

seeing a white face or hearing the voice of another in prayer for weeks, months, or even years. I was not in the Hills to recuperate my health but to study, and so did not profit as some did. A loving Father's care is shown in the establishment of such places in India for physical and spiritual upbuilding of worn and weary workers. "Come ye apart and rest awhile" was the Master's invitation to some of his children in India and on the Hills with Jesus they were blessed. Since they have returned to the Plains it has been said of them "How different they are since they came from the Hills." One man said, "I have found on the Hills the prayer end of my work." The benefits received on the Hills are such that some of the Boards (A. B. M. U.) strongly recommend and others compel their missionaries to take frequent (C. M. S.) vacations.

During the beautiful moonlight nights of last week it was suggested that we increase our labors by visiting some of the villages to hold meetings. It was heartily agreed to by all. We formed quite a procession as we went down the street. First came two men, one a Hindu, with Miss Blackadar's organ balanced on his head. By his side walked a Christian with several folding chairs on his head. Then came two Bible women. Following them were Miss Blackadar and Miss Sanford. Then Mr. Sanford and I with a native preacher on either side each carrying a lantern. Behind us were several other native Christians, boys who had come to help in the singing, and a man with the rickshaw in which the two ladies would return home after the meeting.

Very few knew of our approach until the organ was set up in an open space in the centre of the village, and the sound of Christian music was heard. Then from all sides came the children and behind them the older persons. What a sight! I have read descriptions of a heathen crowd, but to see it in the moonlight with the added light of lanterns is by far more real. I judge it takes more cloth to make a suit for a small boy at home than was worn by thirty of the bright-eyed children who watched us so curiously that evening. These hosts of India—not yet are they clothed and in their right minds sitting at the feet of Jesus. The company that came that evening, however, and stood amid the palm trees and palm thatched huts heard the Gospel sung and preached and listened perhaps for the first time to the voice of prayer to the one true God. The native preachers can talk very fluently. I understand little of what they say but they never seem at a loss for words and speak with freedom which is rare at home. I was especially pleased with one of the Bible women who so courageously bore testimony for Christ. When one considers how woman is regarded in this land, it was a splendid example of the triumph of the Gospel in one woman's life.

Last year this village was visited, and the children taught a hymn. When the hymn was sung in the meeting the children joined in heartily. Several other villages were visited during the next few nights. In each place a company gathered and listened with more or less interest to the message. Some of the seed thus sown we trust has found its way into good soil and will bring forth fruit in due season.

Before this letter reaches its readers, another Convention will be past. How vividly there comes back to me the Convention of a year ago in Yarmouth; and the magnificent response which was made to meet an emergency in our mission work. Such a result was not secured without much real prayer.

It was a new lesson in the prayer life to some of us. The same mighty agency will need to be employed this year to make the convention a success and though so far away we remember your need.

In common with many of you I have been reading the history of the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces. What noble men of God are these our spiritual fathers who wrought so valiantly amid great difficulties. My life has been thrilled at the record. If we judge from the past history we must be convinced that God has a great purpose to accomplish through us as a people. What better wish or prayer could I make than that the same spirit who accomplished so much through our fathers may rest in power upon the pastors and churches of my own home land.

Among the treasures in my memory are the letter received at Aden and the more personal greeting given by Mrs. Sandford to her home when I reached this station. Nothing was left undone that could add to my comfort and happiness. The days I have spent in India have been richer for her influence. She is with us no more.

Heaven by her is made richer to us  
While earth has become more dear.

Sincerely

SEDR A. FREEMAN.

Vizianagram, India, Aug. 11th, 1903.

### Decline of Religious Conviction.

Consider the decline of religious conviction. In the realm of the church, also, how have men grown lukewarm flexible, soft and easy going. There are multitudes who are living on the spiritual momentum of their fathers. They are like orchards that were planted by the wise husbandman and brought to fullness of fruitage, and the husbandman left it to his son, to be cared for and handed on

to another generation. But the son loved the orchard for its pleasure giving qualities, and lives for to day. He gorges himself with the fruit that his father planted. He makes from the cluster the wine upon which he grows drunken. Neglected, the orchard grows up to thorns and brambles, and the noxious weeds drink up the richness of the soil, the caterpillars climb over the bows, the branches are unpruned. The orchard that ought to have been handed forward to generations yet unborn is looked upon as a personal draft and possession, and is wasted and ruined by its owner. What an image is this of the sons and daughters of great fathers and mothers! What ignoble descendants of a noble heritage!

I can point you to a score of young men about you who climbed up to power on the shoulder of their great Christian fathers and mothers, who owe everything they are to their Puritan parents who have come up to this city to make their fortune, to spend their nights at the clubs in gambling, who have used their unrivaled talents to buy the richest foods and the oldest wines, whose babies are in creches for pleasure, who have despised everything their father loved and despised, every ideal of their beautiful mother, and whose journey through the city by day or by night is like the journey of the swine through a rose garden, or a bed of lilies, torn by tusk or hoof. Twenty-five years ago these men and women would have been in some church every Sunday. This day of rest would have been the soul's library day for them, the day of worship, of which Emerson said that it means more to the country and its higher intellectual life than all the other days in the week. They would have been in some of our great mission schools or social settlements, a centre of light and beauty and friendship for a great group of boys or girls or young men and women who have no opportunities. But to day you will find them riding in the parks, studying themselves with rich foods, going to receptions on Sunday night, with no more knowledge of what Daniel Webster meant in his argument on the Girard College case when he said that the republic assumed Christianity, the church, the moral instruction of children and youth—say they have no more appreciation of this than Catharine or Alcibiades had of the ruin they were bringing upon Athens and Rome. They differ from their fathers as a turkey buzzard differs from an archangel. And these prosperous men, who have their ability and culture through Christian fathers and mothers and the Christian church, have deserted both alike.

To-day we have 13,000,000 children and youth in this country who never cross the threshold of a church, either Catholic or Protestant. And these men and women who owe everything to the church and their Christian ancestors do everything they can, by example, on Sunday to destroy the influence of Christianity, and betray the rude, ignorant foreign peoples and their children. These men are traitors to their God and their country, as well as to the church. They are renegades, mere Epicureans, pleasure lovers, and the red color in their faces, and the fat around their ribs, tell us that nature in her kindness will soon dispose of them. I went into a club the other Saturday night to give an address, and of six men around a card table to whom I spoke in passing toward the banqueting room, five of them had their fortune and competence through a Christian father and obedience to these principles. All of them apologized for their gambling by saying that they never went to church. As I looked at their great, fat, sleek, pampered bodies, as one of them said, speaking of my work on the next day, that he had nothing to do on Sunday, that he had not been in a church for eight years. I saw that something in their faces that you see in the hetic red leaf of the dying maple bough in July. They did not have a single great conviction. They were merely sick animals living for their pleasures. For them the world is a barnyard, the occupations are ricks and mangers, and they were beasts feeding in the stall. Alive physically, their convictions and souls died ten years ago. As I stood beside these five men, involuntarily I began to recite the funeral ceremony: "Here we commit his body to the dust, his stomach to stilled ox, his palate to spiced wines, dust to dust, tongue to terrapin, while the spirit returns to the animal, and the beasts that feed with it." Oh, what a tragedy is this! All practice the ideals with the "I" left out. They practice the ideal of marriage and the betrothal, and when the I is gone, they have a deal. They look toward the political party, and their pledge, becomes another deal, not ideal. They look toward the church, and they join the one that will give them social position, for the "I" again has been left out. These are the saddest events in life. Not the ruin of the Parthenon, not the wreckage of the Temple of Diana, not the fall of the great statues of Phidias, but the decay of the great convictions. For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?—N. D. Hillis in Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

### Christianity as Grace.

An essential distinction between Christianity and the ethnic faiths is that every other religion says: "Do good, practice righteousness in order that you may obtain the favor of God." Christianity says: Do good, practice righteousness, because you have the favor of God." Chris-

tianity is primarily a revelation of the grace of God to sinful men and only those who accept this grace can be responsive to the distinctively Christian motive. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," writes the Apostle Paul, not that God may work in you, but because He is working in you. Again he writes, "Having therefore, these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." He does not say, let us cleanse ourselves in order that we may obtain the promises, but he makes the present possession of them the ground of appeal or a parity that corresponds to them.

No one can over-emphasize the importance of personal righteousness. Certainly Jesus Christ laid down more searching tests for the integrity of motive and act than any moral teacher has done. But not for an instant did Jesus give the impression that He was a legalist or that He believed that any man could be saved by his good works. On the contrary, He insisted that He came to bring the Gospel. In the thought of Jesus deeds of righteousness do not win the eternal life. Eternal life is the gift of God, and personal righteousness is the evidence that that gift has been accepted.

As a matter of fact the principal obstacle to the acceptance of the Gospel is the difficulty of making men believe in the grace of God. It is very easy to make men believe that they shall reap what they sow. All their observation of life, their sense of the relation of cause and effect, and their scientific conceptions corroborate that statement. But to make men believe that eternal life is a gift; that the forgiveness of sins and acceptance with God are offered, without price is a difficult matter. Their predilections and habits of thought are against it. Because of this there is a strong and inevitable tendency at work in every community in which Christianity has been preached to relapse from the basis of grace to that of works, and men almost unconsciously get in the way of conceiving of the gospel as a moral discipline effected through sympathy with the ideal character of Christ, rather than as a supreme and overwhelming gift of redemption and salvation of sinful men.

Because this essential message of Christianity is obscured the prevailing type of Christian life becomes pale and joyless, and loses the note of confidence and exultation. It does not make any difference how good a man is, how kind and comparative little in his own character upon which to build assurance of acceptance with God, and triumph over death. But the poorest sinner who feels that he has accepted "the unspeakable gift," that Christ has forgiven his sins and accepted him as one of his own has a basis of confidence that fills his heart with heavenly joy and peace. Too many of our failures in Christian service can be traced back to the fact that a sublimated paganism and a legal righteousness has taken the place of the good news of Christ's message. Watchman.

### The After Glow.

Like viewless wings that scatter dewy balm,  
Along the August sky, the after glow  
Is spreading wide and fighting all below—  
A cloudless glory and majestic calm!  
As if the Maker lifted up His palm  
And smiling blest His work, and whispered, Rest  
And soothing peace to all upon the breast  
Of earth, and after labor sleep's sweet calm,  
It is a solemn, holy time, and brings  
The watching spirit strength and clearer sight,  
And deeper too; and thoughts that call for wings;  
And visions filled with peace and light,  
The spirit is astray, and doth not grow,  
That loveth best not the blessed after glow.

—ARTHUR D. WILMOT.

### Oh Save Us!

Oh Power, ever watching o'er us,  
Abounding Spirit of the universe,  
Have mercy, oh, have mercy upon us,  
Save us, oh, save us, from the world's darkness!

W.

If it is true that knowledge is power, it is doubly true that knowledge of God is spiritual power.—Rev. J. Hudson Taylor.

Keep your hope in bad times. We have the same sun and sky and stars, the same duties, and the same helper. Hope thou in God.—Dr. Goodell.

To be bright and cheerful often requires an effort. There is a certain art in keeping ourselves happy. In this respect, as in others, we require to watch over and manage ourselves almost as if we were somebody else.—Sir John Lubbock.

I do not know when or how it may please God to give you the quiet of mind that you need, but I tell you that I believe it is to be had, and in the meantime you must go on doing your share, trusting in God even for this.—George Macdonald.