faith until finally, having secured all requisite permissions from the authorities, he opened his own house for expounding the Scriptures and for prayer. This truly was a new and startling step. Alas that in the capital of a great European country it should be a novelty for Christians to meet together to speak of Jesus; but so it is in St. Petersburg; and for a rich man in the position of Colonel Pashkoff to do so, was more startling still. He has a noble mansion in the best part of the city, with saloons large enough and