

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

PAPA'S GIRLIE.

A wee toddlin' bairn, following him here, there and everywhere the midget feet, can go: telling stories in baby talk—such music to his ear; governing him by the least wish; causing book, magazine or pen to succumb to her winsome ways, this is some of the power of "Papa's Girlie."

How many a man engrossed with business, full of anxious care, coming home weary with the world's worry, casts all aside when his darling crows her rejoicing at papa's return; laughs merrily as he tosses his treasure up to the ceiling or finds her soft, chubby arms around his neck telling him how "dood" she has been.

Ah! what wonderful magnetism between the two—only surpassed by mother-love. Precious beyond price in the father's eyes is the mite.

What would you not do for your girlie, your daughter, you, the man so grave and sedate?

Seldom absent from your thoughts, dreaming of her at counter, desk or shop, what complete possession she has of your heart's affection. Don't you remember the good-bye kiss or recall her romp with the other treasures—the happy mother, those lads so full of glee and yet withal so gentle, so kind to little sister.

—much as you praise her, there is no jealousy in others claiming a share of the bit lassie. She has a large following. Relatives bid for her favours and she satisfies all. It is beyond dispute she has grandma's mouth, grandpa's brow, this look of aunt or that of uncle, thus belonging to those whose affections radiate to the sunbeam of your home—thrice happy father—fond, loving mother.

As you see her playing at your feet, sometimes the unbidden tear will come while you vainly try to pierce the future of your girlie. You know not what temptations, what trials, what sorrows may be her portion during the sojourn here below. Well for thee if with implicit faith, you leave her in the care of Him—the Great Shepherd of the flock who carrieth the lambs in His bosom. Then, by guiding thy little one aright, watching over her while you may, you can fearlessly trust the Saviour. He will guard and defend her and in His own good time take her to that rest where there are no more tears and all sorrow shall flee away.

That it be thus for time, for eternity, must be the hope the earnest prayer of the many who love "papa's girlie."

J. B. H.

Ottawa, December 10th, 1883.

AN OLD QUESTION.

It is continually being asked, and no wonder that it puzzles people—that old question why God so often permits bad people to be happy in this life, and causes the good to suffer so bitterly. Certainly facts frequently seem to justify it. But there are at least two truths the study of which helps to answer it.

Ungodly people, although the happiness which they enjoy doubtless is actual and considerable, never know what the highest sort of happiness is, that which springs from the harmony of the human will with the will of God, and from mutually recognized love between God and the soul. This happiness no mere fortunate conditions of life can secure. It never does, for it never can, satisfy the deepest cravings of the heart, of which everybody is conscious at times, and it is something which is beyond the permanent influence of disturbing circumstances, so that true Christians have it, in a greater or less degree, no matter how greatly they suffer. Moreover, it grows sweeter and more precious to the Christian, even in adversity; partly because the more one knows of it in any circumstances the more blessed it becomes, and partly because the more one is driven to depend upon it by the failure of other sources of joy the richer its nature and fruitfulness is found to be. God does give His believing children the best happiness after all. But for their sorrows they sometimes could not appreciate it at its true value; and, when they once have learned what it is, they would not surrender it for any kind or degree of merely temporal enjoyment.

It also is to be remembered that the true aim of life, as regarded from the point of view of God and the sincere Christian, is not happiness after all, but goodness. It is a thing for which to be devoutly thankful, that God permits so much happiness to each of us. But

we ought not to be deceived, even temporarily, into forgetting that what we are here for is the attainment of holy characters. It is natural and right for us to desire to be happy, but we must be content to wait for our happiness, if God so wills, until we are with Him hereafter. Here we are to do our duty whether we are happy or not, and there we shall be rewarded. Yet not even for the promised reward, the heavenly happiness, should we strive primarily, but that we may prove to our Saviour by our lives how affectionately grateful we are to Him for what He has done for us. May it not be, also, that when we shall have been welcomed into His heavenly abode, we shall see that we could not have learned to appreciate its peculiar and entrancing happiness properly or fully had we not been caused to undergo a preparation here by suffering? Then we shall be able to say, with the Psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Let us, therefore, try now to say sincerely with Job, "Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him."—*Congregationalist*.

THE PROMISE OF GOD.

"Certainly I will be with thee."

What if the flowers are fading?
What if the fields are bare?
The autumn is all golden,
If God be with me there;
I keep the summer sunshine
Within my heart all day,
And when He walks beside me,
Flowers cover all the way.

What thou I needs must journey
Into a stranger's place?
I turn from that I know not
And look into His face;
And so it does not matter
How far my feet may roam,
I live within His presence,
And always am at home.

What though I meet new duties
And work too great for me?
God makes my fingers skillful,
And He my strength will be
I serve a gracious Master
Who gives the help I ask,
And His appointed labour
Is aye an easy task.

I am afraid of nothing
While He is by my side.
The storms may beat upon me,
Black clouds the sun may hide,
But thunder dies in music,
And darkness turns to light,
Since God forsakes me never,
And keeps me in His sight.

O God, I read the story
Of Thy great love to me
In every fresh day's dawning
And every change I see;
I rest upon Thy promise,
I gladly do Thy will,
Only whatever comes to me,
Be near, be with me still.

—Marianne Farningham, in *Christian World*.

THE PROBLEM OF TO-DAY.

It is but a few years our fathers in mission work had to face the problem as to where they could find a footing for such heralds of the Cross as they should send out. To-day a far different problem presses upon us; our great difficulty lies in the selection of the most urgent of the many urgent claims pressing themselves on every side. The Church, which for years prayed that the door of entrance to heathen lands might be opened to her, finds now in no quarter any bargo her onward progress. God has graciously answered the prayer of His people, giving them all they asked, and more than even their wildest flights of imagination conceived. And now, what use will the Church make of the grand openings before it? From every quarter comes the cry for help from our missionaries in the various fields, because of the demands made upon them for the Gospel from the nations and tribes around them. How will the Church answer their appeals? Shall they be reinforced, and the good work be pushed and extended? What say the Boards of all the different churches? Alas! they all have but one answer to give, and that answer is, in substance, that they have done to the utmost of their power, they have been spending to the last dollar, intrusted to them, and that they dare not incur greater liabilities until they have been given larger means. They are right. It is the unfaithfulness of the churches in the matter that is hindering the progress of the Gospel. The very condition of things at present in

connection with mission work; the cry of the wants felt by the labourers in every part of the wide field; the plea for the Gospel that is coming up everywhere—all show how rich and abundant the blessing of God is upon the work. How it should incite the Church to spring with all its power to the grand work. It is emphatically the day of God's power. Would that his people were willing. Everything has been working together in the Divine Providence to make possible a world-wide proclamation of the Gospel under the most favourable circumstances. Will the Church see to it that it be done?—*Christian at Work*.

HOW TO GROW OLD.

Thoughtful people on the shady side of fifty begin to take some concern as to how they shall adjust themselves to the inexorable advance of years. They make a rapid internal calculation of how long under favouring conditions they can live, and what period of that time is susceptible of any physical or mental pleasure. They have already observed the decay of vision and hearing and, what is of more serious import, the decline of that *vivida vis animi*, the very sparkle of the soul, which enables one to extract joy from the common pastimes and recreations of men. They find often that not merely amusements which entertained have ceased to do so, but that the sober pursuits which once appeared to have value are now regarded as only tedious make-shifts to fill up the time. When society, shows, books and business alike pall upon the jaded senses, there is a prospect for a dreary old age, unless by a supreme effort of will the man rouses himself from this intellectual lethargy, and finds in action, in philosophy, or in religion some fresh charms in life itself.

To guard against stupefaction seems to be the chief desideratum. The dull spirit is the miserable one. To escape self and take an interest in others has been found to be an excellent remedy for the moral distemper that comes on with age and robs the very sky of its splendours and the fair earth of its graceful outlines. No one ever profited greatly by self-brooding. Go out among men and survey their daily lives and changeable fortunes, and you cease to regard yourself as the centre of things. The man of fifty who has preserved a love of children has a strong shield against the dreadful dry-rot, and if he has discovered any agreeable hobby he is doubly fortified. These two things alone, combined with a vigilant conservation of the health will save one from wallowing like Solumon, and make him take the cheerful view which Cicero has immortalized in his "De Senectute."

It should be added that whatever can cultivate a love for the visible world of nature has a partial refuge against spiritual despair. Bryant alludes to this in the opening lines of "Thanatopsis," and all the poets have certified to it in some form. To get a thrill from the sea, from the hill, from sheltered lakes, from enamelled meadows and the blue concave that clasps the warm earth, is a sure sign that the soul still rules and reigns, and that the grave clouds have not fallen upon it, however dim the eye or irresponsive the ear or tremulous the hand. So long as the spirit of man does not hang out the white flag in token of absolute surrender there is joy in life. The eager mind will find beauty in the air and in unseen spheres, and people will speak of the serenity of such an old man or woman with wonder and admiration.

THE ART OF FORGETTING.

What a blessed thing it is we can forget. To-day's troubles look large, but a week hence they will be forgotten and buried out of sight. Says one writer:

If you would keep a book and daily put down the things that worry you, and see what becomes of them, it would be a benefit to you. You allow the thing to annoy you, just as you allow a fly to settle on you and plague you; and lose your temper. But if you would see what it was that threw you off your balance before breakfast, and put it down in a book, and follow it up, and follow it out, and ascertain what becomes of it, you would see what a fool you were in the matter.

The art of everlooking is quite as important. And if we should take time to write down the origin, progress, and outcome of a few of our troubles, it would make us so ashamed of the fuss we make over them that we would be glad to drop such things and bury them at once in eternal forgetfulness. Life is too short to be worn out in petty worries, frettings, hatreds and vexations.