

## PERFECT PEACE.

A mind at "perfect peace" with God:  
O, what a word is this!  
A sinner reconciled through blood—  
This, this indeed is peace!

By nature and by practice far,  
How very far from God!  
Yet now by grace brought nigh to Him,  
Through faith in Jesus' blood.

So nigh, so very nigh to God,  
I cannot nearer be;  
For in the person of His Son,  
I am as near as He.

So dear, so very dear to God,  
More dear I cannot be;  
The love wherewith He loves the Son,  
Such is His love to me!

Why should I ever careful be,  
Since such a God is mine?  
He watches o'er me night and day,  
And tells me "Mine is thine."

## Select Sermon.

## THE GREAT WOMAN OF SHUNEM.

From short-hand notes of Sermon by the Rev.  
R. C. Moffat, Walkerton.

Do you want to study human nature in its ever varying phases? Then let the life work of Elisha be the school. In Jericho you have the one city want, but Jehovah can purify and satisfy. In Bethel, you can hear the ribald mockery, but God can strike the scoffer and make safe to the man of peace his sacred ministry. For the warrior throng perishing for water ere they can crush rebellious Moab; for them you see the valley strangely filled with water, sweet as honey to Israel, red as the blood of doom to Moab. You stand at the widow's door, and listen to the harsh threats of the angry creditor, but the widow's God, by one act of love, can put the heartless monster at defiance. You reach Shunem and gaze upon the living pastoral. The best home-life of Israel lies before you. Historic battles have been fought on the grand plain of Jezreel: The shout of victory, the shriek of despair, have been heard there. To-day, amid peace and plenty, Kishon sings its sweetest music. Tabor, Gilboa, Carmel, loom lordly in the distance. But the interest of our story centres in one family, and it does so because there you find the noblest woman in Israel. In the heart of hearts there burns with steady glow the altar fires of true devotion to Israel's God. Four thoughts present themselves:

## FIRST—THE GREAT WOMAN OF SHUNEM.

Her portrait hangs in the great national gallery. No Rembrandt has left it as his great work masterpiece. But the textual sketch is imperishable. Gaze upon it, Oh sacred art students, until it fills every dream, until it gleams with heart and soul. That eye, once seen can never be forgotten. No scorn gleams there. From the latticed window she marks every passing stranger. One man she singles out as a man of God. What a revelation of both. Of her, because she is drawn to the man for his religion and his God; of him, because his religion was readable in all his life. And that hand, is it not a very model for the sculptor? Beautiful not because of idleness and gems, but because of genuine beneficence. No tenfold return was expected from the prophet. It was freely offered because she loved her God and had true respect for his hard working, self-denying minister. And what can the lynx-eyed enemy say of Elisha? He did not seek the great house and pass the door of poverty by. No, the great house sought him. He was never the man to sneak at the rich man's door for feasts or favors. But when lovingly pressed, he thankfully accepted for his master's sake. Self and the world often get the lion's share of wealth, but here the bare grudging fragments were not tossed into God's treasury. There was simple provision made for the prophet's wants, but it was heartily made. Hence the beauty of the great woman's kindness lay just in this, there was nothing to waste the time nothing to wound the feelings of God's prophet Elisha.

## SECOND—THE FERVENT GRATITUDE OF THE BUSY PROPHET.

Nought can reach the heart so quick, so surely, as genuine kindness. Thankless greed and divine love can never dwell one moment together in any human soul. We question if Elisha could have told any one, aught about her dress or her table. But he could feel. Yes, he keenly feels and fully appreciates all that womanly delicacy and kindness. Shall he forget it? No. The true Christian can forget and forgive the world's foulest wrong, but never can such a man forget either kindly word or deed. And as he travels to and fro on his master's work, he is ever musing how he can repay such generous kindness. Oh for the spirit of grace to have heart and soul ever busy planning how we may do good to foe and friend. The world, the Church, would be much the better; yea we would be very much the better. But ah, she is so rich, so well to do; what can a poor minister like me do? Well, there is one thing I can do, I will wait God's time.

## THIRD—THE SHREWED EYE IN SERVANT'S HEAD.

Gehazi was no stupid slave. Had he lived in some modern Wall street, keen speculators might have said, as he hurried past, there goes one of the most thoroughly wide-awake men of the city. There was just this difference between servant and master. Gehazi was a through man of the world, Elisha was soul and body a man of God. One more Elisha and Gehazi arrive at Shunem. Elisha is fully bound this time to see if he could do her any favor. After all his thought no way had opened; so in straightforward, manly fashion, he painfully asks, could he do any thing for her with the great folks of the land? His influence with King and Court and army is all potent just now; for had he not saved all their lives when perishing with thirst on the borders of Moab? Does her heart leap with joy at the prospect of some influential position or honored title, or visit to the palace? Does she say, Ah, sir, that just suit so well? Ah, sir, that is the very sphere I was born to fill? No. Listen to her sublime answer: I dwell among mine own people. Only a great woman could have given such an answer. A covetous woman could not, an ambitious could not, far less a vain woman could not. There is no daily fretting with her village sphere. Her soul's answer was just this: To me there is no place like home. Elisha is fairly baffled. But now comes in shrewd calculating Gehazi. His keen has long been on the watch; it has measured everything; and now you hear him quietly saying to the prophet when the woman has left the room: Master, these broad acres, that rich vineyard, this great house, have just one want: they want—they want an heir.

## FOURTH—THE STRANGE REVELATION.

Never be above taking a hint from any one, however worldly or lowly. Elisha took it, no doubt wondering at his own short-sightedness. No doubt he laid the matter fully before God; no doubt he got clear explicit instructions. Again the woman is called, secretly wondering why. To her there is the unexpected message: Within a year a son shall be pressed to thy heart. Is it mockery? No. And you see her in her closet murmuring on bended knee and with joyful heart, O God of Abraham, Thy will be done. And you hear her pleading with earnest prayer, May this child be a true son of God; and may I be a true and worthy mother in Israel. In a year God's word is fulfilled, in a year that great house has an heir, that wondering mother has a son. And within a year you hear the prophet earnestly thanking God for a living mother and for a living son.

## TWO QUESTIONS.

First—Mothers, where are thy hearts set? Surely not upon Vanity Fair not upon trifling fashion, not upon coveted luxuries. Nay, rather let them be fixed upon thy family, thy home, thy God.

Second—Mothers, hast thou any wants? Perhaps just now, no; just now you have need of nothing. Perhaps just now you are saying, I can do without God or God's ministers. But wants may come, trouble may come, the deathbed pillow must come, when you will need them all. Then to-day forget not the promise, "She that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward." Yea, let no man, no woman, ever forget the eternal truth, Nothing done for Christ Jesus is ever lost.—*Walkerton Telescope*.

## THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

It contains one hundred and fifty separate compositions. One of them extends to the hundred and seventy-six stanzas; another contains about a brace of verses. There are about 2,500 verses in the whole collection. It is common to speak of the entire book as the "Psalms of David," whereas it is probable that only seventy-three psalms, or about one-half the collection—are from the inspired pen of the poet-king of Israel. Twelve of the inspired songs are ascribed to Asaph, a man of exquisite delicacy and feeling, who lived during David's reign, about one thousand years before the advent of Christ. Two of them are ascribed to that universal genius, King Solomon. That "lofty and melancholy psalm," the ninetieth, which has been chanted as the funeral march of so many a departed saint, is universally held to have been written by Moses himself. It is probably the oldest of the psalms, as Damascus is the oldest of cities. How magnificent this ancient lyric opens: "Lord! thou hast been the dwelling-place of Thy people in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God!" The authorship of sixty of the psalms, is somewhat uncertain. A portion of them are ascribed to the "son of Korah!" One is attributed to the pen of Heman, another to Ethran, the Elraite, who both lived in the days of Solomon. But, however various the pens that inscribed them on the parchments, they all bear the same internal evidence of a celestial inspiration.

Martin Luther styled the book of Psalms "an epitome of the Word of God—a little Bible in themselves." They have been read, and sung, and studied, and prayed over, and wept over for twenty-five centuries of time. The most ancient of them has been in existence for 3,300 years; the latest written was composed at least 2,500 years ago. While the Iliad of Homer, and the *Æneid* of Virgil, have been enjoyed by the intellects of the learned few, yet the praises of David and Moses have been the heart heritage and delight of the lowliest as well as the loftiest. Scholars, statesmen and poets, have all united in extolling the incomparable beauty of these songs of Zion. Lamartine, in his florid French, exclaims: The Book of Psalms is a vase of perfume broken on the steps of the temple, and shedding abroad its odors to the heart of all humanity. The little shepherd has become master of the sacred choir of the universe. A chord of his harp is to be found in all choirs, resounding forever in unison with the echoes of Horeb and Engedi. David is the Psalmist of eternity; what a power hath poetry when inspired by the Almighty God!—*The Independent*.

## BEECHER ON PREACHING.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

I have found time to read but one book during the last busy three months. And the man who has read that book, has got the best measurement of my neighbor Beecher's common sense, sagacity, and what the Yankees call "gumption," that has yet befallen to the public. His "Life of Jesus" betrays great genius, and abounds in powerful passages. But the book by which he is to be best known, and for which he will receive the most votes of thanks, will be his "Yale Lectures on Preaching." Even the most dogmatic conservative who has almost made it a part of his religion to scold Brother Beecher, will bless him for this masterly talk. It is simply talk—just that, and no more; but it is just such talk as the First Napoleon could make about war, and old Wordsworth used to make about poetry. For thirty years Mr. Beecher has been gathering the sap which he has now boiled down into the maple sugar of this book.

Like the best kind of talk, it is occasionally careless. Words are sometimes introduced that were probably never heard among the scholars of old Yale in the days when Beecher's grandfather was hammering an anvil in New Haven. But Mr. Beecher is not afraid to say "educable," or "criticisable," or several other words that Dr. Samuel Johnson never heard of. He is not afraid either to criticise himself, or to lay down a canon to which he does not always conform his own practice. He applauds expository preaching—yet seldom employs it himself. But I once heard him expound the narrative of Ahab and Naboth's vineyard, in a most masterly manner. He has made no little fun at the "theologians" in times past; but in this volume he says frankly "I do believe in the science of theology," and he adds that "every man who is fit to preach will have an outline of his own theology distinctively marked out."

The book abounds in racy apothegms. To select these pithy, pregnant sentences, is as difficult as to know which ruby or diamond to pick up out of the huge pile of jewels in Aladdin's cavern. One of the best sentences is this—"If it were possible, never have two plans of sermons alike." Each text, like every house-door, must be opened with its own peculiar key. Success in producing the right impression on the hearer, he makes to be the ultimate test of all pulpit work. As he phrases it, "that is the best cut which catches the most rats." In discussing plain, direct preaching, he says, "don't whip with a switch that has leaves on if you want to tingle. A good fireman will send the water through as short and straight hose as he can." Like a man of common sense he insists that "if you can do best by writing your sermons, write them; and if you can do better by not writing, do not write them." And that is the upshot of all the controversy about the manuscripts.

It is but a few days since I heard Mr. Spurgeon affirm that "he would as soon be hung as be obliged to write a sermon." He never even premeditated a single sentence. All his discourses are entirely extempore—not as to plan, but as to language. His fluency is wonderful. He never hesitates for a word, and seldom uses the wrong word. Like Beecher, he employs the plain strong Saxon of every day life. But on every Monday morning, the stenographer brings the report of the Sabbath sermons to Mr. Spurgeon, and he sits down and spends six hours in perusing and revising the discourses before they are printed. He does not hesitate to add or to expunge whole sentences. By this method he gains the double benefit of extempore and of written sermons. Brother Beecher *mingles* the off-hand with the written in nearly every sermon. Beecher's best things and his worst things are *impromptu*.

We wish we had space in this hurried article to quote several passages which we have lingered over as a man does over plump peach, or a rare picture. The following passage is as perfect as if it came from Macaulay:

"As an instance of contrasted style, let us read the immortal allegory of Bunyan in contrast with the grandiose essays of Dr. Johnson. Bunyan is today like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth his fruit in his season; his leaf shall not wither. Johnson, with all his glory, lies like an Egyptian King, buried and forgotten in the pyramid of his own fame."

Some of the most beautiful things in the volume are in the last chapter, where Mr. Beecher commends Love as the key-note of the Gospel, and the highest inspiration to all true eloquence, and all effective labor. In this chapter Beecher carries a lighted candle into the recesses of his own heart. He reveals the secret of his marvellous power. The key-note of Henry Ward Beecher's universal popularity and world-wide influence is the word *love*. He loves God, and believes that God loves every human creature on the globe. He loves the souls he preaches to, and speaks the truth to them in love. With all his faults, and impetuous indiscretions, he has melted more hearts and moulded more lives than any man who has stood in an American pulpit. In view of his approaching silver-wedding—our honest prayer is, *God bless Henry Ward Beecher*.—*N. Y. Evangelist*.

## THE QUEEN AT THE PAPER-MILL.

The queen was riding out in her grand carriage, the horses tossing their plumes as if they felt themselves a little better than common horses, and the footmen all decked out in red, feeling that they had something royal about them. The queen had always had everything he wanted, and so was quite miserable because she could not think of a want to supply or a new place to visit.

At last she bethought her that they had just been building a new paper-mill a few miles out of the city. Now she had never seen a paper-mill, and so she determined to stop a little way off, there leave her carriage, and walk in, not as a queen, but as an unknown common lady. She went in alone, and told the owner she would like to see his mill. He was in a great hurry, and did not know that she was the queen. But he said to himself, "I can gratify the curiosity of this lady and add to her knowledge; and though I am terribly hurried, yet I will do this kindness." He then showed her all the machinery; how they bleach the rags, and make them white; how they grind them into pulp; how they make sheets, and smooth them, and dry them, and make them beautiful. The queen was astonished and delighted. She would now have something new to think about and talk about.

Just as she was about leaving the mill she came to a room filled with old, worn out, dirty, rags. At the door of this room was a great multitude of poor, dirty men, women and children, bringing old bags on their backs, filled with bits of rags and paper, parts of old newspapers and the like, all exceedingly filthy. These were rag-pickers, who had picked these old things out of the streets and gutters of the great city.

"What do you do with all these vile things?" said the queen.

"Why, madam, I make paper out of them. To be sure, they are not very profitable stock, but I can use them and it keeps these poor creatures in bread."

"But these rags! Why, sir, they are of all colors, and how do you make them white?"

"Oh, I have the power of taking out all the dirt and the old colors. You see that 'scarlet' and 'crimson'; yet I can make even scarlet and crimson, the hardest colors, to remove and become white as snow."

"Wonderful! wonderful!" said the queen.

She then took her leave; but the polite owner of the mill insisted on walking and seeing her safe in her carriage. When she got in and bowed to him, with a smile, and he saw all the grand establishment, he knew it was the queen.

"Well, well!" said he "she has learned something, at any rate. I wish it may be a lesson in true religion."

A few days ago after, the queen found lying upon her writing-desk a pile of the most beautiful polished paper she had ever seen. On each sheet were the letters of her own name, and her own likeness. How did she admire it. She found, also, a note within, which she read. It ran thus:

"Will my queen be pleased to accept a specimen of my paper, with the assurance that every sheet was manufactured out of the contents of those dirty bags which she saw on the backs of the poor rag-pickers? All the filth and the colors are washed out, and I trust the result is such as even a queen may admire. Will the queen also allow me to say that I have had many a

good sermon preached to me in my mill? I can understand how our Jesus Christ can take the poor heathen, the low, sinful creatures everywhere, viler than the rags, and wash them and make them clean; and how, though their sins be as scarlet, he can make them whiter than snow; and though they be red, like crimson, he can make them as wool." And I can see that he can write his own name upon their foreheads, as the queen will find her name on each sheet of paper; and I can see how, as those filthy rags may go into the palace and even be admired, some poor vile sinner may be washed in the blood of the Lamb, and be received into the palace of the great King of heaven."—*Rev. John Todd, in Sunday School Times*.

## THE JESUITS.

While the Society of Jesus is monopolising public interest in Germany, a few statistical statements respecting it may not be out of place. The order comprises altogether twenty-two provinces, and a contingent of 8,800 members. Castilia takes the lead in point of numbers, its roll amounting to 944, members. Germany follows next, with 738. Austria has only 456. The application of the bill to Jesuits proper is practically limited to the kingdom of Prussia and the diocese of Ratisbon, in Bavaria, these being the only part of the empire in which Jesuits are legally tolerated; and even in Ratisbon they have crept in by an evasion of the law. These figures, quoted according to Professor Von Schulte, convey a very inadequate idea of the real extent of Jesuit power; for Jesuit influence, as he points out, pervades and tinges, controls and directs, the entire clerical system in Germany, which has become a formidable organization. There are no fewer than 18,000 Roman Catholic priests in Germany, besides 11,000 members of convents. Adding to these the pupils in Catholic seminaries, the "Old Catholic" professor computes the entire Romanist army at 50,000, led and marshaled by the Jesuits. The vigor of its growth in the late years M. Von Schulte describes as marvellous. In the five cities of Breslau, Treves, Cologne, Munster, and Paderborn, alone, it amounts to 2,824, which is equivalent to the 20th inhabitant in Cologne, and the 140th in Treves. In Paderborn there is a priest, monk, or nun to every forty inhabitants. Altogether there are established in Prussia 97 monastic orders and congregations, comprising 1,069 members; 11 of these are Jesuit establishments, containing 160 members, and 5 are Redemptionist monasteries, with 69 members. The number of convents and sisterhoods recognized in Prussia is 626, with 5,586 members—i. e., 1,800 more than in 1865. Bavaria owns 71 monasteries, with 1,045 members, and 188 nunneries, with 2,668 members. What gives particular umbrage to German laymen is that most of these orders are subordinated to superiors resident in foreign countries—namely, the Dominicans, Mendicants, Jesuits, Redemptionists, Lazarists, Augustines, and Carmelites to Italians, and the trappists, school brethren of La Salle, Borromeans, school sisters, and Benedictines to French.

## NARROW GAUGE IN JAPAN.

After three years' labour, the Japanese have succeeded in building one railway for a distance of thirteen miles. The line was intended to connect Yokohama and Jeddo, these cities being seventeen and a half miles apart; but public travel has already begun upon it, in spite of its unfinished condition.

The road has but a single track of three feet six inches gage, and yet has cost nearly \$120,000 per mile. Unless, as is most probably the case, there is an immense lack of engineering talent in the country, it is difficult to find an explanation for this state of facts. Labor is abundant and cheap; money and material are plentiful, and the construction of the line has been retarded only by physical difficulties.

The correspondent of the *New York Herald* states that even the completed portion of the route is but poorly built, notwithstanding its great cost. There are first, second, and third class cars. Those of the lowest class look like diminutive cattle cars with wooden benches in them, while those of the other classes resemble ordinary street cars, only they are narrower and in every respect smaller. The first class cars are divided into three compartments by sliding doors, and carry twelve persons comfortably. The second class cars differ from the first by not being subdivided, and being furnished with cane seats instead of leather ones.

The highest speed attained is about twenty-two miles per hour. Officials abound, there being two to each car. The road, in spite of all its shortcomings, is rapidly making money, having averaged since its opening \$500 per day. The rates of fare are absurdly high (1st class, \$1.50; 2nd class, \$1; 3rd class, 50cts.); but these, it is stated, will soon be reduced.—*Scientific American*.