

God's Children in Dark Hours.

BY THOMAS L. CUTLER, D. D.

No human life is all sunshine, and over smooth water. Some of the noblest characters in Bible history were men who travelled to Heaven through dark nights and in the teeth of many a "blizzard."

As it was in those days, so it is in our days. The very best people, those who love God, and who are true to their duty, are not always in the sunshine.

On a summer Sunday I found myself in a country town among strangers. My steps were led, for the morning service, to a plain, unpretending little church.

It is so easy to question why and how; questions so quickly bring doubts; doubts multiply and cling so. How can we get rid of them? What is it to crucify them?

Paul says in Galatians, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." And in another place he glorifies only "in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me."

In the one instance believers are the actors, and crucify passions and sins; in the other instance the cross of Christ crucifies the world. Crucifixion is a shameful and ignominious death.

There are other ways and ways to be considered, answered, and acted upon. Why has God given me life and being, power, a body with members, a mind with faculties and thoughts, a heart to love?

and has as perfect a right to appoint for you and me a path through a pitch-dark tunnel or a valley of the shadow of death as he has to direct our footsteps over a meadow rippled with flowers.

We are so constituted that time is a necessary element in every mental or moral acquisition. No one ever learns the multiplication table by reading it over once.

This law holds in respect to our spiritual being and life. The greater the time spent in real communion with God, the greater and more permanent will be the effect of such communion on our souls.

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"I am going to do my duty," muttered Tom. Rushing to his employer's desk, placing his foot on the spring in the floor, he pressed hard, Tom heard the safe door go—slam!

"Young man!" shouted the old man angrily, his face reddening. "I must look after my employer's interests," said Tom, firmly.

"I will call you up to Mr. Dodlin's, and tell him how it was," Ding-ding-ding! went the telephone in William Dodlin's dining-room.

"Don't you worry me, my mother," kindly declared Tom Sperry. "I can get my own supper just as well as not. Now, you see, I can buy a piece of steak, make a cup of tea, toast a piece of bread, handy as an old cook in a hunter's camp."

"Not a word, mother, not a word!" said the obliging Tom. Soon the steak was broiled, the bread toasting, and all the dishes were on the table, and Tom was seated before them, happy as an office boy eating his supper could be.

"I'm afraid she's a poor, feeble creature," said Mr. Bayliff, shaking his head. "Ten o'clock Monday morning, and the washing isn't out yet. It ain't the way your poor mother used to keep house, Hector, eh? How? Where? Where you go now?"

"I should think it would 'magine' will," declared the old neighbor. "What a progressive world we do live in! Things wuz different when I was a boy—girl, I mean."

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for it at the end. And the tired look in her eyes and the weary flush on her cheek went to Hector's heart at times.

"My darling," said he, "I wish I could see the things easier for you, and I wish I could walk a man somewhere on the farther side of sixty. Three things were very prominent: an immense red handkerchief swathing his neck, very keen eyes behind his iron-browed spectacles, and a cane with a crooked head. With this cane he pompously pounded on the floor, and looking at Tom, said, 'Eh, eh, young man!'

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deal more than thirty dollars. Look, here is my savings-bank book. "Well, I declare!" said Silas.

"Hector objected to it at first," went on Cynthia, "but when I proved to him that I should still have plenty of time left to read and garden and walk with him, he let me go on with it. So you see the improvements are really an economy."

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Facts to be Remembered.

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