

**THE POWER OF A HYMN.**

A Scotch soldier was dying in New Orleans when a Scotch minister came in to give him the consolations of the Gospel. The man turned over on his pillow and said: "Don't talk to me about religion."

Then the Scotch minister began to sing a familiar hymn of Scotland, beginning with the words:

"Oh mother, dear Jerusalem,  
When shall I come to thee?"

He sang it to the tune of "Dundee," and everybody in Scotland knows that; and as he began to sing the dying soldier turned over on his pillow, and said to the minister, "Where did you learn that?"

"Why," replied the minister, "my mother taught me that."

"So did mine," said the dying Scotch soldier; and the very foundation of his heart was upturned, and then and there he yielded himself to Christ.

Oh, the irresistible power of a hymn! Luther's sermons have been forgotten, but his, 'Judgment Hymn' sings on through the ages.—*Christian Scotsman.*

**THE HARDENED HEART.**

It is a great mistake to suppose that God singled out Pharaoh, or that He ever singles out any one, and says: "I will harden his heart," and then proceeds to do it. But the solemn truth is this, that by the operation of that well-known law according to which the soul becomes less and less susceptible to impressions which have been resisted, God hardens the heart of every man and woman that does not yield to Him. Think how many men have hardened themselves in dishonesty, by first using for a little time a sum of money not their own, which prepared them by and by for using a larger sum, fully intending to replace it; and so it went on, the hardening process going on until it ended in the most shameless robbery, and brought final ruin and disgrace.

How many men, again are "gospel hardened," as it is fitly called. They have so often listen-

ed to the appeals of the gospel without yielding to them, that their hearts have become as hard as the nether millstone, and the most earnest appeals have not the slightest effect.

Pharaoh's case is not at all peculiar. It is typical of thousands in every generation. God dealt most tenderly with him, with the utmost long suffering and forbearance, through scorn and evasion, through sham prayers and promises, sham repentance and sham submission; but all in vain. His heart grew harder and harder all the time, till he was swallowed up in the angry waters of the Red Sea. Who ever had more chances of escape? Yet what was the end. Had he only regarded the voice which came to him so gently at the first, or the harmless sign, all would have been well; or had he but recognized "the finger of God" as the magicians did (8: 13), he would have had nothing to fear from "His outstretched arm."—*Selected.*

**CHINA'S APPEAL.**

Millions are in darkness lying  
In the sunny clime afar;  
Hear ye not their voices crying  
From the depths of their despair?—

"Ye that have the light of heaven,  
Ye who know a Saviour's love,  
Share with us the light thus given,  
That we too its joy may prove.

"From our mountains, rivers, plains,  
And our myriad-peopled shore,  
Hope from every idol wanes;  
To their help we look no more.

"Is it true that ye, possessing  
Knowledge of a price untold,  
Such a wondrous cup of blessing,  
Can from us a draught withhold?"

"Come, ye messengers of gladness,  
Come and bring the light of day:  
Let it chase away our sadness,  
Come, that joyful light display!"

—*George Pearse.*

**"I MUST BE ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."**

Surely the one solitary utterance preserved us from the Saviour's first thirty years of earthly life, may well be taken as the standing motto of our lives. Mark its imperative tone, "I must."

There is no doubt, no wavering, no choice. It is not even the conscious "I ought," with which we too often tamper, but an uncompromising "I must." Sonship of necessity includes service; every true child of God *must* be about his Father's business.

There is no thought here of special privilege or special call, but only of sheer, necessity,—a fact which it is strange that anyone should fail to recognize, "Wist ye not" that I must be about my Father's business.

With perishing souls and perishing bodies round our doors, with the cry of the heathen world wafted on every breeze, with the emissaries of evil ever busy night and day, how can a child of God be self-engrossed or idle?

Another thought, equally true and equally important, is suggested by the Revised Version, "Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" Sonship includes communion as well as service, and we can only do the Father's business in so far as we are abiding in His presence and listening to His voice.

There is rest too, as well as stimulus in the words, for they remind us that the work is not ours, nor have we to supply the means or the strength. It is my Father's business, and I have His infinite resources to draw upon—it is my Father's house, and His ear and His heart are ever open to His child.—*Service for the King.*

**OUR FATHER'S BOOK—HOW SHALL WE USE IT?**

A young lady I know of read and laid aside a book. Though perused with some interest, it was soon nearly forgotten. Subsequently she became acquainted with the author, and the acquaintance resulted in betrothal. Then she took down and read again the book with ten fold interest. The soul betrothed to Christ reads the Bible not as mere history, but as a personal message from a dear and personal friend. Yet it is sadly true that there is a vast neglect of the Bible. Its pre-