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BRIEF THOUGHTS ON SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

BY MARY E. HERBERT.

NO. 1.

When I awake I am still with thee.—Psalm cxix. 18.
When the morning light breaks in on his slumbers, how often does the heart of the exile, the stranger in a strange land, sink within him, as he yearns for the dear absent faces of the loved. No more dwelling under the same roof, or sojourning in the same city; he shall have to go forth to the duties of life, but shall not behold them, can no longer interchange sweet intercourse, for

"Mountains divide them, and a waste of seas." Of only *One* can the Christian say, "When I awake I am still with Thee." Consoling thought; wherever we go, though far separated from kindred and friends, or they from us, we are still with Him. With Him "whom not having not seen we love." But whom, by and by, we hope to view without a veil between.

Lord, make us realize more fully thy presence; may the remembrance serve to warn, animate, encourage, and strengthen us to pursue, with unflinching obedience the path of life.

NO. 2.

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.—Matt. xi. 43.
Lift up your heads, ye down-trodden servants of Christ, ye poor and disconsolate, ye whom the worldling passes unregardingly by, lift up heads, for your redemption draweth nigh!
Precious jewels are ye, dimmed by the dust and soil of earth; trodden under foot, and yet of priceless value, God will by and by, gather his chosen ones; then shall ye shine forth, resplendent in beauty, in the kingdom of your Father.

No more tears; no more sighing; truly "Heaven's long years of bliss shall pay" for all God's children suffer here."

NO. 3.

Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.—Psalm cvii. 43.
The wonderful manifestations of God in Providence, is a subject well worthy the contemplation of the Christian.
To look back upon the past, and mark with our eyes the deliverances of the way; to encourage our souls, though surrounded by diversified perplexities, from a remembrance of the timely aid vouchsafed in hours of need, are surely animating and soul-cheering exercises.

To such as this act, God will reveal himself in wonderful ways. He will guide and make straight their paths; "observing Providences," as a good man has remarked, "they shall never want a Providence to observe."

When obstacles and trials seem, Like prison walls to be,
Faith finds its strength in helplessness,
And daily trusts in Thee."
Dartmouth, Oct. 31.

THE BORDER LAND.

BY REV. GEORGE LANSING TAYLOR.

It was evening in summer. A sunset untold Through the gates of eternity melted in gold. Untill silver-throned Hesperus poured his pure beam,
And gray twilight stole on over earth like a dream.

From the grove on the hill, while the world seemed on fire,
I beheld the long glory fade out and expire;
But I gazed not alone on those dusk-shaded skies,
For a pure human angel gazed into my eyes.

Then the dim branches o'er us like censers were swayed,
And the leaves rustled low in the fast-falling shade,
As the night zephyr woke o'er the harvest-knowledge plain,
Which before us stretched silent and vast like the main.

That sweet zephyr, like gales that o'er ocean at rest
Scatter odors ambrosial from Yeman the blest,
Shook the whole fragrant year from its pinions, and sighed,
While Eolian harp-strings above us replied.

They replied with a cadence subdued each soul,
With a strange, wild enchantment, a nameless control;
For the great soul of Nature swept over us there
Like the fullness of summer that breathed on the air.

On and on that weird melody, solemn and strong,
Through the rhythmic scale of aerial song,
Rolled its full diapason; while traced by its swells,
Every chord in my being thrilled deep to its spell.

But 'twas not tree and sycamore that whispered above,
Nor that fathomless glance from the calm orbs of love,
Nor the hand that one moment lay conscious in mine,
That startled my soul with that rapture divine.

No, that gale was from heaven! That plain caught the sweep
Of a shoreless existence! That strain was the deep,
The unuttered, unutterable gush from the strings
Of symphonious seraphs, the rush of their wings!

And those eyes, and that face, and that tremulous hand

Were the outlets from earth o'er an infinite land!
Trees and twilight and sycamore plains far
Dropped their veil by the aid of that pure human glance!
Not transformed, but disrobed in that instant
For O,
Earth is sphered in a mystical life here below,
And at times it o'er-sweeps human sense in the power,
Till our souls mix with spirits, as mine did that hour!

Ah! like men led through forests by sea breeze and roar,
Till they stand in rapt wonder on ocean's vast shore,
So we grope through earth's maze toward a breeze-wafted chime
Ever sounding before us, unending, sublime!

Uninterpreted anthem! Unnamable strand!
In the trance of your confines enraptured I stand,
And with bright forms hold converse, that angel has flown;
But this mystical world is forever my own.

—Independent.

BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS.

(From the Christian Weekly.)

I was standing by the side of mother under the spacious porch of Dr. Beattie's church, Glasgow, awaiting the hour for afternoon service, when I observed two young men turn a corner and walk toward the church. They were dressed in their working-clothes, unshaven and dirty, and slightly intoxicated. As they passed the church door they assumed a swaggering, irreverent gait, laughed, and finally commenced singing a profane song. My mother turned to me and said, "Follow these two men, and invite them to a seat in our pew."

I soon overtook them, and delivered my mother's message. One laughed scornfully, and began to swear; the other paused and pondered; he was evidently struck with the nature of the invitation. His companion again swore, and was about to drag him away. But he still paused. I repeated the invitation, and in a few seconds he looked in my face and said, "When I was a boy like you, I went to church every Sunday. I have not been inside of a church for three years. I don't feel right. I believe I will go with you." I seized his hand, and led him back to the house of God in spite of the remonstrances and oaths of his companion. A most excellent sermon was preached from Ecclesiastes 11:1. The young man was attentive, but seemed abashed and downcast.

At the conclusion of the service my mother kindly said to him, "Have you a Bible, young man?" "No, ma'am; but I can get one," was his reply. "You can read, of course?" said she. "Yes, ma'am." "Well, take my son's Bible till you procure one of your own, and come to meeting again next Lord's day. I shall always be happy to accommodate you with a seat."

He put the Bible in his pocket and hurried away. At family worship that evening my mother prayed fervently for the conversion of that young man.
Next Sunday came, and the next, but the stranger did not appear. My mother frequently spoke of him, and appeared grieved at his absence. He had doubtless been the subject of her closest devotions. On the third Sabbath morning, while the congregation were singing the first Psalm, the young man again entered our pew. He was now dressed gently, and appeared thin and pale, as if from recent sickness. Immediately after the benediction the stranger laid his Bible on the desk and left the house without giving my mother an opportunity she much desired of conversing with him. On one of the blank leaves of the Bible we found some writing in pencil, signed "W. C." He asked to be remembered in my mother's prayers.

Years rolled on; my mother passed to her heavenly rest; I grew up to manhood, and the stranger was forgotten. It was in the autumn of 18—, the ship St. George, of which I was the medical officer, anchored in Table Bay.
Next day being Sabbath, I attended morning service at the Wesleyan chapel. At the conclusion of worship, a gentleman seated behind me asked to look at my Bible. In a few minutes he returned it, and I walked into the street. I had arranged to dine at the George, and was mounting the steps in front of that hotel, when the gentleman who had examined my Bible laid his hand on my shoulder and begged to have a few minutes' conversation. We were shown into a private apartment. As soon as we were seated, he examined my countenance with great attention, and then began to sob; tears rolled down his cheeks; he was evidently laboring under some intense emotion. He asked me several questions—my name, age, occupation, birthplace, etc. He then inquired if I had not, when a boy, many years ago, invited a drunken Sabbath-breaker to a seat in Dr. Beattie's church. I was astonished—the subject of my mother's anxiety and prayers was before me. Mutual explanations and congratulations followed, until Mr. C. gave me a short history of his life.

He was born in the town of Leeds, of highly respectable and religious parents, who gave him a good education, and trained him up in the way of righteousness. When about fifteen years of age his father died, and his mother's straitened circumstances obliged her to take him from school and put him to learn a trade. In his new situation he imbibed all manner of evil, became incorrigibly vicious, and broke his mother's heart. Freed now from all parental restraint, he left his employers and travelled to Scotland. In the city of Glasgow he had lived and sinned for two years, when he was arrested in his career through my mother's instrumentality. On the first Sabbath of our strange interview, he confessed that after he left church he was seized with pangs of unutterable remorse. The sight of an mother and a son worshipping God together recalled the happy days of his own boyhood, when he went

to church and Sunday-school, and when he also had a mother—a mother whose latter days he had imbertered, and whose gray hairs he had brought with sorrow to the grave. His mental suffering threw him on a bed of sickness, from which he arose a changed man. He returned to England, cast himself at the feet of his maternal uncle, and asked and obtained forgiveness. With his uncle's consent, he studied for the ministry, and on being ordained he entered the missionary field, and had been laboring for several years in Southern Africa.

"The moment I saw your Bible this morning," he said, "I recognized it. And now you know who my companion on the memorable Sabbath you invited me to church? He was the notorious Jack Hill, who was hanged about a year afterward for highway robbery. He was dragged from the very brink of infamy and destruction, and saved as a brand from the burning. You remember Dr. Beattie's text on the day of my salvation—'Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days.'"

A LITTLE LOGIC FROM LIFE.

He was a queer old fellow, John was. He was hardly of ordinary stature, but very quick and decided in his movements. In fact his walk was so nearly a run that it was sometimes a question whether he ever walked a step. He had the blessing of a poor parentage, people who had laid up but very little and who never dwelt in their own house. Often times were very hard with them, as when sickness disabled the man or there was very little or no work to do. And yet the honest couple managed to keep themselves and their large family out of the poor house.

John was the oldest, and always said he would be rich. He would have enough of money ahead to keep him from the continual torments of fear from threatened beggary. His boyhood passed away without a penny amassed. He had earned money, how much he could not tell. Besides working at home he had earned many a dollar working for the neighboring farmers during the summer. His wages were low, and what he had earned was paid in provisions of some sort for the family at home.

In the winter he went to school when he could get nothing else to do, but if a farmer needed any wood chopped or grain threshed, John was a willing worker with axe or flail. And yet, never so hard, all his earnings were needed at home, and he let them go cheerfully.

All this is good reason for the fact that when John was twenty-one all he owned was a very plain wardrobe. His education was of course very limited, and further it may be added, he made no profession of religion. When he became of age he told his father that he must depend on the younger boys. He felt that the home had no further claim on him. And so for the first time he was working for himself. He was as cheerful a body as ever whistled or laughed, and such a worker that he had not long to hunt for work. Among his early investments was one in a calf, which his employer agreed to pasture for a small sum. In due time that calf became a cow. This was followed by the purchase of a pair of calves that in time became a yoke of oxen. John was ingenious, and at odd hours made him a yoke for the coming oxen. At an auction he bought a pair of chains and a plough. He incurred no debt, but his maxim was "pay as you go."

Five years had passed since he became of age, and he had bought most of the tools needed to do farm work, he owned a very fine yoke of oxen and five hundred dollars at interest. So far as he knew there was not one penny of his property which he had not himself earned. He was now twenty-six years old, and for the first time in his life thought seriously of getting a wife. Nor was he long in determining his choice, nor when he offered himself was she long in accepting. The young lady, like himself, was poor, but she was comely, tidy, cheerful and thrifty. And they two were married. He rented a farm for cash, and before the year was out doubled his money. In fact, it began to be understood that John was one of the most thrifty men in the neighborhood.

This may seem a very common and perhaps a tedious story, but I tell it to show how a penniless boy won some capital, and was in a fair way to earn more when a great change took place in his views.
He had been a regular attendant on the church on the Sabbath, and he was a model of morality, but now he became a Christian. He was converted among the Methodists at a very noisy meeting, but in this, as in his business, he made thorough work. That night he and his wife went to the altar to be prayed for, and the brethren noisy "hallooed" very heartily when they saw the two kneel at the altar, but there were two "meant business." They were there for a purpose. "Have we sinned?" said John. "Is God angry with sinners?" asked he with real feeling; "then what shall we do?"

"Not to make a long story, they both became Christians; they were 'sincerely converted,' and yet they were as busy as ever. I said and they were so converted." So they were, at least in one respect, for they said, "We must bear our part in sustaining the Church, and in giving the gospel to the whole world." And what is better, they did what they said and they kept to it. They did not yet own a farm, but had the privilege of buying one of them. They had rented, and for that reason, all the dollars they could earn seemed doubly valuable, but they kept saying to themselves, "Much as we want the farm we must not buy it with our Lord's money." It was a good saying for all Christians to consider, since it is to be feared that a great many purchases are made by Christian people with money that is not their own, but is their Lord's.

A little incident occurred about this time. These Methodists are not so precise as some people, and some curious things take place in their meetings. John did a curious thing one night in a missionary meeting. A missionary had laid his case before the people, and John was greatly interested. He had just twenty dollars in his pocket in small bills. The missionary spoke a little while and John said to himself, "I will give him a dollar." A very pleasing anecdote led him to say, "One dollar is not enough. I'll give two!" A moving appeal touched him so much, that he said, "He shall have five dollars!"

All this was "said to himself." After the discourse the people were asked for money, and after a while John started up the aisle, and when almost to the altar, he stopped, and looking over his shoulder as if talking to somebody, he said, "What did you say? that I am a fool for giving money just now when I am wanting money so much? You say I am a fool do you?"

This was said in a voice half serious and half half comical, and going up to the missionary, he counted out the entire twenty dollars in his pocket. Then turning to look over his shoulder he exclaimed, "There Mr. Devil, I'll teach you to hold your tongue the next time." You said I was a fool for starting up the aisle to give ten dollars, and the outcome of it is that this good man has got the whole twenty. You will hold your tongue the next time, won't you?"

And droll as it was thus to talk, it seems to me that some of us might afford to consider whether it would not be better and safer to let the devil's logic force us to conclusions, not such as it usually commends, but rather such as John that night adopted.

It is enough to say that John prospers. John is rich.—Interior.

THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR.

The sacred scriptures speak distinctly and solemnly of the end to which the way of the transgressor leads. Men may, it they choose, deny it, and try to explain it away. But there it is as the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. There may be figurative language used; but these figures mean something. God is no trifler. He plays no paltry tricks upon his creatures. He said to Adam, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die." A lost Paradise, a cursed earth, and the sickness, sorrow, years, lamentations and weeping of six thousand years have proved that he meant what He said. Ah! it has come to pass as we see this day. And so will the threatenings which he has made about the second death. These all the dreadful figures, if figures they be, by which the sufferings of the finally impenitent are shadowed forth, will be found to be dreadful realities. What definitely will constitute the sufferings of the enemies of God I do not pretend to know, and I shall not draw upon imagination for a picture of that land of darkness, death and long despair. But this I know, when the transgressor shall hear the sentence which shall banish him from God and all good beings; when the light of eternity shall fall upon the tablet of memory, and bring out in distinct and legible characters the sin and guilt, and folly of a misspent life, when the sleeping conscience shall awake to sleep no more and point to time mispent, talents unimproved, and occasion passed forever by when the poor undying soul shall remember gospel calls sighted, gospel offers rejected, and gospel salvation lost forever; when in the terror and dismay of that dread hour the poor sinner shall cast an eye back, and find no help, and forward and see no end; when he shall lift it upward and in anguish say,

Farewell, ye happy fields,
Where joy forever dwells,
Hell, horrors hell
Infernal world! And thou, proudest hell
Receive thy new possessor!

He will then know, as God in His mercy grant that none of us may ever know, that the way of the transgressor is hard.—Rev. S. D. McPheters, D. D.

THE HALF-WAY PLACE.

"John," said the teacher, "have you found the beloved disciples place in Jesus's boom?"
"Are you eyes and glad smile said even more than his 'I hope so.'"
"And Fred, how is it with you?"
"I guess if there is any half-way place I'm there," said Fred, who had been halting some time between Christ and the world.

"And how long do you mean to stay there?"
"I don't know. I can't get any farther."
"Ah, you mistake. Where is the half-way place?"
"Where would it have been to the prodigal had he stopped there? Still a long way from home. No father in sight. No home near. No food. No clothes. No faded calf. No golden ring. The least not made. He never would have heard those precious words, 'My son was lost and is found.' He would still have been lost. Half-way home he would have been no better than the far country. But there is no half-way place. Half a Christian is still a sinner. Half-way to heaven is no where near the pearly gates. Half-way to Christ is still on Satan's ground, for 'he that is not with me is against me.' Christ wants your whole heart or none."

"Do you like half-way friends?"
"No, I despise them."
"Do you suppose Christ wishes such friends?"
"Do not stop any longer where you are. If the Lord be God serve him; if Baal, follow him."
"The half-way place, if such there be, is Satan's favorite ground."—S. S. Times.

ANTICIPATION OF DEATH.

How peacefully and gently God deals with those who put their trust in Him! What catastrophes are turned aside—what judgments spent their force before they reach our tabernacle! I have found, in all things in my personal experience, that God's discipline is different from what our haughty and vindictive nature would lead us to expect. He makes use of time. He teaches us by many lessons. We have learned but little since the last time; but he repeats his admonitions again, making allowance for our slow parts and reluctant wills. The old obstacles are still in the way; our vision is not wholly cleared; distressing temptations have still power, but he does not let me lie in wait to smother me through life. When he might have put us to shame—when we even expected him to cast us off—he has not done so. He has watched over us in our waywardness. When sinned against and forsaken, he has

come again to our rescue in time of need. "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."
Having long experienced this mercy and tenderness, we come to know him. He will manage our death for us, and as he has managed our other affairs, without shock or alarm to the remaining or departing. He holds us up perpetually, and will do so especially in a moment to us so critical. We shall wonder when he has borne us through, how slight a thing that great operation was. Like many things we have known, formidable in apprehension but easy in experience, our next hour after the transition will be as natural and as well provided for as any hour we have known.

It is not until we have passed through the furnace of our made to know how much cross was in our composition.

Religious Intelligence.

ITALY.

PADUA.—The Report of the proceedings of the Missionary Committee of Review, and the princely generosity of Mr. Ferylay and Mr. Heald, has, as you may suppose, filled us with joy and thankfulness. I have not been able to visit Rome as yet since then, but shall be there before the end of next week. Meanwhile Signor Sciarrelli has been on the look out for a suitable site, and, though just now the purchase of property or even land in Rome is attended with peculiar difficulties, yet he is not without hope that, out of two or three localities which I made my inspection, one may be found adapted to your use. Of his evangelic work he writes encouragingly. I send you a few notes culled from his letters.

On the evening of the thirtieth of August, the first Roman converts turned to Christ in connection with Methodist agency were admitted to the communion of the Church. From the first, in connexion with our work in Rome we have had a little nucleus of Church members; but these were persons who had received the truth in other parts of Italy. On the date above mentioned, seven men and four women, whose hearts had been touched under Sciarrelli's own preaching in Rome itself, and who, after several months' special instruction had given satisfactory evidence by lip and life of sound conversion, received publicly the first Roman converts turned to Christ in connection with Methodist agency were admitted to the communion of the Church. From the first, in connexion with our work in Rome we have had a little nucleus of Church members; but these were persons who had received the truth in other parts of Italy. 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