

Pastor and People.

DRIFTING!

BY JOHN IMRIE, TORONTO.

Drifting down the river of life—
Drifting, drifting, drifting;
A lonely bark—immortal soul—
Launch'd forth to seek life's final goal,
O'er sunken rocks or hidden shoal,
Drifting, drifting, drifting!

Drifting down the river of life—
Drifting, drifting, drifting;
Here, passing through some lovely scene,
Cool shade and sunshine intervene,
Now, o'er a cascade's glist'ning sheen,
Drifting, drifting, drifting!

Drifting down the river of life—
Drifting, drifting, drifting;
Ever moving—resting never—
Speeds the bark adown life's river,
Daring Death and danger ever,
Drifting, drifting, drifting!

Drifting down the river of life—
Drifting, drifting, drifting;
High rocky, frowning banks o'erhead,
'Neath tangled branches, live and dead,
A tiny bark to ocean sped,
Drifting, drifting, drifting!

Drifting down the river of life—
Drifting, drifting, drifting;
Hark! the roll of distant thunder,
Lightnings rend the rocks asunder,
Oh! the look of awe-struck wonder,
Drifting, drifting, drifting!

Drifting down the river of life—
Drifting, drifting, drifting;
Cowering 'neath the chilly blast,
Many a dreadful cavern past,
Out—out into the light at last!
Drifting, drifting, drifting!

See! the Pilot looking for us—
Drifting, drifting, drifting!
Raise the signal for Him—"Prayer!"
Trust His wisdom, skill and care,
Gone the night of dark despair,
No more danger drifting!

Oh! the wrecks that strew the shore—
Drifting, drifting, drifting;
No fear had they on sea or land,
While others knelt, they dar'd to stand,
And spurn'd the Pilot's helping hand,
Wreck'd and lost while drifting!

SENSITIVE PEOPLE.

The hard part of Church work is not the work. It is the workers. If we could only make the very sensible workers a little more sensitive and the very sensitive workers a little more sensible, and could go about a Church putting in spiritual touches here and there just where they were needed, so that we would work a little less on one another's feelings and a little more on the coming of the kingdom, it would make an amazing difference in the statistics of year-books and the wrinkles on ministers' faces.

It is commonly said that choirs are very sensitive, but in these days of congregational singing we certainly have all joined the choir on that point. Some of us are born sensitive and live all our lives alone with the dread of it—like haunted houses. Others have been made so by continual ill-treatment. Some of us are sensitive all the time and charged like a wire with electricity and ready to throb at the touch. Others are only occasionally so after some particular event, and suffer all the more because they are not used to it.

Sometimes a Church seems like a colossal ball of yarn that in some way or other has been unwound into a wonderful unending tangle, and forthwith a poor minister is ordained and installed to patiently find the ends thereof and wind all up again on the distaff of his eloquence and tact, so that it can be used and spun off into good works.

But it is worse than this. Make all the threads alive so that they are moving in and out among themselves and tying themselves up into new knots while you are untying the old ones, while the yarn that you have wound up is all unwinding again, and then make every inch of thread of pure nerve fibre so that it is hurt when you pull on it, and do you wonder that in such a coil of sensitive confusion many a man, throwing his earnestness into Church work, finds himself tempted to give up our poor human nature, and draw one side to let it squirm and unsquirm itself if it can? It takes a surgical operation to do anything with some of us, and we have to tread around softly in one another's natures as if we were in an invalid's sickroom, tiptoeing our way along toward the truth.

We are not called upon not to be sensitive, but to be sensitive in the right way. Sensibility is the power of great minds. It is the weakness of smaller ones. It makes a song very beautiful, but sometimes it makes the singer very disagreeable. There is a way we can manage our sensibilities and a way we cannot. We cannot say that we will hear the nouns in a sentence and not the verbs, nor that we will hear some things that we are told and not others. We cannot help hearing what we are told, but we can help believing all that we hear. It is so with our sensibilities. They come crying unto us like pettish children, but we tell them that all this would be very easy to explain if we knew all the facts, and that probably it was not so, and that undoubtedly it was

too small a matter to be of much meaning if it was, and at all events "He that judgeth me is the Lord."

Every man has a touch of insanity on one subject, and that is himself. Once let a man get into this condition toward any person or all persons and he is like a man who wakes out of a bad dream in the night, who sits up in bed staring out into the darkness, sure that there is a burglar in the house. The ivy outside the window is trying to get in. The loose blind on the side of the piazza is walking softly around up in the front hall. A mouse is coming down stairs with a creak in its shoes, and the wind in the trees has gotten in somehow and is feeling around in the bureau drawer. The coal sliding in the cellar is a man getting into the window. The house settles like the moving of a trunk, and the piano snap is turning a lock, and the breathing of the child in his crib is the soft opening of the library door.

There is nothing we can do for this man. He will have to do it himself. He will have to get up and strike a light and see how foolish it all is. When a man makes a monk of himself and shuts himself up in a cloister of moods, everything takes the sickly hue of his own morbidness, and every little remark is built away out over into other meanings, and every time some poor, innocent, generous, absent-minded person happens to meet him without speaking, it is as momentous as an European war between two empires, and every little dot of an incident casts a continental shadow, until the poor soul loses its way in a maze of dark inferences—wandering about in a sort of tragic admiration for its own dismalness, as though it were a sort of higher luxury that only sensitive souls were capable of.

The remedy for all this lies in our being more interested in God's work than in the world's marking system for our work. We are not the sentinels of our own reputations. We are soldiers on duty and the call comes from the field, and, my brother in sensitiveness, if, in following your conscience, you have to face harsh criticism, it is worth remembering that there are times in every man's life when he is called upon either to be considered a "fool" in order to avoid being one, or solemnly to be a fool in order to avoid being considered one, and it may comfort your sensitive mood to recall what Paul has to say about "being fools for Christ's sake." Our trouble comes from confounding this kind with the commonplace kind. Being a "fool for Christ's sake" is very different from being a fool for one's own sake. He who is sensitive for Christ will grow less and less sensitive for himself.—*Rev. Gerald S. Lee, in Congregationalist.*

HOW THE DIVINE HELPER COMES.

There is goodness without the impulse and indwelling of the Divine Spirit, and there is no Divine Spirit to dwell in a man's heart without the man trusting in Jesus Christ. The condition of receiving the gift that makes men good is simply and solely that we should put our trust in Jesus Christ the Giver, that opens the door, and that Divine Spirit enters.

True! there are convincing operations which He effects upon the world; but these are not in question here. These come prior to, and independent of, faith. But the work of the Spirit of God, present within, is to heal and hallow us. If you open a chink, the water will come in. If you trust in Jesus Christ, He will give you the new life of His Spirit, which will make you free from the law of sin and death. That Divine Spirit "which they that believe in Him should receive," delights to enter into every heart where His presence is desired. Faith is desire; and desire rooted in faith cannot be in vain. Faith is expectation; and expectations based upon divine promises can be disappointed. Faith is dependence, and dependence that reckons upon God and upon God's gift of His Spirit will surely be recompensed.

The measure in which we possess the power that makes us good depends altogether upon ourselves. "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." You may have as much of God as you want, and as little as you will. The measure of your faith will determine at once the measure of your goodness and of your possession of the Spirit that makes good. Just as when the profit miraculously increased the oil in the cruse, the golden stream flowed as they brought vessels and staid when there was no more, so as long as we open our hearts for the reception, the gift will not be withheld, but God will not let it run like water spilled upon the ground, that cannot be gathered up. If we will desire, if we will reckon on, if we will look to Jesus Christ; and, beside all this, if we will honestly use the power that we possess, our capacity will grow and the gift will grow, and our holiness and purity will grow with it.

Some of you have been trying, more or less continuously, all your lives to mend your own characters and improve yourselves. There is a better way than that. A modern poet says:—

Self-knowledge, self-reverence, self-control.

These three alone lift life to sovereign power.

Taken by itself, that is pure heathenism. Self cannot improve self. Put self into God's keeping, and say, "I cannot guard, keep, purge, and hallow mine own self. Lord, do Thou do it for me." It is no use trying to build a tower whose top shall reach to heaven. A ladder has been let down on which we may pass upward, and by which God's angels of grace and beauty will come down to dwell in our hearts. If the Judge is to say of each of us, "He was a good man," He must also be able to say, "He was full of the Holy Ghost and of faith."—*Alexander MacLaren, D.D.*

THE right way to cure catarrh is to eradicate the poisonous taint which causes the disease, by taking Hood's Sarsaparilla.

THE DUTY OF THE TEACHER TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

- 1—He should find out what teaching is.
- 2—He should study methods of teaching.
- 3—He should pray without ceasing.
- 4—He should be prompt.
- 5—He should encourage his scholars to be prompt.
- 6—He should take part, and encourage his scholars to do so, in all the opening and closing exercises.
- 7—He should use the Bible, not the quarterly, while teaching.
- 8—He should try to direct the reading of his scholars.
- 9—He should call on all his class at their homes at least once a quarter.
- 10—He should invite the class to his home.
- 11—When unable to be present, he should write to the class, enclosing his contribution.
- 12—He should notify the superintendent if he intends to be absent.
- 13—If unable to notify the superintendent he should send a substitute.
- 14—If obliged to be away from the class for any length of time, or if any of the scholars are, he should write to them.
- 15—On taking a new class, he should write to all absentees inviting them to be present the next Sunday.
- 16—He should encourage the scholars to study the lessons.
- 17—He should attend the teachers' meetings.
- 18—He should give all he can to the school.
- 19—He should be faithful in looking after absentees.
- 20—If any scholar leaves the school, he should know the reason from that scholar.
- 21—He should keep track of all who leave his class, writing to them from time to time.
- 22—If he believes any of the library books are not suitable for the library, he should tell the librarian.
- 23—He should never find fault with the school management before his class.
- 24—He should encourage his scholars to attend the other Church services.
- 25—He should be on the lookout for new methods of school work, and report to the superintendent.
- 26—He should report all cases of need to the superintendent.
- 27—He should refrain from all questionable amusements, or from anything whereby he is apt to lose his influence over his class.
- 28—He should remember, above all, that he is to labour, not to entertain his scholars, but to lead them to the great Teacher.

INEXPRESSIBLE.

"The power of language has been gradually enlarging for a great length of time, and I venture to say that the English language at the present time can express more, and is more subtle, flexible, and at the same time vigorous, than any of which we possess a record." So writes Richard Jefferies in one of his latest essays. But notwithstanding all this, he recognizes that we have still thoughts and feelings beyond expression. "How many have said of the sea," he exclaims, "It makes me feel something I cannot say!" And how much more does this feeling possess us as we commune with Him who made the sea, and whose wonders and works are seen in it! Words fail to express the thoughts, and thoughts themselves fail to fathom the truth. The knowledge is too wonderful for us. The pure in heart see God, indeed. His presence is revealed to them, and they feel Him near; but, as Jefferies says of the sea, they feel what they cannot tell. Communion with God must be direct and at first hand. We cannot describe the sea, or explain to one who has not seen it the feelings it calls up. We say to such: "You must see it for yourself. You must watch it in its calms and in its storms, from the beach, from the cliff and from the deck in mid-ocean. Then will you feel what it has made me feel; it will speak forth its own mystery." So we say of communion with God. It must, for each one, be personal, direct, till men's hearts shall burn within them, and they shall, each for himself, hear unspeakable words which it is not possible for a man to utter.—*Quiver.*

MARTIN LUTHER'S LAST WILL AND PRAYER.

The last will of Luther is less known than some of the events of his life, and in it the circumstances and character of the man are grandly displayed. It closes thus:—

"O, Lord God, I thank Thee that Thou wouldst have me to be poor upon the earth; I have no house, land, possessions or money to leave. Thou hast given me a wife and children; to Thee I leave them; nourish, teach and save them, as hitherto Thou hast me, O, Father of the fatherless, and Judge of the widows. O, my heavenly Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of all consolation, I thank Thee that Thou hast revealed Thy Son Jesus Christ to me; on whom I have believed, whom I have professed, whom I have loved, whom I have celebrated; whom the Bishop of Rome and the multitude of the wicked do persecute and reproach. I pray Thee, O, Lord Jesus Christ, receive my soul. My heavenly Father, although I am taken out of this life, though I must now lay down this body, yet I certainly know that I shall dwell with Thee forever, neither can I by any be plucked out of Thy hands. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John iii. 16, x. 28; 2 Timothy iv. 6, 7, 8."

MOST cases of consumption are of catarrhal origin, and death follows inevitably. Catarrh can positively be cured by Nasal Balm. Thousands who have been restored testify to its merits. Try it.