

LOVE THAT WILL NOT LET GO.

Night was upon the city, and the children of darkness were in the streets. A mother moved slowly along in the crowd, looking eagerly and anxiously into the faces of those who passed, and whenever the swinging door of a saloon flashed a glare across the pavement, she turned quickly to look within the place where she thought perhaps her son might be.

She was searching for him, searching with a motherly disregard of her surroundings, intent upon taking him home. That was her mission in the crowd, to find and to take home her son. She found him at last, a pitiable figure; and he had no desire to go home. He had broken with his ideals, he had cast love to the winds, and the bestial in him held the reins and the whip.

But in that mother's heart was a passion stronger than the beast in the boy, a love so determined in its purpose, so compelling in its steady pull upon the boy's better self, that he did go home in spite of the clamor and tug of his lusts. Then, as before, and afterwards, the cry of that mother in prayer and in any voicing of her love for him was ever the same: "I cannot, cannot, let him go!" Nor did she let him go until from a clean life, moving quietly on day by day, the Lord took him out of the fight.

What that mother did for her son, is done for every one of us day by day. If we were to be held back from sin merely by our own preferences, our family surroundings, our sense of propriety, or even by a love for the sinless Christ, we could not hope for any real freedom from the dominance of low and mastering passions. Unstable as we are at the best, no power of will, no uplift of heredity, no steadying star of a love that proceeds from ourselves, could alone save us from ghastly blunders and wreckage all along the way.

Our love for God is weakened by our weaknesses, and neither that nor any of the lesser, cherished helps by the way could alone win us homeward when we have gone away into the bondage of sin. If God should let our case rest wholly on our wavering purpose in unsteadily seeking him, what hope would there be for any of us?

But God is seeking us, and he does not purpose to let us go. We turn to our own ways; he patiently waits, reminding us that the stupid sheep are as wise. We strain away from his leading. One man longs to be in some other profession than the one to which God has called him. Another wishes feverishly that he might escape from burdens which, if he but knew it, are already making a man of him. Another is foolishly unsettled in his doings because he is not someone else. And the Father patiently waits, and will not let us go.

Men weary of the struggle. Things they have preached do not seem to work out in practise. High standards in business are well enough in books and speeches, but how about that moment when everything will go to pieces unless the standard is let down to a reasonable point? And when they are tired of doing the hard, right thing, and the standard is lowered, lowered always more at such a time than man intends, God is yet patient, and in his love has no mind to let the man go utterly down to the alluring low levels. Even though the man has lost his clear vision of God, the Father does not lose his clear thought of what that man ought to be, and can be at his best.

It is well for us that this is so. If God were passive in his willingness to train and to save mankind, mankind would be at the mercy of forces that are not passive. If God sought the man

no more than man seeks God, man would get farther and farther and farther away from God. If the mother had not wanted the boy to go home, far more urgently than the boy himself wanted to go, the boy would hardly have found a way to go. Not his love for her so much as her love for him was the compelling, restraining cause of his return.

In his farewell conversation with His disciples the Son of God, with tender solicitude, spoke very plainly with them, about his relation to them and theirs to Him. Nothing less than the oneness of the vine with its branches was enough to illustrate His thought of that relation. He would not have these friends of His think of themselves now as other than intimate friends, to whom he had confided what the Father had confided to Him. And He calls to their attention one great fact of their relationship which they and we might easily overlook, a fact which He clearly intended should be reassuring to them in the new responsibilities which were to come upon them. "Ye did not choose Me," He said, "but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide."

Their opportunity, frail and variable as these men were, had been of the Master's choosing, and He had held on with patience and forbearance to the real man in each of them, in spite of their doubts and foolish questionings, and their short-sighted understanding of him.

Here is equal assurance for every one of us. Love chooses us, even when the weaknesses within us utter protest; love assumes responsibility for the choice; and love continues patiently to cherish us into the bearing of an abiding fruit. Why then should any of us be hopeless over yesterday's failure, or fearful of today's fight?

"O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean's depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

"O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to Thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in Thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.

"O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not in vain
That morn shall tearless be.

"O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."

—Sunday School Times.

JUBILEE AND RE-OPENING OF THE EDEN MILLS' CHURCH.

A brief history of the congregation prepared by Rev. Dr. Torrance.

Eden Mills is a village in the southwest corner of the township of Eramosa, in the county of Wellington, about six miles from Guelph.

At a comparatively early period, a number of families settled in the district, at that time a wild and unbroken forest, some of whom were Presbyterians and who connected themselves as they found opportunity with one station or another near at hand.

In 1841 Mr. James Argo took up a homestead and joined what is now known as First Church, Eramosa. His brother, Mr. Adam Argo, purchased the mill site and the buildings on it and came to reside in 1846, connecting himself with a congregation in Guelph. In addition to the dwelling he erected a warehouse and for years kept the post

office. It was by him the name of the place was changed to Eden Mills. Other Presbyterian families came in and some of the neighboring Presbyterian ministers gave them religious services, which were held in the most convenient places available but chiefly in Mr. Argo's warehouse. Ultimately it was resolved that a regular preaching station should be opened and that a church should be built. After some discussion as to the site, several being of the opinion that it should be put up in the village, it was decided that it should be at a distance of half a mile to the southwest. Here, upon solid limestone, a frame structure was raised, but the building had not the strength and permanence of the foundation; it soon fell into decay, and Mr. James Argo having offered a new site, just across the road, with ample space for horse sheds, his offer was accepted and a very comfortable stone structure, with seating accommodation for 250 persons, was built.

As time passed the building and property underwent improvements and repairs, showing the care and interest the worshippers took in the house of God. At the last annual meeting the sum of \$500 was voted to beautify and repair their sanctuary, but through the liberality of one of their members, Mr. Samuel Geddes, who died in the spring and bequeathed a handsome sum to the congregation, \$1,000 was spent, with the result that they have now one of the handsomest churches anywhere to be found. It reflects great credit on the skill and taste of the decorator and on those under whose instructions and suggestions he was working.

This was re-dedicated and opened for public worship on the 15th of September last, when the house was crowded to its utmost capacity, even to the session room, many not being able to get inside.

The Rev. W. J. A. Martin of Zion church, Brantford, conducted the services on this occasion and held the sustained attention of the congregation by instructive and scriptural discourses.

A pleasing feature of the forenoon service was a presentation of the General Assembly's diploma to five girls for having repeated the Shorter Catechism from beginning to end without a mistake.

On the Monday evening following, a large social gathering was entertained in a huge tent erected in an adjacent field, in which refreshments were served; thereafter the company took their places in the church, which, as on the Sabbath, was filled to overflowing. An interesting programme was gone through consisting of addresses, readings and sacred music.

The first stated minister was Mr. James Thom. He is still living, but is now connected with another denomination. After a short interval Mr. Edward Reeves accepted a call addressed to him, and was their minister till failing health induced him to tender his resignation, which was accepted by the Presbytery. He is still alive and has his home in Rockwood. After the Rev. D. Strachan had been settled for some time in Rockwood, he gave supply to Eden Mills, and was in charge at both places till he resigned after 24 years of active service in the two places. He was succeeded by Mr. J. A. Cranston, M.A., who accepted a call to Collingwood, where he is still officiating earnestly and successfully. In 1902 Mr. J. T. Hall was translated to Rockwood and Eden Mills. His pastorate has been both happy and fruitful and he still ministers to a devoted and strongly attached people.

Rev. W. G. Back, the newly-inducted minister of the Eglinton Presbyterian church, has moved his family to town and is settled on Broadway-avenue.