

ALBERT DURER'S FOLDED HANDS.

BY REV. C. S. ROBINSON, D.D.

Two boys, Franz Knigstein and Albert Durer, once lived together in Nuremberg; they were going to be artists and had entered Michael Wohlgemuth's study for instruction. The parents of both were poor, and were struggling to keep their sons at their work until they should be able to take care of themselves. Of these two pupils the master knew that Albert possessed genius, but Franz would never make a painter of whom men would be proud. But both were industrious and frugal and affectionate. They loved each other tenderly, and were kind and faithful unto all at home.

Years passed on; one went to Italy, the other continued study in Germany. Ere long Franz married, and bye-and-bye Albert, and the old people died, and times were hard and art was dull. Albert feared that Franz had not the artist spirit and could never succeed. Once they planned together to make an etching of the Passion of our Lord. When they came to show each other what had been accomplished the picture of Franz was cold and lifeless, while that of Albert was full of beauty. Franz himself saw it then. He was in middle life, and so far he knew he had been a failure. He must give it up. He could not be successful as an artist. But he did not complain; only for a passionate moment he buried his face in his hands. Then he said in broken tones, though still full of courage,

"The good Lord gave me no such gift as this, but he has something yet for me to do, some homely work shall be found for me. I was blind so long, so much time I have lost; be you the artist of Nuremberg, and I—"

"O Franz, be quiet an instant!" exclaimed Albert, and a quick rush was made to the paper before him on the table. Only a few lines with a swift pencil. Franz thought he was adding another stroke to his etching, and waited patiently, leaning over the mantel with his fingers twined and clasped. And then, next day, Albert showed his friend the sheet.

"Why, those are only my own hands," said Franz; "where did you get them?"

And there was hardly need of an answer. "I took them as you stood making the sad surrender of your life so very, very bravely, and I murmured to myself, 'those hands that may never paint a picture can now most certainly make one.' I have faith in those folded hands, my brother-friend. They will go to men's hearts in the years to come."

And sure enough the prophecy was true. For over the artistic world has gone the tale, and over the worlds of love and duty has gone the picture, and the "Folded Hands," by Albert Durer, are but the hands of Franz Knigstein once folded in sweet, brave resignation when he gave up his dearest wish, and yet believed the good Lord had a homely duty for him to do worth the doing.

That is the picture which hangs up over my table, and has hung there for years, a mere copy of an etching that belongs in the gallery of Vienna. What it means is there are some things, my Christian friend, you and I cannot do. But there are others we can do, and we can always do something towards accomplishing a preparation for some one else to finish, and what matters all the disappointment to us, if only the dear Lord gets the glory!—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

"HE WHO WAITS until he can do a great deal of good at once will never do any at all." The mistake of "despising the day of small things," of neglecting the thousand and one little opportunities for a kind word, or charitable action, is one to which the best of us are liable. An apt lesson in the value and right use of "that which is least" is furnished by the scholars of the Collogo School, Saltley, who (as described in the Birmingham Weekly Post) a few months ago, began to collect the waste paper about the school grounds and neighborhood, and with the proceeds of its sale have formed a fund for the benefit of the Children's Hospital. Such a plan, which serves the double purpose of relieving the afflicted and promoting thrift among the youthful donors, is both worthy and easy of imitation.

THE PASTOR'S CALL.

"Good morning, Mrs. Minty!" observed the pastor, as the door opened to his knock.

The door seemed to have a surly way with it, and opened scarcely wide enough to let the pastor in, although Mrs. Minty invited him to enter, and brushing some invisible dust from a chair with her apron asked him to sit down.

The pastor saw at a glance that Mrs. Minty was not pleased, but he could not surmise what was the matter. He had accidentally heard that day of the sickness of her daughter, and at the first opportunity called to see the young girl. Not seeming to notice the mother's manner, he said, "I hear that Miss Maria is sick."

"Yes! and she might ha' died for all she's seen of you!" replied Mrs. Minty, with an energy that almost shook the pastor out of his seat. The pastor was a meek man, and overlooking the readiness of her reply, he asked, "How long she been sick?"

"Two weeks, and over," said the mother. "Have you had a physician?" inquired the pastor.

"Had a physician? What a question! Why the girl has been almost dead! I wonder you got here before she was dead! Had a physician!"

These last words Mrs. Minty fairly ground out between her teeth with ill-suppressed scorn. It now became evident that Mrs. Minty, on each day of her daughter's sickness, and the pastor's delay in calling, had added to her wrath, and it had now reached a degree of intensity that suggested strategy or flight. The pastor resolved to try the former first.

"Ah! you have had a physician!" he observed. "How did he happen to call?"

"How did he happen to call? Well, did any one ever hear such a question as that?"

"Perhaps some one told him Miss Maria was sick, or perhaps he was passing and dropped in," interjected the pastor.

"Do you suppose I'd let my own daughter lie sick in the house and not send for the doctor?" fairly screeched Mrs. Minty.

"Ah, you sent for him?" said the pastor.

"Do you think he'd come if we didn't send for him? How'd he know Maria was sick?" replied the mother, looking at the pastor as though she pitied his stupidity.

"Do you always send for the physician when you want him?" asked the pastor with provoking mildness.

"Well, I declare!" exclaimed Mrs. Minty. "What do you ask such questions as that for?"

"I did not know," said the pastor, "but that as you expected the clergyman to find out as best he could that your daughter was sick, without sending for him, you might do the same with the physician."

Something had been gradually dawning upon the mind of Mrs. Minty, which the last words of the pastor, uttered with inimitable good nature, resolved into a full intellectual sunrise. Her severe face relaxed into a broad smile, "Ha, I see!" she exclaimed. "I thought them was mighty queer questions. Well, I guess I had ought to ha' sent for you, too, seeing as how I sent for the doctor. And you didn't know Maria was sick?"

"No," observed the pastor. "If I had, I should certainly have called before this. I accidentally heard of her illness this morning for the first time."

"Well, really, I hope you'll excuse me! Step this way; Maria's in the back room; she'll be all sorts of glad to see you!"—St. John's Chronicle.

THE STRAIGHTFORWARD and outspoken course, which nails its colors to the mast, is always the easiest and safest and best. A midshipman, who was about to leave the sailors' home, where he had been converted, came to the superintendent on the day of going on board, and asked him to write on a card, in plain bold characters, the words, "I am a Christian." When he was asked his object, he said, "As soon as I get on board I shall go to my hammock, and put this card where everybody can see it; it will save a lot of trouble, for everyone will know at once which side I am on, and will expect me to keep true to it." This is raising the heap of witness.

ONLY let us have faith in God, and we shall not lack the means of doing good.—Andrew Fuller.

TEMPERANCE ARITHMETIC.

Please work out this problem and think it over:—

There are 600,000 drunkards in the United States. How many cities of 40,000 inhabitants each would these drunkards form?

(a) If a family spends 15 cents a day for beer, how much is expended in four weeks? (b) How many loaves of bread, at 10 cents a loaf, could be bought for the same money?

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON I.—JULY 1.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL.—Ex. 24: 1-12.

COMMIT VERSES 7, 8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.—Heb. 8-10.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God's covenant with his people, and their covenant with God.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Ex. 20: 1-26.
T. Ex. 21: 1-36.
W. Ex. 22: 1-31.
Th. Ex. 23: 1-33.
F. Ex. 24: 1-18.
Sa. Heb. 8: 1-13.
Su. Heb. 9: 11-21.

THE BOOK OF EXODUS.—

THE TITLE.—Exodus means departure, or going out, from the chief event of the book.

THE AUTHOR.—Moses.

CHARACTERISTICS.—Genesis is the book of Creation; Exodus is the book of Redemption. It sets forth the redemption of Israel from Egypt as a type of man's redemption from sin.

TIME.—May, 1491 B. C. Soon after the giving of the law from Sinai, our last lessons in the Old Testament a year ago.

PLACE.—The valley of Er Rahah, before Mount Sinai. The plain contains about 400 acres and slopes towards a precipitous cliff 2000 feet above the plain, and 6830 above the sea level.

THE NUMBER of the Israelites was about 2,000,000, of which 600,000 were grown men (Num. 1: 46).

INTRODUCTION.—We now take up the Old Testament lessons where we left them a year ago, just after the giving of the law from Sinai.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1. And he said: this really joins on Ex. 20: 21, at which point the Book of the Covenant is given, including chap. 20: 22 to the end of chap. 23: 33. It contains 70 practical precepts, with promises and warnings.

2. Nadab and Abihu: the two oldest sons of Aaron. Elders: leading men, heads of families. Worship after a fashion: Moses was called to the top of the mount, these elders went part way up the mount. The record of their obedience to this command is in v. 9.

3. All the words of the Lord: the ten commandments and the Book of the Covenant (chaps. 20-23), which was the application of the commandments to conduct. These were the first laws of the nation, preparatory to the fuller law given afterwards.

4. Under the hill: the cliff of Sinai. 5. Burnt offerings: animals wholly consumed on the altar, a type of atonement and of dedication to God. Peace offerings: of animals or food, partly burnt on the altar, and partly eaten by the priests and offerers.

6. Sprinkled on the altar: the representative of God, indicating that he would fulfill his part of the covenant. 8. Sprinkled it on the people: the elders representing the people. This was like an oath that they would fulfill their part of the covenant by obedience under penalty of their life, as the animals had been slain.

10. And they saw the God of Israel: some appearance like the Shekinah. Some glorious manifestation, such as Moses saw one on the mount.

11. Nobles: the elders. He laid not his hand: He did not harm them by his presence. Saw God and did eat and drink: as at a feast where God was present. Showing that God was their friend and protector.

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IV. NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT ON OLD TESTAMENT THEMES.—What covenant should we make with God. (Rom. 12: 1, 2.) What does God covenant to do for us? (Heb. 8: 8-10; 10: 16.) Why is this called a new covenant? What is the sacrifice in this new covenant? (Heb. 9: 13, 14.) What blessing will follow from keeping this covenant? (Heb. 13: 20, 21; 1 John 5: 11, 12; Rev. 22: 14.) Give some other examples of visions of God. (1) Acts 7: 55, 56. (2) Acts 9: 3-6. (3) 2 Cor. 12: 1-4. (4) Rev. 1: 9-18.

LESSON II.—JULY 8.

THE GOLDEN CALF.—Ex. 22: 15-26.

COMMIT VERSES 19-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Little children, keep yourselves from idols.—1 John 5: 21.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The sin and danger of forsaking God.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Ex. 32: 1-14.
T. Ex. 32: 15-26.
W. Ex. 32: 27-35.
Th. Deut. 9: 1-21.
F. Rom. 1: 18-25.
Sa. Matt. 6: 19-33.
Su. 2 King 17: 7-20.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

THE GOLDEN CALF. The people became weary of waiting for their absent leader. They had also only an invisible God. Therefore they entreated Aaron to make them an image, so that they might have a visible object of worship, like their former neighbors, and might have the same wild revelries. Aaron collected their golden earrings and made a golden calf, or young ox, as an image to Jehovah, not as another god. Around this image they sang and danced and feasted and drank. 15. And Moses turned: after God had told him what was going on in the valley. Tables: Tablets. 17. And Joshua: the son of Nun, who afterwards succeeded Moses. He was part way up the mount (21: 13). 18. Then that sing: the boisterous songs of revelry. 19. Moses' anger (or indignation) waxed (grew) hot: he was intensely indignant at the people for forsaking so glorious a God, whom only a few weeks before they had promised to serve. The good must be indignant at those who ruin themselves and others by sin. Brake them: an emblem of the broken law, a symbol of what the people had done, breaking their solemn covenant with God.

20. Strewed it upon the water: of the brook Moses brought from the mount and from which they drank (Ex. 17: 6; Deut. 9: 21). Make a drink of it: for they had nothing else to drink.

25. The people were naked: either they had partly disrobed for dancing, or they were broken loose, as in Rev. Ver., from all restraint, and were riotous, disorderly. 26. Gale of the camp: which had probably been fortified after the attack of the Amalekites (Ex. 17: 8-13). There was probably an open space there. The sons of Levi: Moses' own tribe. Many also probably returned to their tents; but the worst ones, those who were turbulent and disobedient, remained, and these 3,000 were slain before the riot was quelled.

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