

Contributions.

Thoughts and Acts of a Day.

AONKS.

A.M.

Margaret Truo was a typewriter in New York, earning ten dollars a week. She lived not very far up in the city in an old-fashioned house, built long before "lots" were divided. The landlady and boarders were comfortable people who dispensed with so-called "style." In consideration of a good many evenings given to mending and making of household linen, Margaret paid only four dollars a week for board. To be sure, at one end of her room was the large clothes press, and sometimes in hot weather it smelled very "blankety," still, she was much more comfortable than any girl she knew. She had not an original mind, but appreciated and appropriated the beautiful in what she read; as her memory was good, her thoughts were largely colored by her reading and her talk was full of apt quotations.

One warm morning in spring she started out, her lunch of bread and butter and a banana in a little satchel on her arm. "What a well-mannered day," she thought, "Green things are growing" somewhere. What a fresh wind; it might be cold, but it is not; the sun might be hot, but it is not; the day is full of delicious possibilities—like a nice woman. Surely something delightful will happen to-day.

Just then a man who was carrying a valise and walking briskly along in front, was stopped by a friend—"Hullo! where are you off to?" "I am going away." She heard no more. "Going away," ordinary enough words, but they recalled part of a sermon of Spurgeon's she had read long before; the gist of it was: "The most commonplace acts in every day life can point to the Saviour; we go on a journey,—we are reminded that 'Christ is the way'; we drink water,—'Christ is the water of life'; we eat bread,—'Christ is the bread of life'; we enter our homes,—'Christ is the door.'" Here the traveller overtook her and was striding rapidly past; with an involuntary motion of her hand she stopped him; he lifted his hat slightly as he paused for her to speak, thinking she probably wished to ask an ordinary question relative to street or number, but she didn't; she looked up and said: "I heard you tell your friend you are going away; did you remember then that 'Christ is the way'?"

A pause of amazement. "Never thought of it." "Please think of it now; and he is not only the Way, but the Truth, and the Life."

"I'll not forget. Thank you for reminding me. Will you shake hands? Thank you. Good bye." Margaret turned away hot and quivering now it was over. "Who said that to him? I'm sure I didn't; something inside me possessed my voice and said it."

In spring, especially, this city-bred girl longed inexpressibly for rural sights and sounds, so she affected a certain street because it boasted an old poplar tree which yearly struggled, without much success, to show some leaves. This day it looked quite hopeful and beneath it was one dandelion poking up a spirited little golden head, between the stone flags and the treebole. It reminded her of Dol Dreo's kitchen crambo in Mrs. Whitney's story "The Other Girls." "Yes; the city does show a 'hint of everything' in spring; this is one little piece of the hem of the beautiful garment spread out for other eyes—spread out 'beyond the dusty, noisy city where

hills and trees are, and there is nothing in the way of the sky."

It was a very busy morning, "lawyers with endless tongues" contradicted themselves and each other, brow beat and bullied their clients and witnesses, while Margaret industriously clocked away at her typewriter, eyes, head, and hands all occupied, but her heart was away soaring "as on eagles' wings," through the sweet air God keeps for the citizens of his country, and singing the quaint metrical version of David's sweetest psalm:—

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green; he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again,
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness
Even for his own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill,
For thou art with me and thy rod
And staff me comfort still.

My table thou hast furnished,
In presence of my foes;
My head with oil thou dost anoint,
And my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me,
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be.

(To be continued.)

Straggling Sprays.

"Aren't you glad? I'm just delighted!" "Oh! why should I care, it doesn't make any difference to me?" That was a question and its answer that set me wondering. The one who spoke first was brimful of joy over an unexpected piece of good fortune that affected her home especially, and, in giving expression to her happiness, felt sure of the sympathy of her friend.

How the apathetic manner, the tone of voice and the selfish words cast a shadow over the other bright face, and joy hid behind the cloud.

It made me think what an amount of pruning and trimming that dwarfed little "me" must receive from the great Gardener of souls before it developed into the noble tree he intended it to be. Such souls need to bask in the reflex rays of another's rejoicing; they need to be watered with the precious showers of another's tears, and let the world be kin humanity, is brother.

"What a sweet face! but that is all," was the thought uppermost in my mind as my eyes rested themselves on the placid features near me, and I said, "she has not yet lived." No one would seek counsel there, or unburden their sorrows to go forth able for the trial, hand in hand with sympathy.

That face was the crude marble—but another face near by had been chiseled and carved by those marvelous sculptors Time and Experience. There were tender lines round the lips, etchings of pain on the white brow, streaks of the marble dust on the brown hair; and peace with strength looked from the soul-fed eyes. Truly life is measured not in years, but deeds.

From the heart of chastenings flow never-falling springs of tenderness, almost divine; for only to the tried ones comes a faint knowledge of the sublime trials of the Man of sorrows, and of victories.

Man sets certain values on sin. God does, too, but sometimes the estimates are vastly different. The coinage of one does not always pass current with the other.

Man raises a thunder-storm of wrath, and from out the gathering clouds rolls out the sentence "no forgiveness," but in the "still small voice"

which some can hear above man's petty tempest is the Christ-message "God sin no more."

Life is in giving, not having. Life is loving, for "God is love," and every giver who gives gladly, spontaneously, keeping back nothing, receives the promised reward. Unfortunately, Ananias and Sapphira left too many descendants.

How the spring sunshine comes pouring down these April days, how the soft showers sink tenderly into the dark earth, waking the early flowers from their brown pillows, how the winds play among the leafless trees till the buds come out to listen, how the birds sing out of vory gladness that they live. Nature is all gift, all bounty. Let the hearts of humanity and nature shout together.

HEART'S EASE.

No Compromise.

The writer had the following incident related to him by the late venerable and much-esteemed Bro. Dugald Sinclair, a faithful minister of the Gospel, who invariably spoke and acted according to his convictions, a line of things much needed at the present time.

It occurred when he was Superintendent of the English Baptist Mission in the Highlands of Scotland, in which mission the Haldanes of Edinburgh were much interested. While on one of his tours, one of the Mr. Haldanes sent for Bro. Sinclair to come to the city to collect funds for the mission which was sustained by other religious bodies as well as by the Baptists. Having received the names of several prominent professional gentlemen upon whom he was requested to call, he was met with refusals and angry denunciations in some instances.

Mr. Sinclair, astonished and discouraged, returned to Mr. Haldane to inform him of the reception he had met with. Yes, says Mr. Haldane, that is the reason why I sent for you to come here and call upon the supporters of the mission, for bad reports have reached the city concerning the preachers;—we must have a meeting. In due time a meeting was called; at which Mr. Sinclair was arraigned to hear the complaints and to answer for the delinquency of his brethren.

One of your Baptist preachers denies the influence of the Holy Spirit, objects an orthodox lawyer; I will not give another penny to your work. May I ask from what point this report comes, says the superintendent. The place was named. O, yes! says Mr. Sinclair, I have learned the particulars of a frantic religious excitement in that neighborhood at which some most scandalous things have been said and done; such as one active worker declaring that a languishing penitent had a devil in him, and then vigorously slumping him on the back to drive the imp out; and other still worse, and most indecent proceedings which are not fit to publish, but which were, at Mr. Haldane's request, narrated at the meeting. The heresy complained of, says Mr. Sinclair, originated in the Baptist minister declaring that this work of confusion and shame, was not the work of the Holy Spirit!

But your preachers are all the time speaking on baptism, puts in a religious physician. Again the interrogation—whence comes this report? And again the place is stated. I am the man, then, says the unabashed respondent, for it was myself that labored there in a successful meeting, during which I only spoke on baptism when administering the ordinance. How many did you baptize there? Is the next enquiry. The number is named

(say fifteen). Then, is the response, according to your own words, you spoke fifteen times on baptism on that occasion. By no means, is the prompt reply, for several of them were baptized at the same time. At this crisis Mr. Haldane interferred, saying, do you not think, Bro. Sinclair, considering the ignorance of the people, that it would be better never to speak on baptism at all? Now come the brave words for the mention of which I have penned this anecdote. "I have a conscience, Mr. Haldane, the ordinance of baptism is a part of the Gospel message; and I must not and will not fail to be loyal and faithful in the discharge of my duty to my God and Saviour;" a resolution which he carried out when returning to his field of labor in the Highlands and afterwards in Canada, for many years before his death, uniting with us in our efforts to restore primitive Christianity, and closed his long and useful life in a peaceful and triumphant death. J. SHEPPARD.

Professor Totten on Baptism.

The following concerning Prof. Totten, of Yale University, who has become widely known from his writings on prophecy and the pre-millennial advent of Christ, whatever may be said in reference to the same, is pre-eminently sound in his views as to the symbolical import and importance of Christian baptism. He was recently immersed at Boston, by the Rev. Dr. Gordon of the Baptist church, and when asked for his reasons for so doing, said:—

The matter has been under long consideration, and after fully weighing it I have come to the conclusion that immersion is the only proper ceremony. It is a type of burial and resurrection. It is putting on the uniform. I am proud of it. Every man must pass through two deaths, the first and second. The Saviour has provided a type for the first, which is immersion. The second or natural death for the Christian thus becomes the second, over which the grave has no power. The unbeliever dies the natural death, and must enter the second, from which I know of no resurrection. I firmly believe that immersion is the "wedding garment" of the Saviour's parable, and each man must soon settle it in his own mind as to whether he will don it.

He is a communicant of the Episcopal church, and when asked what bearing it would have on his future belief replied:—

I was baptized in the usual method of the Episcopal church, sprinkled as a baby and confirmed later in their method. I have not gone over to the Baptist church. I have gone into the Christian church, which is the body of God's people. I am led to this act by a strong set of circumstances needless to be cited, but I chiefly submitted to it from a sense of absolute duty, personal concern as to myself and example to others. It is a solemn thing, and I beg of you to treat it as such in spreading its publicity. This I have not sought in any sense, and I dread its being treated as a pearl beneath unthinking feet. Immersion is the most concentrated emblem of submission that I can conceive of. A man's life is in the hands of him who immerses him. An over moment and real death might ensue. Faith is thus deeply symbolized, and fruition is beautifully consummated by the typical resurrection. It is an absolute rebirth by water.—*Courier*.

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"The Mode of Baptism."

We commend what a recent writer in the *Christian Inquirer* says in regard to "honoring baptism," though we reason somewhat differently in regard to the presence of the Triune God at the baptism of Jesus, for while he argues that the baptism was important by reason of the presence of the Triune God, we would argue that the Triune God was present because of the importance of the baptism. But differ as we do on this point, we agree in that the ordinance ought always to be observed with profound reverence and the deepest solemnity. He says:

This column has already borne witness to the importance of giving additional honor to the observance of baptism. On the occasion of our Lord's baptism all the persons of the blessed Trinity were either audibly or visibly present. So great honor is not given to any other appointment of the Lord or the apostles, so far as we know. It is almost inconceivable that any persons who profess and call themselves Christians could by word or act, and most of all by neglect, slight an ordinance so honored by the Triune God. We have been too thoughtless of the dignity and glory of this ordinance in the architecture of our churches. It is well known that associated with many of the great cathedrals of Europe as, for instance, those of Pisa and Florence, there are great baptistries as separate structures. Perhaps we could not follow this example fully; but we certainly might give much more prominence to the baptistry in the construction of our churches. This writer rebukes himself as he makes this remark; were a certain church to be erected now the thought emphasized in this article would certainly be incarnated in the structure. When one sees the prominence given to the font as the symbol of a rite regarding which there is neither command nor example in the New Testament, he cannot but mourn that in Baptist churches the baptistry, as the symbol of the great apostolic and catholic rite of baptism, is for so much of the time entirely hidden, and is when open ordinarily so inconspicuous. Architects should give this matter their ripest thought; there is here a great opportunity for them in the erection of Baptist churches. Thousands of such churches will be built during the next few years; and it is certainly to be desired that they may exalt this ordinance as the architectural design of their churches.

There ought also to be much more care taken in the observance of the ordinance itself. All the accessories should be carefully studied; the appropriate dressing of the candidates for the ordinance cannot be considered unimportant. Nothing can be more beautiful than that young women who come to the baptistry should be robed in white. The entrance to and exit from the baptistry should be so arranged that every part of the observance shall conduce to its impressiveness and solemnity. If it could be observed in the open river, so much the better; but where this is impossible, the baptistry in the church may be adorned with flowers, and the entire observance of the ordinance may be so managed as to make it aesthetically beautiful and religiously solemn. The chanting of Scripture, or the singing of hymns, by choir or congregation or both, ought to be so directed as powerfully to conduce to the same result. No pains ought to be considered too great to be taken by all our pastors that they may fittingly, and so with due solemnity, officiate at this most significant, instructive and divinely honored of the ordinances of the church. Our younger ministers ought to receive instruction in theological seminaries regarding their duty at this point; and they might supplement that instruction upon their graduation by suggestions from experienced pastors who know how to perform this service with great propriety. The ordinance so honored of God should be honored by the whole church of God. The Lord's baptism equally with the Lord's Supper should receive the wisest thought of the church, as it has received and still receives the marked approval of the Triune God.—*Christian Evangelist*.