

Messenger and Visitor

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Be Brave Enough to Accept Defeat.

A very great and influential word in the eyes of the present generation is "Success." The man who "gets there"—who "gets there with both feet"—that is, the man whose leap does not leave him in the ditch of failure or upon the crumbling edge of uncertain attainment, but lands him distinctly and certainly upon the broad platform of an assured success, that is the man to whom the world takes off its hat. Such a man receives recognition according to the world's estimate of the value of the success attained. "Recognition" is another of those masterful words which dominate the world and tyrannize over men's souls. It is so closely akin to success that it is hard to make a distinction between them. Recognition is to success what the fragrance of the rose is to the flower itself, or, shall we say, it is the throne to which success is the final step. Why does a man strive to be rich or to develop high intellectual power or to accomplish some extraordinary thing? Not generally for the sake merely of the sense of possession, or of intellectual power, or of extraordinary achievement, but because the possessions and positions so secured mean to those who hold them recognition as being men of importance and influence among their fellows.

It should be freely admitted that it is not an illegitimate or unwholesome thing that the ideas of success and of recognition should exercise a powerful influence over the minds of men. Naturally, if a man undertakes to do a thing, he will wish to succeed in it, and if the thing is right and important, he is to be praised for putting forth the most strenuous efforts for its accomplishment. And if a man shall succeed in achieving a good and important undertaking, he will be something less than human if he do not desire and value from his fellow men a generous recognition of his achievement.

But the success for which Christian men and women must strive is not always a thing revealed and enthroned in the eyes of the world. Success in the Christian sense may very often spell failure in the world's language, and *vice versa*. The success which the world so incessantly praises and worships is no criterion of the noblest manhood. If our ears were anointed that we might hear aright, some of the paeans which ascribe honor and glory and victory to the successful man would be changed to dirges over the mighty fallen—over men of heroic mould gone down in that conflict on which hangs things of infinite moment.

Frequently it requires a truer and larger manhood to accept a defeat than to achieve a victory, speaking of defeat and victory, that is, from the world's point of view. In business, a Christian doubtless may sometimes find it necessary to choose between comparative poverty with a clear conscience, and wealth, achieved by means which by no ingenuity could be harmonized with the law of Christ. The man who in business is brave enough to accept poverty for Christ's sake achieves no access in the eyes of the world, but his tested and proved Christian manhood is for him a treasure worth more than millions won at the expense of his fellowship with Christ.

A similar choice frequently becomes necessary between living the life which allegiance to Christ and faithfulness to Christian duty call for, and the attainment of that position in society which receives recognition from the world. Many a Christian might secure that social standing which the world recognizes as success, but the price of such recognition may be one which no Christian can afford to pay. It is surely a braver and stronger manhood and womanhood that is willing to be classed among the

social failures, for the sake of abiding in the fellowship of Christ. Was it braver and better for Moses to suffer reproach with Israel than to reign with Egypt? As surely is it braver and better to suffer social defeat with Christ today than to be recognized as the lords and queens of a godless society. Alas for the church and for the world too, that so much of what would call itself Christian manhood and womanhood today fails to stand this test of nobility.

And if we pass to the sphere of politics, there again it is to be found that success is too often purchased at the cost of things which a man can least of all afford to part with, and the surrender of which must be to Christian manhood a matter of irreparable loss and shame. What shall it profit a Christian man to gain some political success, if the price to be paid includes the surrender of a good conscience and conscious fellowship with Jesus Christ? The great battles which we hear about in connection with our political life are fought on the hustings, at the polls, on the floors of Parliament,—but the real battles are those which we do not hear about, which are fought out in the hearts of the men who engage in this political strife. "I can win this fight," soliloquizes the politician, "but to do so I must not be scrupulous as to means and methods. I must use the same kind of weapons as are used against me. These weapons, it is true, are forged by the devil, but the devil in this case holds the key to success." Here we are then at the point where the battle is decided, here victory is won or lost. This is just the point to which many a politician—and many a man who is not a politician—comes. The question is shall he make an alliance with Satan and win, or shall he stand for truth, and in his integrity suffer defeat?

The multitude will shout its acclamations to the victor, it will bow and pay its homage to the successful man without much question, for the most part, as to the methods and the partnership by which his triumph was made possible. But shall there not be found some saving remnant of people who have eyes to recognize and lips to bless the men who have that rare quality of manhood which enables them to accept failure in a good cause and to endure defeat with a serene mind for the sake of those things for which Jesus Christ accepted the condemnation of Pilate's judgment seat and the Cross of Calvary? For it is out of the darkness of such defeat that the glory of eternal victory shines.

Editorial Notes.

—The Roll Call of the Canard church, with its reminiscent and historical features, of which Reporter writes in another column, would doubtless be an occasion of special interest.

—Christmas is coming, it is very near now, and many of our friends are planning how they may make the day and the season the happiest possible. We most heartily wish them all success in that undertaking. May they all be as happy as happy can be. But we suspect that if notes are honestly compared after Christmas is over, it will be found that those who have got the most enjoyment out of Christmas are those who have tried most unselfishly to make others happy.

—This is the time of year when many persons are considering the question of presents. What shall I give and to whom? We beg to suggest that there are many persons to whom a subscription to the MESSENGER AND VISITOR would be a most welcome and valuable present, repeating itself fifty-two times in the year. There are some of the boys and girls who are far away, to whom it would seem like a letter from home to get the paper week by week, and it would help to keep them in sympathy with things that it is important they should not forget. And there are some of the families connected with the churches, who do not feel quite able to take the paper, but to whom its weekly visits would be a great comfort and blessing.

—The International Sunday School Lessons for the first half of 1902 will traverse the first part of the book of The Acts of the Apostles. They will have to do with Apostolic Christianity in its beginnings, and the planting of the first Christian churches in Judea, Syria, Asia Minor and Macedonia. This series of lessons should be rich in instruction and inspiration for those who earnestly study them. They should lead to the consideration of the power which is at the heart of Christianity, the agencies by which the faith in Christ was propagated at the first, the doctrines which the apostles preached, the methods they employed, the manner of life they lived and the character of the religious communities which they organized. Our pastors can perhaps scarcely do

better for their people than to devote themselves for the next six months to as thorough a study as possible of that part of the New Testament which is covered by these lessons. They would certainly find in such study material and inspiration for the best preaching of which they are capable.

—The news of the death of Rev. Job Shenton, Methodist minister at Fairville, came as a painful shock to his many friends in St. John and vicinity, and would be received with deep regret by a much larger circle, for Mr. Shenton was well known throughout the Maritime Provinces. Death came very suddenly on Wednesday last. Mr. Shenton generally enjoyed good health, and on the morning of his death was apparently as well as usual. He had been about town during the morning, coming home about noon. He had taken his seat with Mrs. Shenton at the dining table and had just asked the blessing on the meal, when, in an instant and without warning, the fatal blow fell, and he was gone. Mr. Shenton was a man highly respected for his worth and work in his own denomination and by all who had the privilege of his acquaintance. He was a good preacher, a wise and painstaking pastor, a man whose judgment in the councils of his denomination was highly valued, and one who took an active interest in moral reforms. Mr. Shenton was of English birth, but came to this country as a lad, and though he was only 61 years of age when he died, he had given the long period of forty years faithful service in the ministry.

—On Saturday evening last our highly esteemed contemporary and neighbor, the St. John Globe, celebrated the completion of forty years of forceful and fruitful life as an evening paper, by sending out an issue of forty-two pages, containing, in addition to the abundant material usually to be found in its Saturday evening edition, a number of articles of an historical and reminiscent character, written by men acquainted with the paper and with the life of which it has been a part and a moulding influence. During all these years Senator Ellis, the present editor-in-chief, has had editorial connection with the Globe, and is, we suppose, fairly entitled to recognition as the Nestor of journalism in these Provinces, if not in all Canada. For careful and skilful editing, for the moderation, fairness and ability of its editorial writings, for the character of its literary department, for newness and variety, and the general excellence of its makeup, The Globe easily stands in the front rank of Canadian dailies. We cordially congratulate Senator Ellis and the gentlemen associated with him in journalistic work on the largeness of the success attained by them. We are pleased to note that the good will toward Mr. Ellis of those connected with the mechanical department of the paper and those also connected with its management and editorial department, has found expression in valuable tokens of regard which will doubtless be cherished by him as souvenirs of this most interesting anniversary.

"From Under the Avalanche."

DEAR EDITOR—I have read that in the mountains of Switzerland, a single word is sometimes sufficient to precipitate an avalanche. I can easily believe it since my words on the Fatherhood of God have brought down "the awful avalanche" of condemnation from the towering heights of biblical scholarship and theological wisdom. I should feel greatly flattered (I hope the type will not say flattened) by the event, and there is a strong temptation to remain silent and pretend to be "crushed." But since that might look as though the way I have taken is a fatal one, to the discouragement of other travellers, I must try my pick and shovel upon this mass of—beautiful snow—that has fallen on my head.

I find the snow from Mt. Saunders a somewhat familiar article. It is a soft and fleecy fall, coming down like wool. He again gently urges me to write on the fatherhood of the devil. But in my first reply to him I stated my view on that matter, and am content to leave a further development of demonology to the worthy doctor. Upon "Sonship" in its various senses, I think I may claim to have already written fairly explicitly and comprehensively.

I beg your pardon, Mr. Editor, for making any reference to the unknown "S." But I judge from his contribution that he is a very recent upheaval of the theological stratum and might feel offended if passed over in silence. "S." cheerfully concedes "that as begetter of both body and spirit God is rightly called Father of all men." But he then as "cheerfully" proceeds to argue against his own concession. God's fatherhood is "not identical with his love," he says. "There must be harmony in purpose and spirit with one who is called child." What, then, becomes of his cheerful concession? After "S." has been duly chastised by Dr. Saunders for conceding the whole point under discussion, I commend him to some quiet nook for reflection upon the cheerful innocence with which he stultifies himself.

But that was indeed a far-thundering "avalanche" which dropped from the massive brow of Mt. Bynon. Yes, it is somewhat difficult, but more distasteful than

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