

out which are we left "to suffer and to mourn." W. B. FALLIS.
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ESSAY VIII.

"Peele Castle" brings out very strongly two phases of life placed in opposition. It shows, in a poetic form, the effect of bereavement on an affectionate and thoughtful nature. It illustrates the refining power of sorrow and the knowledge of a fuller, higher life which sorrow conveys. In a very suggestive way, it shows how a greater sympathy with mankind in general is awakened by personal bereavement. As a whole, besides being "a thing of beauty and a joy forever," it is a record of a great crisis, not only in Wordsworth's life, but in the lives of many of humbler origin and lesser fame.

"FENBOIS."

ELEGIAC STANZAS.

This poem is almost perfect from every point of view. It sets forth two views of life, each of which is illustrated by a picture of Peele Castle. In the picture which the poet himself draws, we get a glimpse of his own life before sorrow had left the print of its chastening hand

upon his soul. The calm, quiet scene represents the poet's own longing for rest and peace, and the shrinking of his sensitive nature from all contact with the rude, hurrying world. But, "'tis so no more." Just as the tranquil sea has been lashed into fury by the raging storms, so a mighty conflict has raged in Wordsworth's soul, and, like the rugged castle, he has weathered the storm and come off victorious. "Sorrow makes all men equal." The truth of this saying came home to the poet. He found that the ideal life could not be lived in Elysian quiet and seclusion, but among our fellow men, and that to live, in the highest sense of the word, does not mean to overcome sorrow and distress by avoiding them, but it means to "rejoice with those who do rejoice, and weep with those who weep," and to take up the burden of life bravely, willing to aid the brother whose cross is heavier. In the last two stanzas he compares the two ways of living, in brief, and states decidedly which way he considers best.

MARGARET McDONALD.
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A pleasing essay. We think, however, that the calm represented per-

fect contentment, perfect enjoyment of nature, rather than a "longing" for rest. The poet's sense of unrest did not come until he was aroused by the death of his brother.

We cannot close without calling the attention to our readers to a question brought up by "Sed" in regard to Question 10: (1) What impression has the study of the poem left on you as to mood?

She says: "A very strong desire that the third line in the ninth stanza had been left out. Why did he write that to stand out in such painful prominence, changing the aspect of the whole poem? A person can smile, talk cheerfully, say manly, noble things because it is right, and he has been accustomed to it, while his very heart is aching and breaking. His grief was so fresh that, although he was striving to take up life bravely, and did, yet there seems something contradictory about it."

"Sed" seems to have an idea here which she seems trying to grasp, and of which we, personally, seem occasionally to catch a flying gleam. Would anyone like to comment?—keeping, of course, close touch with the poem?

Good Dressing, not "Dudish-ness."

A friend remarked the other day that many styles of men's dress which used to be regarded as "dudish" are now quite common, and considered in perfect taste. His observation prompts the thought that it is not so much what a dude wears that makes him objectionable as the eccentricity of his attire and the exaggerated emphasis which it indicates that he places upon dress. A man may deck himself out in many an article formerly confined to the wardrobe of dudes without placing himself in the category of that despised and worthless class. Apparel does not make fops; fops choose apparel that denotes the shallowness of their characters. He who dresses in keeping with his occupation and his means, and with a sensible desire to look his best, need never fear being called a dude. Neat, bright and attractive clothes are to be encouraged, and a reasonable amount of time bestowed upon personal appearances is always well spent.

W. D. A.

The Quiet Hour.

The Place of Meeting.

It shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tent of meeting before the LORD: where I will meet with you, to speak there unto thee.—Exod. xxix.: 42 R. V.
And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee.—Exod. xxv.: 22.

"It matters little where I'm led,
Placed by the usher's hand;
Whether I sit in cushioned pew
Or with the paupers stand;
It is God's house, and He will be
Surely a gracious host to me.

"It matters little what my garb,
If it be plain or fine;
Whether rich silks and jewels bright
Or threadbare robes be mine;
But God will see if my soul's dress
Is made of Christ's pure righteousness.

"It matters little who shall greet
Or who shall shun me there;
God knows if my heart speaks to Him
In anthem and in prayer;
And I shall surely know if He
Hath spoken gracious words to me.

"It matters little what I drop
Into the passing plate;
'Tis God's acceptance that doth make
The smallest offering great;
And well He knows my scanty store
That e'en to Him can give no more.

"In many homes no word, no smile,
No greeting waits for me;
But here the Father's every child
Must always welcome be;
O house, to weary spirit dear,
I cannot come too often here."

If God was willing to have a Tent of Meeting that He might meet the Israelites and commune with them, surely He is not less willing to meet with those who are grafted into the mystical Body of His dear Son, and made entirely one with Him through the wondrous Mystery of the Incarnation. The tent of meeting is set up within easy distance of most people in this Christian land. God is there, true to His covenanted promise: "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." Just think of it! The Infinite GOD comes to the place of meeting, only to find, too often, that the creatures He has made are too busy or too idle to meet Him there. There are plenty of professing Christians in our land to fill the churches, and yet the churches are half empty, unless some unusual attraction has been advertised to fill the empty seats. Just think of it, I say! That people should go to church to hear a popular preacher, and yet stay away when invited to meet their GOD! Every inducement is held out to attract people to church in these days. Music,

decorations, eloquent preachers are advertised to draw a crowd; until anyone from a heathen country might easily suppose that Christians did not go to church to meet GOD and worship Him, but only to an interesting place of amusement, which they had to be bribed to enter.

Long ago the Christians had their places of meeting with GOD in tombs underground. Though they met together in peril of their lives—perhaps because it was a dangerous thing to do—they did not forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is. But now, when the LORD is in His holy temple, instead of all the earth keeping silence before Him, and coming into His presence with the awe Moses felt when he found himself on holy ground, we see crowds drawn to this church or that by various attractions, struggling for the best seats, eager to see and be seen. They come away, too often, not with the trembling gladness or holy fear of souls that have been face to face with God, but with good-natured ridicule of the singers, criticism of the clothes of their neighbors, an inclination to pick the sermon to pieces, or with the bored feeling that a wearisome duty has been performed. Of course, there are multitudes of people who do not go to church at all, but there is something wrong when our public worship is degraded to such a mockery of service as this. What is the matter?

Man is a religious animal. We have all felt—sometimes, if not often—the marvelous joy of drawing near to God and holding real communion with Him. We are dissatisfied with the sham that our own church-going often is. Let us not look so much at the faults of our neighbors as at our own faults, and try to keep our own vineyard free of weeds and planted with good seed.

Let us first clear away the weed of Selfishness. A common excuse for staying away is: "I don't find that it does me any good." Now, that may seem a reasonable excuse, but it expresses the lowest selfishness. We are invited by our Father to meet Him in His House. If you heard a man say, "I don't often visit my father because he doesn't give me anything when I go, it doesn't do me any good," wouldn't you think that man a monster of selfishness? We should not visit our Father in that Spirit, coming away vexed and disappointed because we don't feel that we have received anything from Him—we never really meet Him without receiving some priceless gift, though the full value of the blessing may not be revealed to us on this side of the Veil, but that is His Royal bounty, and not the reason for our coming.

In order to root out this weed of Selfishness, we must plant Love in its place. Instead of going to church principally for our own good, let us go with the thought that we may there meet our Father. Let us lift up our hearts as well as our eyes to His face, praising and thanking Him in real earnest, listen-

ing to His messages, remembering that they are words spoken directly to us—if He told the Israelites that He would speak to them in the tent of meeting, we can surely trust Him to speak also to us. And when we do pray, let our prayers be for others, at least as much as for ourselves, let us seek grace and pardon for them as very members with us of Christ's Body. Then we shall find that the church is not only a place for meeting our Father, but our brothers also. The fellowship of Christians is a deep spiritual reality, in spite of the jeering cry: "See how these Christians hate one another!" It is a real fellowship of real Christians, a sweet communion of saints—and not only of saints in Paradise. Listen to the wonderful words of a modern preacher:

"Christ's love beats like a great heart, pulse upon pulse, combating, defeating, expelling that slow death which has crept over the body of humanity. And thus, 'in Christ, all are made alive.' All: the whole human race is swept forward, is borne upward, by the power of the risen Lord. Where, before, there was degeneration, there is now regeneration. . . . Within the ring of a Christian civilization is the ring of those over all of whom the Name of Christ acts as a living spell, the ring of all those who cling to Him, and cry to Him, and send up heart and voice to Him, and in His Name cast out devils, and do many mighty works. They call upon Him, and the Lord knows them that are His, and He showers down favor upon them as they look up to Him: multitudes upon multitudes, who are swayed, as the tides of the immeasurable sea, by the magic of His love, as it moves moon-like above them and carries them hither and thither, like mighty waters that shake, and roll, and swing, and murmur, and ebb and flow, and ebb again."—Rev. H. S. Holland.

Then there is the weed of Irreverence. Think of the irreverent behavior of many people in our churches. The giggling and whispering, the turning round to stare at late-comers, the inattentive words of prayer and praise which we dare to offer to the Most High, the pretence of kneeling, which is such a common mockery of Him Who cannot be deceived. God has given us many warnings of the danger of irreverence. He smote Uzza for simply touching the sacred ark, and the men of Bethshemesh because they looked into it. Korah and his company were destroyed by fire because they ventured to offer incense—which only the priests might do—and King Uzziah was a leper until the day of his death because he pushed his way rashly and unlawfully into the Temple. Can we fancy that our irreverent behavior, wandering thoughts and mock prayers are unnoticed or disregarded when "the eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." The surest way of conquering inattention and irreverence is the consciousness that GOD is in this place. Where two or three are gathered together in His Name there our dear Lord

is especially present. If our bodily eyes were opened to see His glory, we might be like St. John, who fell at His feet as dead. But the thought of His presence should bring more joy than fear, as He says: "Fear not, for I am with thee," and again: "It is I, be not afraid."

There is another weed which threatens to choke true religion out of our hearts—the pursuit of novelty. Like the Athenians, we are ready enough to flock in crowds to hear a preacher who will tell us some "new thing." Sermons are a good thing, but the right object for going to church is not the listening to a sermon. From earliest times men have come into the presence of God to give rather than to get. All nations have seen the necessity of offering sacrifices to God; and we, who have received so much, should have somewhat also to offer. We should come to offer the great Memorial which Christ instituted the night before His death, to offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, to offer our gifts of money and, last, but not least, to offer and present ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a real sacrifice laid at His feet. Do not fancy that a restless craving for novelty, or a selfish seeking after your own good and indifference to the needs of other people, indicate a truly devotional spirit. We should not come regularly to church only because the service is attractive and we like the preacher, nor even for the good we may find that our souls get from the habit. To stay away, without good and sufficient reason, is to disregard the invitation of the King of Kings. When an earthly monarch invites a subject to an interview with him, the invitation is really a command. And our King has declared that the people who disregard His invitation shall, in the end, be shut out. If they refuse the summons to sit down at the table of the King, they will find at last that the door is shut, for "none of those men which were bidden shall taste of My supper," He says. Remember, the excuses made by the men in the parable were what people consider reasonable excuses for staying away from church. One had his farm to look after, another was busy with his cattle, another was newly married and must stay at home with his wife. God has declared that He will not accept such excuses. Is it likely that the Sunday headache—which would be unnoticed on a Monday—the desire for a walk or a drive, the fear of a shower, the cold or heat, the "having company," will be accepted? Let us come to the Place of Meeting to offer ourselves and all we have to our King, and then we shall go away far richer than we came, for the blessing of the Lord, not only "maketh rich," but He addeth no sorrow with it.

HOPE.

Lo! what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!