

Peter's Wish.

By George Mathieson, D.D.

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect.—1 Peter v. 10.

What a singular wish! The singular thing about it is the blot in the middle—"after ye have suffered a while." What would you think of getting such a wish from a friend—"I hope you will have sunshine, but not till after rain"? Yet this is what Peter desires for you. He foretells for you in his heart all the gifts and graces of the Christ-life; but he asks that you may not get them without struggle—only "after ye have suffered a while." Does it not come with a singularly bad grace from Peter—a man who could not wait five minutes for anything, who saw ever the crown before the cross? Nay, my brother, that is just the explanation of the wish. He spoke from bitter experience of his own past. He had come into his kingdom too soon. He had obtained his crown before he could support its cares. His faith had been drenched in the brine; his love had been cooled in the judgment-hall; as he sat by the fire he had cried "I know not the man." That is why his wish becomes beautiful. He says, "I do not want you to be like me—finding the keys too soon. I do not want you to be innocents—pure because there is no cloud, calm because there is no wind, honest because there is no temptation, loyal because there is no danger. I wish yours to be the bloom of the flower—struggling from below, of the day—emerging from the night, of the man—outgrowing the child. May He who has called you to glory by the cross perfect you only "after ye have suffered a while."

Even so we pray, O Father. There is a peace which we would not possess, because it is not the peace of Thy Son. There is a silence which is mere emptiness—the calm of the deaf; it is the stillness of vacancy. Be not that our peace, O God. We cannot know Thy stillness till it is broken. We cannot see Thy beauty till it is shaded. We cannot reap the healthy benefit of Thine air till we have shrunk from the breath of another air. We see Thee not in Thy full glory till we have met the tempter in the wilderness. Thy sun comes after rain; Thy day comes after night; Thy calm comes after storm. Thy music comes after discord; Thy joy comes after pain; Thy freedom comes after slavery; Thy life comes after death. There is no music in the silence till we have heard the roar of battle; Thine eternal glory would be too long for as if we did not first suffer a while.

Seven Seedlings for Planting Out.

1. The Godhead.—"The one idea which ministered to my soul all its rapture was the magnificence of the Godhead and the universal subordination of all things to the one great purpose for which He evolved and was supporting creation."—Rev. Thomas Chalmers, D.D., LL.D.

2. Joy.—"Some Christians are happy only on special occasions; the rest of the time they may be sulking or scolding. Sunny-hearted old Paul could sing in a midnight dungeon, and rejoice in the Lord always."—Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D.

3. Church History.—"It must always be worth while to survey the battle fields of our fathers, and to note the grounds on which questions of perennial interest were debated and resolved."—Rev. Principal Dykes, D.D.

4. God's Purpose.—"When once I come to feel that God has a purpose to make me good, I can also apprehend that the events of life may be the education which He uses for this end; and the conviction that this is His desire is pressed on me through the action of my conscience, for I find Him at every moment insisting that I should conform my will to His in thought, word and deed."—Thomas Erskine.

5. The Incarnation.—"As the Judge and Avenger

of sin, we shrink from God. But what could more touchingly and truly show us the infinite love that fills His bosom than the birth of His own Son as a lowly human babe? In the form of the Holy Child Jesus, He has laid aside His majesty, and stretches out His loving, Fatherly arms to draw us to Himself."—Rev. Hugh Macmillan, D.D., LL.D.

6. Fulfilment.—"Christ is the fulfilment of all prophecy, the explanation of all types, the completion and culminating miracle of all preceding miracles."—Rev. G. F. Pentecost, D.D.

7. Presbyterianism.—"Presbyterians are not burdened with any extreme theories of a priesthood, which relegated to a certain class of men all spiritual work, and drew a deep line of distinction between the laity and clergy. In the Presbyterian Church they knew no such distinctions—they found no such distinctions in the New Testament, which was their sole rule of direction and guidance in regard to church work."—Samuel Smith, M.P.

Surrender.

Hence, Love!

Not open for me the doors of pain,
More do I lose by thee than gain.

Hence, Love!

Art come, Love?

No longer wilt thou baffled be?

And I must yield myself to thee?

Art come, Love?

Stay, Love!

Thy presence is eternal gain;

Borne for thy sake pain is not pain,

But a sweet suffering I adore,

This, this is life; I had not lived before.

Stay, Love!

Isabel L. Dobbin, in New York Independent.

The Fear That is Not Cast Out.

This expression, "the fear of the Lord," so often passed around among believers, is exceedingly frequent in the Scriptures. It is only another name for piety. It is a sort of solicitude which has in it far more pleasure than pain. Entirely filial and not at all servile, it impels the creature to do homage to the Creator's will just because it is His will. This is the divine claim: "Thou shalt fear God, for I am the Lord our God." We are not afraid of Him, but we are afraid to offend or to grieve Him. We become affectionately solicitous lest we neglect or presume upon his great kindness for ourselves. We are on the alert, like loving children, lest by some carelessness we may do wrong. "The fear of the Lord is the hatred of evil."

It may surprise some persons to be told, but it is true, that love lies at the very basis of all godly fear. They readily quote the words of the apostle, "Perfect love casteth out fear." But this means slavish fear, terror under apprehension of evil, irresistible, merited and surely coming. This is the sort of fear delineated as belonging to the ceaseless experience of the wicked men: "A dreadful sound is in his ears, in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him." But in the fear which the Christian cherishes is a fear not cast out; it has no sting to it; it is only the greater solicitude of an increasing affection.

As some belated bird on homeward wing
Through gathering gloom of a storm-driven night,
Its bruised breast set hard against the blast,
With instinct sure flies swiftly to the light;
So my sad heart, late on its way to joy
Through night of a fast-darkening destiny,
Broken and torn and quivering with affright,
Yet knowing well its way, speeds home to Thee!

—Elizabeth W. Cartwright.

A peace above all earthly dignities,

A still and quiet conscience.

—Shakespeare.

Power of The Fifty-First Psalm.

It is impossible to comprehend the power of the fifty-first Psalm upon the race. Kings, scholars and cottagers have read it with the same spiritual profit. It was the death song of the French Protestants in the times that for cruelty have had few equals. It was sung by George Wishart, when taken prisoner before his martyrdom at St. Andrew's. Its opening verse was the dying cry of the Scottish martyr, Thomas Forster, whose grave was green a quarter of a century before Scotland became free from ecclesiastical tyranny. Its cry for mercy was repeated by Lady Jane Grey upon the fatal day of her own and her husband's death. Its burning words broke from the lips of John Huss at the place of his execution, near Constance. John Rogers repeated its confessions and triumphant passages on the way to the fires of Smithfield. The words of the Hebrew Psalmist were spoken by Sir Thomas More—"who was famous through Europe for eloquence and wisdom"—as he laid his head upon the block. Its seventeenth verse, written by St. Augustine upon the wall of his sick-chamber, did not make the text any the less real to the great German reformer. The seventh verse of this same Psalm was found on a tablet of copper amid the eternal snows on the highest point of the earth's surface, near Cape Beechey, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."—Last Days.

The Care of The Eyes.

On arising in the morning the eyes should be bathed gently in cold water—twenty "passes" are said to be decidedly strengthening. While using them closely they should be rested at intervals of an hour or two, for the strain of constant reading or sewing is like that of extending the arms at a certain height immovably. Imagine, then, the taxing of the eyes, which cannot complain save after years of irreparable neglect.

When dust settles in the eyes warm water will soothe them of any inflammation; rose-water is extremely refreshing, but it should be bought in small quantities, as it keeps but a short time. Five cents' worth will give a daily eye bath for several weeks.

Tea leaves and alum-water were the eye-tonics which our grandfathers used; but in these modern days of absolutely hygienic and antiseptic simplicity water, especially in a distilled form, is considered powerful enough.—Harper's Bazar.

Beneath these fruit tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me spread
Of spring's unclouded weather;

In this sequestered nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard-seat,

And birds and flowers once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

—Wordsworth.

Eminent Men's Ignorance of Kipling.

The well-known literary gossip of the "British Weekly" says: I had the honor the other day of luncheon with three very eminent men of letters. The conversation turned on Kipling. Said one, "I am ashamed that I do not know Kipling's work, but I have begun 'Plain Tales from the Hills,' on the recommendation of a friend, and I do not like them. Is there any book of his in which you can at once see his power?" He turned round to his neighbor, who replied immediately that he knew nothing of Kipling except his name. The third had read "The Recessional," and thought it a mixture of Longfellow and Dr. Watts, but not so good as Longfellow, not nearly so good as "The Psalm of Life." He had, however, heard musical ditties of Kipling which appeared to be clever. If I were free to give the names of the speakers, they would be known to the whole world.