

The Family Circle.

THE TIME WILL COME.

The time will come
When, though the hottest fire on earth should leap
To warm the currents through thy veins that creep,
No August flame or mild September glow,
Thy wintry heart and ice-bound blood shall know.
Hast thou the fire of love, devotion's heat,
And eager, flaming soul wherewith to meet
That chilling time?

The time will come
When though the sweetest bells on earth should ring,
The noblest organ peal and chorus sing,
Men shout thy praise and love's wild pleading call,
Thou shalt be deaf and distant from it all.
What hymn hast thou in store, what words of cheer,
What spirit voices for thy spirit ear
In that still time?

The time will come
When, though the landscape roll its beauty far,
Though fair the skies and woods and rivers are,
Though dearest loving faces look on thee,
No gleam of all shall thy strained vision see.
Hast thou prepared some prospect of delight,
Some opening vistas for thy trembling sight
In that dark time?

Ah, if that time
Follow a lifetime filled with work and love,
Then, while the old world dies, the heavens above
Shall burst to warmth and fragrance, sight and sound,
While glad remembered faces flock around,
And strength comes back and more, and joy, far more,
Skill, beauty, music, o'er and o'er and o'er,
Through endless time!

—Great Thoughts.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

THE STRUGGLE OF LIFE.

BY W. G. JORDAN, D.D.

"Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each string that bids nor sit nor stand, but go!
Be our joys three parts pain!
Strive and hold cheap the strain,
Learn nor account the pang; dare never grudge
the throes!"

We are drawing near to the close of the nineteenth century, and very soon thinkers will begin to sum up its life and try to estimate its significance. It has already been spoken of in many ways, as an age of "shams," of "science," of "freedom and progress," according to the position and mood of the speaker. Like every other period, this age of ours may be spoken of with glad enthusiasm or bitter contempt. It has been said that the present generation is "nothing if not critical," and it might easily be shown that in many spheres of thought there is more of criticism than construction. There is one thing of which we have been specially reminded, and that is that we live in a transitional period, and while that is undoubtedly true it is not so peculiar to our own time as we have been led to think. This is not the first transitional period that the world has seen, life is only another name for change, and the things that seem to be most firmly fixed are undergoing a silent, ceaseless transformation. Those who are being carried along by the stream are hardly in the best position to measure the rate or direction of its movement, but we are now learning the great lesson that life, individual or social, involves constant action and reaction, the realization of new thoughts and impulses, and readjustment to new circumstances. We must pass however from these vague general statements to something a little more definite.

In early life I heard a great many speeches from church platforms on the twofold subject of Rationalism and Ritualism. Sometimes these two divisions

were openly announced. Sometimes they were present in the mind of the speaker, though not so boldly stated. This constant repetition created the impression on the youthful mind that these were the twin foes of mankind in general and of the Christian religion in particular. The theologian, like a knight errant, sallied forth from his fortress to slay these monsters. Some of the speakers to whom we listened so attentively were great men and some were small men, some knew what they were talking about, and others did not. Some were competent to state in a masterly fashion "the principles of Protestantism," while others had not really grasped any great principle, but the mere fact of so much discussion made one feel that the terrible creatures, Rationalism and Ritualism, were not easily slain either by a sharp sword or a heavy club. We had men who know something about "culture," although their religious principles had shut them out of the ancient universities; and we had others who could hit the Puseyites heavily, with references to "men milliners" and "imposing ceremonies;" and we had those who could render a similar service to Darwinites by crying out incessantly for the "missing link," or repudiating in indignant tones "the monkey," which had been so recently brought on the stage as our great-grandfathers. And yet with all this variety of treatment the subject remained in a somewhat unsettled condition, as it is, I believe, even at this day, and in this enlightened country. We have found out that Rationalism and Ritualism are not definite and visible idols which we can break and cast into the fire, they are spiritual forces, tendencies which are stirring in every society, and which create the great problems for every man who seeks a harmonious life, that is, who wishes to be loyal to God and true to himself. There are some who continue to dwell in a narrow ecclesiastical environment, shut up as it were in an air-tight compartment, so that the time-spirit cannot reach them, at least not in such strength as to cause any painful disturbance. But many of us found ourselves flung out into the waters and commanded sternly to steer between the Scylla and Charybdis of Rationalism and Ritualism. The change from the carefully guarded denominational magazine to the great reviews, where the lists were open to all comers, was somewhat of a sudden shock. Those who had found the *via media* called out to us, and proclaimed themselves as the God-appointed guides of bewildered men in a distracted age; but upon examination we discovered that this much vaunted *via media* was not so definite and tangible as we could have wished. It might be a mathematical point having position without magnitude, but at any rate it was difficult to grasp and more difficult to hold. We could not find shelter from the storm in the caves which peculiar people had dug out for themselves, we must learn to move about in the free air and see if in some way the forces that seem so hostile may become helpful to the life of the awakened spirits.

Dean Mansel opens his lectures on "The Limits of Religious Thought" in this fashion. "Dogmatism and Rationalism are the two extremes between which religious philosophy perpetually oscillates. Each represents a system from which, when nakedly and openly announced, the well-

regulated mind almost instinctively shrinks back; yet which, in some more or less specious disguise, will be found to underlie the antagonistic positions of many a theological controversy." This, of course, is a philosophical statement by a man who was a great logician; but here again our old friends, or rather our old enemies, are arraigned and doomed to die. This book, which, in its way, is supposed to be a treatise on "apologetics," has created many controversies and probably settled none. That, however, from our present standpoint, is not altogether a disadvantage. It attempts to meet both dogmatism and rationalism by a new dogma of "agnosticism," which, while it humbles our pride by showing that omniscience is not possible to mortals, can scarcely be said to carry us very far in settling the limits of religious thought. It may be as well that those limits should remain unsettled, as it is better to beat our wings against the bars of our natural limitations than to be imprisoned in a formula of the schools, even though that should seek to shelter itself under the teaching of Sir W. Hamilton, and be quoted with approval by Mr. H. Spencer. We leave Dean Mansel to brush the cobwebs from the brain of the theological students, and pass on.

The author of the "Eclipse of Faith" was one who wrestled mightily with these problems. He was a clear, strong thinker, who had felt the influence of Butler's great work; he spoke noble, helpful words. His "Superhuman Origin of the Bible Inferred from Itself," is a book still worthy of careful reading, notwithstanding the change that has come over Biblical criticism since it was written. On the subject before us he makes a notable point in dealing with the "mythical theory" of the Gospels, then popular, but since dead and buried. The New Zealander, who, according to Macaulay, is to stand on London Bridge and sketch the ruins of St. Paul's, comes across a document supposed to contain a history of church life in the nineteenth century. In the spirit of Strauss, he soon makes short work of it, proving to his own satisfaction that it is not history but allegory. How improbable that there should be a man named Cardinal Wiseman. Of course that title simply represents the subtle policy of the Church of Rome. And how much more improbable that there should be two men, brothers, bearing the name Newman, starting from the same point, and going off, one to Rome and the other to Rationalism. That, of course, is pure allegory, these two names representing the two diverse tendencies, the two currents of influence and life which in their action and reaction have produced the varying and conflicting religious life of this century. This is very good as satire, it shows that fact may look like fiction, and it may remind us that the conflicting tendencies may be found not only in the same home or church, but in the same mind. In connection with a few discursive remarks of this kind one cannot be expected to treat these everlasting and ever burning questions of the "seat of authority in religion." The Bible, the Church, and reason penetrate and interpenetrate each other in ways too complex and intricate to be expressed in any brief, formal definition.

The socialistic tendencies of the present day tend to modify the individualism which was quickened and strengthened by the Protestant Reformation, and some of

the most notable of recent books have shown how cleverly arguments can be presented, which belittle the influence of reason in the formation of creed and character, so that in the coming century these subjects of perennial interest will assume new forms. We may come to the conclusion that there is nowhere a final statement of these things in purely intellectual terms. But it does not flow from that that we can know nothing, and that the man who is content to rest upon a ready-made formula is in as healthy condition as one whose career is a constant wrestling with the difficult questions of life. Browning's inspiring exhortation.

"Rejoice that man is hurled,
From change to change
Unceasingly,
His soul's wings
Never furled,"

is in this view specially appropriate when we remember that the change is not that of aimless drifting, but of unceasing progress. We often crave ease and finality and regret that this perpetual movement and friction should be the condition of our life, but even here we may learn to say, "Yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in Thy sight."

The solution is personal and practical. Those who have known no perplexities and no scepticisms are to be congratulated if their faith, so childlike and serene, throbs with real living force; and those who have looked all questions in the face, and "swallowed all formulas," may rejoice when they have proved that they are not shut up either to a dogmatism which degrades the soul or to a scepticism which leaves it in hunger and drives it to despair. Many a time, with new meaning, have the words been spoken, "Lord, to whom shall we go, Thou hast the words of eternal life." Theologians may discuss the word "Christocentric" and make what they like of it, the mere word is a thing of nought. This much we know, our Lord Jesus Christ, is not only the Saviour who forgives our sins, He is also the teacher who will guide us into larger realms of light and love. In this case discipleship does not mean slavery. He gives us the truth, not in final stagnant, but in quickening forms. From the time of Paul to this day, those who have followed them most loyally have found the richest personal life. Those who bow at His feet in reverent, childlike hope, are free to learn new lessons and to enter into new worlds. Loyalty to our own Church, we may learn from Him, realizing how much we owe to its large social life. But surely in His presence we shall not seek to view the universe from any narrow, ecclesiastical standpoint. Amid life's discordant clamour and stern conflict, we hear His promise of rest; that rest which is peace and progress, deeper satisfaction, and larger activity.

"Rest is not quitting the busy career,
Rest is the fitting of self to its sphere
'Tis the brook's motion,
Clear without strife,
Fleeing to ocean after its life,
'Tis loving and serving,
The highest and best,
'Tis onward unswerving,
And that is true rest."

Strathroy.

The word "Eurasian" is a combination of European and Asian, and is used to designate an inhabitant of Hindustan, one of whose parents is a European and the other a native of Asia.