

Contributions.

Two Moods.

PETER ANDERSON.

The last of all the babbling throng had gone,
 And I was sitting, saddened and alone,
 By the faint embers of the fading fire,
 That, like my hope, seemed ready to expire,
 When through the silence of the lonely room
 This whisper to my spirit seemed to come:
 "Why wage this war, when error never dies?
 Why plead for Truth, while men prefer the lies?
 With men who cannot, or who will not see
 The truths that seem so potent unto thee,
 On whom thy honest scorn of fraud and wrong
 Falls as the echo of an unknown tongue;
 Whose souls are armour'd with imperious greed,
 Whose sole religion is an outworn creed
 Which superstition dreams contains some spell
 Wherewith to cheat, at last, both heaven and hell.
 Thou hast enough of evil, all thine own,
 Enough, enough; let general ills alone;
 What art thou more than all the timid throng
 Who sail life's twilight sea of right and wrong,
 Nor dimly see, with dull, distempered eyes,
 Past the horizon that around them lies,
 And with dumb walls shuts down for evermore
 On all that lies behind and all before?
 Have thine own argosies all sailed so fair
 That thou must others teach the course to steer?
 How much that men held true, in ages past,
 Has proved but specious error, at the last?
 Though men by millions in their little day
 Hugged it, while centuries slowly rolled away,
 Deeming mankind mistaken—all beside—
 Lived for it, fought for it, and for it died.
 How knowest thou that thy ships will stand the test
 Of Time; that has dismantled all the rest,
 And covered every coast explored by men
 With stranded wrecks, that shall not sail again?
 Thou art the veriest fool to vex thy soul
 With problems that affect men, as a whole;
 Peace and be still; thou art at best but one
 Of all the mighty millions, moving on
 To where life's fevered dream so soon shall cease
 In the deep slumber of a dreamless peace;
 While heedless of all human hopes and fears

From the exhaustless sum of coming years,
 The mocking centuries march, with measured tread,
 Over the dust of the forgotten dead."

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I started up as from a troubled dream
 In which the force of all things hideous seem
 Conspired to crush us, with a nameless dread;
 And to the hopeless monster I said:
 "O whispering coward voice; thou art a liar,
 I will relight my lamps, rebuild my fire,
 Chase out the gloom and chill of sable night,
 And challenge thee to face me in the light.
 Were error dead, man's work on earth were done;
 The conflict ended and the battle won,
 But when the war is fiercely waging, then,
 'Then is the time for brave and manly men,
 For men who feel the grandeur of the fight
 And that they work for God, who plead for right.
 I have enough of evil, it is true,
 Evils that fetter me my whole life through
 And mar the best my hands attempt to do;
 But thou wouldst make them greater, and not less,
 With thy poor coward plea of selfishness.
 Not at the first essay might mortals climb
 To the far heights, where final Truth sublime
 Faces with changeless front all changing time.
 Despite of all that pessimists may say
 The grand old world grows wiser day by day;
 And if the heights to which man has attained
 By slow and toilsome labor have been gained,
 With many a dire misgiving, many a fall,
 And many a backward step; in spite of all,
 Brave souls still lead the way, mount upward still,
 Let creed-bound cowards loiter where they will:
 The darkness lies behind; the lights before
 Beckon the leaders onward—ever more—
 You needs must follow where *their* feet have gone,
 Nor can you hold *them* from new heights—afar—
 As well attempt to roll the sunrise down
 Or stay the coming of the morning star.
 No man who pleads for what to him is right,
 How'er mistaken, fights a needless fight,
 Or fails to leave after his lips are dumb,
 An impress on the ages yet to come:
 The phase of truth that I alone can see
 Is God's own message to the world—for me—
 Failing to speak it, I forever fail,
 And make my craven life of no avail.

I know that life's brief voyage soon is done,
 That we must sail beyond its setting sun,
 But still I trust that my storm-beaten bark
 Will not go down, in the oblivious dark;
 But find a mooring on some fairer shore
 Where life's perplexing tempests beat no more;
 And if, at times, all charts seem blurred and dim,
 My final refuge is to trust to Him
 Who planted in the soul the deep desire
 For something purer, permanent, and higher
 Than I might ever dare to claim as mine,
 O whispering voice, by following words of thine."

"Unto Him That Is Able To Keep You."

ANNA D. BRADLEY.

My morning reading chanced to be from that strange, terrible book of Jude I read it, as I always do, with a shrinking heart, a feeling of terror which—no matter how often it might be read—the book never failed to inspire in my breast.

It is seldom that I feel spiritually refreshed from reading the letter of Jude.

I recall the chosen people of God, whom He led out from Egypt and whom He afterward destroyed. I see how even the angels failed to keep their first estate, and were thrust from the presence of God into everlasting darkness. And when I read all of the terrible denunciations, I feel so weak and so afraid I seem to myself as a helpless mariner, far out in mid-ocean, struggling against the angry waves, which at any moment may overwhelm me. How do I know that I will be more steadfast in the faith than was mighty Israel? When an angel from heaven fell, dare I believe that I can be faithful to the end? And feeling and fearing thus, Jude's fierce letter never drew me nearer to the heart of God, never taught me how to rest.

But this morning I read it again—read it with the same old throb of terror; eager to hasten on to the close that I might find, on other pages, words which would give to me more of strength and cheer.

But just as my fingers were eagerly turning the leaves to find other portions that I could read with more of comfort to my soul, I seemed to hear—it did not appear to be my own voice reading—those closing words, "Now unto Him that is able to keep you."

Why, how blindly had I read the book! Always shrinking in fear from such a precious assurance as this! Instead of a denunciation, it is a

beautiful benediction, which should, all of these years, have been filling my soul with trust and peace. I see now why Jude should commence his letter with "Mercy unto you, and peace and love be multiplied." It was because he was divinely commissioned to point, at its close, "Unto Him who is able to keep us."

What though I am but a small, weak atom of humanity? It is not *my* strength that is required in buffeting the adverse waves. My battle is between those mighty billows and the One who created and holds them in their place. I do not fear, for I trust my cause unto Him who is able to save me.

Full well I know that in some home where this paper shall go there will be found some heart that is either lonely and sorrowing, or, in some way, is oppressed by many cares. The spirit is bowed down by some anxiety, which, perhaps, they do not dare to whisper even unto their dearest and their best.

Perhaps they are temporal, perhaps they are spiritual cares that oppress. I do not know. But this I know—somewhere that this page shall go to-night it will find a heart bowed down.

To you, oh brother, sister, wherever you may be, I would whisper the comforting words of another and bid you steadfastly look "Unto Him who is able to keep you."

Able to keep you in sickness and in health; able to keep you in loss or in gain; able to keep you in life or in death.

What does it matter though you may be treading a way that is rough or dark or drear this evening? You cannot fall, for you have committed yourself "Unto Him who is able to keep you."

"Unto him!" Just think of it. The Maker, the Ruler, the Friend, the Father, the Saviour! Oh, trembling, fearing brother, sister, remember it is "unto Him" we must look.

"Unto Him who is able!" Ah, the thought grows more precious as it expands. No need to fear the threatened disaster, the fiercest temptation, the most cruel foe. There is absolutely nothing for us to really fear, for we are relying upon One "who is able" to shield us from every danger.

"Unto Him who is able to KEEP!" To keep! Think of this, oh lonely, fearing one. He "keeps." He does not save us for a day, a week, a month, a year. But always and always, through all eternity, close to Himself He will "keep" you and me forever.

"And, now, unto Him who is able to keep you!" Just see how still more precious, because so personal, the tender words of love become. It is