

Pastor and People.

SOMETHING FOR THEE.

Something, my God, for Thee,
Something for Thee;
That each day's setting sun may bring
Some penitential offering;
In Thy dear name some kindness done;
To Thy dear love some wanderer won;
Some trial meekly borne for Thee,
Dear Lord, for Thee.

Something, my God, for Thee,
Something for Thee;
That to Thy gracious throne may rise
Sweet incense from some sacrifice—
Uplifted eyes undimmed by tears,
Uplifted faith unstained by fears,
Hailing each joy as light from Thee,
Dear Lord, from Thee.

Something, my God, for Thee,
Something for Thee;
For the great love that Thou hast given,
For the great hope of Thee and heaven,
My soul her first allegiance brings,
And upward plumes her heavenward wings,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee.

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THE CHILDREN'S PULPIT

EDITED BY M. H. C.

THE MAGIC RING.

For he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.—Hebrews xi. 27.

A king sat on the throne of Lydia, named Sadyattes. He was an usurper, as were the four kings who had gone before him. The ancient royal line lived in Lydia also, but as private persons, the one who should have been king being called Dascylus. Both he and Sadyattes knew the prophecy that had been pronounced when an older Dascylus was put to death by an ancestor of Sadyattes. It was, "Vengeance cometh in the fifth generation." Sadyattes was the fifth. His throne was in Sardis, a strong city built at the foot of Mount Tmolus. It took in part of the mountain, and there the citadel was built, a place so lofty and rugged that it was thought no army ever could take it. So they say in their old fables that when the city walls were set up, a prophet told the king to carry a young lion round them, and that if this were done Sardis would never be conquered. He carried the lion round till he came to the citadel, but, looking at its massive strength, he said: "What need is there to go further? This part of Sardis can never be taken." Then the young lion went back to his cage, by the banks of the river Pactolus that flowed through the city.

Sadyattes thought of the fifth generation, and sent for Dascylus, pretending to offer to share the throne with him, and the good nobleman came, suspecting nothing, leaving his wife and little babe at home. Sadyattes had caused a gilded crown to be made, otherwise like his own, and had secretly taught a skilful climber when to steal it away and leave it on a rocky ledge by the citadel. "Come and see the crown I have prepared for you," said the perfidious king, and to the citadel Dascylus followed him. They looked into the royal chamber; the crown was gone. Dascylus saw a man hurrying away with something in his hands, and told Sadyattes. They followed the man, who disappeared down the crag, and could no more be seen. But when they came to the place where he had disappeared, there lay the stolen crown. It was on a dangerous ledge. Sadyattes said: "We will return and send a servant for it;" but Dascylus replied: "Nay, my lord, for the thief may return in our absence; hold my left hand and I will seize it with my right." So, while Sadyattes held his left hand, he ventured out on the face of the cliff to take hold of the crown. Then the treacherous king first drew his victim towards him and then pushed him away, and down to his death, over the cliff, went the murdered man, with the wretched tinsel crown in his hand. Then there was grief and lamentation in a house where a mother bent over a little babe.

Sadyattes pretended to be very sorry for the accident that had happened to Dascylus. He called his widow to him, and asked for her infant, that he might show the baby boy to the people as their future king. The mother he threw into prison. The child he gave to an officer to take away and put to death. He could not kill the babe himself, for it smiled upon him; yet in his heart he cursed it, for the smile was that of Dascylus. So the officer took the little one away, and went far beyond the city walls, away into the country, wondering all the while how he should obey the king. At last he saw a lion, and thus he reasoned with himself: "If it is right the child should die, the lion will kill him; if not, then God will take care of him." So he left the babe on the ground and went back to Sardis. "Is the child dead?" asked Sadyattes. "A lion has devoured it," answered the officer. Then the king let the widow of Dascylus out of prison. "Your husband and your child are dead," he told her; "vengeance has not come in the fifth generation." But she went to a home in Sardis, believing that somehow, she knew not how, the prophecy would yet come true.

The babe was left to the lion, and the lion advanced towards it, as it lay kicking its feet in the air and smiling, but just then an antelope passed by, and at once the lion gave

chase, and did not come back again. Soon a flock of sheep came along, nibbling the tender grass. They flocked about the little intruder, and even the dogs could not drive them away. So the shepherd came to see what was the matter, and beheld the little child. "It is a nobleman's son," he said; "how cruel noblemen are, and what a playmate for my little Thomace!" The shepherd took the baby home to his wife and his little daughter scarce a year old. The children grew up together, and the good shepherd, who was faithful to the old Lydian line, called the boy Gyges, because such was the name of the first murdered Dascylus. Little Gyges and little Thomace were brother and sister, and as they became older they loved each other all the more.

Gyges' foster father was a shepherd; so he became a shepherd boy. He had his childhood's trouble. The herdmen and boys he mingled with were of common clay, coarse and vulgar. He was a gentleman born, and they plagued him because of his noble bearing. This was bad enough, but there was something far worse. One day, while tending his sheep, he heard a commotion, and looked up. Horsemen and dogs came careering along, and, as their leader appeared, all the shepherds fell to the ground on their faces. But Gyges would not fall. He looked the king, for it was he, straight in the face, and doffed his cap. Sadyattes saw the face, the noble bearing, the one standing erect among the prostrate shepherds, and cursed him. Then he called his servants and ordered them to throw the lad down on the ground, and beat him with their whips for not showing due respect to the king. The blows entered the boy's soul. He was full of rage and hatred; and when the shepherds taunted him with his punishment, he cursed Sadyattes and the day when himself was born. Henceforward it seemed to him that life would be one long misery.

But suddenly he heard once more the tramp of hoofs and the baying of hounds. The king and his hunting party came back, and in a hurry. A great storm was blowing up from the south. What cared Gyges for storms? The storm in his heart was more than the shaking of all the world to him. But Gyges had a conscience, and his duty was towards his sheep. So he placed them behind a rocky wall of pure marble, such as may be found in Asia Minor as well as in Canada. Soon came the mighty, rushing wind. Down went the great trees before the blast. The lightnings flashed, the continuous thunder roared and growled and re-echoed over the plains, an earthquake shook the ground, and the red light of the volcano blazed afar. The shepherds ran in abject terror and hid themselves. Gyges sat out the whole storm, because the storm in his soul was greater. Soon the storm clouds passed away and the rain ceased. The sun came forth again and the earth smiled. The shepherds that had cowed in abject terror treated the whole thing as a great joke, and laughed over the ravages the tempest had made. But Gyges was serious.

After the storm ceased he went to look for his sheep. The earthquake had made many changes in the landscape, and when at last he found his missing charge, the sheep were in a chasm he had never before seen. This chasm in the rock he followed, and came at last to a large chamber in the solid rock that had been cut out in ancient days, and had been kept secret until the earthquake revealed it. Gyges entered the rock chamber with awe, and there, in the centre of it, he saw a horse of brass. Approaching this wonderful sight, he found an opening in the body of the horse like that by which the Greeks came out of the wooden horse of Troy. He looked in and saw the body of a great king. There was nothing special upon his person save a ring on his left hand. Gyges took off this ring and put it on his own finger, and as he did so he noticed that the bezel, or that part which holds the stone, was on a pivot, and could be turned out or in. He came back to the shepherds. They all had rings and even earrings, so they did not observe that Gyges was any richer than before. But Gyges was afraid lest they might see the bright stone and take his ring away from him, so he turned the stone inwards. At once he heard the shepherds cry: "Where is Gyges? Was he not here a minute ago?" Then he knew that by turning the bezel in he had made himself invisible.

Gyges was glad. He smote one shepherd, who had acted wrongly by him, a terrible blow, and the shepherd looked in vain for the person who had injured him. He struck them, pinched them and scratched them, and as they could not see him, they blamed each other for these deeds, and fought viciously among themselves. Then Gyges began to be sorry, and left them alone. Now he saw dark spectres in the air that whispered evil things, that swore and fought. They came near to him too, but he thought of the calm royal face that he had seen in the brazen horse, and resisted their entreaties to wrong. Then white angels came and drove the black ones away. How he hated the black spectres, how he longed to kill them, how angry he was to think that such beings should be permitted to exist in the world! And then, when nobody could see him, and he could see all things, his eyes turned up towards the skies, and he beheld an eye. It was a speaking eye. Into it were gathered yearning and pity and love, so that all the hatred and indignation and revenge in Gyges' heart vanished as he beheld that eye.

He knew that the eye saw all things. If his own small world that the ring opened up to him was so bad, how dreadful must be the sights that the heavenly eye beheld! Gyges lost all desire to play tricks upon his companions, so

that when a voice said, "Return," he went back and herded his sheep. He saw the charm no more, but he had the ring. Now came a sad and hard time for the poor people. Tax-gatherers came and robbed them in the king's name. The winter came in cold and cheerless, so that many of the sheep died, and Gyges lamented losses among his own. The shepherds too acted unkindly towards him, simply because he looked like a king's son. Then he remembered the eye that sees all things. The winter passed, and pleasant days came when there was much that was fair to look upon. The ground was radiant with flowers and sweet with the fragrance of roses and mignonette, of lavender, rosemary and thyme growing wild. The very nightingales sang by day in the groves where vines and palms, orange and fig trees and myrtles yielded their fruit. Away out on the blue sea the dolphins were leaping. Gyges and his playmate Thomace were never tired of watching them, and the gazelles, wild goats and hares that shyly looked at them and scampered away. The young people pelted one another with the young walnuts that grew freely all around them, and after their play Thomace would listen while Gyges told of Him who was over all. Then the winter came once more. The peasants became poorer and poorer. And, worse than all, their children disappeared, one by one, always after the white-robed priests had passed that way.

Gyges was sometimes glad to turn the ring. He mixed among the people, and saw strange things. He saw their souls. A smiling face had a shadow with a scowl, a strong tall man had a crooked shadow and a small heart. He wondered how his soul looked to the eye that sees all things. But chiefly was he glad to turn the ring when the weather was wet and cold, and when his heart was fearful for Thomace and himself. Then he saw heaven's eyes, not one but two, this time, so glorious yet so human like, so kind and tender, yet so sad. And away on the far-off horizon, beyond the sea, the sunset clouds built up a radiant city, fair and shining; and his ears were opened, so that he heard the distant but happy song of those who were dwellers there. All this made him strong and brave when he went back to his humble work again.

Now something dreadful happened, yet what has not only happened in all lands during hundreds and hundreds of years, but takes place now when the Phouds of India are allowed to do as they please. The white-robed priests came to the old shepherd's hut, and said to him: "The goddess wants your daughter to serve her." The simple-minded old man felt proud to think that his little girl should be so sought after, and let her go with the priests. When Gyges came home there was no Thomace. Her father told what had happened, and the lad was heartbroken. He turned the stone of the ring inwards, and followed. Soon he saw Thomace clothed in rich garments, laden with ornaments and crowned with a wreath of flowers. A priestly procession moved forwards with music of many instruments and with songs the priests sang to one they called the great mother. But other worshippers followed that seem to be mad, raving and foaming at the mouth, cutting themselves with knives till the blood flowed, crying *Io Bacche*, that could be heard above the sound of the piercing pipes and the clanging symbols. Thus they marched on to a thick grove of trees, in the midst of which was a garden with a fountain playing in the centre. There was a hideous woman idol, and before it an altar and a priest with knife in hand. They led Thomace to the altar, a poor sheep to the slaughter, proud of her fine clothes and ornaments, suspecting no evil. I cannot tell you more, but Gyges, powerless to save, shrieked as he fled. The priests and people heard the shriek and said it was the voice of the goddess, pleased with the awful sacrifice. Away Gyges sped into the country, and in his despair looked heavenwards. There he saw over all the heavens no longer the eyes but a face, the face the eyes belonged to, majestic, beautiful but sad. He cried: "O Lord, how long?" and a voice echoed his and answered: "How long?" Then, as he fell on his own face to the ground, there came a word to him: "Gyges, son of Dascylus, go, tell what thou hast seen and heard."

(To be continued.)

POWER OF MUSIC, WEAKNESS OF SOBS.

The case of a stranger who appeared in the congregation of St. Stephens Church, Philadelphia, clad in the garb of a tramp not long since affords the illustrations.

When the organist began to play a soft, sweet melody, the man's eyes filled with tears, and he buried his face in his hands.

During the singing of the first hymn he became unnerved, and those near him could hear his short quick breathing and perceive his weeping.

When the minister read the commandment "Honour thy father and mother," etc., and the choir sung the response, no longer able to restrain himself, he broke out into audible sobs, saying, "Would to God I had done so. I would not be where I am now."

There was manifested the power of music to awaken memory, melt the heart, bow the proud head, and fill the eyes with penitential tears.

The vast congregation was deeply touched by his emotion and made to wonder what story was hidden in that man's life.

The story of his life remains hidden. Though the congregation was "deeply touched," the touch was not deep enough to move a single member of it to approach the man, to take him by the hand, to speak a word of sympathy, or to point him to Jesus, the sinner's friend and helper. There was the weakness of sobs.

Emotions that do not grow into desires, and culminate in actions, are as evanescent and useless as the ripples stirred by zephyrs upon the surface of a lake.

It is saying to the hungry and the naked, go in peace, be ye clothed and filled, but giving to the sufferers neither food nor clothing.

It is looking upon the sorrowing with pitying eye, but speaking no word of comfort, doing no act that gives evidence of sympathy, or that affords substantial relief.

"Deeply touched" themselves, people thus touched, touch nobody else with the tip of their fingers.—*Christian Index*.