

heart, brimful of fun, and did more than anything else to popularize his name with the common people

Another element in Cowper's spirit, indeed the most prominent, is his ardent love for nature. Thomson, in his "Seasons," has an affected stiffness which is absent from Cowper. The marvellous beauty of rural scenery in England became common to all and to all ages.

The whole being of Cowper was permeated with profoundest reverence for the Divine and his faith in God shone with steady lustre when not clouded by mental derangement. His Christian faith shines out of the gloom of despair and enables him to sing:

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace,
Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face."

A brave spirit in a weak, nervous body; a triumphant faith amid the darkness; despite the aberrations of mental disorder; an evangelical recognition of man as a sinner, and Christ as the only Saviour, at a time when the ideas were treated with aristocratic hauteur—these are qualities in Cowper which, associated with classic grace and literary excellence, gave him a high place in the mental and affective life of England, and explain the tenderness and sympathy inspiring Mrs Browning's poem of fourteen stanzas on Cowper's grave:

"It is a place where poets crowned may feel the heart's decaying,
It is a place where happy spirits may weep amid the praying,
Ye who are grief and humbleness, as low as silence languish;
Earth surely now may give her calm to whom she gave her anguish."

"Oh, poets! from a maniac's tongue was poured the deathless singing!
O Christians! at your cross of hope, a hopeless life is praying,
O ye who sit in brotherhood, your weary paths beguiling,
Groaned ill while he taught you peace, and died while ye were smiling."

"And now what time ye all may read
How discord on the music fell, and darkness on the glory,
And how when, one by one, sweet sounds and wandering lights departed,
He wove no less a loving face because so broken-hearted."

"He shall be wont to sanctify the poet's high vociferous,
And how the maddest Christian down in meeker adoration,
Nor ever shall he be, in praise, by wise or good forsaken,
Named solely as the household name of one whom God hath taken."

"With quiet sadness and no gloom I learn to think upon you—
With meekness that is gratefulness to God whose heaven he won him,
Who suffered once the madness-cold to his own love to bind him,
But gently led the blind along where breast and bird could find him."

"And wrought within his shattered brain such quick poetic senses
As hills have language for, and stars, harmonious intonances,
The pulse of dew upon the grass kept his within its number,
And silent shadows from the trees refreshed him like a slumber."

"Wild, timid hares were drawn from woods to share his home-carresses
Uplinking to his human eyes with sylvan tendernesses,
The very world, by God's constraint,
And man falsest of men, were moved,
His women and his men became, beside him, true and loving."

"And though, in blindness, he remained unconscious of that guiding,
And things he ded, came without the sweet sense of providing,
He testified this solemn truth, while phrensy desolated,
Nor man nor creature satisfy whom God only created."

"Like a sick child that knoweth not his mother while she blesses,
And drops upon his burning brow the coolness of her kisses,—
That turns his fevered eyes around—
"My mother! where's my mother?"
As if such tender words and deeds could come from any other!"

"The fever gone, with leaps of heart he sees her bending o'er him,
Her face all pale from a painful love!
The unwearied love she bore him!

Thus woke the poet from the dream his life-long fever gave him,
Henceforth those deep pathetic eyes, which closed in death to save him, blim,

"Thus? Oh, not thus! no type of earth can image that awaiting,
Wherein he scarcely heard the chant of seraphs, round him breaking,
Or felt the new immortal throbs of soul from body parted,
But felt those eyes alone, and knew,—
"My Saviour, not deserted."

"Deserted! who hath dreamt that when the cross in darkness rested,
Upon the victor's hidden face no love was manifested?
What frantic hands outstretched have o'er the anoning drops averted?
What tears have washed them from the soul, that one should be deserted?"

"Deserted? God could separate from his own essence rather,
And, since he have swept between the righteous son and father,
Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry his universe hath shaken—
It swept up single, echoless, "My God, I am forsaken."

"It went up from the holy lips amid his lost creation,
That, of the lost, no son should use the victor's words of desolation,
The earth's worst phrensies marring hope, should mar not hope's fruition,
And I, on Cowper's grave, should see his rapture in a vision."

OUR PERIODICALS:

Table listing various periodicals such as Christian Guardian, Methodist Magazine, and Wesleyan Herald with their respective prices and frequencies.

WILLIAM BRIGGS, Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto. S. F. HERRICK, Wesleyan Book Room, Halifax, N.S.

Pleasant Hours: A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Whitrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, AUGUST 28, 1899.

WAS SUBJECT UNTO THEM."

One of the most touching and beautiful intimations that we have of the boyhood of Jesus is the impressive phrase, "And he went down with them (his parents) and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." Many of the old masters have represented in their pictures their conception of what this meant with striking simplicity. In some cases the child Jesus is picking up the chips and shavings in the workshop of Joseph the carpenter, while Mary, spinning with her distaff, and his reputed father looked smilingly on. In other pictures he is represented as himself using the saw or the plane and assisting Joseph in his calling of carpenter. That he did this is undoubtedly from the exclamations of the people. Not unwisely, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" For all the Jews—sensible people that they were in this respect, as are the Germans of the present day—were weakly parents, taught their children some honest trade or means of livelihood. Thus Paul, the highly cultured member of the Sanhedrim, and the disciple of Gamaliel, was instructed in the carpenter's trade, and was able afterwards to boast, "These hands ministered to my necessities."

As the mother of our Lord witnessed the expansion of intellect and growth of thought in the youthful Jesus, how often must that Scripture have been fulfilled over and over again, "Now Mary kept all these things and pondered in her heart." How often would this be true after her finding Jesus in the temple and hearing his strange, soul-penetrating question, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

There is an ancient tradition that Joseph was at a somewhat advanced age at the birth of Jesus. The old Christmas carol says:

"Now Joseph was an old man, an old man was he,
And he married Mary, sweet Mary of Galilee."

The tradition further says that long before Jesus attained manhood Joseph died. We are doing no violence to probability in assuming that Jesus laboured with his own hands for the maintenance of his widowed mother. Certainly his first work of her. As he hung upon the cross he said to John, the beloved disciple, "Behold thy mother," and to Mary, "Behold thy son."

There is a beautiful picture by Holman Hunt, in which Jesus is represented as, worn and weary after a day's work in the carpenter's shop, stretching his arms in the doorway, while the mother stands on the opposite wall in the form of a cross. The strange shadow smites the heart of Mary with a pang of apprehension, as she seems to ponder the prophetic significance of her position. The expression of her face that the Scripture is being fulfilled, "Yea, a sword shall pierce thine own soul also."

Our Roman Catholic friends greatly reverence the mother of Jesus, applying to her such unwarranted expressions as "Theotokos," and "Mater Dei," the latter of the two, too, we think, is not sufficiently reverencing the character of her who was called "The blessed among women," and to whom our Lord himself paid such loving reverence. Certainly all of us, both young and those who have grown to the estate of manhood and womanhood, should learn from our loving Lord to be in youth and in manhood, and in womanhood to treat them with tender consideration and loving regard.

THE TELLTALE FOOTPRINTS.

"Eddy, O Eddy, where are you?" "Here, mother, came a shrill voice from the back door."

"Come here, Eddy; I want you to do something for me."

Then the back door opened, and Mrs. Taylor heard the soft patter of bare feet along the passage. But when Eddy entered the sitting-room, and stood by mother's sewing table, she only said, "Now Eddy, what's the matter?" "Why there, mother, are my pumps or brushes about the little boy. Why should the mother think anything was the matter? Because his brown eyes, which generally looked right up at you like two little birds lying out of a cage, were now an uneasy look; neither here nor there, but away."

"Nothing's the matter," said Eddy, looking out of the window. "What did you call me for, mother?" "She had wanted him to run down to the village post-office to mail a letter, but the letter was forgotten now. Mother was silent for a few minutes, then seeing nothing out of the way between her table and the back door she spoke:

"I am sorry my little boy has disobeyed me about going to the apple bin without leave. Eddy gave a little start. The reason, as God put me here, as your mother Eddy, is because he thinks I know better what you ought to do, and ought not to do, than you do yourself."

Eddy did not answer. He was asking himself how mothers knew everything a fellow did."

"I am specially sorry that you should disobey me by sneaking through the coal-room window," said Mrs. Taylor. "I won't mind you, and go in before my eyes, than go in by telling a lie."

"Why, mother, I didn't say—" began Eddy, glad of a chance to defend himself. "Do you think you only talk with your lips?" interrupted his mother. "What do you suppose has whispered to me that you have been in the apple bin when that you went through the coal room?" "I can't imagine," said Eddy, honestly. "Look behind you."

The little boy turned, and there, between him and the door, were five, closely footprints on the white matting. Mother could not help smiling at the look of surprise and dismay on the little face, but it was a rather mournful smile.

"Do you think we can ever do wrong, Eddy, and not leave marks of it somewhere?" she asked. "And, oh my little boy, the marks which ought to be clean and white for God's eyes, instead of being all tracked over by wrongdoing?"

"Won't they come out?" asked Eddy. "They mean that the footprints on the matting, but it was a rather mournful smile about other marks when she said:

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseeth from all sin." You must ask him to forgive you, my Eddy, and to take away your guilt, and to make you hate sin, which leaves such ugly footprints on your little life."

And then for a punishment, and for a reminder, mother kept the footprints on the sitting-room floor that whole day, so that Eddy might see them and remember how every wrong deed left dark stains on his little heart."

THE PRINCESS AND THE TRAMP.

When the grand old lady who has been Queen of England for sixty years was a child, she had no idea that she was one of the great good queens of the world to keep her simple and gentle, and so denied her many things which other rich men's daughters had for the asking. When she was seven or eight years of age, her best work was in a certain doll which she had seen in a shop window. She had to wait, however, until she could save the price, six shillings, out of her pocket money. At last the day came when the coveted doll was paid for and received. The story proceeds as follows:

And now, with the precious treasure upon her arm, the little lady bade the boys go to school, and she was about to step from the door when a poor, miserable-looking man met her eye. He was standing but a couple of feet away and seemed as if he was going to speak to her, but he was so frightened by the innocent kindness of her expression and the tenderness of her blue eyes. But though his lips moved, no sound came from them.

"Ho stood aside to let her pass, a mute agonized appeal in his sunken cheeks and quivering chin."

"Did you wish to speak to me?" asked the little lady, stung by her eyes.

"Yes, my lady, I was wanting voice, the poor tramp—for such he was—said, in trembling accents:

"I am very hungry. I would not ask for help if I were not ready to sink with hunger."

"He looked famine from his eyes. "I am so sorry; I have no money or else—"

"His lips trembled forth a bumble 'Why, your lady?' then he shuffled on his way."

"Stay!" murmured the little owner of the new doll. There was a quiver in her childish voice and a moisture in her eyes as she spoke. "Wait a minute, please."

She stepped back into the shop, approached the lady behind the counter, and said:

"Oh, please, do you mind taking the doll back and keeping it for me for a few days longer?"

"Certainly I will," replied the shop-keeper; "and you wish me to return you the money?"

"Yes, if you please."

This was done, and the little lady, hurrying out of the shop, placed the whole of the money in the hands of the shop-keeper.

He was like one thunderstruck. Never had bounty rained upon him in such profusion before.

The object of her bounty murmured in a low tone, though loud enough to reach her ear.

"If the Almighty made you a queen it would not be more than your goodness deserves." "I should be obliged to give you the money," he hobbled away, saying to his hunger.—The Quiver.

Bishop Potter and several of the women of his diocese are planning a method of Sunday transportation for the poor people of the pro-cathedral in Stanton Street, New York. They are to collect in the morning from the Divine, on Springdale Heights. It is to be the spiritual home of the poor, as well as the rich, the bishop says, and they are to feel that the money they are collecting in the morning will be taken free on Sunday to the church, and, as the grounds around the cathedral will be used for a park, the people can enjoy an hour or two in the open air.