

spread revival of practical, philanthropic Christianity the world would witness! To those who are thus filled with the self-sacrificing spirit of Jesus, and consecrate themselves to the service of their fellow-men, there shall come a unique realization of the blessedness of ministering, at that day when the Son of man shall come in His glory and shall say to those on His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of the My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. \* \* \* Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."—*Christian Advocate*

#### ART THOU WEARY? ART THOU LANGUID?

This is the beginning of a very old and popular hymn. The first two lines of each verse contain a question, and the two following lines give the answer. We have other hymns similarly constructed: for example, "Peace! perfect peace!" "Who is He in yonder stall?" Such hymns require part singing to bring out their full meaning. Fully four years ago I heard "Art thou weary?" sung on a Sunday evening in Dr. Parker's, City Temple, London. The choir sang the questions and the congregation gave the answers, and I still remember the fine effect produced. I should like to see these question-and-answer hymns similarly sung in Australia. Half the effect is lost where all sing both question and answer.

Most hymn-books have the hymn in question, but there are some different readings. "Church Praise" has "Angels, martyrs, prophets, virgins." This, in Sankey's Collection, reads, "Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs." The latter is, possibly, the better of the two. "Saints and apostles," as having experience, are better qualified to testify to Christ's power than "angels,"

It is, however, to the teaching contained in the hymn that I desire to direct attention. That teaching, as far as it sets forth the new life in Christ, is for the most part of a sombre nature. The first verse is one of the most cheerful:

"Come to Me, saith One, and coming,  
Be at rest."

Verses two and three speak of the "wound prints" and the "crown of thorns." The fifth relates to the after life, but does not rise high:

"Sorrow vanquished, labor ended,  
Jordan past."

There is nothing about positive enjoyment. The fourth verse is pitched in the lowest key:

"If I find Him, if I follow,  
What His guerdon here?  
Many a sorrow, many a labor,  
Many a tear."

This is true, but is it the whole truth? Is this all that Christ saves us to? An unconverted person might well say, If this is all that Christ restores, let me remain as I am. Does the Saviour not give peace and hope and joy and assurance during this life? Till we come to Christ we are like a traveller who has lost his way in the bush. He goes round and round, Hours of walking and anxiety bring him no relief. Physically and mentally he labors in vain. By-and-bye he comes to the track, and then he knows where he is. The cold perspiration ceases, and his mind is at rest. There are miles to be travelled still; there are sharp pinches here and treacherous places there; but he is certain that the track leads to his home, with its rest, its plenty, and its sweet companionship. No one could make him believe that he is on the wrong track. So when once we have taken Christ as our Saviour, we become new creatures and possessors of new and glad feelings. All difficulties are not surmounted. We have temptations and hesitating sins, and there is a hard struggle often between the old nature and the new. We are not exempt from the ills of life—its losses, disappointments, its "thorns in the flesh," its troublesome duties. We may have fightings within and fears without; we may have days of darkness and backslidings; still we know that Christ is ours and that we are homeward-bound. Amidst the clouds and darkness we still hear His "It is

I; be not afraid." We know, like Paul, whom we have believed; and, though we are cast down, we are not destroyed. High spiritual enjoyment and communion with Heaven are not confined to the life beyond. That life is only a continuation and an expansion of what begins here. Heaven is enjoyed in some degree on this side the grave, and the nearer we keep to God, the more we shall have of "the light of His love." Our aim should be to expect much in this life and to have heaven in present possession. The nearer we keep to God, the more we shall experience that "the happy land" is not "far, far away," but is here and now within us."—in the *Australian Presbyterian*.

#### DOES GOD CARE?

Two kinds of human life are lived, one on each side of that question. The life of faith not only says that God does care, but walks also in the consciousness that God's eye marks everything. There is restraint it may be, but it is restraint that guards purity, uprightness, and everything worth preserving. But there is also rest from burdens there, and balm for wounded spirits, and healing for broken hearts. Even the place of trial is a Holy Place, where the soul is shut in with God. There may be a veil between the tried one and God, as there was in the Sanctuary; but, nevertheless, God is near, though His face be hid for a while. On the other side the idea of God's caring about what man is, or does, or suffers, is looked upon as a strange hallucination; there men revel in a liberty that becomes license. They drink from fountains at first bright and fresh, but which soon grow tasteless, stale and putrid. There are places of trial, but these are not places of child-like entreaty and of holy communings. They are dark valleys of horrible isolation and bitterness and cursing. There are broken hearts there but no healings. There are wounds and bruises and putrifying sores, but there is no balm and no physician.

How strange is it that a faith and its negation should mean so much for us! On one side we have the bright, sunny south; on the other the bleak, dark north. Which is true? Is the one in a fool's Paradise, and is the other facing the sober, saddening certainties which the former will by-and-by have to meet? Or has the first found the Home, built and furnished for man, and has the other missed it, and is he losing himself in wilds where there is no provision, and only starvation and death?

It might seem as if the answer to these questions was beyond us, and that the future alone could furnish the reply. But that is hardly true. On the side which shuts God out there is stunted growth and blighted life. On the side which shuts man in with God life rises into Christ-like stature, and pureness, and beauty. The men who prove what possibilities lie in manhood do their work and make their influence felt there. We might imagine that the difference lay in the men, and not in the influence of the conviction under which they live. But it is not so. Men pass from the one side to the other, and when they do, they in each case cease to be the men they were before. The man who passes from the thought that God does not care—the man who lays down the thought that he and his thoughts, and doings, and interests, are nothing whatever to God, and who is mastered by the conviction that God *does* care—takes into his veins a new life. The new life changes him, and, no matter how poorly equipped he may be with talent or with education, he will become a man after Christ's pattern. The man who *loses* that faith becomes like the dwarfed and hollow things among which he moves. Could there be a fuller proof of which is true and which is false than that loss and gain? The belief that God does care fits in with the plan of this universe; it belongs to the system of things. In other words, it is true; and the contrary belief, that God does not care, is false.

If we come to the Scripture, we see whence the light and power of the conviction that God does care has come. The regulations in the camp of Israel have what seems to many the strangest of all reasons behind them. It is that God cares. *He* is among them. Things are forbidden because they distress and offend Him, and even obedience to the sanitary regulations has the consecration resting on it that it is pleasing to God. God is with them in their warring. They look to God, and make no provision of battering rams, mining tools, or scaling ladders; and the result is a miracle which brings God still nearer to them. The walls of Jericho collapse, and the Israelites walk in. God is still with them