

Counting the Mercies.

A Southern woman who died lately at a great age, and who had carried to the last days of her life a happy heart and a singularly gay temper, thus explained the mystery of her unfailing cheerfulness:

"I was taught by my mother when a child to reckon each morning before I rose the blessings God had given me with which to begin the day. I was not simply to say:

"When all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise."

"But I was to count the mercies, one by one, from the neat and serviceable shoes that covered my cold feet to the sunlight shining on the hill-tops. My school friends, my play, my fun, my mother's kiss, the baby sister in her cradle—all these I learned to consider separately, and of every one to say, 'He gave it to me.'

"This practice taught me the habit of thankfulness. It kept my heart near to him. Kept it light and happy. These every-day blessings were not to me mere matters of course, but special, loving touches from His paternal hand. No pain or sorrow could outweigh them."

Quicunque Christum Queritis.

BY THE REV. JOHN ANKETELL.

A hymn of Prudentius (A.D. 400), adopted for Vespers of the Transfiguration in the Roman Breviary.

Ye, who Christ your Saviour seek,
Upward lift your vision meek,
Where enthroned of God on high,
All His glory fills the sky.

There behold His wondrous sign,
Bright, eternal, and divine,
God that sign of joy hath given,
Ere He made the earth and heaven.

Christ, the Gentiles' King decreed,
David's Son of Abraham's seed,
Reigns the King of Israel,
Ever with His flock to dwell.

Christ, the ancient prophets praise,
Christ, the holy mount displays,
There the Father's words proclaim:
Hear my Son and own His Name?

Jesus, praise to Thee shall flow,
Who Thyself to babes doth show,
With the Father, ever blest,
And the Spirit, One confess'd.

Regular Church-Going.

Like anything else of the same kind, church-going is a great deal a matter of habit. Some of us have been brought up in the habit, and find it perfectly natural to go to church at least twice on Sunday, and to receive the communion at least once a week. Those who have formed such a habit would find it hard to give it up.

On the other hand, some of us have made it a habit to stay at home and loaf on Sundays, and to read through the Sunday newspaper. Of course, this entails a good deal of hard work, now that the Sunday newspaper has grown into a volume. But a resolute man can, if he will, break up an old bad habit, and establish a new good one.

Why not set yourself to work till regular church-going, which you know is a habit you ought to cultivate, has become second nature to you? You will find it the best discipline you ever set for yourself, and we venture to say that, when once the habit is formed, you will wonder how men can endure such a desperately dull piece of business as a churchless Sunday.

Friendship.

A blessed thing it is for any man or woman to have a friend, one human soul whom we can trust utterly; who knows the best and worst of us, and who loves us in spite of all our faults; who will speak the honest truth to us while the world flatters us to our face and laughs at us behind our backs; who will give us counsel and reproof in the day of prosperity and self-conceit, but who again will comfort and encourage us in the day of difficulty and sorrow, when the world leaves us alone

to fight our own battle as we can. If we have had the good fortune to win such a friend, let us do anything sooner than lose him. We must give and forgive, live and left live. If our friend have faults, we must bear with them. We must hope all things, endure all things, rather than lose that most precious of all earthly possessions, a trusty friend. And a friend once won, need never be lost, if we only be trusty and true ourselves.

Friends may part, not merely in body, but in spirit, for a while. In the bustle of business and the accidents of life, they may lose sight of each other for years; and more, they may begin to differ in their success in life, in their opinions, in their habits, and there may for a time be coldness and estrangement between them; but not for ever, if each will be trusty and true. For then, according to the beautiful figure of the poet, they will be like two ships which set sail at evening from the same port, and ere nightfall lose sight of each other, and go each on its own course and at its own pace, for many days, through many storms and seas, and yet meet again, and find themselves lying side by side in the same haven when their long voyage is past.—Charles Kingsley.

His Workmanship.

Theodore Monod once made use of this beautiful illustration. He said: "If a piece of iron could speak, what would it say? It would say, 'I am black, I am cold, I am hard.' Perfectly true. Put that piece of iron into the furnace and wait awhile, and what would it say? 'The blackness is gone, the coldness is gone, and the hardness is gone'—it has passed into a new experience. But if that piece could speak, surely it would not glory in itself, because the fire and iron are two distinct things that remain distinct to the last. If it could glory, it would glory in the fire and not in itself—in the fire that kept it a bright, molten mass. So in myself I am black, I am cold, and I am hard, but if the Lord take possession of my soul, if I am filled with love, if His Spirit fills my being, the blackness will go, and the coldness will go, and the hardness will go; and the glory does not belong to me, but to the Lord, who keeps me in a sense of His love."

Missionary Unbelief.

The Christian that does not believe in Foreign Missions, does not believe in the Great Commission. Repeat it and see. The Christian that does not believe in Foreign Missions, does not believe in the Apostles' Creed. Repeat it and see.

The Christian that does not believe in Foreign Missions, does not believe in the Lord's Prayer. Repeat it and see.

The Christian that does not believe in Foreign Missions, does not believe in the Doxology in long metre. Repeat it and see.

The Christian who does not believe in the Foreign Missions in this generation, believes that three hundred more millions of the heathen world ought to die before we try to tell them of Jesus Christ.—Herrick Johnson, D.D.

How to Get There.

A sermon or a Sunday-school lesson that does not point to salvation as a desirable and indispensable object to be attained can scarcely be called complete. Indeed, there is a world of wisdom in the words that a pious old Scotchman once addressed to his pastor after the latter had delivered a discourse in the village kirk. The pastor was no other than the well known Rev. John Macnab. The occasion was a communion season, and the subject of the address was "Heaven." It was a long sermon, but the people thought it as beautiful as a series of dissolving views. It had, however, one defect—the length of the descriptive part left no time for the "applicant."

Old George Brown met the preacher at a friend's house and astonished him by the *resumé* he gave of the sermon.

"It was really a grand sermon as far as it went," he said, after he had finished his report. "I never enjoyed a description of heaven better. Ye told us a'thing aboot heaven except *how to get there*; and, Maister Macnab, you'll excuse me, my

young friend, for sayin' that that shouldnae have been left out, for ye'll admit yersel' if that's awantin' a's awantin'. Ye'll mind the king's son's feast? The servants didnae only tell that a'thing was ready, but they compelled them to come in."

The young preacher was too intelligent not to see the aptness of the criticism, and when George had retired he said to his friend:

"I've been criticised by learned professors and doctors of divinity, by fellow students and relatives, but that good old man has given me more insight into what preaching should be than all the others put together. I hope as long as I live I shall never again, when delivering God's message to my fellow men, forget to tell them '*how to get there*.'"

Whose Will Shall it Be.

One of the hardest and most difficult lessons for a Christian to learn is to submit his own will to the will of God. Upon this point human nature is not only rebellious and stubborn, but easily deceived and led astray. It will often, very often, be found that when we are the most positive in thinking and asserting that our will is right and should be followed, that a little more time, a little more knowledge, experience or patience, will show that we are mistaken—that we have reached our conclusions too hastily, and that our opinions are erroneous and unwise. Our daily lives are full of illustrations on this matter. How great the need that Christians should ever be on their guard against such mistakes. They profess to be the children of God. They tell the world that as His children they can go to Him at all times and ask for divine wisdom and guidance in all things, and not only so, but their Father loves to have His children to come to Him, and that He is willing and ready to hear and answer their requests. With such professions how important that Christians be very, very careful as to how they pray and what they pray for. It is not enough to say we have asked God's guidance and blessing, therefore what we propose must be right. This does not follow, and just here it is we so often make most fatal mistakes. Let us stop and think.

"Mr. Justice Byles," we are told in "Leaves of a Life," "was once hearing a case in which a woman was charged with causing the death of her child by not giving it proper food or treating it with the necessary care. Mr. F——, of the Western Circuit, conducted the defence, and while addressing the jury said: 'Gentlemen, it appears to be impossible that the prisoner can have committed this crime. A mother guilty of this conduct to her own child! Why, it is repugnant to our better feelings.' And then being carried away by his own eloquence, he proceeded: 'Gentlemen, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, suckle their own young, and——' But at this point the learned Judge interrupted him, and said: 'Mr. F——, if you establish the latter part of your proposition, your client will be acquitted to a certainty.'"

—It is somewhat curious that whilst so many references have recently been made to Newman's "Lead, kindly Light," his verses beginning "Time was I shrank from what was right" should have escaped observation. It is said that they really originated the Oxford Movement. They were written on his return from Zante and Corfu.

Time was I shrank from what was right
From fear of what was wrong;
I would not brave the sacred fight
Because the foe was strong.

But now I cast that finer sense
And sorer shame aside;
Such dread of sin was indolence;
Such aim at heaven was pride.

So, when my Saviour calls, I rise
And calmly do my best;
Leaving to Him, with silent eyes
Of hope and fear, the rest.

I step, I mount where He has led;
Men count my haltings o'er;
I know them, yet, though self I dread,
I love His precepts more.