

Pastor and People.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN

UNITY OF UNITIES.

BY V. A. M., BLYTH.

Why do the many look up to the few
Who fill the high positions of our land?
Honoured we feel if they but shake our hand,
What phantoms we pursue!

Why down with discontent thy kingly mirth?
Why idly think, "what joy to sit in state?"
Ah, foolish man, position makes not great,
Nor wealth, but honest work.

Empty the honour man to man doth pay,
Nor pleasure, longer life, nor wit, nor worth;
Vain the high sounding titles of the earth—
They pass—they fade away.

Envy not those on whom the world doth fawn,
But early seek to make thy peace with God;
Look unto Christ, and tread the path He trod;
Faint not—but follow on.

THE GOSPEL AFLOAT.

Ten days' sojourn in "the City of the Sultan" can only furnish a very meagre conception of the life and life of a town so vast, so varied and so picturesque. The narrow streets are themselves a panorama. They are crowded from sunrise to sundown with a struggling throng which one might well mistake for a masquerade, so fantastic and various are the costumes worn. The shops are called so by compliment. They are simply boxes. Beggars and cripples abound. It is a Bedlam. The hot air is filled with shrieks and cries of all descriptions, and is heavy with unwholesome smells.

The bazaars present somewhat of a relief to the weary, sun-dazzled traveller. Everybody should see the great bazaar of Stamboul. A literal hive of small shops, it is sheltered from the sun by being arched overhead. It is a labyrinth teeming with never failing interest. The great mosque of St. Sophia must not be overlooked. It is massive, and majestic in proportion, but disappointing grandeur and tawdry accessories, magnificence and dirt, are everywhere found in alliance. The wonderful dome, grander than St. Peter's, at Rome, the pillars, to the number of 170, each one a single piece, and a monument of antiquity, the pavement, the marble balustrades and the magnificent perspective of the whole, are all marred by bad taste glaring upon you everywhere, and by the omnipresent dinginess and dirt.

A few words concerning Scutari will not seriously be considered an illegitimate digression. Like two guards at the entrance of the Bosphorus panorama stand Constantinople and Scutari—the latter, on the Asiatic shore. The centre of interest in this Asiatic suburb is, of course, the Scutari cemetery and that terrible charnel-house—the barrack hospital sad and suggestive monuments of the Crimean War. In the centre of the cemetery stands a simple obelisk, supported by four female figures, by Marochetti. This obelisk, which is a copy *in petto* of the Luxor Column, bears the following inscription.

TO THE MEMORY
of the
OFFICERS AND MEN
of the British
Army and Navy,
who, in the war against Russia,
In 1854, 1855 and 1856,
Died for their Country,
This Monument
was raised by
QUEEN VICTORIA
And her people.
1857.

This same inscription appears on each panel, on the back in Turkish; in French to the right, and in Italian on the left.

There are surrounding this monument eighty-six memorial tablets, recording in sad terms the grief of the living or the virtues of the dead; but from end to end the place is crowded by the nameless dead in solemn rank and file, with not a line to mark their resting-places *quia carent vale sacro*.

I am tempted to quote some of the inscriptions, which tell their own simple, sad tale. No. 49 stays our steps, and we read:

Dedicated by his brother officers
to the memory of
WILLIAM PITCAIRN CAMPBELL,
Aged 30.

A CHRISTIAN SOLDIER,

Finding comfort in death from these assuring words of the Saviour in whom he trusted: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matthew xi. 28.

Here is another of a mere boy of nineteen, who died in that charnel-house hard by, misnamed a hospital. It bears the words, "Erected by an affectionate mother, in commemoration of a most dearly beloved son."

A deep pathos surrounds grave No. 44, with its simple inscription:

A Russian officer.

So also that of a hospital nurse, inscribed:

She hath done what she could.

We leave the sad and sacred spot where the heroic dead lie, to sail down the beautiful Bosphorus, but we have no heart for the beautiful in nature. The lurid haze of war comes between me and the magnificent panorama which the European and Asian shore uplands present. My heart is burdened with a strange load, and breathes its prayer out to God that ere long the time will come when wars shall cease, and when man shall never more imbrue his hands in brother's blood.

After ten days' sojourn in Constantinople, we re-entered the Marmora *en route* for Smyrna, the queen of the cities of Anatolia. Skirting the islands of Tenedos and Mitylene, we enter the spacious Gulf of Smyrna. How eager we were to catch a glimpse of the site of that church which, almost alone of the "Seven," received commendation without reproof from God; and which, absolutely alone of the "Seven," is a busy, prosperous place. And how beautifully picturesque it seemed! A glorious bay—a land-locked sea, indeed—is Smyrna Bay. With a small and intricate entrance to the west, flanked on north and south by towering hills, and on the gentle slopes of Mt. Pagus to the east, beautifully reposes the city of Smyrna. Again distance lends enchantment to the view. Unlike Constantinople, Smyrna may be encompassed in one outlook. It lies before you, along a sea line of four miles, creeping more than half way up the mountain towards the ruined castle which crowns its summit. The same fairy lightness marks the scene as in other Eastern towns, and the same inevitable dissipation of romance accompanies personal acquaintance.

We remained anchored in Smyrna Bay nearly a fortnight, enjoying the privilege of our stay by making many incursions into the city and surrounding country. Some of the richest reminiscences of "The Gospel Afloat" belong to this period. The situation and circumstances were impressive, and lent themselves readily to our work. "The Seven Churches" were sufficiently near to add a local and vivified interest to short, improvised lectures on the epistles to the churches in Asia. On the conclusion of my unpretentious course of seven lectures, I was reminded that my course was not complete, that instead of there being "seven churches in Asia," there were eight. I named them, one by one—only seven. "Nay, there were eight, for was not the church in the fortress one." Yes, indeed it was; and it was to them more important and real than all the rest. Each evening, with the exception of the few spent ashore, we had our regular service, with a congregation which for reverence and earnest attention could not have been surpassed at home. An Austrian man-of-war was anchored at the north end of the bay, and its splendid band played each evening at sundown, and the sweet sounds would roll along the conducting waters of the bay, from end to end, and back into reverberation among the girdling hills. With less of pretence, and yet not wanting in beauty of another kind, the seamen's simple song of praise swelled forth across that bay from ship to ship, telling its own simple tale of evening worship. Opportunities of personal intercourse with the men were more than usually frequent during our anchorage before Smyrna. After a hard day's labour in cargoing the ship with her freight of fruit, the evening was the sailors' freehold. Not a man sought permission to leave the ship, and every one, with the exception of the quarter-master on watch, was free to attend our evening service.

Not alone did the seamen constitute the congregation; the officers of all grades, from the highest to the lowest, were frequently fellow-worshippers with their crew. One officer, not noticed in previous chapters, had hitherto held aloof from us. He was a good

officer and a strict disciplinarian, but had a most violent temper, and while under the spell of his temper had a terrible habit of swearing. One quiet evening our service was proceeding when, to the astonishment of everybody, this officer appeared. I was reading the text of my simple address. Strangely enough, it was this: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young thou girdedst thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not."—John xxi. 18. Whether according to the strict exegesis of the passage or not, my interpretation led me to speak upon the power of evil habits. While we were young we could cast them off; but when we were old we became their slave. In youth we could write our habits on the sand, which we could readily obliterate, but in after years we should find them deeply graven upon the rock. At first they seemed to us garlands of flowers easily broken and cast away; but ere long we should discover that what seemed a floral garland had turned to a band of steel. Such was the trend of my simple discourse. I knew not what "the chief" thought of it; but this I know, we seldom heard an oath afterward. A year or two afterward, when he had been promoted as captain of an important ocean liner, I had a letter from him, saying kind things of my work which I dare not reproduce, and giving evidence that the seed had not fallen on barren soil.

JUDGE NOT.

"She's the closest woman I ever saw! If I were in her place, I'd be ashamed of myself. Why, auntie, she never wears anything but calico to school, and hasn't had a new bonnet this winter, and to crown it all, when I asked her this morning to buy a ticket for our exhibition, she laughed and said she couldn't afford it! Yet uncle told us that all the teachers, Miss Crawford included, receive \$40 a month. I really don't see how any one can be so mean!"

"Now that you have to pause for breath, Nellie, would you like to hear a little story?"

"Oh yes, Auntie, just wait a minute while I find my crochet-needle. There, now, I'm ready."

"Some three years since, a wealthy merchant in one of our large cities failed. Being an upright man he kept nothing for himself, but put everything he possessed into the hands of his creditors, leaving himself, his invalid wife and only daughter utterly destitute.

"So great was the strain upon his nervous system, so severe the struggle to maintain his position, that when all was over, a low fever laid him on his bed, and from that bed he never rose. The only child of this gentleman now found herself penniless, with a widowed, invalid mother to support. She was a wise as well as an affectionate daughter, and seeing plainly that it would be impossible for her to take proper care of this dear mother and earn her living at the same time, she placed her in a private home, a charitable institution, where she receives the best of care for a reasonable sum paid monthly; for you see neither of them would be dependent on charity if it could be helped.

"Once a month, when this daughter goes to pay her mother's board, she spends a day with her. This day is always a Saturday, and she must travel a good share of Friday night in order to have a whole long day to spend with her precious mother, and reach home before twelve o'clock Saturday night. More than this, out of her salary, is this self-sacrificing daughter laying aside every penny she can spare, in order that by and by she may be able to buy a little home for her mother and herself, and pay a good woman for keeping house for them, and looking after the poor invalid.

"This young woman of whom I have been speaking was brought up in a luxurious home with everything heart could wish. I don't know what you think of her since I have told her story, but I think her one of God's true, noble women, and I feel like chiding anybody who calls her close and 'mean.'"

"Oh, auntie, you surely don't mean Miss Crawford."

"Oh Nellie, I surely do mean Miss Crawford."

"I am so ashamed of myself—the dear, sweet, noble woman. It's a mercy I've never breathed a word against her to any one except you, but I feel as if I must make some amends for my wicked thoughts. I wish I could do her a favour."

"Well, I'll tell you what you may do, if you like—