

**The True Lenten Fast.**

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

Is it the Fast which God approves  
When I awhile for flesh eat fish,  
Changing one dainty dish  
For others no less good?

Do angels smile and count it gain  
That I compose my laughing face  
To gravity for a brief space,  
Then straightway laugh again?

Does Heaven take pleasure as I sit  
Counting my joys as usurers gold;  
This to give, that to withhold,  
Weighing and measuring it?

Setting off abstinence from dance  
As buying privilege of song;  
Calling six right and seven wrong,  
With decorous countenance;

Compounding for the dull to-day  
By projects for to-morrow's fun,  
Checking off each set task as done,  
Grudging a short delay?

I cannot think that God will care  
For such observance; He can see  
The very inmost heart of me  
And every secret there.

But if I keep a truer Lent  
Not heeding what I wear or eat,  
Not balancing the sour with sweet  
Evenly abstinent,

And lay my soul with all its stain  
Of travel from the year-long road  
Between the healing hands of God  
To be made clean again;

And put my sordid self away,  
Forgetting for a little space  
The pretty prize, the eager race,  
The restless, striving day;

Opening my darkness to the sun,  
Opening my narrow eyes to see  
The pain and need so close to me  
Which I had willed to shun;

Praying God's quickening grace to show  
The thing He fain would have me do,  
The errand that I may pursue  
And quickly rise and go;

If so I do it, starving pride,  
Fasting from sin, instead of food,  
God will accept such Lent as food  
And bless its Easter-tide.

**St. Antony.**

ANTONY was a noted Christian of the early Church, who is often called the founder of the monastic life; but this is not strictly true, as he really followed the example of a class of people who called themselves "Anchoretes," and lived lives quite apart from the world. Antony, however, carried his retirement to greater lengths than did these people.

He was born in Upper Egypt, and was brought up at home by his parents, who were both wealthy and pious. He knew no one outside his own family, and received so imperfect an education that he knew no other language than his native Egyptian.

When he was twenty years of age his parents died, leaving a younger sister to his care. He lived with her for six months, managing his estate, which was very large, and dreaming of the early days when Christians sold all their worldly goods and laid them at the feet of the apostles. He was a young man of growing imagination, strong impulses, and a warm, loving heart.

Being in church one day, and hearing the gospel read where our Lord says, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me," the words seized upon his vivid fancy, and seemed personally spoken to him by the voice of God. At once he resolved to obey. He went home, distributed his lands

among his neighbours, sold his furniture and other goods, and gave away the money, except a small sum for his sister's use and after placing her in a house for women who wished to devote themselves wholly to the service of God, he took up his abode with a hermit near the village where he had been born. Here he supported himself by working, and gave away to the poor what he earned above what was necessary for his own support.

He remained here until about thirty years of age, giving himself wholly to labour and prayer, and shunning the society of the world so far as possible. But at this time he felt drawn to seek a still deeper retreat, and accordingly penetrated farther into the desert, where he made his dwelling in an old ruin on the top of a hill. He was not able to persuade the old hermit with whom he had spent the previous ten years to go with him, but this did not hold him back. Entering the ruined, lonely castle, he closed its doors, and did not open them for twenty years! His friends brought him bread every six months, and he drank of a spring inside the building. It is said that he never tasted food until after sunset, and sometimes fasted for three days together. And yet, as we have told you, this man had a loving heart and a nature which delighted in all that was beautiful and attractive. Strange and sad that he did not learn that the separation God asks of us is a separation of the heart and will to Him—not a withdrawing to the solitudes, a shunning the face of man!

But the fame of Antony went abroad, and disciples began to gather about him and to beg him to let them listen to his holy teachings. Gradually a sort of hermitage grew up around his retreat. First one, and then another and another, built a cell near the admired hermit; and after a time a kind of uniform custom began to prevail in these little communities. The brothers wore long linen tunics, with a woollen girdle, a cloak, and over it a sheepskin.

They usually went barefoot; but at certain very cold or very hot seasons they wore a kind of sandal. Their food was bread and water, their luxuries a little oil or salt, a few olives, peas, or a single fig. They ate in perfect silence, and were bound by strict obedience to their superiors. The furniture of their cells was a mat of palm-leaves and a bundle of the papyrus, which served for a pillow by night and a seat by day.

When Antony was ninety years old, and had many disciples, he went to visit a very aged hermit named Paul, who had lived in a cavern ninety years. In three days he came to the cave; and these two old men, who had never seen each other, were filled with joy. They spent the night in prayer, and on the morrow Antony set out to get a mantle in which to bury Paul, who felt assured that his end was near. Before he could return, however, the spirit of the old hermit had left his body.

In the hundred and fifth year of his age Antony felt his strength decline, though he had no sickness, and his sight and hearing were as perfect as in his youth. Calling two of his disciples, he said, "My sons, according to the scripture, I am going the way of all flesh. The Lord hath called me, and I desire to depart." He exhorted them against all heresy, and then made his

will. One sheepskin and his cloak he gave to one of the fathers of the desert, and his hair shirt to the two that stood by. Then saying, "And now farewell; Antony is going, and will not be seen again in this world," he departed this life.

**Some Droll Habits.**

ALL good men have had their follies, and the field open for gleaning is almost boundless. For instance, we have such facts as the following recorded in the biographies and histories: Tycho Brahe, the astronomer, changed colour, and his legs shook under him, on meeting with a hare or a fox. Dr. Johnson would never enter a room with his left foot foremost; if, by mistake, it did get in first, he would step back and place his right foot foremost. Julius Cæsar was almost convulsed by the sound of thunder, and always wanted to get in a cellar, or under ground, to escape the dreadful noise. To Queen Elizabeth the simple word "death" was full of horrors. Even Talleyrand trembled and changed colour on hearing the word pronounced. Marshal Saxe, who met and overthrew opposing armies, fled and screamed in terror at the sight of a cat. Peter the Great could never be persuaded to cross a bridge; and though he tried to master the terror he failed to do so. Whenever he would set his foot on one he would shriek out in distress and agony. Byron would never help any one to salt at the table, nor would he be helped himself. If any of the article happened to be spilled on the table, he would jump up and leave his meal unfinished.

**Brevities.**

Teacher: "Emile, which animal attaches itself the most to man?"  
Emile (after some reflection): "The leech, sir."

RESOLUTIONS NEVER GO BACKWARD.—Temperance reform, aye, prohibition, will come despite political chicanery, duplicity, and cowardice. The people will not rest quiet while the liquor traffic ulcer is doing its work of death. Shift the question as you may, it will not down. Sooner or later, if it is not met by Legislatures and parties as it should be and solved in the interest of the welfare and happiness of the people, an avalanche of righteous indignation will sweep the curse from the land, together with all its advocates. Possibly it may be necessary to cut out the ulcer, but out it must come.—*Liberty Herald*.

THE TREE OF THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.—An American authoress, in a work on Hindostan, relates a little incident of heathen superstition which is rather suggestive to those who call themselves better than heathen. At Ulwar, the British Agent wished to plant an avenue of trees on either side of the road, in front of the shops, for the purpose of shade. He chose Peepul trees, as they are considered sacred by the Hindoos. But so soon as the native shop-keepers heard of his selection, they all declared that if these trees were planted they would not occupy the shops. When asked the reason, they replied that it was because they could not tell untruths or swear falsely under a Peepul tree; "and how," said they, "can we carry on business otherwise?" It would be well for some shop-keepers nearer home to have that Tree of the Ninth Commandment spread over them.

**Puzzledom.**

Answers to Puzzles in Last Number.

- 84.—1. Dotheboy's Hall.  
2. Footstool.  
85.—1. Geer, eger.  
2. Dine, Enid.  
3. Ohsea, Hosea.  
86.—1. Honesty is the best policy.  
2. Truth crushed to earth will rise again.  
3. The eternal years of God are hers.  
87.—1. L A N E 2. M I L L  
A D A M I D E A  
N A M E L E A D  
E M E U L A D E

**NEW PUZZLES.**

88.—CHARADES.

1. A preposition; to perform; a fast. Lazy.  
2. An article; an instrument for writing; a number. A mountain range.

89.—ENIGMAS.

1. My 1, 6, 7, 7, 6 is a Bible character; my 8, 2, 4, 6, 10 is sweet; my 7, 5, 9, 8, 8 is active. A great and good man.  
2. My 1, 5, 7, 9 is a girdle; my 1, 2, 3 is to gamble; my 11, 16, 14 is a number; my 14, 18, 13, 19 is not distant; my 17, 13, 15 is a machine; my 12, 10, 8, 6 is to apprehend; my 4, 16, 13, 6 is to serve. A familiar proverb.

90.—HALF-SQUARE.

- A precious stone; a structure; to coop; one; a letter.

91.—HOUR GLASS.

- Honest; to detest; a vehicle; a letter; a token of respect; to curl; to ravage. Centrals, an animal.

**"Smiles."**

"ARE there any of the big guns of the church around?" asked a reporter. "Yes," said a man at the vestry door, "the gentleman just inside is a canon."

WHEN Patrick saw the announcement in a shop window, "Great Slaughter in Clothing," he stepped in and inquired for "wan of thim kilt suits."

"Now, children," she continued, "what is the meal you eat in the morning called?" "Oatmeal," promptly replied a member of that class.

THE owner of a pair of bright eyes says that the prettiest compliment she ever received came from a child of four years. The little fellow, after looking intently at her eyes a moment, inquired naively, "Are your eyes new ones?"

A MAN went home the other night and found his house locked up. After infinite trouble he managed to gain entrance through a back window, and then discovered on the parlour table a note from his wife reading:—"I have gone out. You will find the key on the side of the step!"

AN impatient Welshman called to his wife,—"Come! come! Isn't breakfast ready? I've had nothing since yesterday, and to-morrow will be third day!" This is equal to the call of the stirring housewife, who aroused her maid at four o'clock with "Come, Mary, get up! Here 'tis Monday morning; to-morrow is Tuesday; the next day is Wednesday—half the week gone, and nothing done yet!"