

To-Day.

BY ADELAIDE PROCTER.

Rise! for the day is passing,
And you lie dreaming on,
While others have buckled their armour
And forth to the fight have gone;
A place in the ranks awaits you,
Each one has a part to play,
The Past and the Future are nothing
In the face of the stern To-Day.

Rise! from your dreams of the future,
Of winning some hard-fought field;
Of storming some airy fortress,
Or bidding some giant yield;
Your Future has deeds of glory,
Of honour (God grant it may!),
But your arm will never be stronger,
Or the need so great as To-Day!

Rise! if the Past detains you,
Her sunshine and storms forget;
No chains so unworthy to hold you
As those of a vain regret;
Sad or bright, she is lifeless ever,
Cast her phantom arms away,
Nor look back, save to learn the lesson
Of a nobler strife To-Day.

Rise! for the day is passing;
The sound that you scarcely hear,
Is the enemy marching to battle—
Arise! for the foe is near!
Stay not to sharpen your weapons,
Or the hour will strike at last,
When from dreams of a coming battle,
You may wake to find it past!

That Young People's Meeting.

"I NEVER can, and I never will,"
Fred Bastwell had said over and over
again, when asked to lead in the
Young People's Meeting.

But one Monday night found Fred
in the leader's chair, giving out the
hymns, and apparently as cool as a cu-
cumber. But he wasn't, all the same.

Fred was only seventeen, and it was
perfectly dreadful to him to face all
those young folks, and a few older ones
intermingled with them, and presently
to have to stand up and read the
chapter and "say a few words."

When that time came everybody in
the room knew just how nervous Fred
was. Dear me! how he stumbled along
through the chapter, stopping to re-
pronounce his words and correct him-
self, and take breath in the wrong
places, till only those who knew the
chapter very well could make much out
of it!

Some of the very young folks were
inclined to titter. And even Clarice
Bell—one of the older ones, who was
sincerely sympathizing with Fred, and
feeling just how his heart beat up into
his throat, and just how his breathing
would not come right and easy—even
Clarice Bell felt a nervous desire to
smile, and but "for Christ's sake" would
probably have done so.

"But then," thought, Clarice, "if I
let myself laugh they will think I am
laughing at him; when really, down in
my heart, I am admiring his bravery,
and I know he is doing this simply
'for Christ's sake.' He is doing his
duty in Christ's strength."

So Clarice sent up a prayer to God
to help the boy, and in her heart
sprang up a chivalrous desire to help
him, and let him see she was not criti-
cising or laughing at him, but was on
his side. And then she thought, "I
must do something! I must speak or
pray or—something."

But Clarice was a coward also.
That was how she knew so well just
how Fred felt. She always had "stage
fright" when she attempted to speak,
and never could get out more than a
sentence or two, then stop. So she
began to tremble and her heart to
thump. And meantime Fred had
finished his few words and sat down.

Well, two or three others spoke after
that on the subject, "Rest," but the
meeting went slowly, and there were
waits between the speakers. And still
Clarice sat thinking, and still there was
that undercurrent of lightness in the
hearts of the young folks. Clarice's
conscience stung her hard all this time.
It said, "O you coward, why don't you
get up and help him? Help the meet-
ing along! You've been a Christian
for years, and he's only been one for a
little while, yet he is bravely doing his
duty. You're a coward! You're a
coward! Get up! Get up!"

Clarice held in her hand a branch of
cherry blossoms, and intermingling
with these thoughts there were others
of the spring and of God's world.

Still Clarice stuck to her seat and
sang when there was singing, and
thought every time there was a halt,
"Get up! Do or say something!
Help him! help the meeting along!
You can't be worse frightened than he
is! "You can't, be worse frightened
than he is."

Then from this she took another
step: "I will! I will—just as soon
as this speaker is through."

But still she stuck there; and again
and again came the thought, "You
can't be worse frightened than he is,"
till at last Clarice found herself on her
feet and bowing her head in prayer.
(She didn't believe in kneeling and
hiding her face in her hands, and
smothering her weak voice so that no
one could hear her words. So she
stood and let her voice have all the ad-
vantage it could have.) And Clarice
prayed in something like these words:

"Dear Father, we thank Thee for
the rest which comes to us when we
remember that Thy great helping hand
is ever reaching down to lift us up.
And we thank Thee for the rest which
comes into our hearts when we re-
member that Thy great heart of love is
continually bending over us. And we
thank Thee for this beautiful world
which Thou hast made for us. We thank
Thee for the springing grass and the
budding flowers, and the blue skies
overhead. We thank Thee for all the
beautiful things of life—for love and
friendships, and kind words and smiles.
But most especially we thank Thee for
Thy Son, Christ Jesus."

And then Clarice sat down, unable
to utter another word.

But Harry Lee sprang up to say,
"I am thankful to say that I am rest-
ing in Jesus." And then Howard
Brinscomb recommended Christ to
those who would find rest. And then
—why, the young folks jumped up, all
of them, as fast as they could, one
after another, for just a sentence which
expressed the hope and confidence of
each heart. The three girls on the
front seat owned their Master, and, in
short, nearly everybody in the room
had to speak. And at last Fred rose
to say that that was the happiest hour
in his life, and he hoped it would not
be the last time he would lead a meet-
ing.

But it was all because he had stood
to his guns so bravely in spite of his
trembling, and had done his duty in
Christ's strength.

It was because we, seeing his terror,
recognized that hit was simple Christ-
service; and a chivalrous desire to
help him, as well as do our duty, rose
in our hearts, spurring us to action.

I think the feeling in every heart
must have been, "Well, I can do as

well as he can, anyway. I can't be
worse frightened than he is!"

In fact no one seeing him in all his
simple, terrified loyalty, standing yet
bravely by his gun of duty, could find
in his own heart a reasonable excuse
for not owning that he also was a
soldier of Christ's.

So let us all, however weak and
cowardly we may be by nature,
determine to do our duty according as
the Spirit of God directs us. For we
do not know but that our cowardice
and weakness, overcome in Christ's
strength, may be an inspiration to
others also to fight bravely, notwith-
standing the weakness of their knees.
—*Joy Vetrepoint, in illustrated Chris-
tian Weekly.*

A Bit of Pottery.

The potter stood at his daily work,
One patient foot on the ground;
The other, with never slackening speed,
Turning his swift wheel round.

Silent we stood beside him there,
Watching the restless knee,
Till my friend said low, in pitying voice,
"How tired his foot must be!"

The potter never paused in his work,
Shaping the wondrous thing;
'Twas only a common flower pot,
But perfect in fashioning.

Slowly he raised his patient eyes,
With homely truth inspired:
No, marm; it isn't the foot that kicks,
The one that stands gets tired."

—*The Continent.*

Josh Billings on Infidelity.

IMPUDENCE, ingratitude, ignorance,
and cowardice make up the creed of
infidelity.

Did you ever hear of a man's re-
nouncing Christianity on his death-bed,
and turning infidel?

Gamblers, nor free-thinkers, haven't
faith enough in their possession to teach
it to their children.

No theist, with all his boasted brave-
ry, has ever yet dared to advertize his
unbelief on his tombstone.

It is a statistical fact that the
wicked work harder to reach hell than
the righteous do to enter heaven.

I notice one thing; when a man gets
into a tight spot, he don't never send
for his friend the devil to get him out.

I had rather be an idiot than an
infidel; if I am an infidel I have made
myself one; if I am an idiot, I was
made so.

I never have met a free-thinker yet
who didn't believe a hundred times
more nonsense than he can find in the
Bible anywhere.

It is always safe to follow the religi-
ous belief that our mothers taught us
—there never was a mother yet who
taught her child to be an infidel.

A man may learn infidelity from
books, and from his associates, but he
can't learn from his mother nor the
works of God that surround him.

If an infidel could only comprehend
that he can prove more by his faith
than he can by his reason, his impu-
dence would be much less offensive.

Unbelievers are always so red-dy and
anxious to prove their unbelief, that I
have thought they might be just a little
doubtful about it themselves.

The infidel, in his impudence will
ask you to prove that the flood did
occur, when the poor idiot himself
can't even prove, to save his life, what
makes one apple sweet and one sour,
or tell why a hen's egg is white, and a
duck's egg blue.

When I hear a noisy infidel pro-
claiming his unbelief, I wonder if he
will send for sum brother infidel to
cum and so him die. I guess not. He
will be more likely to send for the or-
thodox man who engineers the little
brick church just around the corner.

A Gambling Den.

The casino of Monte Carlo is now
the most important part of the princi-
pality of Monaco; instead of being sub-
ordinate to the palace, the latter has
become but an appendage to the
modern splendour across the bay.
Monte Carlo occupies a site as beautiful
as any in the world. In front the blue
sea laves its lovely garden; on the east
the soft coast-line of Italy stretches away
in the distance; on the west is the
bold, curving rock of Monaco, with its
castle and port, and the great cliff of the
Dog's Head. Behind rises the near
mountain high above; and on its top,
outlined against the sky, stands the old
tower of Turbia in its lonely ruined
majesty, looking toward Rome.

From a spacious, richly decorated en-
trance hall the gambling rooms opened
by noiseless swinging doors. Entering,
we saw the tables surrounded by a
close circle of seated players, with a
second circle standing behind, playing
over their shoulders, and sometimes
even a third behind these. Although
so many persons were present it was
very still, the only sound being the
chink, chink, of the gold and silver
coins, and the dull mechanical voices of
the officials announcing the winning
numbers. There were tables for both
roulette and trente et quarante, the
playing beginning each day at eleven
in the morning and continuing without
intermission until eleven at night.
Everywhere was lavished the luxury
of flowers, paintings, marbles, and the
costliest decorations of all kinds; be-
yond, in a superb hall, the finest
orchestra on the continent was playing
the divine music of Beethoven; outside,
one of the loveliest gardens in the world
offered itself to those who wished to
stroll awhile. And all of this was
given freely, without restriction and
without price, upon a site and under a
sky as beautiful as earth can produce.
But one sober look at the faces of the
steady players around those tables be-
trayed under all this luxury and beauty,
the real horror of the place, for men
and women, young and old alike, had
the gamblers' strange fever in the ex-
pression of the eye, all the more intense
because, in almost every case, so gov-
erned, so stonily repressed, so deadly
cold! After a half-hour of observa-
tion we left the rooms, and I was glad
to breathe the outside air once more.
The place had so struck to my heart,
with its intensity, its richness, its
stillness, and its terror, that I had not
been able to smile at the professor's de-
meanour: he had signified his disap-
probation (while looking at everything
quite closely, however) by buttoning
his coat up to the chin and keeping his
hat on. I almost expected to see him
open his umbrella.

I REMEMBER the time when, at my
mother's feet or on my father's knee, I
learned to lip the phrases of the sacred
Scripture that have since been my daily
study and vigilant contemplation. If
there be anything in my style to be
commended, the credit is due to my
parents in instilling into my mind in
early life the sacred Scripture.—*Daniel
Webster.*