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## "They Love the Praise of Men More Than the Praise of God."

"When mortals praise thee, hide thine eyes,  
Nor in thy Master's wrong  
Take to thyself His crown and prize:  
Yet more in heart than tongue."

These words, from one of Keble's hymns for children, have been ringing in my ears since I was a child myself; and conscience rubbed them into me yesterday when a letter reached me from the manager of our Home Department, saying that many of our readers had expressed approval of the Quiet Hour. To say that this approval pleased me, doesn't begin to express my feelings; and yet, in thanking my friends for their kind words, I dare not venture to appropriate praise which is rightfully due to God alone. When the disciples carried bread to the multitudes by the Sea of Galilee, how strange it would have been if they had pretended that the supply was of their providing. They had to go to their Master for each piece. He did not even trust them with one whole loaf, but broke the bread Himself, and they were only His messengers to the hungry people. Glad and thankful those servants must have been for the privilege of being permitted to minister to the wants of so many, but surely they would explain that not they but their Master should be thanked. I too am glad and thankful if the Quiet Hour has helped any on the upward road, but I too have gone to the Master each week for His message to you. I always ask Him for the words to say, and for His blessing on the message after it has started on its mission. So, in thanking you for your expression of appreciation, I must explain that my office is only that of a messenger. If any words in the Quiet Hour have helped you, or given you pleasure, they are God's words, and I don't deserve any praise for them.

The text of to-day's sermon refers to many of the Jewish rulers, who believed on Christ but were afraid to confess their faith lest they should be put out of the temple. "for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Now, it is the most natural thing possible to like other people to think well of us. If a man says he doesn't care what anybody thinks of him, he is probably—well, to put it as mildly as possible—"mistaken" in his opinion of his own character. Why, even a dog likes to be praised; and there is surely no harm in the desire for the approval of our neighbors, if it is kept in its right place. When this desire for praise is allowed to rule our conduct, so that we are ready to do wrong in order to win it, or afraid to speak out for fear of ridicule, then, indeed, it is an enemy to be fought—because then it is very plain that the praise of men is "more" to us than the praise of God. Don't let us fancy that this inordinate love of praise is only a "little weakness," for it is an enemy which may do terrible mischief—mischief which may sadden a whole life. St. Peter was a brave man, who drew his sword singly in defence of his Master against an armed band, and struck one blow with it which might have resulted in loss of liberty or life. Yet this brave man was led that same night, by nothing else but fear of ridicule, into an act of cowardice he must have bitterly re-

gretted all his life afterwards. As Bishop Ingram says: "Many a man who would face a battery unarmed cannot stand a laugh, and is beside himself at a covert innuendo, especially if uttered by a woman. And so Simon Peter, who was quite brave in the presence of the armed mob, could not stand being 'made a fool of' by a servant girl: it was so humiliating for the leader of the Apostolic band, the rock Apostle, to be the butt and laughing-stock of the whole kitchen: and out comes the fatal denial, and then the oath to follow it, because he knew that he was wrong."

And, again: "To be made to look foolish is the undefined horror of half the world, and I am not saying we ought to want to look foolish; there is a perfectly natural self-respect, and it is a true instinct to desire the praise of good men and women, for their approval is the shadow of the approval of God; but to be so afraid of looking foolish that we trifle with our most cherished convictions—to be so afraid of the opinion of our set, that we dare not openly say out what we think—that is to run dangerously near denying Christ, like St. Peter."

Then, again, think of King David, the man after God's own heart, the man whose glorious songs of praise and devotion have been an uplifting power in the world for thousands of years. He was in the dangerous position of a very popular man, for "whatsoever the king did pleased all the people." He had won a great and well-deserved reputation for holiness of thought and act, and, of course, he valued that reputation. He was tempted to sin very deeply, and yielded to the temptation. Then came the struggle between his desire to keep the praise of men and his desire to deserve the praise of God; and—to his lifelong sorrow—he loved the praise of men more than the praise of God, for a time. When his crafty expedients for covering up his sin from the knowledge of men failed; he descended to a depth of crime which seems almost inconceivable in a man who had feared and loved God all his life. The cold-blooded order for the murder of one of his most faithful servants was given; and, instead of horror at his own crime, he seemed relieved to think that now his reputation was safe and his sin hidden—by another sin—from the eyes of men. But, happily for him, he really, at the bottom of his heart, cared far more for God's favor than for the undeserved respect of his people; and, when repentance came, as it soon did, he made no secret of his crimes. Indeed, no public confession could have reached more people than David's has done in his penitential psalms. He seems to care nothing now what the world thinks of him, as over and over again he cries out in his agony that he has sinned "against the Lord." He who had sacrificed his character to keep the respect of his people, now accepts with patient meekness the curses of Shimei, who followed the king and his weeping followers, who, with bare feet and covered heads, fled from Jerusalem. When Shimei "cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust," David restrained the angry Abishai, who was eager to cut off his head. "Let him alone, and let him curse," he says, with stern sadness, "it may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day."

When we think of the bitter shame and sorrow brought into the lives of St. Peter and King David by a too eager desire to stand well in the eyes of the world, we may well be on guard, and watch and pray earnestly

against the fear of man which bringeth a snare. They thought they loved the praise of God more than the praise of men, and they never expected to fall so terribly. Perhaps we think as they did, but it is never safe to be sure of one's own strength. None of us can afford to disregard the warning: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

The favor of the world is a very fickle thing. Probably many of the voices which cried "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday cried "Crucify!" a few days later. "Thou art not the more holy for being praised, nor the more worthless for being dispraised. What thou art, that thou art; neither by words canst thou be made greater than what thou art in the sight of God."

Although, like St. Peter, we may fail in our loyalty to our Master—fail through fear of ridicule—yet, if we have any love at all for Him, we may hope to be won back to our allegiance sooner or later by His look of loving rebuke—

"And under that deep gaze  
Sorrow awakes. We kneel with eyelids wet,  
And marvel, as with Peter at the gate,  
That we could so forget."

HOPE.

## Housekeeping and Music.

One of the most striking features of education for young women at the present time is the attention that is being paid to the practical. Almost every ladies' college now has a department of "Domestic Science," and while literature, music and art are studied as earnestly and conscientiously as ever, the girls are also being taught to cook a dinner, set a table, and make the home comfortable and attractive. It is a good thing that we are getting over the idea that household work is a menial task, and are now regarding it as a "Science." There is no reason in the world why the same hand that plays the piano should not wash the dishes and sweep the floor. One employment is no more dignified than the other.

Rev. Everett Hale, in the Twentieth Century Home, says: "I was at a dinner party in Buffalo five-and-twenty years ago where we had the presence of a dozen of the first gentlemen of the world. We were talking of social adjustment, and one of these leaders said: 'There must be division of labor. We cannot expect,' said he, 'that the person who made for us this delicious soup shall interpret Beethoven for us. Each must do his part.' Then we went on with the dinner, and after two hours of most entertaining conversation, our host rose from the table and said: 'We will come into the drawing-room, and the lady who made the soup shall interpret Beethoven for us.'"

There is no reason in the world why such cases should be rare, and if the good work now inaugurated by the ladies' colleges is encouraged, they will become numerous.—[Epworth Era.

## The Lovers.

The sky above was tender blue,  
And golden was the weather,  
When down a path a foolish two  
Went strolling on together.  
Her little hand in his was tight  
(With boldness well amazing),  
And thus they sauntered, full in sight,  
And everyone a-gazing!

It matters not of things they talked  
Prosaic, ordinary;  
The fact was patent that they walked  
A different language—very!  
Perhaps, because their heads were turned,  
They deemed themselves sequestered,  
And thought they could not be discerned,  
And by rude glances pestered.

"How silly!" laughed the grass and breeze—  
And kissed each other over;  
"How silly!" scoffed the honey-bees—  
And straight caressed the clover;  
"How silly!" piped the feathered tribe—  
And fell to billing sweetly;  
"How silly!" quoth we all, in gibe—  
And envied them, completely!

—Edwin L. Sabin, in Smart Set.

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