

THE QUIET HOUR.

The Plan of Christ.

"What heart can comprehend Thy name,
Or searching, find Thee out?
Who art within, a quickening flame,
A presence round about."

"Yet though I know Thee but in part,
I ask not Lord for more:
Enough for me to know Thou art,
To love Thee and adore."

The plan which Jesus proposes as the end and aim of His mission is not only completely unique and original, but so stupendous, so sublime, as plainly to transcend the bounds of merely human conception. Observe what the purpose avowed by Jesus Christ was: to establish a world-wide kingdom on this earth in the minds and hearts of mankind. Alexander undertook to subdue all earthly kingdoms in his own generation; but Christ undertook to bring under His sceptre not only all the peoples and kingdoms of one generation, but of all generations, present and to come.

"King of Kings" and "Lord of Lords" is the title He calmly assumes. He foresees His death, but this will be no check to His power or to the progress of His kingdom. This Carpenter of Nazareth, without any appearance of presumption, speaks and plans and acts as one superior to death (though He knows He is soon to die), as one to Whom the ages belong, and Whose work will go on from age to age—ay, unto the ages of the ages—and go on under His guidance, under His governing hand. He is a man—oh! never was such intense and sensitive humanity as His—and yet He seems independent of time and death and change: He is the King of the ages; eternity is His sphere of action. It is not merely that He founds a kingdom which He believes will endure, but that in spite of death He will still be the king of this kingdom, the living ruler of His church through all time.

Is it thus that men lay their plans? Did any other man ever dream of such an undertaking? If any living man should hold such language to-day would he be listened to? Would he not be laughed to scorn? Or would he not be pitied as a madman? Yet Christ was listened to. Men heard Him, followed Him, obeyed Him, gave up all for Him. More wonderful still, myriads who never saw Him or heard His voice have died for Him. This is what so impressed the Emperor Napoleon. He said in his conversations at St. Helena: "Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, I myself, have founded great empires; but upon what did these creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for Him. . . . I think I understand something of human nature, and I tell you all these were men, and I am a man. None else is like Him: Jesus Christ is more than man. . . . Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man towards the unseen that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across a chasm of eighteen hundred years Jesus makes a demand which is beyond all others difficult to satisfy. . . . He asks for the human heart; He will have it entirely to Himself; He demands it unconditionally; and forthwith the demand is granted. Wonderful! In defiance of time and space, the soul of man with all its powers and faculties becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ. . . . This phenomenon is unaccountable; it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time, the great destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame. Time can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range. . . . This it is which proves to me quite convincingly the divinity of Jesus Christ."

Yes, the plan of Jesus Christ was so vast in its scope, so sublime in its aim—being nothing less than the moral and spiritual regeneration of the whole human race—that it is not only absolutely unparalleled, but plainly beyond the range of mere human conception. It soars into a region that the mind of man never before aspired to reach.

Let us note also as one of the absolutely unique peculiarities of the plan avowed by Jesus, its relation to his own person. He was not only the founder of the kingdom, but its king, its head, the living center and heart of its being. Now try for a

moment to realize what it meant for a man (and a poor man, without place or power) to say, "I am the light of the world;" or to say, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away;" or, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me;" or, "The Son of Man is come to give His life a ransom for many." This young Galilean peasant dares to put himself forward as the Saviour of the whole world, and makes His own sufferings and death a necessary part of the plan for the salvation of the world. He declares that His cross will become the magnet to draw all men until Him. He affirms that His blood was to be shed for the remission of sins, and that no man could come to the eternal Father but by Him. He bids all the weary children of care and sorrow come unto Him and He would give them rest. He boldly assumes power to forgive sins, and even when nailed to the cross He claims power to open the gates of Paradise to the dying thief. When leaving the earth He encourages the disciples by the extraordinary promise of His perpetual presence: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." And as He puts himself forward as the Saviour of the world, so also He advances the equally astounding claim to be the final judge of quick and dead. Yes, the judgment and the final destiny of every individual soul of all the generations of men, and of all races and peoples and tribes of mankind, is to be in the hands of this man Jesus of Nazareth. What then is He? Who is He? Whence came He? Is He a madman, or is He indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God? That is the inevitable dilemma. [TO BE CONTINUED.]



"SPOILS OF WAR."

"Unpossessed Possessions."

Is not that condition of passive acquiescence in their small present attainments, and of careless indifference to the great stretch of the unattained, the characteristic of the mass of professing Christians? They have got a foothold on a new continent, and their possession of it is like the world's knowledge of the map of Africa when we were children, which had a settlement dotted here and there along the coast, and all the broad regions of the interior undreamed of. The settlers huddle together upon the fringe of barren sand by the salt water, and never dream of pressing forward into the heart of the land. And so too many of us are content with what we have got—a little bit of God, when we might have Him all; a settlement on the fringe and edge of the land, when we might traverse the whole length of it; and behold! it is all ours.

"Quiet Hearts."

The highest energy of action is the result of the deepest calm of heart: just as the motion of this solid, and, as we feel it to be, immovable world, is far more rapid through the abysses of space, and on its own axis, than any of the motions of the things on its surface. So the quiet heart, "which moveth all together if it move at all," rests while it moves, and moves the more swiftly because of its unbroken repose.

A Family Affair.

"Willie," said papa, "you have wasted a charge of buckshot by carelessly handling that gun."
"Yes," answered the boy, as he pointed to the bodies on the floor, "but it's all in the family."

"Spoils of War."

There is something very pathetic in this picture. Chairs out of doors generally suggest a cool veranda or pleasant lawn—but here—what a difference! Possibly the victory was a just and glorious one; but the sight of all those "household gods" lying around in confusion goes to the heart. One wonders at the free and easy attitude of the elderly officer, seated in his enemy's chair, and at the jubilant air of the young soldier, who is showing some of the "spoils" to the other; but youth is often thoughtless, and the horror and sadness of war, perhaps, comes later—with many. Look at those quaint little teapots, perhaps not so long ago held by fair hands as they poured the refreshing tea into dainty cups. The ornamental clock, too, how many long years has it ticked the hours and minutes? Then the guitar—is the hand that swept its strings cold in death? And where is the little child who innocently played with that funny toy dog on wheels?

One soldier's face looks a little sad; he is looking at a picture, which, possibly, brings back some memory of home, of mother, wife, sweetheart—we know not.

Some of the sombre-looking group in the right background seem to be prisoners, and one can imagine what is in their hearts, although they are too proud to let their enemies see into them.

Alas! the "Spoils of War" mean untold misery to so many that we may well afford to give some sympathy to the vanquished, even though they be our enemies, and try to imagine the shattered homes and these grieving ones, who mourn their dead and their absent, even as we mourn our dear ones.

The Note of Thanks.

A WORD WITH GIRLS ABOUT THE ART OF WRITING IT.

Just a word, girls, about the gentle art of writing a graceful note of thanks. Don't be chary with such notes. Does somebody send you a pretty gift, it goes without saying that you write a cordial note of appreciation, but if some act of courtesy is done, or some little favor rendered, the written word of thanks is too often neglected.

It's an art; this art of writing a brief word of thanks, but it is one which every gentlewoman should cultivate, and it will, in the long run, be of far more service to her than even the mysteries of china painting or mandolin playing.

You go out of town, perhaps, and stay over night with a friend, and if you wish as pleasant a memory of your visit to linger with your hostess as with yourself you should write a line

repeating to her your spoken thanks. Oh, that's a "board and lodging letter," you say. Very true, but it's always appreciated by the woman whose hospitality you have accepted, and, presumably, enjoyed. Then, again, if a man sends you a book or a clipping from a newspaper, or a card for a reception, write that word of thanks, even if you have to get up in the middle of the night to do so. As a matter of policy, if nothing else, you will find the habit an expedient one, for people are much more apt to do a kindness for a person from whom the invariable word of thanks comes quickly and spontaneously, than for that unpleasant and matter-of-fact member of society who takes all such courtesies as her just due and does not trouble herself to send the slightest acknowledgment of small social courtesies.

Recipes.

CREAM SAUCE.

Melt one tablespoonful of butter, being careful not to burn it; add 1 tablespoonful flour; mix until smooth; then add $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of cream or milk; stir continually until it boils; add salt and pepper and use at once.

WASHING FLUID.

One box of alkali; five cents' worth of solid ammonia; five cents' worth of salts of tartar. Put the alkali into a large pot of cold soft water; as soon as the alkali is loosened take out the box. When the water is boiling add the ammonia and salts of tartar (taking great care that it does not boil up and scald you). Let it boil for a few minutes, then strain into an earthenware jar, and cork. Use a large teacupful of the fluid to a boilerful of clothes. This must not be used for colored clothes.