

THE COMMON SORROW.

A much divided people we!
And have our strifes, without, within,
Scant good in one another see,
Each struggling his own prize to win—
Death comes, and lo! we all are kin!

Our cottage homes are darker for
The shadow resting on the throne.
The crowd would fain turn comforter,
The pain is one we all have known,
The Prince? We mourn him as our own.

How many loyal Englishmen
Would gladly have gone forth to fight
That foe who struck our Queen again,
And quenched a lighted hope in night!
God's will, you say? Then all is right.

But God have pity on our earth!
And on the mother's heart that aches,
And on the home blessed by his birth,
And on the maiden heart that breaks,
And on all life which joy forsakes.

But England's grief is for the dead!
His was the glad time of the spring;
His year of life has flashed, and sped
Ere through his dreams the birds could sing
The prophecy—"Long live the king!"

A dearer message he had heard—
"I love you"—and all else might go!
After that whispered magic word
Life broadened into sunny glow,—
Then sudden winter laid him low!

But Heaven has room and work for all!
The young Prince starting on his quest,
The gentle, Christly, Cardinal,
God knew this time would be the best
For nobler work, and well-earned rest.

God's will be done! The crowd is great
That daily dying sues for grace,
And commoner, and prince of state
Is glad to take the lowest place.
God! let Thy children see Thy face!

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

WAS IT COINCIDENCE OR PROVIDENTIAL INTERPOSITION?

BY THE HON. NEAL DOW.

We were boys together, Eben and I; we grew up together side by side until we became men, with never an unkind word between us; our families were next door neighbors. By the death of the father Eben at an early age became the mainstay of the mother and two sisters constituting the family. This duty he performed as faithfully and successfully as if he had been of mature years, of sound judgment and experience in affairs.

Arranging everything for the comfort of home during his absence, when he became of age he turned all his small earnings and savings into a venture which he placed on board a brig bound for New Orleans, and resolved to try his fortune there for a few years. He was to go by land, and the brig, in case of her arrival at her port before him, was to keep his adventure on board for one week without charge for demurrage.

There were no railways in those days; the long journey to New Orleans was to be made in stages and river steamboats, liable to many delays which might subject him to heavy cost for the storage of his goods, which he was anxious to avoid. His stage, crowded with passengers, arrived on a Saturday night at a country tavern among the mountains in the interior of Pennsylvania. He said to his companions:

"How many of us will stop here over the Sabbath?"

"None of us," answered a young man promptly.

"Yes, there's one of us," said my friend. "I shall stop over; I've never travelled on the Sabbath and will not break that rule now; I hope there are some others of us who will keep the Sabbath as I propose to do."

"It will be an unwise thing for you to do now and here under the circumstances," said an experienced traveller. "You must wait for the Monday night's stage, and on its arrival the chances are that it will be full and you must wait for that of Tuesday, and so on indefinitely; you cannot be sure when you can get on. All will depend upon a chance place for you in the western-bound stage."

"I have considered all that," said my friend. "My case is not one of necessity, and I will not otherwise travel on the Sabbath."

He was the only one of the company who remained. On the Sunday he went

to the little country church; on the Monday the stage was full and he must stay, and on the Tuesday it was the same; he could only resume his journey on the Wednesday. On arriving at Pittsburgh he found the last steamer for the season to New Orleans was gone; on account of the low water there would be no other. If any of his stage companions had been there, they might have suggested to him that his faithfulness to the Sabbath had resulted only in serious embarrassments. He was obliged to embark on a flat-boat, which, after a slow voyage, he left at Cincinnati, where he waited three days for a steamer bound to New Orleans; and on arrival there he found his little cargo had been a week in a warehouse, involving an expense which he would have saved if he had continued his stage route as his fellow passengers had done.

In addition to this he lost the sale of his venture, the whole of it, to the purchaser of the most of the brig's cargo, who wanted my friend's part of it very much. But now the sky began to clear, his fish—all fish—began to rise in the market; he did not sell at the first offer, but held it for some days, when he sold for cash at a large advance, yielding him a handsome profit; and the man who bought the rest of the brig's cargo on time failed—and but for the stopping over on the Sabbath among the mountains of Pennsylvania my friend would have sold with the rest of the cargo on the same terms and would have lost every penny. Was this a coincidence, or was it a Providential intervention? For myself, I believe it was the intervention of Providence in the affairs of man; I like to believe it; many times this faith has been to me a solace and a comfort.

My friend remained in New Orleans a few years and by industry, good judgment and prudence accumulated a small fortune. He made many friends in that city among business men, and especially among religious people. There were really many there, though at the time slavery may be said to have been the dominant faith of the country. The people believed in it as thoroughly as in the Bible and in the existence of a Supreme Being; it was to them a divine institution, and at the same time a terror.

A large number of citizens were detailed every night as a city guard. They were notified during the day to report at the Calaboose (city prison) at a given hour in the evening, where they were shut up until morning; they were there to be ready at a moment's notice to meet and quell an uprising of the slaves which was constantly feared if not confidently expected. My friend did not find this pleasant; the company at the Calaboose was not always exclusively or even largely of the elite of the citizenship of the Crescent City, and in those old days when there was no temperance cause and little or no teaching on the mischief and danger of drink, it is not difficult to imagine what sort of a time there must be in the Calaboose among three hundred people shut up for a night with plenty of that refreshment.

One of the curious things which struck my friend was the freedom with which persons who had slain a friend or some other in a duel or a brawl could walk about the street as if no law, human or divine, had been broken. One of the most prominent clergymen in the city had a little tiff with some one and shot him dead as the best and easiest, as well as the quickest, way out of it. This clergyman was "a good shot," and people who knew him gave him a "wide berth" accordingly. My friend had no office of his own, but a desk only in the large counting-room of a prominent mercantile house. This clergyman was an habitue at that counting-room, the chiefs taking their Gospel from his pulpit. My friend said it would have been funny if it was not grim and ghastly to note the ease, grace and self-possession with which this "good shot" met and greeted his friends in the counting-room and in the streets within one hour after an exhibition of his skill—with no allusion whatever on either side to "what had happened."

My friend did not care to prolong his stay in that famous city; so he gathered together his earnings, savings and belongings and took passage in a first-class clipper ship for Philadelphia. There were no ocean steamers in those days, and passengers as well as trade were more dependent then

than now upon the winds and tides and ocean currents. In those old times ship masters as well as sailors took frequent occasion to "splice the main brace"—the seaman's slang phrase for a "good pull" of rum or whiskey. The captain of this noble clipper ship was one of that kind. He could always walk straight, but not always walk "a crack"—a jolly good sailor was he.

On the second day out from New Orleans, in the open Gulf, they had a strong, gusty "topsail breeze"—the upper sails were furled. The ship was running bravely under her topsails—fore and main courses, jib, fore-topmast staysail and trysail. Off two miles upon the starboard beam was a fine clipper ship bound also to Philadelphia. The mate was the officer on deck. The captain said to him:

"I do not want that ship to reach port before we do; can't we carry more sail?"

"We are now carrying as much sail as is prudent, sir; the wind is strong and gusty, I don't think the spars would bear more."

The captain went into the cabin—soon came on deck wiping his mouth on the back of his hand and said to the mate:

"Mr. Jones, set the fore, main and mizzen top-gallant sails."

"I do not think it prudent, sir; I don't think the spars will stand it. It's very gusty."

The captain did not repeat the order, but went into the cabin again. Soon he re-appeared on deck wiping his mouth as before and said peremptorily to the mate:

"Set the top-gallant sails, Mr. Jones."

The officer of the deck had no alternative but to obey, and the sailors who were ordered aloft had hardly reached the deck after making the additional sail before the main top-gallant mast with the topmast all came down together. Two glasses of brandy did that. The disaster was no doubt entered in the log without a word about the drink which cost the owners a thousand dollars and a voyage to Philadelphia prolonged by four days.

Temperance teaching and preaching and temperance literature had not reached the shipmasters of those days, consequently there were few if any of them who did not "splice the main brace" at every suitable opportunity. I do not think Providence had any part in disabling that noble ship.

A funny friend of mine told me this story of a coincidence, or a Providential intervention, occurring within his knowledge many years ago: A foreign missionary, for more than thirty years laboring among the Turks and Armenians, came home, as his health was shaky and advancing age demanded less care and less hard work. He was at once chosen a professor of a theological institution, where in a few years he made himself obnoxious because of his pronounced temperance views, which he would in no wise mask or hold in abeyance. He was therefore dismissed summarily, and came to my friend's house for temporary shelter.

My friend asked him if he continued to rely upon Providence to care for him. "Here you are now," he said, "in your old age turned out of doors without any resources, after having spent a long life in hard work for the Lord. What can you do now?"

"I have never had more confidence than now that God will open the way for me. I do not know what it will be."

While they were talking about it—he and my friend—there came a pull at the door-bell; the servant said some gentlemen wished to see Rev. Dr. Blank, who went out to meet them. Returning to the room where my friend was yet sitting, he said: "Can you guess what those gentlemen wanted of me?"

"No, I've no possible means of forming an opinion."

"Well, they came as a committee of the faculty to offer me the presidency of Blank College, which I have accepted, and shall go there immediately. You see, the Lord does not abandon his servant."

The doctor remained at his post until his age warned him that a younger man would be more suitable for it than he was; he therefore resigned and bought a snug place in a country village to serve him as a home until the final departure. He paid down for it half the price in cash, all the money he had, and gave a mortgage for the balance. Immediately cheques came in to him from many quarters unexpectedly,

until the amount was exactly equal to the mortgage and interest, when no more came.

Were the college presidency and the liquidation of this mortgage mere coincidences or were they the timely interventions of a gracious Providence?

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