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Religious Miscellany.

Will not be Long.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

'Twill not be long—this wearying commotion
That marks its passage in the human breast,
And, like the billows on the heaving ocean,
That e'er rock the cradle of our being,
Will soon subside; the happy time is near,
When bliss, not pain, shall have its rich increase,
Even unto thee the dove may now be steering
With gracious message. Wait, and hold thy peace;

'Twill not be long!
The lamps go out; the stars give up their shining;
The world is lost in darkness for awhile;
And feeble hearts give way to sad repining,
And foolish as they go'er again could smile.

Why murmur thus, the needless lesson scoring?
Oh read thy Teacher and his word aright,
The world would have no greeting for the morning,
If 'twere not for the darkness of the night;

'Twill not be long!
'Twill not be long; the strife will soon be ended;
The doubts, the fears, the agony, the pain
Will seem but as the clouds that low descended,
To yield their treasure to the paroled pain,
The times of weakness and of sore temptations,
Of bitter grief and agonizing cry;
These earthly cares and senseless tribulations
Will bring a blissful harvest by-and-by—
'Twill not be long!

'Twill not be long; the eye of faith, discerning
The wondrous glory that shall be revealed,
Instructs the soul, that every day is learning
The better wisdom which the world concealed.
And soon, ay, soon, there'll be an end of teaching.

When mortal vision finds immortal sight,
And her true place the soul in gladness reaching,
Beholds the glory of the Infinite.
'Twill not be long!

'Twill not be long; the heart goes on repeating;
It is the burden of the mourner's song;
The work of grace in us He is completing,
Who thus assures us—'It will not be long.'
His rod and staff our fainting steps sustaining,
Our hope and comfort every day will bring;
And we may bear our cross as uncomplaining
As He who leads us unto Calvary;
'Twill not be long!

No Leisure.

BY THE DEAN OF CHESTER.

"No leisure"—a brief, but very true, description of a large part of the life of most of us. It is not a constant complaint with us, that we are hindered at every turn, by want of time, either from beginning what we wish to do, or from doing well what we actually attempt. Our occupations are very different from one another. In some cases they may be trivial. But our day is filled, so that we find "no leisure." Various objects may present themselves which are more or less desirable, advantageous to ourselves, or useful to others. We may be very willing, even anxious, to undertake these things, from selfish motives or unselfish. But the answer we are obliged to make is that we have no time.

This being the case with regard to our employments in general, it is certain that our religious life must be exposed to the same pressure. There is much reason to fear lest our efforts for calm and serious thought, our acts of self-examination and prayer, should suffer frequently and greatly from this dangerous limitation.

We can hardly, then, be better employed than by considering, now on Sunday, how our energies are affected religiously by this prevalent temptation and difficulty. Many subjects, doubtless, would be more attractive and exciting. The controversies of the day supply abundant resources for discussions not by any means unimportant. Doctrinal, Biblical, social, ecclesiastical questions, in every variety, are just now warmly debated by eager combatants. Never was there so great a wealth of material ready for any one, who wished to make a sermon either interesting for the moment, or subservient to the cause of a party. But the purpose of a sermon ought, in most cases, to be the doing of some real good to the souls of those who listen to it. Now, with regard to all these matters of debate, we may take the right side or the wrong side; but, right or wrong, there is a serious personal question which lies, for each of us, deep within and below all this public discussion. The interest and animation of what is conspicuous before the public may hide from us what we really are. There are "many coming and going," and it is most essential to our spiritual welfare, that we ourselves should "come apart" sometimes "into a desert place and rest awhile."

And if this is true even of those who care warmly and hopefully for religious questions, it is still more obviously true of those who are living in a very busy or a very exciting life with hardly any reference to religion at all. Nothing is more likely to act forcibly on the conscience, in such a case, than the awakening of a sense of responsibility in regard to the employment of their time. If there is "no leisure" to pray, there clearly must be something wrong. Let us briefly then, see how this matter stands with regard to different sections of society and different occupations in life.

1. There is, first, a very large class whose life is chiefly occupied with amusement. Hardly any persons have a scantier amount of "leisure" than those who spend their time in laborious idleness. And an appeal to their conscience might surely be made from their own sense of the waste of leisure. They know that religion though desirable, is not the thing which they cannot be without prayer. But for these things there is no time. The obvious conclusion is, that the first step towards a better life must be to make time for thought and prayer. Here, in fact, is the critical and decisive point of their spiritual existence. This is the very pivot on the present, upon which all the future hinges and turns.

(To be Continued.)

Only.

Only one drop of water at a time that had found its way from the mighty ocean through the dike, and was slowly wearing a little channel. Her morning nap had not noticed it, who can tell what the terrible results might be?

Only a stray stray sunbeam! Yet perchance it hath pierced some wretched abode, gladdened some stricken heart, or its golden light found its way through the leafy branches of some wild wood, kissed the moss-covered bark where the violet violet grew, and caused a rich shade of beauty to adorn its lovely form.

Only a gentle breeze! But how many aching brows bath it fanned, how many hearts cheered by its gentle touch!

Only one stray bullet that pierced the noble soldier-boy as he trod the lonely midnight round, faithfully guarding the precious lives intrusted to his keeping, and the life blood slowly ebbed out, and the morning sunbeams fell upon the cold face of the dead!

Only a sentinel! And yet one soul more had passed from its earthly tenement to meet its reward at the hands of a merciful God.

Only a drop of ink! And yet it carried the news of death to anxious ones at home, and caused the tear of anguish to trickle down the furrowed cheek of a widowed mother.

Only a frown! But it left a sad, dreary ache in that child's heart, and the quivering lips and tearful eyes told how sorely he felt it.

Only a smile! But ah! how it cheered the broken heart, engendered a ray of hope, and cast a halo of light around the unhappy parent; made the bed-ridden one forget its present agony for a moment as it dwelt in sunshine of joy, lived in the warmth of that smile.

Only a word! But it carried the poisonous breath of slander, assailing the character. O, how it pierced the lonely heart!

Only one glass! And how many have filled a drunken and reckless revelry, and how many homes made desolate! How many bright anticipations of a bright and happy future blasted by its blighting influence!

Only a mound in the quiet church-yard, and yet it speaks volumes to the stricken ones. Some home has lost a light! Some home circle has a vacant chair!

Only a child, perhaps, yet 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

Only a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple, but it is not forgotten. Then tell on, Christian, yours is a glorious work; hope on ever, for yours is a bright reward.

One soul snatched from the ways of sin and degradation through your feeble efforts coupled with the grace of God will add lustre to your crown of glory, and speak more for your happiness hereafter than a life of selfish works.

Only a prayer, and yet it calls to you for help. It calls for good rain and food; and, Christian, shall we not think of the grace of God who answers that prayer? God grant it in his mercy.

Only a lifetime, a short day in which to prepare for death, for 'as death overtakes us, no judgment will find us.' Let us then gird on the armor anew and press on, the hope of a brighter hereafter being our talisman, using the weapons of prayer, lest we enter into temptation, and lose the rich reward of Him who is faithful even unto death.—N. W. Presbyter.

Religion and do Nothing.

A Christian woman in a revival season had conversed with a young girl upon the importance of a change of heart, and of attending at once to the subject. The girl appeared to be deeply convicted of her need, but was not ready to take the first step.

One evening, as they passed out of a meeting where many had been anxiously inquiring the way of salvation, she turned to her friend and said:—"I wish I could get religion and not do anything!"

Religion, and not do anything—not labor for God—not strive against sin—not accept denials and sacrifices for Christ's sake—not render weak and imperfect love for love infinite and eternal! There is no such religion.

The young girl was at that time convinced of the truth, and she desired the results of prayer, and the safety and happiness of a child of God. But there was something she preferred to a life of piety—she was unwilling to come so boldly and acknowledge Christ as her Saviour.

And so the Spirit, slighted and refused, left her. I do not know that it ever came to her heart again. In a few years she became a critic of all things sacred and holy, then an avowed infidel; and then, while yet in youth, she passed into another world to meet the God she had not done anything for.

When the soul, intelligently convicted of sin, chooses, willfully, and deliberately something else than God there is no certainty that the Spirit will ever again seek to win it to truth, and help it to heaven. Perhaps that one earnest call, and her refusal to obey, was to the glory of the point where turned her eternal destiny. I have never heard that she afterward gave any evidence of a true desire for God or heaven.—*Tract Journal.*

Honey-Comb of the Psalms.

While we do not agree with some of our Scotch-Irish brethren that the psalms of David are to be our only vehicle of sanctuary praise, we do agree with them in the profound love they bear to these wonderful lyrics of the Divine Spirit. We claim the privilege to sing not only them, but "Jesus, lover of my soul!" and "Rock of Ages," likewise. We insist on singing the New Testament as well as the Old; and we heartily acknowledge that in the Old Testament there are no utterances dearer to the devout heart than these delicious melodies. Sweeter are they than honey and the honey-comb.

When we come to the book of Psalms we seem to leave the world and to enter the temple of Jehovah. Hitherto we have been in patriarchal times, in royal courts and the camp of the people. He will draw men into Him. His labor deepens the piety of the Church, and they attend not merely through a sense of duty, but because they delight in the worship of God. Loving God, they are willing to work for Him, and the minister thus secures important aid in building up his congregation. Others will be won by the preacher's courtesy.—*Id.*

Why did you not tell us this Before.

The Missionary Herald relates the following touching incident. Read it, ye professed friends of Christ, and then inquire, "Have we done our duty to the heathen?"

A few years ago, in one of the beautiful islands of Micronesia, a young girl was sitting at the feet of a missionary. A little before that she was a wild, rude creature, as all the heathen children around her were; wearing almost no clothes, and likely to grow up a corrupt and vicious woman, like the other natives of the island. But the missionaries who had come there to live had taken her into their family. There she had learned something about God, and she tried to pray to him. She had put on American clothes, and at the time of which I speak, she was helping the missionary to turn the Gospel of Mark into the language of the islanders. At this time she came to a passage which said something about believing in Christ. She stopped a moment, seemed to be thinking very hard about something, and then looked up into her teacher's face and said: "Missionary, what is it to believe in Jesus?" He had tried to explain it to her before, and now he tried again. At last she seemed to understand it, and to receive it into her heart as if it were meat for her. Just as she was beginning to feel glad that Jesus had forgiven her sins and was her Saviour, a very sad thought came to her, and she looked up into the teacher's face again and said: "Missionary, where are my father and mother?" Why did you not come to tell us this before? Why did your mother and father had died before the missionary came, without ever hearing of Jesus or the way

Depreciation of Ritualism.

The Bishop of Iowa, before leaving England, addressed a letter to the Bishop of London, expressing the great pleasure his visit to England had given him, and his appreciation of the kindness and hospitality received on all sides, but declared he was deeply grieved at the wide spread of ritualism, and in touching and earnest words he urgently advised English Churchmen to stick to the simple doctrines of the Primitive Church and of the English reformation.

Courtesy.
AN ATHENIAN STORY BY LORD MACALAN.
My Athens are its sun of fame had set,
Midst pomp and show the gazing crowds were met,
I sat forever upon something new,
The mimic wonders of the Stage to view.

So near the wide extended Circus spreads
In gathered ranks its sea of living heads,
Ranged in closed order, rising row on row
The void arena claims the space below.

The seats were filled, but ere the show began
A stranger entered—'twas an aged man,
While he sought a place with aspect mild,
The polished Athenians sat and smiled—
Eyed his confusion with a side long glance,
But kept their seats, nor rose on his advance.

Oh! for a burning blush of deeper hue,
To mark the shame of that self-glorious crew;
How poor the produce of fair learning's tree,
That bears no fruit of self-humility!

The growth of Arts and Sciences how vain
In hearts that feel not for another's pain.

Not so the Spartan youth, whose simple School
Instilled the plain but salutary rule
Of kindness, and whose honest souls preferred
Truth to display—performance to a word.

These Spartan youths had their appointed place,
Apart from Attica's distinguished race,
And rose with one accord, intent to prove
To honored age their duty and their love;
Nor did a Spartan youth his seat resume
Till the old man found due and fitting room.

Then came the sentence of reproof and praise,
Stamped with the sternness of the ancient days,
For standing full amidst the assembled crowd,
The venerable stranger cried aloud, but lo!
The Spartans practice what the Athenians know.

Proper Subjects for Prayer.

The Rev. W. Jay once received, in the pulpit a note containing the following request: "The prayers of this congregation are earnestly desired for a man prospering in his earthly concerns—a drunkard's request could not be made of a praying congregation. Their supplications are often called for the widow in her sorrow, the orphan in his loneliness, the son or daughter who has wandered from the paths of christian instruction; for the husband, whose growing bad habits fill the heart of the wife with alarm; for the child of misfortune, whose wealth has taken wings and left him a beggar; and for all these prayer should be made; and yet, none of these man who is prospering in all his earthly concerns, and none so sorely the prayers of the godly. How hard for such a man to tear his idols from his heart, and enthrone God in his affection. How hard to feel his dependence on God when his mountain stands strong. How hard to give his thought to heaven when earth is fair. Could we read the lessons of Providence, we would often find that God is very pitiful when the plans of such an one are blasted and God sends the ruins of his earthly hopes, he finds the "pearl of great price," and he then turns his thoughts to that more permanent inheritance on high. We have hard hearts if we cannot sympathize with the widow in her deep distress, or the prisoner in his sorrow; but after all, that man who is becoming so wrapped up in his worldlyness that every holy impulse withering in his heart, is in a more pitiable plight. He may have more heart than can be held, he stands on slippery places, and with thoughtful steps, he moves on to a terrible doom. His chains are wrought of gold and sparkle with many a gem, but they will fetter his soul forever in that gloomy prison-house of sin, which pride and sensuality have mistaken for a palace. That man who is "prospering in his earthly concerns" stood in need of prayer. There was a possibility that, in the presence of earthly wealth, all thought of eternity might be forgotten; and, little as many may think of it, the man who is prospering in all his earthly concerns, and none so sorely the prayers of the godly. How hard for such a man to tear his idols from his heart, and enthrone God in his affection. How hard to feel his dependence on God when his mountain stands strong. How hard to give his thought to heaven when earth is fair. Could we read the lessons of Providence, we would often find that God is very pitiful when the plans of such an one are blasted and God sends the ruins of his earthly hopes, he finds the "pearl of great price," and he then turns his thoughts to that more permanent inheritance on high. 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