

## The Cure for Bitterness.

By George Matheson, D.D.

They could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; and the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet.—Exodus xv. 23 and 25

"When He had cast a tree in the waters, the waters were made sweet." It was a strange remedy. One would have thought it was a case for extraction, not addition. The burden of bitterness is a very heavy one. When it comes to us our first cry is "empty out the waters." "No," says the Divine voice, "instead of emptying them, put something more in them." And truly the Divine voice is right. What we need for our bitterness is not the removal of things, but the seeing of them in a new relation. The Psalmist speaks of a tree planted by rivers of water. A tree makes a great difference to our view of the water; it may change it from monotonous into beauty; it is the old thing with a new fact added. So it is with my calamities; one added point of knowledge will chase them away. When the child is waters of Marah. How will you cure it as it goes to school, it often needs these waters? By keeping him from school? God forbid! Show him the developed tree. Show him the fruit of knowledge. Show him that without school he will be a solitary man—mindless in a thinking world. The sight of the tree in the waters will make the waters sweet.

O Thou, whose suffering was sweetened by the sight of the redeeming tree, make Thine experience mine own. I do not ask that the waters be assuaged from the face of my earth; I dare not ask that; but tell me that the waters are nourishing my tree. Send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me. Show me it is impossible the cup should pass from me if I am to grow; put tree in my waters. I do not ask, any more than Newman, to see the distant scene; but I want to see something which is not distant—Thy will. I do not pray to know where the waters are going; but I do want to see where they are coming from. I wish to feel that they are from Thee. Tell me that, and I am satisfied. They may rise up to the firmament if they come from Thee. It is revelation, not emancipation, I need. Let the waters remain; but shine through them, shine across them, shine beneath them, O Lord. Show me Thy way in the sea. Reveal Thy path in the deep. Reflect Thy light in the waters. Put Thy music in the rolling billows. Say, when the storm is walking through the waves, "It is I." Then shall there be no bitterness in the taste of the brine; the waters will be sweet if they are shared by Thee.

The strength of character, like that of a beam, is equal to the weakest point.

## Power of the Fifty-First Psalm.

It is impossible to comprehend the power of the fifty-first Psalm upon the race. Kings, scholars and cottagers have read it with the same spiritual profit. It was the death song of the French Protestants in the times that for cruelty have had few equals. It was sung by George Wishart when taken prisoner before his martyrdom at St. Andrew's. Its opening verse was the dying cry of the Scottish martyr, Thomas Forret, whose grave was green a quarter of a century before Scotland became free from ecclesiastical tyranny. Its cry for mercy was repeated by Lady Jane Grey upon the fatal day of her own and her husband's death. Its burning words broke from the lips of John Huss at the place of his execution, near Constance. John Rogers repeated its confessions and triumphant psalms on the way to the fires of Smithfield. The words of the Hebrew psalmist were spoken by Sir Thomas More—"who was famous through Europe for eloquence and wisdom"—as he laid his head upon the block. Its seventeenth verse, written by St. Augustine upon the wall of his sick-chamber, did not make the text any the less real to the great German reformer. The seventh verse of this same Psalm was found on a tablet of copper amid the eternal snows of the highest point of the earth's surface, near Cape Beechy. "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."—Last Days.

## God and the Right.

By Frederic William Faber.

Thrice blest is he to whom is given  
The instinct that can tell  
That God is on the field when He  
Is most invisible.

Blest, too, is he who can divine  
Where real right doth lie,  
And dare to take the side that seems  
Wrong to man's blindfold eye.

For right is right, since God is God,  
And right the day must win;  
To doubt would be disloyalty,  
To falter would be sin!

## Only Five Times.

By A. E. C. Maskell.

Mrs. Morrell had just finished reading "In His Steps." She laid it down with a sigh, saying, "Oh, if only all Christians would do that, wouldn't we have a better world?" And then the next moment: "But if one would do it the world would be some better. Why can't I? Oh, if I only could!" and there were tears in her eyes.

"I ought to go down and see the Dixons, I suppose," she said later, "but they are such a set. I wonder what Jesus would do?"

"Go, of course," whispered conscience. "He visited publicans and sinners when it was for their good."

"To be sure," smiled the lady; "I

will take along a pat of butter and some things to make them comfortable."

"To be sure, for Jesus has commanded us to feed the hungry and clothe the naked," and with quick steps and a light heart the little woman tripped over the fields to visit her miserable neighbors. Then asking herself "What Jesus would do?" made her talk in her sweetest and most winning manner, and made her throw a loving arm around the wickered mother, and urge her to come to Jesus.

When night came and work was done up, she said to herself: "I think I won't go to prayer meeting to-night, I shall only go to sleep;" then "What would Jesus do?" came into her mind.

"Why, go, of course," a still small voice answered. "His disciples went to sleep in the Garden of Gethsemane, but they were some company to Him, for all that; and He would rather have me in prayer meeting asleep than not there at all," and so she went; but it was so sweet to obey Jesus, that somehow she didn't feel sleepy at all, and enjoyed the prayer meeting as never before.

Only five times during the day had she asked: "What would Jesus do?" but each time she had obeyed, and it was with such a light, happy heart she crept into bed and sank to sleep, thinking: "If five times obeying Jesus makes me so happy, I wonder how ten times would make me feel?" and she tried again, and is still trying, with the most precious results, and you will not find a happier Christian in all the world.—Christian Work.

The morning is the gate of the day and should be well guarded with prayer. It is one end of the thread on which the day's actions are strung, and should be well knotted with devotion. If we felt more the majesty of life, we should be more careful of its mornings. He who rushes from his bed to his business and waiteth not to worship, is as foolish as though he had not put on his clothes, or cleansed his face, and as unwise as though he dashed into battle without arms or armor. Be it ours to bathe in the softly flowing river of communion with God, before the heat of the wilderness and the burden of the way begin to oppress us.—Spurgeon.

A Quaker lady suggests the following cosmetic: For the lips, truth; for the voice, prayer; for the eyes, pity; for the hands, charity; for the figure, uprightness, and for the heart, love.

Some good men are very peremptory in asking God to give them souls. That may not be the best service you can do for God. The best service you can give Him is to submit to His will.—Dr. Andrew Bonar.

The eternal stars shine out as soon as it is dark enough.—Carlyle.