

Hope's Quiet Hour.

The Living Fountain.

My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.—Jer. ii.: 13.

JESUS stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.—St. John vii.: 37.

Probably it was the time—during the Feast of Tabernacles—when the priests went down with their golden vessels to the pool of Siloam, and brought up the cool and sparkling water to pour out before the Lord, that these wonderful words of Christ were spoken. The people shouted, "With joy let us draw water out of the wells of salvation!" and then a young man stood before them and declared Himself to be the one Fountain of living waters, able to satisfy the thirst of every human soul.

We are so accustomed to the familiar words of the Gospel story that they often lose their force and fail to impress us. Let us try to imagine our feelings if the greatest and best man of our acquaintance should suddenly announce that he could and would satisfy all the deepest longings of everyone who should come to him. If we did not think him insane we should certainly accuse him of presumptuous pride and blasphemous self-assertion. No one who is only a man can really reach and satisfy the unutterable desires of even one human soul. That is a truism, which every generation of men has proved to be true. Down through the centuries rings the confident assertion of the great Augustine—an assertion which each man can prove for himself—that the heart of man is restless until it rests on God.

If the thirst of even one soul is to be satisfied with living waters, then God Himself must supply the need. The Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem, describes in "Ecclesiastes" how he tried to find satisfaction in earthly things. He sought for it in wisdom and knowledge, but found only sorrow and vexation of spirit. He sought for it in laughter, mirth and wine, but found only an empty mockery of real gladness. He sought for it in work, in building houses and planting gardens. Then he gathered great possessions, still retaining his learning and fame, until he was the richest and wisest of men, and the possessor of everything earthly that anyone could desire. Was his thirst satisfied? Why, he was as unsatisfied as before, finding that all for which he had worked was "vanity and vexation of spirit."

It always must be so. The higher a man climbs in knowledge the more unsatisfied he is, when he piles up earthly possessions and trusts in them for happiness, he still finds that the thirst of the soul makes him restless whenever a quiet time for meditation gives it a chance to assert itself.

When Jesus, the carpenter-prophet from the little village of Nazareth, offered to satisfy the thirst of anyone who should come to Him, He was declaring His Divinity as certainly as when He royally offered forgiveness to a sinner.

Can He fulfill that great promise? Why should the world pay any attention to a claim so tremendous? If anyone else should make such an offer we should know he had no power to fulfil it, and should go on our way without troubling to consider it. Why should we listen to this one Man out of all the uncounted millions who have walked on this earth? Why? because He, and He alone, has made good His claim. You will find plenty of happy souls, who go on their way rejoicing, even though they have plenty of troubles to endure. Ask them the secret of their happiness, and—if they admit you to their confidence—they will probably tell you that it is the service and daily companionship of their Master Christ which makes work pleasant and burdens light. Remember that if He can satisfy the deep thirst of even one human soul, He must be God. Can anyone deny that His service has been as a

spring of living waters filling many souls with gladness? If He has satisfied one soul, there is good reason for you, if you are dissatisfied, to accept His offer. If you do not come to Him, you will go on restlessly seeking for satisfying peace and joy. He quietly offers to give rest to all who are weary and heavy-laden, living waters to all who are thirsty, living bread to all who are hungry—if only these needy ones will come to Him.

But you may answer: "I know plenty of Christians who are restless and discontented, who worry and fret over every trifling trouble. Why has Christ—

ple, who think themselves too clever to believe in the faith of their fathers, must live out their lives on the earth, must die, and—whether they wish for a life after death or not—must face eternity. Their disbelief cannot alter facts. If they can satisfy their hearts' desires with anything that earth can give, then—and then only—can they afford to ridicule those who daily find fresh springs of joy in the service of God. If they can look forward to death as the door of a fuller and higher life, and go out into that other life joyously and triumphantly, then—and only then—can they claim to

beauty of His holiness and hand clasped closely in His, is to be ready for any call to service. Let us do our daily work cheerily and honestly, drawing daily strength and sweetness from the glad consciousness that our Master is working in us and through us. Even as I write, the thought of His Presence fills my heart with wondering joy. It is so marvellous to know that the Eternal, Almighty God loves me and cares for my love. Yet nothing short of that could ever satisfy me—and I can rest, and do rest on His Love.

"I should not love Thee now wert Thou not near,
Looking on me in love. Yea, Thou dost meet
Those that remember Thee. Look on me still,
Lord Jesus Christ, and let Thy look give strength
To work for Thee with single heart and eye."

DORA FARNCOMB.

Rain in Summer.

How beautiful is the rain!
After the dust and heat,
In the broad and fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain!
How it clatters along the roofs,
Like the tramp of hoofs!
How it gushes and struggles out
From the throat of the overflowing spout!
Across the window-pane
It pours and pours;
And swift and wide,
Like a muddy tide,
Like a river down the gutter roars
The rain, and welcome rain!

The sick man from his chamber
Looks at the twisted brooks;
He can feel the cool
Breath of each little pool;
His fevered brain
Grows calm again,
And he breathes a blessing on the rain.

From the neighboring school
Come the boys,
With more than their wonted noise
And commotion:
And down the wet streets
Sail their mimic fleets,
Till the treacherous pool
Engulfs them in its whirling
And turbulent ocean.

In the country, on every side,
Where far and wide,
Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide,
Stretches the plain,
To the dry grass and the drier grain
How welcome is the rain!

In the furrowed land
The toilsome and patient oxen stand,
Lifting the yoke-encumbered head;
With their dilated nostrils spread;
They silently inhale
The clover-scented gale,
And the vapours that arise
From the well-watered and smoking soil,
For this rest in the furrow after toil
Their large and lustrous eyes
Seem to thank the Lord,
More than man's spoken word.
—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

The Cows.

Into the barn at the close of day
The mild-eyed cattle come, one by one;
Soberly into the stalls they stray
Munching their cuds, at the set of sun.
Bess and Daisy stand close beside,
Switching their tails in a friendly way;
Molly and Susan with quiet pride
Into their stanchions at random stray.
Maud and Nancy in awkward haste
Stumble in turn through the wide barn door;
Wandering Gipsy is homeward chased,
The last to blunder across the floor.
Swish, swish, swish, into waiting pails,
In rhythmic motion of hands well skilled,
Splashes the milk, while the nervous tails
Flap and flop till the pails are filled.
Then quiet reigns and the cattle rest;
Through the dark the barn rat roams unawed,
All undisturbed in its midnight quest
By Bess or Daisy or mild-eyed Maud.
—Helen M. Richardson, in Farm Journal.



Princess Elizabeth in Prison.

(From a painting by Millais.)

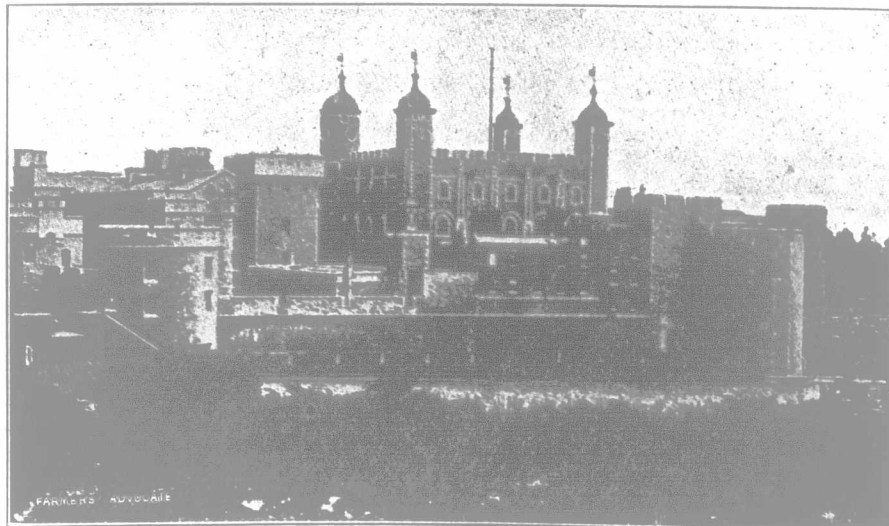
the Master they profess to serve—failed to satisfy these people?"

The reason is that in the cases when they worry and fret they are not coming to Christ. He has told them to cast all their care on Him, and, if they will persist in carrying a burden of anxiety, they are proving plainly that they have not come to Him, no matter what they may say. Real trust in the ever-present God must be a living spring of joy and peace. Is there anything we want more than that?

There are some people foolish enough to treat religion with careless contempt, as if it were only a matter for ignorant women and children. And yet these peo-

ple be as rich as one who can truthfully say: "To me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

But the Christian must not be like a stagnant pool, always receiving living water, but remaining satisfied to keep to himself the gift of God. When our Lord offered to satisfy the thirst of anyone who should come to Him, He also promised that from believers should flow rivers of living water. We cannot give unless we receive. It is useless to try and help others in spiritual things unless we are daily drawing living water from the Fountain. But to walk always with God, drinking ever more and more of His Spirit, with eyes lifted always to the



The Tower of London.