

and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!"

Christ loves you. Believe that He loves you. Look away from self, away from your own sin. A door is opened in Heaven; look through that opened door. "BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!"—*Wilkinson*.

#### THE LONELY CHRIST.

There is no aspect of our Lord's life more pathetic than that of His profound loneliness. I suppose the most utterly solitary man that ever lived was Jesus Christ. If we think of the facts of His life, we see how his nearest kindred stood aloof from Him, how "there were none to praise, and very few to love," and how, even in the small company of His friends, there were absolutely none who either understood Him or sympathised with Him. We hear a great deal about the solitude in which men of genius live, and how all great souls are necessarily lonely. This is true, and that solitude of great men is one of the compensations which run through all life, and make the lot of the many little, more enviable than that of the few great. "The little hills rejoice together on every side," but far above their smiling companionships, the alpine peak lifts itself into the cold air, and though it be "visited all night by troops of stars," is lonely amid the silence and the snow. Talk of the solitude of pure character amid evil, like Lot in Sodom, or of the loneliness of uncomprehended aims and unshared thoughts—who ever experienced that as keenly as Christ did? That perfect purity must needs have been hurt by the sin of men as none else have ever been. That loving heart yearning for the solace of an answering heart must needs have felt a sharper pang of unrequited love than ever pained another. That Spirit to which the things that are seen were shadows, and the Father and the Father's house the ever-present, only realities, must have felt itself parted from the men whose portion was in this life by a gulf broader than ever opened between any other two souls that shared together human life.

The more pure and lofty a nature, the more keen its sensitiveness, the more exquisite its delights, and the sharper its pains. The more loving and unselfish a heart the more its longing for companionship: and the more its aching in loneliness.

Very significant and pathetic are many points in the Gospel story bearing on this matter. The very choice of the twelve had for its first purpose, "that they should be with Him," as one of the evangelists tells us. We know how constantly He took the three who were nearest to Him along with Him, and that surely not merely they might be "eyewitnesses of His majesty" on the holy mount, or of His agony in Gethsemane, but as having a real gladness and strength even in their companionship amid the mystery of glory as amid the power of darkness. We read of His being alone but twice in all the gospels, and both times for prayer. And surely the dullest ear can hear a note of pain in that prophetic word: "The hour cometh that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone;" while every heart must feel the pitiful pathos of the plea, "Tarry ye here, and watch with Me." Even in that supreme hour, He longs for human companionship, however uncomprehending, and stretches out His hands in the great darkness, to feel the touch of a hand of flesh and blood—and, alas, for poor feeble love!—He gropes for it in vain. Surely that horror of utter solitude is one of the elements of His passion grave and sorrowful enough to be named by the side of the other bitterness poured into that cup, even as it was pain enough to form a substantive feature of the great prophetic picture: "I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none."

So here, a deep pain in His loneliness is implied in these words of our text which put the disciples' participation in the glories of His throne as the issue of their loyal continuance with Him in the conflict of earth. These, as these only, had been

by His side, and so much does He care for their companionship, that therefore they shall share His dominion.

That lonely Christ sympathises with all solitary hearts. If ever we feel ourselves misunderstood and thrown back upon ourselves; if ever our hearts' burden of love is rejected; if our outward lives be lonely and earth yields nothing to stay our longing for companionship; if our hearts have been filled with dear ones and are now empty, or but filled with tears, let us think of Him and say, "Yet I am not alone." He lived alone, and alone He died, that no heart might ever be solitary any more. "Could ye not watch with Me?" was His gentle rebuke in Gethsemane. "Lo, I am with you always," is His mighty promise from the throne. In every step of life we may have Him for a companion, a friend closer than all other, nearer us than our very selves, if we may so say—and in the valley of the shadow of death we need fear no evil, for He will be with us.

#### Missionary.

#### WALDENSIAN CHURCH MISSIONS IN ITALY.

The appeal of this mission for sympathetic help and interest must find an echo, we are sure, in many hearts. As we look back to the days when they suffered such bitter persecution and were well nigh extirpated as a church by the enmity of Rome: when England in the days of Cromwell came forward to protect them.

Milton, in his matchless sonnet:—

"Avenge O Lord thy slaughtered saints, whose bones  
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;  
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,  
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones."

Must appeal for them to the hearts of Canadian no less than English Christians. We are glad to read in their report that the advance they have made in the year just closed, is greater than that of the previous year, although it is but a little step in comparison with the ground yet to be gone over. Such as it is, however, it has a special importance for us, inasmuch as it proves that the God of their fathers has been with them, without whom they would have been unable even to maintain their position in the unequal struggle against enemies so numerous and so powerful. "To Him," say they our thanks are due that we have been permitted to receive five hundred and forty new members, about the half of whom have been directly won from infidelity or superstition."

They drew for us, pictures of the past and the present, that by their contrast we may realize better what progress has been made.

#### A NIGHT AT RIO MARINA IN 1861.

"It was summer: all nature seemed to conspire to raise the soul towards God. But alas! The inhabitants of the little town had no eyes to admire the works of their Creator. They were to be seen running in crowds in one direction, screaming and gesticulating as if they were beside themselves. The words which reached the ear, because repeated most frequently, were 'Away with them—death!' The crowd at length reached a house which appeared to be the object of their fury and excitement; they surrounded it, raising their voices higher and higher, while some of the more active and willing of the men proceeded to heap fagots against the walls and doors. It was evident that they intended to burn down the house. What could the house contain, to excite the passions of the populace to such a degree? One stricken with the plague? Some one escaped from the Porto-Ferraio prison? No—it shelters a student of theology belonging to the Waldensian Church, who had come to Rio with a friend to preach the Gospel! For them were the fagots piled round the house.

Happily, God did not permit His servants to perish by such a horrible death; He did not permit the pages, already so soiled with the history of Roman fanaticism, to have such a bloody stain added to them. He put a thought of humanity and of courage into the hearts of some influential men, who succeeded in calming the fanatics and delivering our friends from certain death. Who would not have said, after being present at this scene, 'Here is a corner where the Waldenses will do well not to seek to introduce the faith of their Fathers?' Well, let us return to Rio twenty-two years later.

#### A DAY AT RIO MARINA IN 1883.

"It is the 16th of August, the feast of Saint Roch—patron of the locality. A numerous cortege, preceded by music, is making its way towards a neighbouring eminence. The band is playing grave and solemn airs, and the people of every rank and age who form the procession appear serious and thoughtful. Drawing near we discern the cause—it is a funeral. And who can it be, to whose memory the population of Rio are showing so much honour? A member of the Waldensian Church of Rio. The crowd fills the cemetery, and with uncovered heads listen with respect and attention to the reading and preaching of the Good News.

Would you not imagine yourself to be in a country altogether Protestant? And yet the greater number are still Roman Catholics, and probably a great many of them cried 'Death to the Protestants!' some years before. What a contrast!

"Yes, notwithstanding the apparent sterility of the soil, the seed has germinated, it has grown, and the wind of persecution has only served to make it strike its roots deeper and stronger. The church of Rio Marina numbers only 88 members, because many have emigrated to Leghorn, Nice, and elsewhere; but its presence has been a blessing to hundreds, and about two-thirds of the new generation have sat on its school benches. Of 184 children who have attended the schools during the past year, more than a hundred belong to Roman Catholic parents. The good influence is felt beyond the limits of the Commune, for a petition from Rio Castello reached the Committee, signed by fathers of families who were anxious to entrust us with the education of their 72 children.

"This striking contrast reminds us of another still more striking.

#### THE 9TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1560, IN ROME.

On Monday, September 9th, 1560 (as an Italian historian relates), an excited crowd was urging its way towards the Piazza Castel Sant' Angelo. A scaffold, and close by a pile of fagots, had been erected. Near to these was an amphitheatre of richly covered seats, where sat His Holiness the Pope, Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, cardinals, inquisitors, priests and monks of all kinds and in great numbers. When the martyr for Christian truth appeared, with difficulty dragging himself along under the weight of his chains, his enemies, who observed the working of his features, that they might triumph over the least appearance of weakness, could detect neither change nor fear. There was the same sweet and resigned expression which had never left him during all his long and painful imprisonment. Arrived on the scaffold, and profiting by a moment's silence, he declared to the people that if he had to die it was not on account of any crime which he had committed, but for having dared to confess the doctrine of his Divine Master and Saviour, Jesus Christ. "As to those," he continued, "who hold the Pope to be God on earth and Vicar of Jesus Christ, they strangely deceive themselves, seeing that in all things and everywhere he shows himself the mortal enemy of His doctrine, of His true service and of pure religion, and that his acts show him to be the real Antichrist." He could say no more—the