

it ends—of the harvesters coming home with shouts of joy, their arms full of sheaves.

The men who sang this psalm (Ps. 126) had passed through an experience of redemption. They had come back from the Babylon which they hated to the Zion which they loved. They knew and confessed that their God had done great things for them: and they were at once humbled, grateful and glad. They moved about as one in a dream, because they could not trust themselves to think that so good a thing was true. And they were so happy, that they could not find words to express their joy. Their mouth was filled with laughter, their tongue with ringing shouts; but all they could say was, "We were glad." That is all; but, on the lips of sincere men, that is everything.

Have we any such experience of redemption which enables us, even afar off, to appreciate the rapturous joy of the psalm? Have we ever been delivered from anxiety, from disappointment, from defeat, from danger, from oppression, from sorrow, from evil habits, from sin, from death? And if we have, do we acknowledge our Redeemer? and are we grateful and glad for our redemption? and have our sluggish hearts ever been moved to say, "The Lord has done great things for me; I am glad"? And if we have never made such a confession or known such a joy, are we quite sure that we have been redeemed indeed?

The psalm further reminds us of the duty of hope. Men to whom the dream of redemption has become a fact, may look to the future through eyes blinded by tears; but they see afar off the golden harvest, and to the listening ear the shouts of the merry harvesters are borne back from the future days, as they bring their sheaves in armfuls, home. In days of disappointment, this is a consolation of which no one can ever allow himself to be robbed who truly believes in God—that no honest effort is ever in vain, that in due time the faithful worker will reap, if he faint not, that the seed sown in weariness and tears will be brought back as sheaves with shouts of gladness—if not in this world, then in some other. No seed is ever flung from any faith-

ful hand in vain. In God's good time, if not in ours, it will spring up and bear its destined fruit. In this world, sometimes one sows and it is another that reaps; but God is as mindful of the sower as the reaper, and one day—how far away we know not—he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together.

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### The Towel as a Weapon

By Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, D.D.

A sentence from the lips of a great living preacher ("living", in more senses than one), suggested the above caption: for it was a towel, not a sword, that the greatest of all Conquerors chose as the means of victory,—victory, first, with his closest lieutenants, and then, through them, in all the world.

It was His last hour with them, before He was to be delivered defenceless into the hands of His foes. He would bind them to His Person and service by a bond that nought could break. He had eaten and drunk with them. After supper, he laid aside his garments, and, servant-like, took a towel and poured water into a basin, that He might wash their feet,—a pattern, as He told them, of the service which they, as His followers, were to be ever ready to render. His willingness to serve won their hearts; even as their willingness to serve was to win the hearts of the myriads, who, before the course of these first valiant message-bearers was run, had yielded to the claims of their Lord and Master.

Not all of Christ's followers have remembered this lesson in conquering. The church has not infrequently rallied the sword to its aid, thinking the readiest way to win men to the Cross was to compel them by force. Possibly the sword is finally sheathed, so far as its actual use by the church is concerned. The days of persecution in the name of the gentle Jesus are ended. But does the spirit of service truly possess all who labor in His name? Is our work, for example, as teachers, always done with His meekness and self-effacement? Are we to our scholars "your servants for Jesus' sake"?