

I Now See.

He stood before the Sanhedrim; The scowling rabbis gazed at him; He looked not of their praise or blame; There was no fear, there was no shame. For once upon whose dazzled eyes The whole world poured its glad surprise. The open heaven was for too near, His first day's light to sweeten clear, To let him waste his now saved ken On the hate-clouded face of men.

But still they questioned, Who art thou? What hast thou seen? What art thou now? Thou art not he who yesterday Sat here and begged beside the way— For he was a blind.

For I was blind, but now I see.

He told the story o'er and o'er: It was his full heart's only lore: A prophet on the Sabbath day Had touched his sightless eyes with clay, And made him see who had been blind. Their words passed by him like the wind Which raves and howls, but cannot shock The hundred-fathom-rooted rock.

Their threats would fain all went wide; They could not touch his Hebrew pride. Their sneers at Jesus and his band, Nameless and homeless in the land, Their boasts of Moses and his Lord, All could not change him by one word.

I knew not what this man may be, Slender or stout; but as for me, One thing I know, that I am he Who once was blind, and now I see.

They were all doctors of renown, The great men of a famous town, With deep brows, wrinkled, broad and wise, Beneath their wide phylacteries, The wisdom of the East was theirs, And honor crowned their silver hairs. The man they jeered and laughed to scorn Was unlearned, poor, and humbly born: But he knew better far than they. What came to him that Sabbath day; And what the Christ had done for him He knew, and not the Sanhedrim.

—Harper's Magazine.

Pastor and People.

He Leadeth Me.

The clearer light does not always fall upon the pathway of the Christian. The way that is straight and narrow, though it leads to the beautiful city, is often beset with great difficulties. Thorns often pierce the feet of those who follow where the Saviour leads. He was weary and worn by the roughness of the way, and the world knows not what tears of bitterness he shed. The servant is not above his lord, and if the Christian should even be as his Lord, there would be no reason to expect exemption from seasons of darkness and sorrow. Many have the mistaken idea that religion should be all pleasure and gratification, and because it is not, they reject it as gloomy and undesirable. It requires self-denial, but it yields pleasures, even here, far better than carnal gratification. Though it does not deliver from the trials and sorrows of the present world, it sustains and comforts in them. All Christians who read Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, find their own experience produced in it. Pilgrim was so often overwhelmed with trouble, and would almost yield to despair, yet in all he troubles he found a safe way out. We need not weary ourselves to avoid troubles and afflictions, for they are the inheritance of this world. The thing we need most is a guide and a support in them. The Saviour is the true guide, and he was in all points tried as we are; he knows just how to support and deliver those who are tempted. He was not dismayed or overcome by his sorrows, but endured hardness as a true soldier. It is the Christian's first duty to follow him. This makes faith essential to Christian comfort, life and progress. In hours of darkness, faith enables us to adopt the sentiment of these beautiful lines:

The clouds hang heavy round my way, I cannot see; But through the darkness I believe God leadeth me. 'Tis sweet to keep my hand in His, While all is dim; To close my weary aching eyes, And follow Him. Through many a thorny path He leads My tired feet, Through many a path of tears I go, But it is sweet To know that He is close to me, My God, My Guide He leadeth me, and so I walk Quite satisfied. To blind my eyes He may reveal No light at all; But while I lean on His strong arm I cannot fall.

God is Love.

It is the one, almost only struggle of religious life to believe this. In spite of all the seeming cruelties of this life; in spite of the clouded mystery in which God has shrouded himself, in spite of pain, and the stern aspect of human life, and the gathering of thicker darkness, and more solemn silence round the soul as life goes on, simply to believe that God is love, and to hold fast to that, as a man holds on to a rock with a desperate grip when the salt surf and the driving waves sweep over him and take the breath away—I say that this is the one fight of Christian life, compared with which all else is easy. When we believe that, human affections are easy. It is easy to be generous, and tolerant, and benevolent, when we are sure of the heart of God, and when the little love of this life, and its coldness, and its unreturned affections are more than made up to us by the certainty that our Father's love is ours. But, when we lose sight of that, though but for a moment, the heart sours, and men cease no longer worth the loving; and wrongs are magnified, and injuries cannot be forgiven, and life itself drags on, a mere death in life. A man may doubt anything and everything, and still be blessed, provided only he holds fast to that conviction. Let all drift from him like sea-weed on life's ocean. So long as he reposes on the assurance of the eternal charity, his spirit, at least, cannot drift. There are moments, I humbly think, when we understand those triumphant words of St. Paul, "Let God be true, and every man a liar."—R. W. Robertson.

Fearlessness.

How are we to obtain and maintain the calm, cheerful courage, the equanimity, which is the guardian of the fearless heart? For when we are not standing on the shore watching Niagara, but sitting in what feels like a mere shell of a boat, or out in the very whirl and mad riot and rush of the rapids, moving for all we can see, to swift and sure destruction, how are we to help being faint-hearted and weak? Eyes grow dim, cheeks grow pallid, hands tremble, knees knock together, and we are not strong as Great-heart, but timid as Mr. Despondency. Through such hours of turmoil most of us have passed now and then, perhaps wearing faces that were outwardly serene, the while dismay and terror have been threatening to submerge our souls. Where shall we go for the rest and help we need? One way is to take fast hold of the promises. They shine out on our darkness like stars of hope. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings. His heart is fixed, trusting in God." And other ringing words that have sounded through the ages come to us like grand inspirations. It is a great thing to be familiar with the Word, in times of need, and they may well be thankful who have stored their memories with its precious life thoughts. In the Apocrapha, which is comparatively little read, but which, while it has not the value of the recognized inspired writings, is still worthy of study and of consideration, there occur passages which are not very comforting, as, for instance: "Look at the generations of old, and see; did ever any trust in the Lord, and was confounded? or did any abide in His fear, and was forsaken? or whom did He ever despise, that called upon Him?"

Concerning these verses there is an interesting fact mentioned in the life of John Bunyan. In a period of great spiritual gloom, they flashed into his mind, and he thought they must surely be in the Bible. He hunted it through to find them, but he says: "This I continued for over a year, but could not find the place." At last he discovered it in Ecclesiasticus, and felt somewhat troubled that it was not a real Bible message, but after awhile he composed himself and quaintly said, "I considered that though it was not in those texts that we call holy and canonical, yet forasmuch as this sentence was the sum and substance of many of the promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it, and I bless God for that word, for it was of good to me; that word doth oft-times shine before my face."

The Folly of Pride.

The very witty and sarcastic Rev. Sydney Smith thus discoursed on the folly of pride in such a creature as man: "After all, take some quiet, sober moment of life, and add together the two ideas of pride and of man, behold him, creature of a span high, stalking through infinite space in all the grandeur of littleness. Perched on a speck of the universe, every wind of heaven strikes into his blood the coldness of earth, his soul floats from his body like melody from the string; day and night, as dust on the wheel, he is rolled along the heaven, through a labyrinth of worlds, and all the creations of God are flaming above and beneath. Is this a creature to make himself a crown of glory; to deny his own flesh, to mock at his fellow, sprung from the dust to which he will soon return? Does the proud man not err? Does he not suffer? Does he not die? When he reasons is he never stopped by difficulties? When he acts is he never tempted by pleasure? When he lives is he free from pain? When he dies can he escape the common grave? Pride is not the heritage of man; humility should dwell with family, and atone for ignorance, error and imperfection."

Truth Telling.

He has gone but a little way in this matter who supposes that it is an easy thing for a man to speak the truth, "the thing he trotheth," and that it is a casual action which may be fulfilled, at once, after any lapse of exercise. But, in the first place, the man who would speak the truth must know what he trotheth. To do that he must have an uncorrupted judgment. But some people's judgments are so entirely grained over by vanity, selfishness, passion, or inflated prejudices, and fancies long indulged in; or they have the habit of looking at everything so carelessly, that they see nothing truly. Again, to speak truth, a man must not only have that martial courage which goes out with sound of drum and trumpet, to do and suffer great things, but that domestic courage which compels him to utter small-sounding truths in spite of present inconvenience and outraged sensitiveness or sensibility. Truth-telling in its highest sense requires a well-balanced mind. For instance, much exaggeration, perhaps the most, is occasioned by an impatient and easily-moved temperament, which longs to convey its own vivid impressions to other minds, and seeks by amplifying to gain the full measure of their sympathy. But a true man does not think what his hearers are feeling, but what he is saying.—Arthur Helps.

REMEMBER that it is not by your doing that God bestows largely. It is for His own name's sake that He does it.—Rev. A. C. Thompson.

How thoughtful we need be in our ways of doing good! We try to confer a favour, and perhaps we wound the tenderest susceptibilities; we seek to give comfort, and through our want of gentle tact we jar the most sensitive nerve of grief. Or perhaps we give physical relief in some inconsiderate way, and we break down independence of spirit and destroy the power of self-help. When we can aid others so walk, we should not try to carry them. It is well to study God's dealing with ourselves, if we are Christians, which saves the soul while it weakens none of its powers. He delivers from the curse and terror, and then restores to soundness, that we may walk at liberty keeping his commandments.—Rev. John Kerr.

The Debt Paid.

There were two boys who lived in the north of Scotland. In childhood they played together, and loved one another, but as they grew towards manhood their paths separated. Years passed away, and they met again, but not as they had parted. One of them was a criminal, brought before the court to receive his sentence, and the other was the judge upon the bench, who was to pass the sentence.

The prisoner, recognizing in the judge his former playmate, felt hope spring up within him. After his case had been stated, the judge called for the book of law, in which the penalty attached to the crime was written. There were two extremes, the smallest and the greatest sum.

The prisoner hoped that the judge, for the sake of their old friendship, would give him the least; but the judge ordered that he should pay the heaviest sum, a sum so great that he could not pay it, and would therefore be condemned to life-long imprisonment. His head sank in sadness upon his breast, when he heard the voice of the judge, saying:—

"George, George, my old friend, I have judged you as a just judge, and now I will save you as a friend. I have indeed fixed the heaviest penalty, but I intend to pay it all myself, and you are free."

Reader, does this story remind you, as it reminds me, of the One who took upon Himself the penalty which justice claimed because of our sins, that we might be set free?

God, the judge of all mankind, paid the heavy price; not a sum of money, but giving up His only Son to suffer in the sinner's stead; and Jesus stooped so low, even so low as to die the death of the Cross, that he might save men from eternal ruin. Jesus, the holy, loving, obedient Son of God, did not save us by setting at naught the law of God, but he owned it to be good, and the punishment for disobeying it to be just, by taking the sinner's place, and bearing the punishment instead. The judge in the story which I have related, was obliged to pass sentence upon the criminal according to law, but he chose to pay the debt himself.

And so, God must condemn sin, and punish for sin, but in His great love, He gave His Son to bear the punishment; and Jesus, in love as great, has done so, suffering on the Cross; giving—not money—but His own life—Himself—for sinners, so that, believing on Him and loving Him, we are saved by Him alone. And now, should we not give back love for love to this kind Judge who has paid the debt for us, to this "Good Shepherd" who laid down His own life for ours?—Sears of Truth.

What is Christ to Us?

He is our way: we walk in Him.—He is our truth: we embrace Him.—He is our life: we live in Him.—He is our Lord: we choose Him to rule over us.—He is our master: we serve Him.—He is our teacher: instructing us in the way of salvation.—He is our prophet: pointing out the future.—He is our advocate: ever living to make intercession for us.—He is our Saviour: saving to the uttermost.—He is our root: we grow from Him.—He is our bread: we feed upon Him.—He is our fold: we enter it by Him.—He is our shepherd: leading us into green pastures.—He is the true vine: we abide in Him.—He is the water of life: we slake our thirst in Him.—He is the fairest among ten thousand: we admire Him above every thing.—He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person: we strive to reflect His likeness.—He is the upholder of all things: we rest upon Him.—He is our wisdom: we are guided by Him.—He is our righteousness: we cast all our imperfections upon Him.—He is our sanctification: we draw all the sources of life from Him.—He is our redemption: redeeming us from all iniquity.—He is our healer: healing all our diseases.—He is our friend: relieving us from all our necessities.—And when we need Him no longer on earth, He is the Lamb in the midst of the throne above, the light of heaven, leading us to living fountains of water.—N. Bishop.

Little Crosses.

Christ comes to us morning by morning, to present to us, for the day then opening, divers little crosses, thwartings of our own will, interferences with our plans, disappointments of our little pleasures. Do we kiss them, and take them up, and follow in his rear, like Simon the Cyrenian? Or do we toss them from us scornfully because they are so little, and wait for great affliction to approve our patience and our resignation to his will? Ah! how might we accommodate to the small matters of religion generally those words of the Lord respecting the children. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Despise not little sins; they have ruined many a soul. Despise not little duties; they have been to many a saved man an excellent discipline of humanity. Despise not little temptations, rightly met, they have often nerved the character for some fiery trial. And despise not little crosses; for when taken up, and lovingly accepted at the Lord's hand, they have made men meet for a great crown, even a crown of righteousness and life, which the Lord has promised to those that love him.

Thou may'st be more happy than ever was Caesar or Solomon, if thou wilt be more virtuous.

The world was made to be inhabited by beasts, but studied and contemplated by man. It is the debt of our reason we owe unto God, and the homage we pay for not being beasts; without this the world is still as though it had not been, or as it was before the sixth day, when as yet there was not a creature that could conceive or say there was a world. The wisdom of God receives small honour from those vulgar leads that rudely stare about, and with a gross rusticity admire His works; those highly magnify Him whose judicious inquiry into His acts, and deliberate research into His creatures, return the duty of a devout and inspired admiration.—Sir Thomas Brown.

"The Little Ones."

How careful the divine record is to mention the "little ones." They must be present in Joshua's "big meeting" when the blessings and cursings were read, and all the people said "amen." For aught we know they said "amen" too. No doubt they said something. There is nothing better for children, than to be trained to go to church early. The Jews, to this day, don't forget to take their "little ones" with them to the Synagogue. We were struck with this feature in a synagogue service we once attended. The children were there in large numbers, and they did not seem to be a nuisance either. We cannot help believing that the great dislike to public worship on the part of many of the young, which so many complain of, and the blame of which is put upon the Sunday School, is owing to early neglect on the part of the parents, for which, however, we have charity to believe, these parents are not wholly responsible. The customs of the pulpit and of religious societies have had much to do with it. The idea, that a child should not go to church until it is "old enough to behave," is "what's the matter" to a great extent. For our part we were never disturbed by the presence of the "little ones" in meeting; even if they did once in a while stand up on their feet, or were a little uneasy, or said "Pa," or "Ma," or showed their displeasure in their own way, at the long sermon. No; let them come any way. They will learn "to behave" after a while. Some people complain because the "young folks" do not go to church more than they do. But let them remember how they received these young people, when they were "little ones," into religious assemblies, or others like them. Two or three little children were uneasy in the gallery, or a little one made a slight noise by a suppressed cry or laugh—and what next? Why, the minister stopped short in his sermon, stood still as a post, and put on such a grave, dignified demeanor for a few moments, and then said, "One speaking at the same time is enough." And the people all round began to stare at the poor mortified mothers, and seemed to say by severe glances, "What did you bring those little things here for to disturb the meeting? Better keep them at home till they can learn to behave." And the mothers went home grieved and ashamed, and the children somehow got the impression that they had been where they were not wanted. Next Sabbath if the parents are disposed to try it again, the children begin to cry and say "Oh, mamma, I don't want to go to meeting to-day; everybody looked so cross at me last Sunday."

The Missing Members.

There are three ways of leaving a Church. One of these is to die, another is to be turned out, another is to take a disjunction certificate from the Church to some other. These three ways are in accordance with ecclesiastical law and order. To these three orderly methods of exit a fourth is too frequently added by the Church members who have an exceedingly thoughtless method of doing business. They quietly slip away without saying much about it, and neglect to take their certificate from the Church in which they have been members to that to which they go. Some of them value their membership in the old Church so highly that they dislike to break up old associations by asking for a certificate, others have received so little advantage from the fact that their names were inscribed on the Church roll that it does not occur to them that they will be missed if they go away.

Much of this is due to the loose fashion in which communion rolls are kept and Church members looked after, or rather suffered to return without being looked after, and without even a knowledge of their whereabouts. We know of a Church whose roll showed a membership of 470. The revision of that roll consequent on the coming of a new pastor resulted in cutting it down to about 250. Now, what is Church membership? Does it mean anything? Has it advantages and disadvantages? Are there privileges and responsibilities? Does it make any difference whether a man is a Church member or not? Are there any other societies in which members are suffered to leave without any notice being taken of their departure. Elders and deacons are too often mere figure-heads, and neglect these and other matters to which their attention should be given, and then if the pastor happens to be a weak brother, fond of seeing a large Church membership in print, regardless as to who are living elsewhere, or have long since died, the "mious fraud" is continued, to the discredit of the Church. We repeat—let your list of Church members do what you expect Christians to do—tell the truth, and the truth only. Any other course, if the result of carelessness is inexcusable, if done with a purpose of swelling a fictitious membership, it is fraud, and nothing less.—Review.

Living Together.

The art of "living together" pleasantly is greatly promoted by the habitual exchanges of the little courtesies of this life; they are never unimportant, never unacceptable, are always grateful to the feelings in every household. Shall brothers and sisters be less careful of the feelings of one another than of those of the stranger? And, between husband and wife, should there be less effort at gentleness of deportment, at suavity of manner and courtesy of expression, than is extended to outsiders, who have no special claims and may never be seen again? Shame upon any member of any family who neglects those affectionate attentions, and whose suavities of deportment towards the members of the household, and even to the lowest servant, which cannot fail to elevate the giver, and to draw from the receiver those willing and spontaneous reciprocities which make of family associations a little heaven below.

Always have something doing, or ready to do; for a Christian should never have any idle time.

Random Readings.

Love not the world, for it is a moth in a Christian's life.

Grace is glory militant, and glory is grace triumphant; grace is glory begun, glory is grace made perfect; grace is the first degree of glory; glory is the highest degree of grace.

He who can look up to his God with the most believing confidence, is sure to look most gently on his fellow men, while he who shudders to lift his eyes to heaven, often casts the haughtiest glances on the things of earth.

The man who goes about to humble himself, and to atone, after a fall into sin, before he looks to Christ, only gets hardness into the heart, and attempts to purge away sin by sin. Nothing must stand between the sinner and the Saviour.

MANY a blessed promise in the Bible would remain a sealed promise if the key of sorrow, or trial, or temptation were not sent to open its stores, and send warmth to one's heart such words as "Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid."—Maria Harc.

Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful. Beauty is God's handwriting—a wayside sacrament; welcome it in every fair face, every fair sky, every fair flower, and thank Him earnestly with your eyes. It is a charming draught, a cup of blessing.

HAVE a special care to sanctify the Lord's-day. Make it the market for thy soul, let the whole day be spent in prayer or meditation; lay aside the affairs of the other parts of the week; let the sermon thou hast heard be offered into prayer.—Bunyan.

FAITH in general is the sight of spiritual things; religious faith is the sight of God in His works and His Providence; Christian faith is the sight of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Thus faith in general produces spirituality; faith in God produces religion; faith in Christ produces the Christian life.

ONE design of our dear Lord, in afflicting His children, is to give them a noble opportunity to glorify Him. Suffering brings into patience, submission and faith, testifies of Him. It says:—"It is the Lord, let Him do unto me as seemeth to Him good." The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.

A pleasing instance of the union of Protestants of all denominations has just been given in Newry. During the past week Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Independents have held united Evangelical meetings. The Assembly Rooms could not hold the worshippers, and a Presbyterian Church near by was opened. This was also filled, and an Episcopalian minister presided at the service, calling, as chairman, upon a Primitive Methodist to preach, and upon a layman to pray.

The Epistle to the Romans was written to a church who had believed, and who really know the truth. Yet how the Apostle goes over the whole ground, from the beginning, thus showing that those who have believed, must be continually occupied with all the truths of the gospel—doctrinal, dispensational, and practical. We want no new doctrines, but we want a deeper insight into, and a richer experience of those things which are so clearly revealed.

Who ever knew an eminently holy man who did not spend much of his time in prayer? . . . Whitefield says, "Whole days and weeks have I spent prostrate on the ground, in silent or vocal prayer." "Fall upon your knees and grow there," is the language of another, who knew that whosoever he affirmed. The-e, in the spirit, are but specimens of a feature in eminent piety, which is absolutely uniform.

MAN's material frame is adapted in his inward nature. His upward look and speaking eye are the outlet of the soul. As the soul grows nobler, it lets itself be seen more distinctly, even through features that have sprung from the dust of the grove. It thins and makes transparent even the walls of clay. There is a struggle of the inner life to assimilate the outer form to itself, which is prophetic of something coming.—Rev. J. An Kerr.

A GREAT POSSESSION.—The peculiarly precious promises of the gospel belong only to those who are truly sorry for their sins, who sincerely believe the promises of God in Jesus Christ; to those who daily repair to these promises as the main pillar and ground of their hope and comfort; to those who plead for the fulfilment of these promises, as for the greatest of all blessings; to those who are endeavouring to please God in the newness of life, and whose most precious hopes and consolations for time and eternity, are derived from a simple, child-like reliance upon the truth of God, in all His gracious promises.

CONSCIOUSNESS of unbelief is a sign of actual faith. Infidels are never troubled with unbelief. Dead men never feel cold. Frozen feet never ache. And a soul given up to ungodliness, and bound hand and foot in sin, has no trouble with unbelief. It is only when faith shoots its first illuminating ray into the darkened heart that baleful presence of unbelief is made manifest. It is only when the troubled soul can say, "I do believe," that it starts back in the abyss of doubt which that first gleam of faith discloses, and exclaims, "Help thou my unbelief!"

I FEEL all that I know and all that I teach will do nothing for my soul, if I spend my time, as some people do, in business or company. My soul starves to death in the best company, and God is often lost in prayers and ordinances. "Enter into thy closet," said He, and "shut thy door." Some words in Scripture are very emphatic. "Shut thy door" means much:—it means, shut out, not only company, but business; not only the company abroad, but the company at home: it means, let thy poor soul have a little rest and refreshment, and God have an opportunity to speak to thee in a still small voice, or He will speak to thee in thunder.—Coell.