

sacrifice the first thing met on his way home from a victorious battlefield. The awful sequel followed: The greeting of his daughter as she came outside the city walls with her attendant minstrels to welcome the victor, and the relentless fulfilment of the father's vow by the offering up of his dearest possession.

The spiritual application of this terrible drama made such an impression on the young society girl that she decided immediately to consecrate her life to the work of the church. In order that the renunciation might be complete she was ordained as a sister of the Holy Communion. Then her religious life began.

She established as a first venture a school for abandoned girls. Very soon a dispensary followed. In a short time the cholera epidemic came, and the girl who once thought it her highest mission to lead a cotillion discovered that it was happier to lead a band of nurses. Wherever the scourge raged, there Sister Anne was to be found. She was absolutely without fear. No danger was too great, no loathsome work too hard for her. The sick blessed her, and the dying looked their last into her loving eyes.

After the epidemic passed, and there was no longer any need of dramatic heroism, she quietly gave the rest of her life to the Sisterhood of St. Luke's Hospital. To be an every-day nurse, to have common drudgery, to relieve suffering that ranged through the whole gamut of misery, to bury herself in unheroic work—herein lay her womanly heroism.

The sisterhood that she founded has now many thousands of members throughout the world. When she died at an advanced age her only request was that her ashes should be placed beside those of the preacher who opened her eyes for the first time to the unselfish uses and the true value of this mortal life.

Such in a few words, is the story of a faithful and triumphant stewardship. To her the first step must have seemed a great sacrifice; but very soon the sacrifice was turned into contentment and joy. To all of us the secret of the way to make the best use of life is shown in some of the conditions and associations in which we are placed. The revelation of what we ought to do and what we can become greets us in plenty of time for a decisive choice. For the sake of a few evanescent pleasures shall we allow the soul's opportunity for beneficent, godlike achievement to pass us forever by?—The Youth's Companion.

Mr. Spurgeon on Theatre-Going.

I see it publicly stated, said the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, by men who call themselves Christians, that it would be advisable for Christians to frequent the theatre, that the character of the drama might be raised. The suggestion is about as sensible as if we were bidden to pour a bottle of lavender water into the great sewer to improve its aroma: If the church is to imitate the world in order to raise its tone; things have strangely altered since the days when our Lord said, 'Come ye out from among them, and touch not the unclean thing.' Is Heaven to descend to the infernal lake to raise its tone? Such has been the moral condition of the theatre for many a year that it has become too bad for mending, and even if it were mended it would corrupt again. Pass by it with averted gaze; the house of the strange woman is there. It has not been my lot ever to enter a theatre during the performance of a play; but I have seen enough when I have come home from distant journeys at

night, while riding past the play-houses, to make me pray that our sons and daughters may never go within the doors.

If our church members fall into the habit of frequenting the theatre, we shall soon have them going much further in the direction of vice, and they will lose all relish for the ways of God. Theatre-going, if it become general among professing Christians, will soon prove the death of piety.

A Dream.

(By Clara C. Hoffman.)

Harold slept and dreamed that he died and went to heaven.

He was not surprised to find himself there, for he was prominent, popular and prosperous. He had broken no law, except the law of love, which has no place among the statutes of the state and is not too highly esteemed in the church. Though worldly and self-centred he was highly endowed, reputable and religious. Of course, his place was in heaven! Why not?

Even in fancy, he had never pictured anything half so lovely as the country in which he found himself. It was like a fairy scene. Hill and dale, meadow and stream, richest foliage, beautiful and fragrant flowers; the soft air vocal with song of birds. All this to eye and sense, but why was this land, surpassing thought of poet or artist, without inhabitant? He seemed alone in the midst of this entrancing loveliness. Where were the hosts of the redeemed—the eminently orthodox and respectable Christians of his class? Where the judgment tribunal and the great white throne, and he that sitteth thereon to judge the world? Where the glorious Saviour who had died that such as he might live?

Full of these questioning thoughts he wandered from one scene of beauty to another until he found himself on the summit of a hill from whence his eye could sweep over a vast extent of territory.

Here was nature—in all her varied and exquisite forms of life—yet his soul longed for human companionship. How could he live here alone—alone?

At that moment he saw a dark object against the distant horizon. Does it move? Yes, yes! It is coming toward him? Yes, and again yes! Intently he watches and waits, thrilled with alternate hope and fear.

Now he sees a long, moving line. Nearer and nearer it comes toward him. Now he can distinguish that the procession is composed of living, human beings like unto himself, and all his being is filled with joy. He is not doomed to solitude.

Steadily, steadily the column advances and slowly winds past him. Here are men and women and children. Here are young and old, rich and poor, here the learned and illiterate. Slowly as they pass each one turns and looks into Harold's face. Then like a flash of lightning comes remembrance of time, and place, and circumstance when each of these silent ones had touched the circle of his life—his self-seeking, self-centred life!

He saw the erring seeking a place for repentance. Tender, helpful sympathy would have meant so much! It did not come, and the soul in desperation rushed on to its doom.

Though unfortunate, buffeted and borne down, no hand stretched out to save; the strong, frustrated and defeated—a little encouragement would have driven away the cloud and brought back the sun of hope; youth, chilled and embittered by harsh condemnation; the old and weary and disappointed, longing only for rest and sunshine; the poor who asked for bread and received

a stone; the halt and lame and blind, yet brothers all.

Will they never, never pass? Is this awful procession endless? Will these pictures from memory's gallery haunt the soul forever and forever?

Harold's eyes burned like balls of fire. A great trembling laid hold upon him. Conscience, like a sharpened dagger, pierced to his marrow and remorse wrung his heart. In anguish he cried out, 'My God, my God, is this the judgment?' Then from afar, borne on the soft and fragrant air, came a voice never to be forgotten, 'Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these; ye did it not unto Me.'

In the unspeakable agony of that bitter hour the dream dissolved. Harold awoke.

It was not death—it was not heaven—yet judgment had been rendered. Back to the duties and responsibilities of life came the dreamer with clearer vision to understand that his mental endowment, his splendid physique, his far-reaching influence, his wealth of time, the ever-opening doors of opportunity set before him, are each and all the goods committed to him by the Master, to use for humanity. He that loveth not his brother loveth not God.

Harold's being was illuminated with truth. His heart was filled with love. As self died he poured out his soul in prayer:

'Father, I scarcely dare to pray,
So clear I see, now it is done,
That I have wasted half my day
And left my work but just begun.

'So clear I see, that things I thought
Were right or harmless, were a sin.
So clear I see that I have sought
Unconscious, selfish aims to win.

'So clear I see that I have hurt
The souls I might have helped to save.
That I have selfish been, inert,
Deaf to the calls Thy leaders gave.

'Father, in outskirts of Thy kingdom vast,
The humblest spot give me;
Set me the lowliest task thou hast;
Repentant let me work for Thee.
—Union Signal.'

Famine Difficulties.

A lady missionary in India set out to relieve a special case of distress through starvation. After feeding some children, a crowd of about fifty people collected, begging for food. 'Evidently,' writes the lady, 'they were aware of the fact that there was not enough for all, so they refused to sit down and be served in turn, as the Bunya wished. They had become (rendered so by semi-starvation) like wild beasts fighting for food. We tried pushing them aside; the Bunya took the food-basket right away; while I endeavored, by umbrella and shouts, to make them quiet and orderly enough to receive the food. It was all in vain. They were wild because unable to clutch at the food. At last I put the basket in the tumbum, and sat myself on the tailboard to dispense it; but just as the food reached the would-be recipient's clothing, which was held out, a stronger one managed to convey it to his or her keeping. With the help of the two men, I managed to divide the mere handful of food (for such a crowd). One blind man was clutching at me on one side, and a lad, rendered horrible to look at by small-pox, on the other, the coachman quite unable to keep him back. Never have I seen such a crowd before, and never again, without help of police or a large staff of servants, shall I attempt to feed such a famished group. It was indeed pitiful to see them. I shall write to officials at once, and see if something cannot be done for them. My text this morning was, 'Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy. To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in time of famine.' We do need strength and faith to grasp all such promises.'