

# Sunday Reading.

## THE SHINING LIGHT.

Graphic Story of a Burning Ship—A Sunday Talk With Children.

I want to lead you to see the light that shines, forever in the Bethlehem cradle that you may understand what it is the Bible means when it speaks of men arising and shining because their light is come.

There are other lights than gas-lights and candle-lights and star-lights, lights that shine only to the eye-balls that look out of your head. There are lights which shine only to the heart, which thrill and gladden its sadness away, and clear up perplexity and distress, the darkness which is felt.

You shall see one of this sort of lights. It was far away from land out on a sea which rolled heavily after a storm. It had blown hard for days, and a ship and all the four hundred souls upon it were in the greatest peril.

Among these four hundred mortals were sixteen small boys and girls, whose voyage up to now had been a great enjoyment to them, for beside kindly sailors there were decks and upper decks, and holds and hatchways, saloons and cabins, and endless holes and innumerable corners of darkness made by the big beams of the huge wooden ship they were sailing in. It was the very place for children when all went well. But for the last two days all had been going ill. Games were stopped, decks were cleared, and all the little folks and many of the bigger ones were lying in their berths sick, neither knowing nor heeding what happened. There had been two wild days and nights. Terrible waves had thundered over the ship and smaller ones were still breaking on it.

The skies were still low and cold and black, but the storm was fast going down, and the clouds were lifting and breaking and driving away, and glints of the setting sun were seen. Suddenly a great commotion was heard on deck. Everybody below heard it, the children could not make out what was the matter. Everybody seemed to be running about overhead and along the passages so excitedly and so constantly that the ship shook to the tread of the feet. The fact was, a fire had broken out in the hold of the ship, but at present only a few people knew. The children wondered. At length they were told what it was, then they only thought it fun and wanted to get up to go and see it. They had as yet no idea what terrible sorrow and anxiety the news brought to the hearts of the mothers who sat by their beds, telling them that they must not go, as calmly as they could.

It was in the cold grey shadows of the evening that the fire began. It was down a most awkward place to get at, where the luggage and stores of the ship were. To reach anywhere near it, men had to go down the gangway up which came all the smoke of it, which was soon thick and black as it coming up a chimney.

In ten minutes after the fire began the whole ship was in alarm and confusion. Crew, passengers—everybody was drawing buckets of water and pitching it down where the smoke came up, while others were clearing decks and passages for better ways to get at it.

Midnight had come and no headway had been made against the fire. Smoke and star were breaking out at new places, and the hole stern of the ship was ready to burst into a blaze. And everybody was in the greatest anguish and alarm.

By this time the children had been dressed and got on deck, for the captain said the ship must be abandoned with all speed. A thing almost too awful to contemplate was everybody's mind. It was well known that the ship contained large stores of powder. The moment these were reached by one spark from the fire, in less than a second, deck, masts, people would be high in the air, shattered, scorched, senseless, to sink down with hissing and splashing back into the sea. The boats (which had been being got ready for some time) were lowered. The deck was thronged with hundreds crowding to the place where the boats were to be entered.

The night was pitch dark; getting into the boats was a long and tedious affair, for the fire as yet lent no aid, rolling up only huge volumes of smoke, which a stern wind drove right along the deck, adding to the darkness, confusion, blindness, and suffocation. In the dense black volume of smoke even the lamps the men carried were almost useless.

The wind, though it was going down, was still fresh. The sea rolled heavily; the ship was without helm, the deck being now too hot at the stern, as well as too smoky, for the helmsman to stand on it. He had been got away, after a brave struggle to it to the last, almost dead and stifled. The night was still pitch dark. The sailors worked at their difficult task, while, at the captain's direction, the passengers got as much clothing as possible, and fresh water for drinking and food to eat, for none knew what long days and nights they might be doomed to spend on the sea. One after another the boats were got afloat, and one after another the passengers were got into them with as much speed as possible.

Before the last man had leaped, the pitch darkness went, the stern of the ship broke into huge flames, which rapidly ran along the deck, leaped up the masts, spread along the spars and sails and sig-

ging, lapping all [5] great tongues of flames, lighting up the inky black sea, and sky with horrible red glare. But the night's darkness had given way to a more terrible one—the darkness of the mind, full of dread of instant death. The explosion seemed now but seconds away; it proved to be minutes, and in those last minutes the boat was filled and got well away.

Bit by bit the fire ate through the timbers, the door of the powder magazine was reached, and all round its sides was ablaze. One spark at the powder, the first, and in a flash of time, with deafening roar, the huge ship rose into the air; all the masts, all the beams, all the stores that were in it, rose in one swift, mighty, rushing blaze, high into the black clouds of the night. For half a second the ship was in the air, a blazing mass against the black sky; then down it came, lower; a vast shapeless confusion of flame it fell into the black, yawning sea below—one final splash, one long, steaming hiss, and the ship was gone.

It was not half a minute's duration, and the last ember had sunk under the sea and the boats where in the silent darkness, with but one little lamp in each to a mast, which made the surrounding darkness seem darker.

It was now three in the morning. They kept their boats to the wind and waited for the dawn; the wild waves surging past them, spray drenching them to the skin, cold winds chilling them to the bone as they vainly cling for warmth to one another full of gratitude that they had escaped with their lives from the destroyed ship to cling to one another, though it was wet and weary and frightened and frozen.

At length the slow, black night had worn away, and the morning came, but with heavy rain, which blinded sun and sea and sky, and day was only less dark and wretched than night. The sea became stiller under the rain.

The hours were slowly on till five o'clock in the evening, when, in its moments, just as the sun sank down into a suddenly-cleared strip of western sky of brilliant yellow light, and right athwart the pale brightness on the very edge of the horizon, stood out black the far-away rigging of a ship. A sail! "excitedly exclaimed the first man to see it.

As by magic the cry passed from boat to boat. At the word all started out of their torpor, and stood up on their cramped, stiffened limbs to see.

"Where?" they gasped, looking for a second with eyes which famished for the sight in vain.

The sailors pointed to where the black spot on the sky-line was; and with timid, bewildered hope, they saw it.

"Which way is it going?" they asked, almost afraid to know, lest it should be away from them. With eager eyes the sailors fixed on it one long, breathless minute. A flutter like the birth of heaven ran through them all as grim voices announced that it was bearing their way.

Delighted and grateful ran the murmurs, "It's coming this way!" "We shall all be saved!" "Thank God for His goodness!" "Oh, my darling, we shall see papa again!" "It is there; see!"—lifting a little boy up to do so.

From his boat the captain sent up a rocket to attract attention. At the thought of how tiny the black specks of their boats must be at so great a distance, even seen through a glass, the light in their faces flickered and almost went out. If they were not seen before that sinking sun, they all was over. Shout as they would they could never be heard across that seething wast of waters, and would be certainly passed in the dark without the ship even knowing what was happening so near under the cover of the night.

In half a moment, the ship replied to the rocket by sending up another, which thrilled their hearts with gratitude. At the sight joy broke into a trembling cheer which was too timid and fearful to be a shout. They were seen! When they sat down in the places again, all was changed. Deep, calm, thankful joy and the buzz of a hopeful life passed round.

It was three hours before the ship's boats met. When the darkness fell and sight of the ship was lost to the boats, the ship's Captain flashed more rockets to guide the boat and ships. At length they were on the ship where warm beds and warm food were given to all, and on her the shipwrecked hundreds at length found their homes.

But that is not what I want you to see. I want you to see how that black speck of sail they saw was to their hearts the brightest light they had ever seen in their lives. It was not the yellow sun the way their light, but that black spot against where it was setting in long level lines of sickly gold. At the name of that black speck—"A sail!"—light started in them, and glowed on their eager weary faces, the light of hope and thankfulness. The burning ship did not light up their souls with hope; it filled them with horrible darkness of fear and danger of death. But at the tiny sign of a saviour they arose; for their light had come and the glory of that saving ship had arisen upon them. BISHOP WAUGH.

## A Message From God.

"Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee." Psalm 143:8.

The Bible in Various Languages. The bible has the most extensive circulation in the German language. Through the agency of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the bible in the German language has had a circulation of 17 million copies. The same society secured a circulation of 12 million copies of the bible in French; over 5 million copies in Chinese; over 5 million in Russian; nearly 3½ million in Italian; nearly 3 million in Swedish; nearly 3 million in Danish; and over 2 million in the Dutch language. Nearly 400,000 copies have been issued in Arabic, over a million and a half have come forth in Bengali, over three-quarters of a million in Czech, about a million and a quarter in Hebrew, over a million in Magyar, over 800,000 in Lettish, over 500,000 in Malagasi, over 616,000 in Malayalam, 600,000 in Marathi, and over a million in Tulu.

At the beginning of this century, the bible was only accessible to one-fifth of the world's population, while now it may be read by nine-tenths of the people of the globe. There are now more than 200 million copies of the bible in circulation in 330 different languages.

## CONVERTS TO JUDAISM.

They are not Many in Number and They are not Heartily Welcomed.

Converts to Judaism are scarce at all times, but they are positively prohibited in Russia, where the learned rabbi was domiciled until he came to this country.

Even if the law there was otherwise, however, and the attractiveness of Judaism to the infidel were greater than it is, it is safe to say that very few conversions would occur. The Jewish church is not given to proselytizing, and the rabbis of the orthodox persuasion, at least, are slow to accept proselytes. "We are the chosen people," cry the orthodox Jews, "because we have sprung from the loins of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and mere sympathy with our faith makes not the infidel one of us."

The applicant for admission to the Jewish church has to go through a long and laborious course of training before he can hope for any encouragement from the orthodox Jewish rabbis. The experience of a German army officer who applied for admission to the orthodox church illustrates this. He was a man of good family and had fallen in love with the daughter of an orthodox Jewish merchant in Berlin. He was so completely infatuated with her that he was willing to sacrifice social position, his military career, and everything else for the sake of possessing her. She was not indifferent to his suit, but firmly refused to consider it unless he abandoned his religion, and became converted to hers. The officer resigned from the army, bade farewell to relatives and friends, and came to this city. Here he made known his purpose to one of the orthodox rabbis and persuaded the latter to instruct him in the principles of Judaism and prepare him for the ceremonies attendant upon his formal admission into the church. The novice lasted for more than a year, and all his impetuosity did not, avail to shorten it in any degree.

The feeling against admitting the outsider is responsible also for the unwillingness to let go of one born in the faith. The Jew who wishes to abandon the religion of his fathers must be ready to give up all his friends, and to be forgotten by his relatives—even by the mother who bore him. Of course, it does not follow that such a fate always befalls the wanderer, but it does usually, and the relatives actually go so far as to wear sackcloth and ashes in mourning for the heretic, just as if he were dead and buried. "Society Leuka" gives a very accurate description in the "Yoke of the Torah" of the feelings of the orthodox Jew in regard to intermarriage, and it is even stronger where the Jew wishes to abandon his faith totally.—N. Y. Sun.

## GLADSTONE ON CHRISTIANITY.

The Greatest of All Phenomena as Well as of All Facts.

Says Mr. Gladstone: The religion of Christ is for mankind the greatest of all phenomena, the greatest of all facts. It is the dominant religion of the inhabitants of this planet in at least two important respects. It commands the largest number of professional adherents. If we estimate the population of the globe at 1,400 millions (and some would state a higher figure) between 400 and 500 million of these, or one-third of the whole, are professing Christians, and at every point of the circuit the question is not one of losing ground, but of gaining it. The fallacy which accepted the vast population of China as Buddhists in the mass has been exploded, and it is plain that no other religion approaches the numerical strength of Christianity; doubtful, indeed, whether there be any that reaches one half of it. The second of the particulars now under view, is, perhaps, even more important.

Christianity is the religion in the command of whose professors is lodged a proportion of power far exceeding its superiority of numbers. And this power is both moral and material. In the area controversy it can be said to have a serious antagonist. Force, secular or physical, accumulation in the hands of Christians in a proportion absolutely overwhelming, and the accumulation of influence is not less remarkable than that of the force. This is not surprising, for all the elements of influence have their home within the Christian precinct. The art, the literature, the systematized industry, invention and commerce—in one word, the power of the world—are almost wholly Christian. In Christendom alone there seems to lie an inexhaustible energy of world-wide expansion. The nations of Christendom are everywhere arbiters of the fate of non-Christian nations.

## Rules For Daily Life.

1. Never begin the day without prayer.
2. Learn to accept everything as permitted by God.
3. Seek to learn the needed lesson in each disappointment (his appointment).
4. Never look at others, but be ever looking unto Jesus.
5. Cultivate the habit of living your life alone with God.
6. Whenever the devil tempts, get down on your knees as soon as possible, and wait upon God.
7. Accustom yourself to take everything to God.
8. Never lose time in idle self-pitying or excusing yourself when God waits to show you it is you who are in the wrong.
9. Be earnest, sincere, faithful and true at all costs.
10. Let Christ live out his life in you at all times and under all circumstances.

## Dean Stanley's Bad Handwriting.

Dean Stanley's bad handwriting is a matter of common notoriety, and I have often been asked if it was true that the printers refused to set it up. The fact is that when the "copy" for the History of the Jewish church was sent in, the printers deputed that they would have to charge a special rate for composition, as no man could set

up such manuscript on the ordinary terms. We, accordingly, had the work copied out by a skillful amanuensis before it was set in type, as this proved to be the least expensive way of meeting the difficulty. Once he wrote to my father a letter on an important matter, but there were some passages in it which in spite of every effort, proved undecipherable. My father was compelled to underline these sentences and return the letter, with a request that they might be rewritten. In due course the dean replied: "If you cannot read my writing, I am sure I cannot do so, but I think I meant to say" so and so, and the sentence was rewritten in a form scarcely more legible than before—John Murray, in Good Words.

## IN TWO WEEKS.

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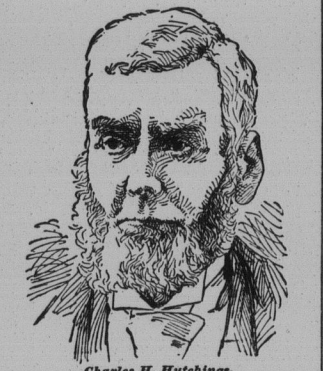
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The case of Mr. Samuel Hanna, an esteemed resident of Manvers, Ont., has attracted the attention of hundreds living in the district. Since Mr. Hanna's cure, by the use of Paine's Celery Compound, scores who were previously skeptical, are now thoroughly convinced that every word of the numerous testimonials in favor of Paine's Celery Compound in the past, is true and deserving.

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Mrs. Grimwood Marries. Mrs. Frank Grimwood, heroine of the siege of Manipur, in 1891 during which her husband, the resident, lost his life, has married, at Carshalton, Mr. Miller a paper manufacturer. Mr. Grimwood herself led the defense cheering the men and taking her part in the fighting. At 2 o'clock in the morning, when there were scarcely men enough left to carry the wounded, the remnant of the force abandoned the place and plunged into the jungle. On the tenth day despair settled in their hearts. The cartridges could last only through that day. "Kill me before they can take me," she whispered, and Col. Butler promised to do so. When all Europe was acclaiming Mrs. Grimwood's heroic Queen Victoria sent for her, gave her an affectionate greeting, and bestowed upon her the Victoria Wreath, a grant of £1000 and an annuity of £140 a year.



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