

# The Inglenook

## Letting Your Light Shine.

By Count A. Bernstorff.

The words of our Lord in the sermon on the mount, that his disciples should let their light shine before men, almost seem to contradict other words from the same divine lips. How could the Lord tell us to show forth our good works when he strongly denounced the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who prayed in public places and gave their alms in an ostentatious way, so that they might be seen of men? But Jesus cannot contradict himself, and we can easily see that the command to let our light shine presents to us an important moral truth.

In the first place, let us remember that the disciples were not asked to let that shine which they did not possess. The Pharisees did not really pray. Their prayers were but an outward religious ceremony. They approached God with their lips, while their hearts were far away from him. Nothing has been less pleasing to God at all times than an outward form of religion, without real worship in the spirit. Let us be watchful not to profess more religion than we have. We certainly cannot deceive God—we cannot even deceive men.

But we must further remember that we are not told to proclaim all the secrets of our inner life. An old saying goes, "Beware of laying bare the roots of your strength." The Lord himself tells us to lock the door when we pray. Nevertheless, much remains which we are not to keep for ourselves. We owe it to the Lord to confess him before men. We should not be ashamed of Him who gave His life for us; and only when we confess him here will he confess us hereafter. Jesus thought at the right hand of his Father, is yet neglected or despised on earth. It will be no difficulty to confess him when he comes in glory. Now, when the world, among which we move, still rejects him, we have the great privilege of standing up for him. We owe this confession, secondly, to our fellow Christians. Many believers, especially such as live among worldly surroundings, are afraid of working for Christ as they ought, and thereby are weakened in their own inner life. They want stirring up and nothing will do them so much good as when they see other Christians come out boldly for the Master. But, chiefly, we owe it to the world. How is the world to learn to know Christ if not by the testimony of those who know Him? No unbeliever has seen Christ since His resurrection. He only showed Himself to His own people, but they went about testifying as eye-witnesses that Christ was risen indeed. Just the same law prevails now. The unbeliever does not see Christ with the eye of faith. He must learn to trust those who have seen Him, until he himself sees. Therefore every living Christian is a steward over God's mysteries, and he is called to be faithful. The writer of these lines can affirm that he received the first impulses for his inner life by having been brought into contact with a whole-hearted Christian. So it is in many cases.

But how are we to witness? Undoubtedly in a twofold manner; by our word and by our life. The one is insufficient without the other. The word is necessary to explain the truth, to make it intelligible, but the life must show that the words are truth. The injunction to let our light shine evidently refers more to the profession of our lives. What we are to let shine is not ourselves, but our light; not our persons, but that which God has given us. We have a splendid example of this in nature. The moon has no light of her own, but when the light of the sun can reach her she throws her gentle light into our dark nights. The Christian also has no

light of his own. But when he is in contact with Jesus, who is the light of life, he can communicate this light to others. In every Christian's face we see the peace and joy which only a soul can have whose sins are washed away. If our faith is sincere it will change our whole life—our affections as well as our doings. Shall we make a secret of it that our hearts are more drawn to the prayer-meeting than to the ball-room? If the world is to have better affections it must see that the change in ours is genuine.

## A Christless Burial.

BY HORATIUS BONAR, D.D.

"So I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done."—Ecc. 8: 10.

Wrapped in a Christless shroud,  
He sleeps the Christless sleep;  
Above him, the eternal clomb,  
Beneath, the fiery deep.

Laid in a Christless tomb,  
There bound with felon chain,  
He waits the terrors of his doom,  
The judgment and the pain.

O Christless shroud, how cold,  
How dark, O Christless tomb!  
O grief that never can grow old,  
O endless, hopeless doom!

O Christless sleep, how sad!  
What waking shalt thou know?  
For thee no star, no dawning glad,  
Only the lasting woe!

To the rocks and hills in vain  
Shall be the sinner's call:  
O day of wrath, and death, and pain,  
The lost soul's funeral!

O Christless soul awake  
Ere thy last sleep begin!  
O Christ, the sleepers slumbers break,  
Burst thou the bands of sin!

## The Story of Pahn-Lee.

Pahn-Lee was a little Chinese boy who lived in a boat on the river with his father and mother and two older brothers. His story is told by "Sunbeam." There had been a little sister, but Pahn-Lee's father did not want a girl in his family. So the baby was sold to a missionary for a quarter of a dollar's worth of our money in Chinese change. Pahn-Lee's father and mother thought it a fine bargain, and wondered what the foreigner wanted with such a useless creature as a girl baby. But Pahn-Lee went by the mission school after that and heard little girls singing inside and thought it must be a happy place. The Chinese hymns they sang stayed in his head. There was one about Jesus, the Good Shepherd, that Pahn-Lee liked best of all; and he kept wondering who Jesus might be, until one day he heard the missionary preaching about the Good Shepherd, and then the little boy listened eagerly.

The Gospel story is so simple and plain that a child can understand it, and so Pahn-Lee took it all into his little heart. He went home and told his father, but his father was angry, and beat him so that Pahn-Lee was afraid to speak to any one about it again. But he thought about it all the more, and one day he spoke to the missionary, and the good missionary walked with him and prayed with him, and gave him a little Chinese tract, with a picture of the Good Shepherd on it, for his own.

I do not suppose that Pahn-Lee had ever seen a

sheep; but he was very happy over the picture. He took it home, but now his father was angry in earnest. He not only beat his son, but he took him before the judge for being disobedient, and the judge ordered that Pahn-Lee should wear a "canjue" around his neck for a month. A "canjue" is a square plank of wood, with a hole for the neck in the center and the person who wears it cannot eat or sleep comfortably, so it is very hard punishment to have to wear one for weeks at a time. On the "canjue" was written the reason why Pahn-Lee was punished, and every one who saw him read it and frowned at him as a criminal.

Poor Pahn-Lee! that was only the beginning of his troubles. It would take too long to tell the story of the next few years—how he was cast out by his father and mother for being a Christian boy; and he suffered from hungry and cold, but always kept true to the name of Jesus. But at last the good missionary found a home and work for the brave boy, and Pahn-Lee worked so well that he rose from one thing to another, until now he is a strong useful man, and helps the missionary in bringing others to Jesus.

How do you think he does it? Why, he puts on a "canjue" and goes around the streets as if he were a criminal being punished. People look to see what is written on the "canjue" about his crime, and Pahn-Lee has, in large letters, "Jesus the good Shepherd," and three or four beautiful gospel texts about the Saviour. Then, when he sees the people reading the words, he tells them about Jesus, and so often he wins them to Christ. He says: "I heard the voice of the Good Shepherd and followed him. Will you listen to Jesus' voice and follow him, too?"

Pahn-Lee's little sister is a Christian girl now, and his mother became a follower of Jesus before she died. Pahn-Lee says: "It was the best day of my life when I followed the Good Shepherd's voice."

## A Bright Bird.

He was an English starling, and was owned by a barber. A starling can be taught to speak, and to speak well, too. This one had been taught to answer certain questions: so that a dialogue like this could be carried on:

"Who are you?"  
"I'm Joe."  
"Where are you from?"  
"From Finsbury."  
"Who is your master?"  
"The barber."  
"What brought you here?"  
"Bad company."

Now, it came to pass one day, that the starling escaped from his cage and flew away to enjoy his liberty. The barber was in despair. Joe was the life of the shop; many a customer came attracted by the fame of the bird, and the barber saw his receipts falling off. Then, too, he loved the bird, which had proved so apt a pupil. But all efforts to find the stray bird were in vain.

Meantime, Joe had been enjoying life on his own account. A few days passed very pleasantly, and then, alas! he fell into the snare of the fowler, literally.

A man lived a few miles from the barber's home who made the snaring of birds his business. Some of the birds he stuffed and sold; others, again, were sold to hotels near by, to be served up in delicate tidbits to fastidious guests. Much to his surprise, Joe found himself one day in the fowler's net, in company with a large number of birds as frightened as himself. The fowler began drawing out the birds, one after another, and wringing their necks. Joe saw that his turn was coming, and something must be done. It was clear that the fowler could not ask questions, so Joe piped out:

"I'm Joe."  
"Hey! What's that?" cried the fowler.  
"I'm Joe," repeated the bird.  
"You are?" said the astonished fowler. "What brings you here?"

"Bad company," said Joe promptly.

It is needless to say that Joe's neck was not wrung, and that he was soon restored to his rejoicing master, the barber.—S. lected.