MOSES.

No. II.

'Twas no accident that drove Moses from the palace of Pharoah, for all history is but a comment on this phase of the great Hebrew's life, and goes to show how for great deeds there must ever be great preparation. God was sixteen centuries preparing Europe for the discovery of America. He was fourteen hundred years preparing England for the doctrine of justification by faith; and four thousand years preparing the world for the crucifixion. Christ was in retirement thirty years. Paul must go to Arabia, Luther to Frankfort, Spurgeon to Waterbeach. And as preparation for rescuing a nation Moses must tend sheep in the desert. And this preparation for great deeds is often of a peculiar kind. The multitude desire the architect's praise who, mid peal of bell and crash of cannon, completes the stately edifice. But no man cheered him as he dug the deep foundation, and slowly reared the mighty pile, slowly, as man builds character, or God makes trees to grow. The tulip says, 'I will sprout and expand, I will bud and blossom, until for love of me, glowing beauty forsakes the ball-room's witchery to admire my shape and perfume; but to do all this the lily bulb must die. So the steadiness with which Moses beheld the burning bush, or Paul the sneering Festus, or Christ the bitter Caiaphas, is only learned in the school of sorrow, where the discipline is severe and sharp. And Daniel must go through lions' den to power; and Joseph through prison cells to throne; and Shadrach through fiery furnace to distinction. If John would hear heaven's thunder throb, and watch the lightnings of the judgment quiver round the eternal throne; if he would see the blinding blaze of God's glory, or be enveloped in the inky blackness of God's wrath; if he would behold the sea of glass that burns like fire, and is never ruffled by the storm wind's breath; if he would hear the wail of those whose chances are in the past, whose misery fills all their present; if he would listen to the angel's song, as with thunderous swell it praises the Omnipotent Goodness; if he would gaze on the massive glory of the Father, or view the bloody palms of Calvary's Christ, he must be banished from home and kindred to Patmos' lonely isle.

For all great men are lonely. The smaller hills are surrounded by their fellows, the mountain lifts itself up into the solitude of the heights. At the foot of the hill the gay crowd laugh merrily, but the multitude decreases as we rise; and on reaching the summit the silence is around us. And part of the price eminence demands, is to stand alone where once you were the centre of a crowd. And this loneliness, my brothers, tests a man. For to the most of us excitement and external pressure are essential as is constant whipping to a spinning top. But this is an inferior life. The corpse man who jerks and starts as spasms from without bear on him, is on a par with machinery, which vibrates while I touch it, but is motionless when I leave it; with the true man, 'tis altogether different. While Jerusalem seeks to crown, we can all play at being Christs; but when in the gathering gloom Jerusalem goes home, we sham Christs are overwhelmed and lost. But as Christ was about His Father's business, and not engrossed by the holiday makers' merriment, so we must be about our own business, thinking our own thoughts, communing with our own spirits, working out our own salvation. For there are times when we must leave the beaten track and go out into the far-off desert, where there are mountains of Insight, and vales of Contemplation; where there are burning bushes, and silent heights; and where God's thoughts blossom like Nature's wild flowers. For loneliness is full of thought, and full of beauty too. And you will never know the strength of your own soul, the possibilities of your own life, the grandeur of existence, or the wealth of Nature, until standing alone you view the world as it really is; as it was, when like a starry dew-drop it fell from the Universal Good.

'Twas in the lone land of Midian that Moses saw the bush on fire; and wondering that like truth in error's grasp, it still was unconsumed, he turned aside to see the strange sight. The bush was burning, mark you, not consumed, but glorified; for as the Deity blazed, the bush was illumined. So the great God is in things we call common: is as interested in school boy as in apostle or angel; and loves all with a common love. For God is with us all as heaven is above us all; and is interested in ant and angel, in song-bird and seraph. He has the true majesty which can afford to stoop. He lacks the pettiness that is afraid of condecension. And as all melody is in the nine notes of music, as all literature is in the alphabet, so in a common spruce bush, when rightly viewed, we can find the great God, with His atmosphere and sunshine, with His wind and world. And God is equally in the acorn and the oak; in the birch mast and the forest; in the sod and the sky. For there are no trifles. The dashing of the tiniest wave one inch higher on the shingle demands an alteration of all the world's laws; and would make otherwise all past, present, and to come. Not a sparrow falls without God's notice, and the hairs of your head are numbered. Oh that we could see things as they are, for then, with Emerson, we should know

"There is no great and no small,
To the God that maketh all."

And God is in the unlikely places and things. To build a church is not to enclose God with the Bible and organ, to be visited once a week; oh no, He dwelleth not in temples made with hands. He is universal as sunshine, unbounded as thought, intangible as spirit. And the whole world with its skies and stars, its seas and storms, its mighty hills and rolling plains, and dense woods, is but the robe the Deity wears to conceal the blinding effulgence of His great glory. For as David says, the whole world is but the garment of God, the visible form through which we infer the spiritual and the unseen. But alas in these days we judge by strength and size, and sight; rather than by sense and spirit; and whereas the Tishbite found God in the still small voice, we modern fools look for Him only in rushing storms or shuddering earthquake. We forget that

"The dew which never wets the flinty mountain
Falls in the valley free;
Green verdure fringes the small desert fountain,
But barren sand the sea."

And Moses turned aside to see the sight. How true is inspiration. For we all must turn aside or lose the sight that would make us better for gazing at them. You must turn from the seething strife and festering broils of men; from all mean pursuits and ignoble aims; if you would see God or nature as they really are. Turn aside, O Moses, now and then, for as God be true, she herding is not all of life, and man cannot live by bread alone.

From Midian's desert Moses returned to Egypts land; from tending sheep he goes to emancipate a nation and slay a king. How great the change, from the sheep fold to the palace; from silence and solitude, to utterance and throng. But so it is in all life. The stream glides smoothly o'er its sandy bed, and no rise or fall, rock or bough provokes a ripple or an eddy; and then it dashes down the slope with infinite rush and tumult, the white foam betokening its madness. In the morning on Carmel's top, Elijah scorned all powers and dared all gods; but at night beneath the juniper he felt the coward's fear and breathed the coward's prayer. Israel's poet king called on hill and plain, on sea and storm and sun and star to help him sing God's praise; but even while he sings the proud waters rush o'er his soul, and he sinks in deep mire where there is no standing. The world cries 'Hosanna' on Thursday, and with as much earnestness on Friday it shrieks "Crucify." To-day it wreathes your brow with kingly gold, to-morrow with thorns cursed and cruel. To-day it flatters, to-morrow frowns; to-day blesses, to-morrow curses; exalts to heaven, thrusts to hell. "So be not elate with pride, by the pressure of this world's hand; for to-day we are deified, to-morrow damned."

And this element of change it is that tables men according to their respective value. I'll wait till your gold has the refiner's brand on it, till your ship has been storm rocked, till your life has been torn and desolated, and then I'll sit in judgment. The coat of mail shines with a dazzling lustre, the workmanship is more than I expected; but I reserve my opinion concerning it, till you return from the battlefield, where the bullet rain hailed upon you, and the foeman sought an entrance to your life. I know nothing of Job while children, and cattle, and wealth and honor are his; but when the patriarch trusts God in spite of scolding wife and worrying devil, then I know in all the land of Uz Job has no superior. And as shipping suffers little from the ordinary storm, providing sea room is abundant; so these transitions do not vitally affect the man whose scope is wide on the sea of Truth; whose Insight is ample as horizon from hill top. Hugging shores of Policy where rocks of selfishness and ambition lift their heads; where the shoals of pettiness and fear are found; danger is imminent, and risk is great. But when far out on the sea of Principle, in harmony with God and the laws of His universe, there is little danger of life's transitions wrecking you. Build your house on the rock; under your grand halls let there be a foundation solid and strong; then shall you outlive the storm, and the fierce wind shall not dismay you. To thine own self be true; and then, as many shades are in the painting, as varied notes of major and minor are in the music, as snow and rain, sun and air, breath of wind and strength of soil enter into the harvest, so all change and tumult, sharp and sweet, training and transition, will only round thy life into a grand fullness of completion.

W. B. HINSON.

Moncton.

Our Hearts Before Him.

It was Madame de Gasparin who said: "It is not enough for me to think about God; my soul must pour itself out before Him." Yes, this touches a vital point in Christian experience. Natural religion may lead us to "think about" God; but the faith that is the "evidence of things not seen," the faith that conducts us to Calvary and appropriates the cleansing blood, causes us to do more than this. We bow prostrate before Him, confess our sins, acknowledge our helplessness, entreat His mercy, and, having heard His blessed voice, declare His power and willingness to save. Do we only "think about" the objects of our earthly love? Rather we delight to commune with them, and show our regard by acceding in all proper ways to their wishes. How much more should this be our spirit toward our heavenly Father. He is the source of all comfort, the supreme Helper in all our troubles. He invites us to "ask, that we may receive;" tenderly entreats us to bring every earthly care to Him, and covenants with us that not a single breath of sincere supplication will be ever in vain.

— Everyone must have noticed, in passing through a railroad tunnel in the daytime, how the light gradually fades out, the darkness culminates, and then shades into a gray pallor, which gradually increases, until the full light is restored again. It is so with human sorrow. Mercifully tempered at first, it gradually increases as the soul is able to bear it, culminates at a point of utter darkness, and then yields to the returning light again. Thank God! it is not in the nature of sorrow to be enduring. If it were so, with all the accumulating troubles of life, humanity would be crushed to the earth. Be assured, O suffering heart, that as surely as the glow of morning returns upon the mountains; as surely as the tide comes back to cover the unsightly drift and rocks; as surely as the storm-stript plant puts forth another flower, so surely shall God's peace return unto thee. This is a law no less calculable than that which governs the procession of the equinoxes.—*Zion's Herald.*

Thomas Robinson, Farnham Centre, P. Q., writes:—"I have been afflicted with Rheumatism for the last ten years, and have tried many remedies without any relief. I got a bottle of *Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil*, and found it gave me instant relief, and since then have had no attack. I would recommend it to all."

Enlarging the Sphere of the Home Missionary.

WILLIAM ASHMORE, D. D.

The Home Missionary is sent to plant witnessing churches of Jesus Christ. In this, his errand is like that of the Foreign Missionary, though in other respects processes vary greatly. In pursuance of his purpose he first gathers together the scattered disciples, almost sure to be found, and organize them into a church; or, if there are no disciples at all, which is rare, indeed, he preaches the gospel until some are converted, and then proceeds as in the other case.

But from the moment that little church is organized, the sphere of the preacher as a missionary seems to be circumscribed. Henceforth his efforts have to be put forth in the small body so gathered. A church exists, and all the years of the future must be given to looking after everything personally. He preaches in the morning and he preaches in the afternoon; he leads the prayer-meeting; he presides at the church meetings; he is man of all work. Such he makes himself! such the common usage of the denomination makes him, and such the new members he has gathered soon agree to make him. He soon has his hands full of very local work. He must always be on hand. If anybody is sick, nobody but the missionary can pray with him. If anybody has died in the neighborhood, nobody but the missionary can read a passage of Scripture or pray at the funeral. He must be within reach for any and all sorts of calls which custom has put on the minister, but which he could train somebody to do as well and which others ought to do as well and ought to do willingly.

What, now, is his position? May he not cease to be a missionary and become simply a pastor? Paul recognized the two kinds of work as quite distinct. Christ gave some evangelists and some pastors and teachers. No matter whether it be in the home or the foreign field, it indicates a real change of status when a man who has been sent out as a missionary or an evangelist settles down in one place and becomes the pastor of the church there. To this there are many exceptions, of course. Many a brother, even after a church is organized, still keeps pushing out into regions round about; but, in the main, it must be confessed, the usage is much like what we have named, and the drift is perpetually in the direction of changing the missionary into the pastor.

Is there not a more excellent way? Let our brother refuse to drop his missionary office. Other towns and villages also need his help. A portion of his time he must, of course, give to the nurture of the young child thus born into the sisterhood of churches. But why not teach them to do far more for themselves from the very start than custom now enjoins? He can, if he chooses, let them grow and harden into habits of doing nothing except pray in a prayer-meeting. It will take but a little time to fix them. A year or six months even will confirm them in the way of always being fed with a spoon in the hand of the missionary. He can do all the work and carry all the loads and have some twenty or thirty or forty Christians growing up around him, with as large a proportion of helpless ones among them as ever consumed the energies of God's best workers. He can do this, or he can start them off right with a sense of responsibility on themselves; he can teach them to speak and exhort and to look after the lost sheep of the flock themselves, to exercise oversight on each other, to mutual upbuilding and edification. He can call out gifts and lead them to believe the great but ever ignored truth that when Christ ascended on high he gave gifts unto men, and that this young church is not made an exception; and then when he has to go to help save others also, and must be gone from them for a little time, they will not be like a troop of vagrant and helpless Baptist children who do not know what to do with themselves, but must go brousing about in other people's pastures on all the vacant Sundays. In a word, it may be all the better for them as a church and a people to be thrown off a little in this way. We have abundant New Testament warrant for this very thing.

And now follow the home missionary as he goes into neighborhoods about. He can soon have half a dozen little assemblages at regular dates and fixed points learning to do the same thing that the first company has learned to do so well. In them, too, in response to faithful effort in earnest prayers, other men may be coming forward learning how to take command, how to help guide the flock, how to speak and exhort their fellow-members, and how to witness before the world. Instead of one embryo church coming on, he may have several. Not each one, it is true, can take an independent position, being possibly too few in members for that; but two or three can combine and form a church at the most eligible central point. It will be a wonder, too, and quite at variance with what the Scriptures lead us to expect, if among all these the missionary has in training, there does not arise some one more specially blessed of the Holy Spirit, and in whom decided pastoral qualifications will be developed. We should expect such a result and should look for it, and should expect also that some of the young men would be turning their thoughts to collegiate training for more efficient work. It does seem scriptural to say that no church should be satisfied that does not raise up a minister, and no minister should be satisfied who is not helping to get somebody forward to fill vacant places and occupy new ones.

It may be said this is only applying a foreign mission idea to a home mission one. That may be true; but note, also, that the foreign mission idea has the advantage of having been very well tested already, and is being still more tested ever day. In fact, foreign mission work could not be carried on at all on any other plan than the one now being commended. If foreign missionaries were to preach until a small company of disciples had been gathered and were then to settle down as pastors over them after the style considered the proper thing at home, foreign missions would come to a dead halt in short order. It must be confessed that there have been instances abroad in which missionaries have done so notwithstanding. They have been familiar with the home usage, and have carried the idea abroad with them. But the results have not been what they should be. Even a foreign missionary on a foreign field can cease to be a foreign missionary at all and become but little beyond a local home missionary, if we still allow the use of the word missionary after he has become a neighborhood pastor.

The missionary proper continues to be a missionary, a leader of lieutenants, a man of a region and not of a point. He has, therefore, to report not only his own movements, but those of possibly a dozen native helpers and aids of various kinds, at a dozen different stations under his care. So far as home work is concerned, anything of this kind is an exception to a general rule, if we read aright. But there is no reason why our good and solid workers on the frontier, and in our older States as well, should not have a series of stations to make reports about, and also a number of public speakers that help take part in the conduct of the larger, Sunday services. The home missionary that can do this has multiplied himself quite beyond the common number. The Missionary Union has only a few over a hundred men in the field. Yet see how they multiply their powers by means of trained local helpers. The Home Mission Society has several times as many, who, by means of their lieutenants, could take possession of two or three times several hundred more places even than they now have, if their views are found wise and practicable.

Brethren, be ye also enlarged.—*National Baptist.*

How a Servant Girl Blessed a Home.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

"Lizzie Fielding is absent again," said the pastor of a large city church one pleasant Wednesday evening. "I fear she is ill. I am so in the habit of looking over into this remote corner for her never withheld word of testimony that I feel as if a star was missing from one of my constellations," and he smiled down at the group who had lingered a few minutes after the close of the prayer meeting for his kindly greeting.

"She is ill, sir," said one of the bright, earnest-faced girls, whom, although they were all working girls, the pastor numbered among his most helpful members. "She is still at her place, No. — Forty-second street, and is very kindly cared for; but she will be pleased to hear that you missed her."

The pastor's memorandum book came out, and Lizzie's name went down on the page for imperative next day's duties.

The call was not allowed to be crowded out by some pleasanter demand. The young nurse girl was comforted by his words of prayer and good cheer; and the good man, with the joy of Christian love brightening his face, was taking up his hat in the hall when a gentleman appeared at the open library door.

"You are Mr. ——," he said pleasantly, "the pastor of my little granddaughter's nurse maid? It was kind in you to find time for such an humble member of your flock, for you must be a very busy man."

"With the Good Shepherd all lambs are alike precious," replied the minister.

And the master of the house went on cordially. "Do not hasten, please. Come in. Let me show you my paintings."

The invitation was accepted, and at the end of a most agreeably spent half hour the pastor, with a bunch of freshly cut carnations in his hand, found himself once more in the roomy hall.

Instantly, like a pang almost, a thought shot across his brain, and he said, with an effort unusual to him in his daily work, "You have been very kind, sir; I have enjoyed my call exceedingly. The Lord has blessed you most abundantly in this world's goods; may I ask if you are a servant of His?"

The gentleman's face softened, he turned about, walked half the length of the long hall, came back, and said, with a broken voice: "I am not a Christian, and this is the first time the question has been asked me for thirty years. Will you come back to the library, and let me tell you? I am not unmindful of such things. I realize how near we are all living to the borders of the unseen world. I know Jesus died for me. I know I am a lost sinner; but, my dear sir, my mother has been many years dead, and no one on earth cares for my soul. I have been led to think more than usual of such matters since this Lizzie Fielding has been ill, for every evening her little charge, my granddaughter, comes and asks if I will hear her say her prayers. It seems nurse Lizzie has taught the child of God and of Jesus, and I am hoping that, when she gets a little older, she will pray for me."

"Pray for yourself, man."

"Do you think the Lord would listen to me after He has cared for me, and I have turned my back on Him all these years? I would be afraid and ashamed to go to Him. Some one must intercede, for me."

"Jesus has promised to do that, my friend. We will both kneel and pray. Have you forgotten the promise: 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do'? Let us ask now, in faith, that His name may be glorified."

"I know now what it means to pass from death unto life," said the gentleman next day, as he presented himself in the minister's study. "I am a new creature, and this is a new world. Verily, the Lord must have sent that faithful Christian girl into my household, and then sent you to look after her. He took that way to reach me."

"What if I had neglected to call on her," said the pastor, "and what if I had allowed myself to leave the house without speaking to you? I was sorely tempted to do so."

Lizzie said when she was told the story: "What if I had neglected to teach little Winnifred to pray, or failed to make her understand that Jesus is her loving Friend, so that, for fear of grieving Him, she would not neglect Him for a single night? Or what if I had neglected to give my testimony at the meetings, so that the pastor would not have missed me when I was ill?"

Is not this story a lesson to us all to be mindful of little present duties.—*Congregationalist.*

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"Natural Religion."

"Bob" Burdette, who, not long ago, was regularly advanced to the dignity of the pulpit by solemn ordination to the ministry, thus expresses himself on what he calls "natural religion:"

"A friend named Blake, living in Chicago, has sent me a letter on 'natural religion.' It is a good letter, but I don't think I care to order any 'natural religion' just now. In fact, I have quite a large stock of it on hand that I would be glad to get rid of on any terms, if I knew what to do with it. I kind of hate to give it to the purchaser. It never did me any good, and I can't guarantee it as an article that ought to be kept in every household. 'Natural religion' gets into the market early and holds on long. I have seen babies in full possession of it rending their playthings to rags, kicking and yelling with infantile rage as though possessed of many devils, howling for pure 'cussedness' long, long before they were able to lisp a prayer. I have seen little children in full possession of 'natural religion' learning to lie, to deceive, to steal, ill-natured, vain, overbearing, treacherous, bad in a score of ways, and bad in spite of teaching and training, just 'naturally bad.' I have seen the guileless savage of the plains, with never a college or a theological seminary in all his tribe, so full of 'natural religion' that he couldn't get scalps enough to satisfy the unspoiled cravings of the 'natural man,' nor drunk enough to celebrate his triumph when the last prisoner was finally carved up into small fragments.

"For people who enjoy the natural man in all his native 'naturalness' 'natural religion' is, no doubt, sweet and uplifting, and tranquilizing. I prefer it with milder flavors, myself; I like it refined, softened, improved by educational processes. Brethren, there is nothing in the world of animal life that is good in its natural state but an oyster, and he's next door to a clam.

"We will now take up the collection for the fund for ministerial education, and brethren with the naturalistic tendencies will please not chew up bits of paper pulp to fire into the hat. We find that the natural pulp is greatly increased in value, even for natural religious objects, by going through a process of overworking and manufacture in the mills and presses of the treasury department. Even the raw material from the California gold mines has to lose somewhat of its native dross in the mint before it attains its highest degree of convenience and usefulness."

Jenny at the Opera.

Jenny is a young lady from the country. She is a most fervent and devoted Christian, and nothing makes her so radiantly happy as to win a soul for Christ. When she came for a visit to the city, her mother, long resident here, bought tickets for the opera of "The Valkyr," and Jenny went with him to hear it. He had told her the story of the play, and she had read the libretto he self.

This is, as nearly as memory serves the writer, Jenny's own account of the evening:

"The music was very fine, but I hadn't been there fifteen minutes before I wanted to get up and go out. If I had been alone I should have gone out. I was ashamed, the morals of the play were so dreadful. They seemed worse on the stage than in the libretto. I wouldn't have had my Sunday-school class see me there and listening to such stuff for anything in the world. It didn't harmonize with the 'Ten Commandments,' and I don't like anything, I don't want to like anything, that doesn't harmonize with them. Sieglinda was a married woman, Hunding was her husband, Siegmund was her brother. What is left to the imagination between some of the scenes made me blush with shame. The cries of those women to Wotan to help them were pitiful, dreadful. Wotan was a god, but a powerless god. What kind of a God is that? He was, too, a licentious god. It sickened me. The music was fine, and I called John's attention to parts of it that pleased me, and tried not to say anything about what I didn't like, for John was very desirous that I should enjoy it; he said the first time he heard the opera he couldn't sleep after it, it thrilled him so. But I couldn't thrill over such a piece of immorality as that, no matter how fine the music.

"Then I've been brought up in a simple, natural way, to go to bed early and get up early. I am always soundly sleeping at midnight when I am at home, but this midnight my eyes were aching from the gaslight and the shifting scenes of the play; the air was something intolerable, so close, so warm, so unbreathable; my head ached and I was nauseated. How could I help comparing Wotan with my God; how could I help thinking how incomparably purer are the pleasures of the sanctuary than those of the opera? I know John was disappointed, but how could I like that opera when every moral sentiment revolted from it?

"If it had been an oratorio I should have enjoyed that. The 'Messiah' and 'Elijah' I have heard with rapture. I'm sorry for John's disappointment, but I'm sorry for the time I've wasted over that opera. I might have taken care of Mrs. Porter's sick baby and given her a rest, which she so much needs. I might have visited some poor family and carried cheer to them, and I should have felt infinitely better the next day than I did after my night with 'The Valkyr.'"

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