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"THE CHRISTIAN,"

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ST. JOHN, N. B.

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EDITORIAL.

"Thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards." John Aili. 26. Jesus uttered these words in a small meeting, the last to be held with His disciples before His death. No unfriendly Jews were at it, Judas had gone away to betray him, and Jesus and the eleven were left free to speak and breathe. Still, a pang of sorrow was felt in the friendly circle. Will there ever be a pleasurable meeting without an alloy? Yes, indeed, but not in changing time. The thought of parting disturbs the sweetest meeting on earth, and the disciples were very sad to think that they would soon adjourn to meet no more, for their loving Master was going away where they could not find Him. Peter says, "Go or stay, I can't be separated from Him. If He leaves, how can I stav? All my associates have been relinquished; I have left all to follow Him, and what is the world to me if He has gone? Lord, whither goest Thou let me know, and neither prison nor death shall divide us."

Jesus states two facts-one bitter, the other sweet.

I Whither I go thou canst not follow me now.

II. But thou shalt follow me afterwards.

I. Thou canst not follow me now. Here the bitter comes first. This is always the case. In going from God the sweet comes first, then the bitter; but in coming back to God, the bitter comes first. Had there been no separation from God, it would be all enjoyment and no bitterness; but in every change there is the bitter and the sweet. The forbidden fruit was sweet to Adam's taste, but it ended in the bitterness of death. All sin, whether it be the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life, has its seducing pleasure, but, O! the dreadful end! All whom Jesus leads have the sorrow first, but afterwards joys that shall never end, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." To forsake the broad road we must deny ourselves of sinful pleasure, and meet the opposition of men. Sometimes we must incur the keen displeasure of our nearest friends as well as deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts So that many who are almost persuaded to be Christians think the sacrifice too great, and turn their back upon the "man of sorrows. Jesus' langrage 'e His disciples was, "Ye now have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your hearts shall rojoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" So He tells Peter, "Thou canst not follow me now." When a fond mother goes to visit friends how eagerly her little one pleads to go with her When told that he cannot go the hear avells with grief that can only be assusged by her kind assurance that he will in future ac-

journey. Hope sparkles in the moistened eyes as he exclaims, "Ise doin' adin when I dets my new dess."

Thou canst not follow me now. Let us consider some of the reasons why Peter could not follow Him then.

1st. He was not long enough in the school of Christ here to go up higher. God trains His children on earth to fit them for the society of heaven. Peter knew so little of Jesus' death and resurrection that when Jesus told His disciples that the chief priests and scribes would deliver him to the Gentiles, who would scourge and crucify Him, Peter began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord, they will not do this unto Thee." How painful this rebuke may be to the Son of God, who told him of His approaching agony, and how strange the prejudice on Peter's mind after all he heard from Jesus, and after hearing Moses and Elias on the holy mount talking of the descense that He was to accomplish at Jerusalem. He was too ignorant to follow Jesus.

2nd. He also needed moral training on earth. He was quite willing to render evil for evil, and to hate and destroy his enemy. He drew his sword and cut off the car of his enemy. He had to possess a different spirit ere he passed into the heavens. It is good to notice Peter's rapid improvement in head and heart. He saw the very fulfilment of what had been foretold. He saw his Lord condemned and scourged and crucified. He saw Him after He had risen from the dead, and spent his life in proclaiming this for the salvation of men. #And when enemies beat and threatened him with death for preaching Christ, he drew no sword upon them, but rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus.

3rd. Peter had work to do on earth before he followed Jesus He would give him two keys by which he could open the kingdom of heaven to two nations, Jews and Gentiles. And he used one key when he preached. Christ-to-His Jewish murderers, and showed them how to be saved so plainly that 3,000 entered the Kingdom in one day, which number soon reached 5,000

He used the other key when he preached Christ to Gentiles in the house of Cornelius, and they in hearing believed and entered into the Kingdom of Heaven. Since then the Kingdom is open to all nations by Christ's authority, and no man can shut it, and by the same authority all are invited to enter.

Again, Peter had important work to do in showing those who had entered the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Church of God on earth, how to gain the Eternal Kingdom by adding to their faith virtue and all the graces of the Holy Spirit, which he did by tongue and pen, but especially in the letters addressed to the strangers scattered throughout Western Asia.

When about to put off his tabernacle and follow his Master, he was intensely anxious that they would do those things and they would never fall, but have an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. When we consider the grand training and important work of Peter on earth, we see the wisdom of Jesus in not permitting him to follow Him then Who can tell the myriads who will shine in Peter's crown who have and shall learn from his mouth the way of salvation?

II. The promise, thou shalt follow me afterwards Blessed promise. "After you know the Father and Me and My work, and after you have faithfully made Me and My Father known to others, then you will follow Me through the grave and in the resurrection and to My Father's presence, where there will be no misunderstanding, no clouds, no separation." How the apostle would rejoice in the prospect of following his Master company her when he is better equipped for the when prepared for the society of heaven. He had ple who do nothing, in their own person, to hinder-

his Master's promise of eternal life, and he had along with that the carnest of the Spirit

If we are the children of God, and are left by Him on earth, it is that we should be trained for heaven and do important work for the Master here. The lingering sufferer on a bed of pain can receive such training and do such work. How many will bless God forever that they saw in such the grace of Jesus, and heard from them His blessed Gospel. Let us who hear the name of the Saviour ask this important question, Do I know more of Jesus than I did years ago, and we will likely say yes; this is right, we should follow on to know the Lord and not rest with present attainments. If we ask, Am I more alive in the Lord's work than I was? Do I resemble Christ more than. I did in the past? Do I spend more time and more money according to my ability than I did? How will we answer these questions to Jurselves and to God? If we cannot by His grace answer these in the affirmative, how can we be assured that we are being trained for heaven? And if we are not now, when will we be? While we feel our shortcomings, and remember our High Priest, let us come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

On the whole, it is better for the Christian to desire to live and labor for Christ than to die and rest with Christ We are very apt to grow impatient at our lot, and liable to mistake a selfish desire to escape trouble for a love to be with Jesus, Even the sweet singer of Israel had his weakness, and once wished for the wings of a dove that he might fly away and be at rest. How many have heartily expressed that wish, and quoted the very words. When we examine this wish it appears as foolish as it is selfish. What would David do if he had the wings of a dove? And if they were sufficient to carry him as far as he wished to go, where would be his destination? How much. better for him to meet trouble, and when the Lord needed to remove him, he would send angels tocarry him home. On what ground can I or any Christian claim an exemption from either work or trouble?

> Must I be carried to the skies On flowery beds of case, While others fought to win the prize, And sailed through bloody seas. No. I must fight if I would reign-Increase my courage, Lord-I'll bear the toil, endure the pain, Supported by Thy word. When that illustrious day shall rise, And all Thy armies shine In robes of victory through the skies, The glory shall be Thinc. —D. C.

In the September number of "Lend a Hand," Dr. E. E. Hale presents a truth recognizable in every organization, whether political, moral orreligious It really brings out the truth well known to us all-that grumblers are no workers; that it is impossible for us to grumble and to work at the same time; that if we grumble we haven't time to work, and when working we haven't time to grumble. Yes, and we see all belong to either one class or the other. Brethren, if you should find yourselves among the grumblers, get away from them; they will do you no good. Dr. Hale says:

"It is very interesting to observe that the people who do give themselves to charity or to work of public spirit-that is, who give time, thought, ingenuity, service, resource, companionship, as well as money, are always the people who are satisfied with the results achieved, and who look forward cheerfully and hopefully to the future, either of next year or the next generation. On the other hand, the most gloomy people and those most distrustful of the future-the people who, as a whole, think the world is going te the dogs-are the peo-