

## THE QUIET HOUR

### CHOOSE WHOM YE WILL SERVE

If it seems evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve. And the people said unto Joshua, "Nay; but we will serve the Lord."—Josh. xxiv.: 15, 21.

"When soldiers take their sovereign's fee,  
And swear his own to be,  
The royal badge on forehead bold  
They show to young and old.  
Nor may we hide for fear or shame  
The persecuted Name."

Usually I address myself more particularly to those who, like the great Apostle to the Gentiles, glory in the high vocation of a "servant of Jesus Christ." But to-day I should like to speak especially to those who are drifting easily along, without showing their colors plainly, perhaps thinking that there is no hurry about making a definite decision. When Joshua put the great choice before his people, saying: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," the people did not hesitate to declare:

"God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods."  
There seemed nothing doubtful about that reply, and yet Joshua was apparently still in doubt, for he says, "Ye cannot serve the Lord: for He is an holy God."

I think he was doubtful about their decision because it was made too easily; it was taken for granted, as a matter of course, that the Lord was their choice. There is the same danger now. We grow up in a Christian country, and it seems to be a matter of course that we shall consider ourselves Christians, and it is easy to drift comfortably through life without really making a choice at all. That position is very dangerous. Each of us must make his own choice, for Christ has said that anyone who is not on His side is against Him. The call is an individual one, and each must answer for himself, with earnest determination, unless he wants to find himself fighting against Christ.

In the ninth chapter of St. Luke's gospel we see how our Lord dealt with men who, in an easy-going fashion, were willing to consider themselves His followers. The first of three would-be disciples finds his eager declaration, "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest!" met with the stern warning—a warning which must have seemed almost like a repulse—"Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."

Indeed, if a man wants to choose an easy service, he must follow a less-devoted Leader, not one who walks straight to the Cross.

The second man met the Master's call, "Follow Me!" with an appeal for delay, on the ground of family claims. He also was sternly told that the service of the Master of the world must precede and outweigh all other claims.

The third disciple was willing to follow Christ, but seemed to think there was no special hurry. He was told that one who chooses that service must be thoroughly in earnest, or else he is not fit for the Kingdom of God.

So, in saying to wavering souls, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," I don't want you to think that the grand and glorious vocation of a follower of Christ should be undertaken lightly. A grand and glorious vocation is never an easy one. So, if your ambition is to live an easy life, don't choose the service of Christ. He calls for enthusiastic followers, men who, like St. Paul, press forward in spite of many warnings that bonds and afflictions await them, echoing his eager declaration: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy . . . for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus."

Do you shrink back, thinking that you would rather choose an easier service? Why, Christ is calling manly, noble

natures by a call that is true to their deepest instincts. Even in a game, or a race, anyone who is worth anything is disappointed if the victory is won without effort. A short time since a reader of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE wrote approvingly of "Songs of a Sourdough," by R. W. Service, drawing especial attention to "The Law of the Yukon." The book is calculated to fire the hearts of young men with the spell of "The Magnetic North"—and why? Because it vividly describes the difficulties that would seem to block the way.

"This is the law of the Yukon, and ever she makes it plain:  
Send not your foolish and feeble; send me your strong and sane.  
Strong for the red rage of battle; sane, for I harry them sore;  
Send me men girt for the combat, men who are grit to the core."

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Wild and wide are my borders, stern as death is my sway,  
And I wait for the men who will win me and I will not be won in a day;  
And I will not be won by weaklings, subtle, suave and mild,  
But by men with the hearts of vikings, and the simple faith of a child;  
Desperate, strong and restless, unthrottled by fear or defeat,  
Them will I gild with my treasure, them will I glut with my meat."

But, though Christ's service is not



A FINE CLOUD EFFECT.

easy, it is most attractive. If anyone holds back, thinking that he wants to have "a good time" before he settles down and becomes religious, he is making a great mistake. No one in the world has such a good time as a whole-hearted, enthusiastic servant of Christ. Why, the word "joy" seems to be almost the exclusive property of the servants of God. There is a great deal about joy in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament it rings out like a chime of bells all the way through. Other people have a good time when everything is going prosperously, but the joy that Christ gives shines out in the darkness as well as in the sunshine. No one who knows anything about the pleasures of sin can doubt that the pleasure soon changes to misery. You only have to look in the faces of those who have yielded themselves servants to sin to see how restlessly unhappy they are, if they step for a moment out of the whirl of excitement which drowns the steady protest of conscience. No one can be really happy if his own noblest self is constantly accusing him. The deeper he goes the more difficult is the upward climb. Dr. Davidson says that a young medical student in Paris chose to enjoy the pleasures of sin, doing it deliberately, with his eyes open to the misery ahead. He said: "I know that I can enjoy life in my own way about so many years. I shall parcel out my money to last so long a time, and no longer. When my time is up, my revolver shall end all." And it was not many years before desperate misery induced him to try to "end all" in that sad fashion. Of course he could

not "end all" with any revolver, or in any other way. God gives us life without our choice, and we cannot escape from ourselves by stepping presumptuously over the threshold of this earthly probation.

No, if you want to enjoy life, don't choose too easy a path, if your conscience points straight to a harder one. Happiness does not grow on any road but the right one, and the wages of sin must be paid sooner or later. May I quote our "Canadian Kipling" again on this point?

"Time has got a little bill—get wise while yet you may,  
For the debit side's increasing in a most alarming way;  
The things you had no right to do, the things you should have done,  
They're all put down: it's up to you to pay for every one.  
So eat, drink and be merry, have a good time if you will,  
But God help you when the time comes, and you foot the bill."

Perhaps you think the service of Christ would interfere with your business. I think that is another great mistake. The best man of business is one whose word is trusted as readily as his oath; the man who always acts, as the common saying is, "on the square"—even to his own loss. He is the man who keeps his promises and never cheats. His goods are always what they profess to be, and he works just as well when his employer's eye is not on him. And a true servant of Christ, feeling that he is always working under his Master's eye, must therefore make a splendid man of business.

### LET US BE KIND

Let us be kind;  
The way is long and lonely,  
And human hearts are asking for this blessing only—  
That we be kind.  
We cannot know the grief that men may borrow,  
We cannot see the souls storm-swept by sorrow;  
But love can shine upon the way to-day, to-morrow—  
Let us be kind.

Let us be kind;  
This is a wealth that has no measure,  
This is of heaven and earth the highest treasure—  
Let us be kind.  
A tender word, a smile of love in meeting,  
A song of hope and victory to those retreating,  
A glimpse of God and brotherhood while life is fleeting—  
Let us be kind.

Let us be kind;  
Around the world the tears of time are falling,  
And for the loved and lost these human hearts are calling—  
Let us be kind.  
To age and youth let gracious words be spoken,  
Upon the wheel of pain so many weary lives are broken,  
We live in vain who give no tender token—  
Let us be kind.

Let us be kind;  
The sunset tints will soon be in the west,  
Too late the flowers are laid then on the quiet breast—  
Let us be kind.  
And when the angel guides have sought and found us,  
The hands that link the broken ties of earth that bound us,  
And heaven and home shall bring the all around us—  
Let us be kind.

### AN EVENING PRAYER

If I have wounded any soul today,  
If I have caused one foot to go astray,  
If I have walked in my own wilful way—  
Lord God, forgive!  
If I have uttered idle words or vain,  
If I have turned aside from want or pain,  
Lest I myself should suffer through the strain—  
Lord God, forgive!

If I have craved for joys that are mine,  
If I have let my wayward heart repine,  
Dwelling on things on earth, not things divine—  
Lord God, forgive!

If I have been perverse, or hard, or cold,  
If I have longed for shelter in Thy fold,  
When Thou hast given me some port to hold—  
Lord God, forgive!

Forgive the sins I have confessed to Thee,  
Forgive the secret sins I do not see,  
That which I know not, Father, teach Thou me—  
Help me to live!  
—C. Maud Battersby, in The Presbyterian.

### THE FRIEND

Take the lid off your heart and let me see within;  
Curious, I, and impudent, a rugged man of sin.  
And yet I hold you truer than would president or priest;  
I put my bowl against your lip and seat you at my feast;  
I probe your wound and chafe your limbs and get my gods to see  
That you are strengthened as we fare the forest and the lea,  
Strive hands with me—the glasses brim—the sun is on the heather,  
And love is good and life is long and two are best together.  
—Richard Wightman, in Success Magazine.

Can any of our readers supply the desired poem?

N. L.

D. F.

DORA FARNCOMB.