

THE CHRISTIAN'S RETROSPECT.

WHOEVER has entered into the venerable rank of the men of sixty years of age, and looks back on the two generations over which his life has extended, may well regard himself as having now reached the last stage of his journey. He will hardly commence any new enterprise, or enter on any fresh undertaking. Living only on that it has already gained, the soul will scarcely reckon on any farther real increase of its spiritual capital. It will rather live in the memories of the past than dream away the brief time now remaining in hopes for which, at least here on *this side*, there is no longer any anchor-ground. Well is it for him who is able, with the peace of old Simeon—a peace altogether different from that which the world knows, and which it seeks to build on the deceitful foundation of a consciousness of personal merit—to look forward into the future, as well as back into the past! Perhaps this retrospect will not only fill his soul with songs of joy, but will also hold him fast at many places which he will be constrained anew to water with the hot tears of repentance. But he will always raise himself up and take courage again, and feel his just sorrow give place to equally well-founded joy over the everlasting truth that “if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.”

TIME.

TO a thoughtful man, there is something strangely mysterious in the onward flow of that viewless duration which we call time. We living creatures seem to be a mere company of travellers, on a hurrying train. We converse, we sing, we play, we eat, we drink, we amuse ourselves, or grow weary. And all this neither hastens nor hinders. We sweep forward through the midnight and the noon.

Our practical habit is to measure time by motion. There is no possible connection between these two; for the hours float by as swiftly for a sleeping, innocent child, as for a galley-slave, the one perfectly still and unconscious, the other harassed and hated, stringing his sinews to toil every moment. These both grow old just as fast together. But nature has set us the example, or, at any rate, given us the hint, making prophecies of pendulums in the annual and diurnal revolutions of the planet on whose surface we dwell. That seems to be the way in which we have been taught to force activity into registers. The standard of unchanging value in coin among all nations is derived from the worth of one able-bodied man's labour from sunrise to sunset.

We are conscious very rarely, how much we are controlled by the ceaseless pressure of moments and days. Like a staff in a stream, seeking to float upright, but restlessly bending to the current, because it is more rapid at the surface, so we find ourselves leaning forward as we drift, inclining our heads to outrace the hours as they hurry us ever on. We are positively manufactured over in taste, sensibility, and views, by the silent rush around us, so that twice or thrice in a single life, we undergo an entire revolution. Time does all that; not abruptly, or we should resist. Those who dwell near the seashore, often remark how all the trees point their scant boughs inland, before the unseen wind. But they are not so apt to notice how we all, wherever we live, bend our topmost branches of purpose with a slant before the irresistible pressure of time constantly urging its way.—*Christian Weekly*.

Although the Almighty Maker has throughout
Discriminated each from each by strokes
And touches of His hand, with so much art
Diversified, that two were never found
Twins at all points—yet this obtains in all,
That all discern a beauty in His works,
And all can taste them.

For the trying hour we need a living Saviour. For the time of joy we need his company.

Sorrow and distress follow close on the heels of wilfulness, and the wilful sin is hard to pardon.

Tell the world you have no troubles, O child of God! and have them not! Let Jesus have them all, and carry them Himself alone. For the sorrows of the world far outweigh thine own, while thy Lord could say, “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like unto My sorrow, which is done unto Me.”—*Lam. i. 12.*

BLOWN FROM A GUN.

BY SERGEANT LAVERACK.

WHILE stationed at Fort Attock, which is situated on a rocky eminence, and almost surrounded by ravines, and reaching down to the Indus, on the banks of which it has stood for nearly 300 years frowning upon invading forces who have endeavoured to cross the deep and rapid stream, to invade the fertile plains beyond, a dreadful accident happened to a poor fellow of my regiment by the name of Morris.

My regiment being anantry one, we had not been instructed in big-gun drill out as there was a paucity of artillery at this place, a party of my comrades received instruction in this art, so as to be able to act as artillerymen in the case of necessity. And on the occasion to which I now refer, the general commanding the division of the army in the Peshawar Valley, Sir Sidney Cotton, K.C.B., was coming to inspect us, and a salute of thirteen guns was being fired by my comrades in honour of his visit, and I distinctly remember hearing two rounds fired at regular intervals, and then a third discharge followed too rapidly, and it struck me that an accident had happened, and so it proved to be. While Morris was ramming home the third charge of powder, it appears that he had but imperfectly sponged out the chamber of the gun, or perhaps it was honeycombed and some portion of the wadding which was still burning ignited the powder, and there was an explosion, the poor fellow being blown some distance from the muzzle of the gun; both his hands and arms were broken and shivered into splinters; the face, and especially the left side of the neck, was much burnt; the hair was burnt off the fore part of his head, and his clothes, which were set on fire, had to be extinguished with water. The poor mangled fellow was picked up by kind and loving hands, and at once taken to the hospital, which was close by, and everything done for him that was possible. It was discovered that his chest was the most seriously injured, as he groaned very heavily and spit much blood. After his arms were amputated I talked with him, and tried to point him to Jesus, and then knelt down and prayed with him, but I was afraid there was not much hope. He lingered on for two days and then expired.

The general, who had a warm and generous heart, sent a message to the poor man to say “how sorry he was that the accident had happened.” It was very kind of him to think of the poor fellow; there are people who are so wrapped up in self, that they have no time to think of or care for others; whether the world is lost or saved is nothing to them, and it was kind of Sir Sidney to think of poor Morris; it was kinder still to send a message to him hoping that it might cheer him somewhat to remember he was not forgotten; but it would have been kinder still if he had communicated the message personally.

Ah! my dear, dear brother, thou art wounded and bruised by the fall, left by the enemy, naked and dying, but the “Good Samaritan” comes to pour into thy bruised soul the consolation of His grace. Not merely to send a messenger to say how sorry He is that thou art in this dreadful plight, but He comes. He comes in the fullness of His love, not only to speak loving words coming from His heart gushing with sympathy for thee, but to bind up and heal thy soul of its fearful maladies. Art thou “groaning heavily”? art thou “lingering on”? and thinkest thou art “forgotten” by thy Saviour and thy God? Never. No penitent's groan was ever unheard, or unanswered. Hark! 'tis the voice of mercy speaking to thee, 'tis the footstep of the blessed Jesus, coming to thee. His right hand is put beneath thee, His loving arms press thee to His bosom; whence the crimson tide flows right into thy wounded heart, restoring thee to health and strength again. Hang thou upon His words, cling to His cross, rest in His finished work, trust in His bleeding mercy, and although every bone were broken, every joint dislocated, every sinew shrivelled, every muscle powerless, every fibre diseased, every sense deadened, every hope blasted, every joy withered, every avenue closed, every feature blackened and defaced, every shred of self consumed, and even forsaken by every earthly friend, thou shalt find in Him a sure refuge, where thy heart can safely rest until the storms of life be overpast. His words will cheer thee. His bleeding mercy will pity thee, His finished work will atone for thee, His cross will save thee.