

Magdalen.

(Annie Campbell Huestis, in the 'Independent'.)

'Where are you going, weary feet,
Feet that have failed in storm and flood?
'I go to find a flower sweet
I left, fresh growing, near a wood.
The winds blow pure from many a hill,
And hush to tender stillness there,
Shall not this restless heart be still,
And grow more innocent and fair?
'Not so; for sin and bitter pain
Can never find Youth's flower again!

'Where are you going, wistful face,
Face with the mark of shame and tears?'
'I go to find a quiet place
Where no one sees and no one hears.
The beauty and the silence there
Shall thrill me through and still my pain,
Shall touch my hardness into prayer,
And give me back my dreams again.'
'Not so; for Sin has closed the door
On Youth's fair dreams forevermore.'

Where are you going, heart of woe
Pitiful heart of fear and shame?
'A strange and lonely way I go,
Where none shall pity, none shall blame.
Far with my sin and misery
I creep on doubtful feet, alone;
No human heart can follow me
To mark my tears or hear my moan.'
'Nay; but the never-ceasing sting,
The clearness of remembering!'

'What do you see, O changing face,
Alight with strange and tender gleams?'
'I near the hushed and holy place
Of One who gives me back my dreams.'
'Where are you daring, eager feet,
Feet that so wild a way have trod?'
O bitter world, no scorn I meet,
Sinful and hurt, I go to God!
On my dark sin, forevermore,
A sinless Hand has closed the door.'

The Snapping of the Thread.

At a recent ordination the young man who was to be admitted to the ministry related his religious experience, and told how his religious life, and with it his beginnings of preparation for the ministry, had their occasion in the breaking of some threads a dozen years ago.

He was an orphan lad, and had come up in a hard way, through a cheerless childhood nearly destitute of good influences. While still a boy he was employed in a weaving establishment. Although he was not really vicious, he was coarse and profane, and seemed quite unlikely to come to any good.

One day the looms he was running worked badly. The yarn contained a good deal of shoddy, and was so weak that it broke frequently. Every few minutes he had to stop a loom to join broken threads. The superintendent was an abusive man, and on his occasional rounds did little but curse because the work was proceeding so slowly. The boy's patience, also, diminished steadily, and his fear of the superintendent increased as he found himself making less and less progress.

At last it seemed as if almost every thread in the loom broke simultaneously. The boy had but one vent for his overstrained feelings. Before mending a single thread of the warp he uttered a succession of curses such as never before had passed his lips.

Then came the reaction. He had often used oaths before, but never such as these. A feeling of horror at his own profanity came over him with a flood of revulsion, and mingled with his disappointment. He burst into tears and dropped on the floor, sobbing.

The superintendent came up, but he did not swear as he usually did. There was a sort of tenderness in his voice as he said, 'Come, Billy, I'll help you tie 'em up.' Then as they worked together, he added, 'Billy, it ain't good for a little fellow like you to swear like that. I believe I'd give it up if

I was you.' Then, after another interval, he asked, 'Do you ever go to Sunday school, or anywhere? They learn you there not to talk like that. I'd go, if I was you. I'm a little mite careless in my talk myself,—more'n I ought to be,—but I don't like to hear it in a boy.'

So Billy took a start toward better things. The Sunday school gave him new associations and new habits. Soon he was a canvasser of the factory for new pupils, and within two years he was teaching a class which he had gathered from the streets. He advanced in the factory, also, and as assistant superintendent there and in the Sunday school he had a marked influence for good.

At last he assumed temporary charge of an almost abandoned little mission in a forlorn part of the city, and gave simple talks on practical religious subjects.

So grew his work and influence till the time when it seemed best for him to give his life entirely to it; and the council called to ordain him heard abundant testimony to his fearlessness, sympathy and consecration. Into the new web he is weaving bright strands that will not easily break.—'Christian Age.'

Paying to Preach.

I used to see a dear old lady in the garb of a Quaker, says a well-known minister, very often in the church. One of the deacons said to me:

'Mrs. — is a great friend of yours.'
'I am glad to hear it, I replied.
'Yes,' said the deacon, 'she said to me, "I love to hear your pastor preach, but I should like him so much better if he did not receive money for it."

"But," said I, "he pays £800 a year for the privilege of preaching to us."

"Does he, indeed? And how so?" asked the old lady.

"Well, we were educated at the same time, we are about of an age, and I earn £1,000 a year at my profession, while he receives only £200."

"I tell thee," said the dear old Quaker, "I shall always hear him hereafter with a great deal more pleasure."—'Christian Age.'

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Pain and Peace.

It is often surprising to see how much pain there may be in the sensibility, and yet peace, in the depths of the mind. In crossing the Atlantic some years ago, we were overtaken by a gale of wind. Upon the deck the roar and confusion was terrific. The spray from the crests of the waves blew upon the face with almost force enough to blister it. The noise of the waves howling and roaring and foaming was almost deafening. But when I stepped into the engine room everything was quiet. The mighty engine was moving with a quietness and stillness in striking contrast with the war without. It reminded me of the peace that reigns in the soul while storms and tempests are howling without.—C. J. Flinney.

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His Mother's Version.

A Bible class teacher was telling of the various translations of the Bible and their different excellencies. The class was much interested, and one of the young men that evening was talking to a friend about it.

'I think I prefer the King James' Version for my part,' he said; 'though, of course, the Revised is more scholarly.'

His friend smiled.

I prefer my mother's translation of the Bible myself to any other version,' he said. 'Your mother's?' cried the first young man, thinking his companion had suddenly gone crazy. 'What do you mean, Fred?'

'I mean that my mother has translated the Bible into the language of daily life for me ever since I was old enough to understand it. She translates it straight, too, and gives its full meaning. There has never been any obscurity about her version. Whatever printed version of the Bible I may study, my mother's is always the one that clears up my difficulties.'—Selected.

Shallow Christianity.

'To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.' Imperfect consciousness of forgiveness results in tepid love. That was a keen but loving dagger-thrust at Simon. It is the key to much shallow Christianity. Wherever there are types of Christian teaching which minimise the fact of sin, and make little of forgiveness and of the sacrifice by which it becomes ours, there are types of Christian life which lack fervor of love and radiance, of self-surrender, which, like Simon, dislike emotion, and do not understand the beautiful abandonment which forgiveness received occasions. And, whatever prominence may be given to sin and forgiveness in our creeds, if we do not habitually realise them in our minds and hearts, our religion will be cold, and of little force in shaping our characters or acts. To feel myself a debtor, bankrupt and penitent, and to feel that Christ has said to me, 'Thy sins are forgiven,' touches the depths of my being, and melts all its hardness into flowing streams of grateful love. When an iceberg floats down into temperate latitudes, sunshine and the warm ocean which laps it round change ice into sweet water, which blends with the all-encompassing sea that bears it up.—'British Weekly.'

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