

SHALL WE NOT BE AS BRAVE?

In the golden days of Rome if a man were tempted to dishonesty, he would stand upright, look the tempter in the face, and say to him, "I am a Roman." He thought that a sufficient reason why he should neither lie nor cheat. It ought to be a ten times more than sufficient answer to every temptation, for a man to be able to say, "I am a son of God; shall such a man as I yield to sin?"

I have been astonished in looking through old Roman history at the wonderful prodigies of integrity and valor which were produced by idolatry, or rather which were produced by patriotism, and that principle which ruled the Romans, namely, love of fame. And it is a shameful thing that even idolatry should be able to breed better men than some who profess Christianity. If a Roman, a worshipper of Jupiter or Saturn, became great or glorious, a son of God ought to be nobler far.—Look at Brutus: he has established a republic, he has put down tyranny, he sits upon the judgment seat; his two sons are brought before him; they have been traitors to the commonwealth! What will the father do? He is a man of a loving heart and loves his Son, but there they stand.—Will he execute justice as a judge, or will he prefer his family to his country? He covers his face for a moment with his hands, and then looking down upon his sons, and finding that the testimony is complete against them, he says, "Victors do your work."

Christian men do you feel this with regard to your sins: When you have been sitting on the judgment bench there has been some favorite sin brought up, and you have, let me blush to say it, wished to spare it, it was so near your heart; you have wished to let it live, whereas should you not, as a son of God have said, "If my eye offend me I will pluck it out and cast it from me; if my right hand offend me, I will cut it off, rather than I should in anything offend my God." Brutus slays his sons; but some Christians would spare their sins.

Look again at that noble youth, Mutius Scaevola. He goes into the tent of king Pyrrhus with the intention to put him to death, because he is the enemy of his coun-

try; he slays the wrong man, Pyrrhus orders him to be taken captive. A pan of hot coals is blazing in his tent; Scaevola puts out his right hand and holds it; it crackles in the flame; the young man flinches not, though his fingers drop away. "There are four hundred youths," says he "in Rome as brave as I am, and that will bear fire as well; and tyrant," he says, "you will surely die." Yet here are Christian men who, if they are a little sneered at, or snubbed, or get the cold shoulder for Christ's sake are half ashamed of their profession, and would go and hide. And if they are not like Peter—tempted to curse and to swear to escape the blessed imputation—they would turn the conversation, that they might not suffer for Christ. Oh for four hundred Scaevolans, four hundred men who for Christ's sake would burn, not their right hands, but their bodies, if indeed Christ's name might be glorified, and sin might be stabbed to the heart.—[Spurgeon.]

"TWO SIDES TO THE STORY."

"It's very hard to have nothing to eat but porridge when others have every sort of good thing," muttered Charlie, as he sat with his wooden bowl before him.

"It's very hard to have to get up so early on these bitter cold mornings, and work hard all day when others can enjoy themselves without an hour of labor!"

"It's very hard to have to trudge along through the snow, while others roll about in their coaches!"

"It's a great blessing," said his grandmother, as she sat at her knitting—"it's a great blessing to have food when so many are hungry; to have a roof over one's head when so many are homeless; it's a great blessing to have sight, and hearing, and strength for daily labor, when so many are blind, deaf, or suffering,—ay, and to have plenty of work, when many willing to work can't get it!"

"Why, grandmother, you seem to think that nothing is hard," said the boy still in a grumbling tone.

"No, Charlie, there is one thing that I think very hard."

"What's that cried Charlie, who thought that at last his grandmother had found some cause for complaint.

"Why, boy, I think THAT HEART IS VERY HARD that is not thankful for so many blessings!"