

Pastor and People.

NO CROSS, NO CROWN.

I sometimes think when life seems drear
And gloom and darkness gather here—
When hope's bright star forsakes my
skies

And sorrow o'er my pathway lies,
It would be sweet, it would be best
To fold my tired hands and rest;
But then God sends an angel down
Who sweetly says: "No Cross, no Crown!"

Last night I heard the river moan
With sad and melancholy tone;
I saw its waters flashing free,
And dashing headlong to the sea!
I would have plunged beneath its tide
And on its friendly bosom died,
But then God sends an angel down,
Who whispered still: "No Cross, no
Crown!"

I said: "The world is dark and lone:
There is no hand to hold my own,
I cannot bear the noonday heat,
The thorns so pierce my bleeding feet!"
"Behold!" he cried, "where, sacrificed,
Shine the red, bleeding wounds of Christ!"
And fell his tears of mercy down,
While still he said: "No Cross, no
Crown!"

Then turned I from the river shore
And sought the lonely world once more;
With aching heart and burning head
To battle for my crust of bread!
But Hunger came, who knew me well,
And fainting by the way, I fell,
But still the angel fluttering down,
And weeping said: "No Cross, no Crown!"
No Cross—no Crown! . . . As standing
there,

The cross too heavy seemed to bear;
And for the crown—I could not see
That it was ever meant for me!
The words I could not understand,
Even while I pressed the angel's hand:
But still he looked with pity down,
And still he said: "No Cross, no Crown!"

Back to the world I turned again
To feel its grief; endure its pain;
But all the sweetness that it gave
I followed weeping to the grave;
And from the cold and quiet sod
I lifted my sad eyes to God,
And saw the angel coming down,
And in his hands a golden crown.

Then I forgot my earthly loss
And kneeling, lifted up the Cross;
Though all at once made life so sweet
Lay 'neath the lilies at my feet!
A radiance from the realms of Light,
Flashed for a moment on my sight;
A still small voice came fluttering down:
"It is enough. Receive the Crown."

—E. L. Stanton, in Atlanta Constitution

A MIRACLE OF HEALING.

The Rev. John McNeill, of London, spoke lately at the Hotel Epworth, Chicago. The passage was the healing of the woman who was afflicted with the issue of blood; Mark v. 25. His subject was "How little will do," and he spoke as follows:

Now, look at that woman and that man, and remember that all these miracles of healing are parables of grace. 'Tis a trite remark: it is, indeed. We have heard something like it before. But maybe, through the blessing of God, the commonplaces of sin and grace may fall with new meaning on some mad or sad, some demented or dejected sinner here.

Here is the woman, and you think you can almost hear her heavy sighs. Twelve years ago she was, perhaps, in opening womanhood, young and bright and gay. Suddenly there came this blight with its drain upon the body, its deep and deepening dejection to the spirit, and pretty much as if she had been a leper, its shame and "separation." One doctor was tried and then another, but as the weary years rolled on, hope died away, and now there was nothing before her but the opening grave not very far ahead. I may be speaking to some sad, almost despairing sinner, but I dare to say to you now: "Don't despair. Do not begin to say, 'There is no help for me.'" This woman might well have said so, and yet, oh! wonder of wonders, the day came when she and Jesus met together. Her burden was lifted, she was restored, not only physically but spiritually, to that simple faith in the Blessed Redeemer which brings into the heart eternal life.

Now, that is the hope for some of you. If I had preached this sermon twelve years ago, let us say, you, although close by, would not have been here to listen. You were young and healthy, maybe wealthy, and you tossed your head at religion. Religion and preachers might be very well for aged, sick, and careworn people, but they had a very slender interest for you. The pride of life was at its height. But it is otherwise to-night. Twelve years have made a difference. If I had only overheard you, this very day you were heaving great sighs like your sorrowful neighbours. You are here to-night because your strength is weakened in the way, your days of life are shortened. Well, bless God for anything that takes out of us the pride of life, the false strength, and makes us come tottering at last to Jesus. How true to fact is this item. "She had suffered many things of many physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse." Why, for example, are theatres full in Chicago every night in the week? They are filled to a considerable extent with people who are trying to get rid of a gnawing weariness. They will pay this clown or that actor, saying, "Make me surmount this secret and growing sadness." They say to this prima donna, "Sing to me and I will pay much money if you will drive from my soul, aye, for one hour, this mortal weariness, this ghastly sickness that is killing all my joy. Ease me of mine adversary."

You have heard that pitiful story of one of our famous players, Grimaldi, who used to charm thousands by the hour, and make them forget their miseries by his acting. One day there came to a doctor, a weary, haggard, man who said: "I am so wretchedly heavy and dull that I cannot get cheered up." The doctor examined him and then said, "You are simply melancholy; why not go and hear Grimaldi?" A spasm of intense pain crossed the poor man's face as he said, "Doctor, don't jest with me; I am Grimaldi."

"She came hopefully when she heard." If she had been like some of us she would have said, "Oh, ah, he is come is he?" And if you had been her neighbour, you would have said, "Rachel, dear, you ought to try." "Oh, but why should I trouble." "Because, since I knew you first, my good neighbour, you are getting thinner and whiter. When I hear that hollow cough of yours through the wall at nights, I cannot sleep for the concern it gives me. I think you should try." "Oh, well, maybe I'll think about it." And she would have been like some here to-night. When she heard Jesus, she would have done really nothing; right on up to nine to-night, through ten, twenty, thirty, forty years, you have heard and heard, and heard; but you have never come to Christ yet! Notice further, that as she came she was saying to herself, "If I may touch but His clothes I shall be whole." Thus she came hopefully.

Now, my friends, I wish you would help yourselves, I wish you would come to the gospel as you never have come before. Pluck up heart of grace. Here is the very mildest expectations in and from Jesus, and they will never be falsified; they will be fulfilled. Oh, be hopeful about the love and power of Christ; help them to save you; be willing and wishful to be saved, then put it all to the touch this very moment.

But now I must hasten. I see the poor creature coming with a wrap, shall I say, of some kind pulled about her thin, sharp shoulders, pushing through the crowd, and they, perhaps, turned upon her in anger. None of us like to be shoved in a crowd. Men would turn sharply round, but when they saw her wasted frame, all their manhood's pity rose up; they stood back and made a lane for her until she came right in behind the Lord. I see her put forth a hand, "like the veined marble." She touches the Saviour's robe, and straight-

way I did rub mine eyes to see if it was the same woman. Oh, what a change! Straightway the mortal pallor went from her face, the pinching from her frame. The weight of twelve years lifted and floated away like the clouds before the sun. Straightway she was whole. "She felt in her body that she was healed of that plague." She was a "braw lass" once more.

The same Christ is with us to-night, and you have but to touch him, you have but to come into contact with him ever so little, and you will be infinitely the better for it. Salvation is so easy as this. The Lord is so full of blessing that if you will only sit there, saying in your heart, and thinking in your heart, "Oh, Lord, I want to be saved," then it is done and you are saved. "Before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." Touching and touching. I like to dwell on that, because we are so apt to think, a number of us, that if we are in the general crowd, that will do. But that won't do, and some of us, up to this hour, have only been in the crowd. The Lord Jesus Christ never once yet heard you cry, or felt the throb of your faith. Now, there is the Bible, and if you will take one of the texts and use it like the telegraph plunger, and just press it with the weight of your own need, it will say, "Lord, this is I." He will acknowledge it and say, "Yes, here I am, you have called up the Lord." You have wired to heaven, you have touched the Lord's very heart the moment that you press your own soul's finger anywhere on His own word of promise.

You have first to take Christ, and then to confess Christ. You cannot come to Christ and steal a blessing, and slip away and say, "I won't tell anybody." You have to come out openly and confess Christ, and when you do it the great blessing of it is, that He seals and confirms your faith. Not her touch, but her trust; not her finger, but her faith through her finger. "He sealed the blessing upon her because she confessed Him before the world." We must break with false modesty, false shame, and cringing fear. We must confess what great things He hath done for us. And by His help we shall.

CALVIN AND SERVETUS.

The leading article in The Presbyterian and Reformed Review for July, on "The Trial of Servetus," by Prof. C. W. Shields, is of great value. The learned professor admits that he will seem "to tilt against a wall," in re-opening the case and defending Calvin, who, in the popular belief, "not only taught that hell is full of infants a span long, but proceeded to roast the chief opponent of that doctrine in a fire of green wood, with his heretical book tied to his girdle." Nevertheless, the professor has found in Calvin's works, in the documents of the trial, and in contemporary authors, new passages, and others which appear in a new light in vindication of the great Reformer.

Here are the facts which he establishes:

The trial and execution of Servetus were demanded and approved by the Christian world, Romanist and Protestant, and specially by the leading reformed theologians of the day, so that if Calvin was guilty of all that is alleged against him, it is unfair to single him out for all the vituperative condemnation. The charges against Servetus were not merely theological, but political; he "was condemned, scarcely as a heretic, but essentially as seditious; and politics acted a much more important part than theology towards the end of the trial." Heresy was subordinate to sedition and conspiracy. The whole procedure was before a civil tribunal, of which Calvin was not a member; the Presbytery of Geneva, of which he was a member, had nothing to do with it. Not only was he not a mem-

ber of that Council which tried the case, but the majority of it were personally opposed to him, uninfluenced by him, seeking to stab him. That Council was forced to condemn and execute Servetus by his own rash and violent course, and by the pressure brought to bear upon it by the other authorities of Switzerland and of Europe. While Calvin wished to have Servetus somehow punished and made harmless, he earnestly entreated that he might not be put to death. When he found that the magistrates were bent upon the extreme penalty, he and his ecclesiastical colleagues, besought them either to change the sentence, or effect it in a milder form, by means of the sword.

No doubt, these assertions will surprise many, and be received with incredulity. The slander on the Reformer has been so widely circulated, that it can scarcely be discredited in all quarters now. But, as Prof. Shields closes his article: "The sixteenth century made itself justly responsible for the burning of Servetus; the nineteenth century has been unjustly holding Calvin responsible for it. It is time for the scales of public judgment to be restored to a true balance of praise and blame. Of late we have been hearing too much of the intolerance of Calvin, and too little of his fidelity and courage and magnanimity; too much as to the tyranny of a former age, and too little as to the license and abuse and detraction of our own day."

A general thought, beyond the special case is suggested by the article of which we have thus given the pith.

During the trial of Servetus, Calvin himself was struggling in Geneva against enemies and detractors. "His influence upon the Council as a body, was gone. Of the twenty-five councillors, only seven were Calvinists, as many more were Perrinists, and the intermediate majority were leaning towards Perrin, in the existing controversy with Calvin. True, he emerged from the struggle on the tidal wave of success; but it was a struggle in which he was opposed, maligned, at times apparently beaten. He was the counsellor of the Protestant leaders in all the nations of Europe. He was shaping the course of the Reformation everywhere. He was the great man of the whole movement. His impress more than that of any other man has been felt on all the course of religious and political history since. Such being the case, the general presumption would be, that in little Geneva itself, he was an unresisted and always successful autocrat; that all the Reformed there were his friends; that whatever he advocated was agreed to. But, no, he had jealous rivals. He was beaten time and again on local questions. How true to human nature, even Christianized human nature! So it had been with Paul in the Church; so with Washington in the State. So it has been since with other leaders. Let a man, in Church or State, make his impress on the country or Church at large, and become a power in their movements, in his own little community there will be smaller minds jealous of him, working against him by tricky political scheming in which they will be adepts, but which he will despise, getting the better of him sometimes. They magnify his weak points, and try to injure by behind-the-back attacks and insinuations. Alas for the littleness of human nature. Even fellow citizens in Geneva, who should have had a local pride in the fame of the city, worked against, and sought to pull down the man who gave it that fame! But now they are known, and known to their discredit, only because of their mean connection with him.

The thoroughly great men are those who have done everything thoroughly, and who have never despised anything, however small, of God's making.—Ruskin.