

DOES THE WORLD HATE PIETY ?

Sidney Smith says, "It is not true that the world hates piety." That modest and unobtrusive piety which fills the heart with all human charities, and makes a man gentle to others and severe to himself, is an object of universal love and veneration. But mankind hate the lust of power when it is veiled under the garb of piety; they do not choose to be insulted; they love to tear folly and impudence from the altars which should only be a sanctuary for the righteous and the good."

This sounds well and plausible (says an unknown but sensible writer,) and has but a single flaw, it is not true. Athens had once a citizen of unblemished virtue, whose stern integrity, and winning and blameless life excited universal comment, but so far from being "an object of universal love and veneration," Aristides was banished in disgrace to foreign land. At a later day she had a second citizen, whose lofty example infused fresh life into social morals, and whose eloquent teachings allured young men from the haunts of vice, and the snares of evil companionship, yet Socrates did not become "an object of universal love and veneration," but died in prison, a martyr to his personal goodness.

Several centuries later there appeared in Judea, a man, whose "modest and unobtrusive piety," even Sidney Smith would not venture to call in question. His "charities" were universal, his tenderness more winning than woman's. His character was harmoniously rounded, wholly free from the rough edges and inequalities which inhere in excellent men, when governed by a single idea; equally free from the bitterness of spirit and rude personality which excite aversion in many reformers. "He went about doing good," healing the sick, comforting the troubled, sympathizing with the outcast, raising the dead. "He spake as never man spake." He lived as man never lived. But did Jesus Christ become "an object of universal love and veneration?" Let the secret snares of his untrusting enemies answer. Let the treachery of Judas, and the malice of the Pharisees, and the mockery of Herod with his men of war, and the shouts of the populace in the streets of Jerusalem, answer. Let Golgotha, with its bloody cries and its bitter jeers, "He saved others, himself he cannot save," answer. Let his own words answer, "They hated me without a cause." "They have both seen and hated both me and my Father." "If the world does not hate piety, the life of our blessed Saviour in whom it appeared in the most winning form of innate love, would be quite inexplicable.

Sidney Smith was not a competent witness. He was a man of genial temper and ready wit. But of the nature of true piety, as rooted in a heart renewed by the Holy Spirit, he seems never to have conceived. The very idea of such a piety excited his derision, and he sought to riddle it through and through with the keenest shafts from the quiver of his wit. A higher authority has said, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "Ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." One must have overlooked the teachings of the New Testament, and have misread strangely apostolic history, and the dark annals of the martyrs of the churches, and have looked with a dull vision into the inner chambers of the human heart, if he denies that the world hates piety. "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?"—*Gospel Trumpet*.

YOU NEED A GUIDE.

When men are travelling in the far East, over the burning sands of the desert, (where there are no railroads or stage-coaches such as we have), they go in *caravans*, that is, a great many of them together. Sometimes there will be hundreds of persons, and thousands of camels, that stretch out in a long line as far as the eye can see. But whether there are many or few, they are always sure to have one man going before them, whom they call the *hyber*, or guide. If any company of travellers should think of going over the desert without him, they would be as foolish as if we were to try travel in the railroad cars without a conductor or engineer; and they would be almost sure to get lost by the way. This guide must be one who knows all about the country through which they are to pass. He must be able to tell when the dreadful simoom, or hot wind, is rising, so that they may be able to prepare for it. He must know where the sands are most firm, and where they are shifting, so that the men and beasts may not sink in them. He must know all about the wells and springs by the way, where they may drink and not die of thirst; and where the little oases, that is, the grassy resting-spots, are found. And he must be a man who knows the tribes of Arabs, and can keep them from robbing the caravan. Every one follows and obeys this guide, until he has led them safe to the journey's end.

Now, I see before me a *little caravan*—a company of travellers, and where are you going? To *eternity*. Some of these little feet have only begun the journey, others have been longer on the way. Now and then one has dropped down by your side, and you have seen them no more; they have reached the journey's end before you. But just as fast as the minutes fly, you are all going on—on to another world.

And, like the travellers over the desert, do you not need a *guide*? Oh, yes, for there are many dangers before you. There are many wrong paths that do not lead to heaven, but lead far away from it; paths pleasant to look upon, but oh, their end is misery and death.

Yes, my little pilgrims, you need, and we all need, a strong, and loving, and wise *guide*; one stronger than any man, and who loves us so well that he will take us by the hand, and never let us go away from him; one who knows where the springs of living water are; one who can lift you over the bad places, and lead your tired feet to pleasant resting spots, and who can guide you to the heavenly home, and not let you get lost by the way.—*Little Crowns and how to Win them*

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MORAL SENSE OF LIFE.

We are prone to imagine that our temptations are peculiar;—that other hearts are free from secret burdens that oppress our energies, and cast a cloud upon our joy; that life has for others a freer movement, and a less embarrassed way. But in no one has God made the human heart to carol its thoughtless song of joy; and the shadow of our moral being rests darkly on us all. We cannot take the world as it comes, enjoying what it offers, and passing by its sufferings and its burdens with our lightest touch;—we get involved in the deep questions of Conscience and Duty, and the sense of Responsibility stills the carol of the spirit, and suffers no man to repose without a trouble on the bosom of life.

Infinite are the ways in which the devices

and aims of the Moral Nature break the instinctive happiness that lives for the day, and forgets the morrow; but effectually this awakening of deeper and sadder life takes place in all; and struggle, fear, disappointment, the partial feeling of an unfilled Destiny, the restless wavings of uncertain Hopes, are in the heart of every man who has risen but a step above the animal life. The more we know of what passes in the minds of others, the more our friends disclose to us their secret consciousness, the more do we learn that no man is peculiar in his moral experience—that beneath the smoothest surface of outward life lie deep cares of the heart—and that if we fall under our burdens, we fall beneath the temptations that are common to man, the existence of which others as little suspect in us as we do in them. We have but the trials that are incident of humanity;—there is nothing peculiar in our case—and we must take up our burdens in faith of heart that, if we are earnest, and trifle not with temptations, God will support us, as, in the past fidelity of his Providence, he has supported others as heavily laden as ourselves.—*J. H. Thom.*

SONG OF THE INCARNATION.

This is the day the Lord hath made;
Let all the world thereof be glad!
Praise Him, ye heavens, and thou, O earth,
Proclaim the wonders of His birth.

The nations waited long for Thee,
Until the time fulfill'd should be
When God sent down from His high throne
The world's Redeemer, Thee His Son.

When this event my soul surveys,
'Tis lost in wonder and amaze,
And seeks in vain to grasp a love
All human thought so far above.

Thou dost, O Lord, Thyself abase,
That sinners may receive Thy grace,
And our weak flesh and form assume,
To save us from impending doom.

Thy King, O Zion, comes to Thee.
"Tis written in the book of Me,
I come, O God, to do Thy will,
And perfectly Thy law fulfil."

Lord, who didst come on earth to dwell,
The Prince of Peace, Emmanuel,
Whom long the fathers hoped to see,
Messiah, God, I worship Thee!

Our Saviour and our highest good,
Thou join'st Thyself to flesh and blood,
Our Friend and very Brother here,
That we may be God's children dear.

Oh, thought sublime and truly great,
'Tis thine the soul to elevate!
Oh, blessed thought, 'tis also thine
To fill the heart with joy divine!

By one man's sin the world first fell,
By One it is redeem'd from hell!
Then wherefore fear?—at God's right hand
Our Saviour and our God doth stand.

Rejoice, ye heavens, from which to earth
Were brought the tidings of His birth;
And earth, who seest now this day,
Oh sing to Him thy sweetest lay.

This is the day the Lord hath made;
Let all the world thereof be glad!
Praise Him, ye heavens, and thou, O earth,
Proclaim the wonders of His birth.

C. F. GELLEY.

—*British Herald*.