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## Religious Miscellany.

### Sojourning as at an Inn.

BY A. D. F. RANDOLPH.

Look abroad upon the verdant fields,  
The song of birds in the summer air;  
How many a treasure sometimes yields,  
To bless my life, and round the edge of care.

And yet the earth and air,  
All that seems good and fair,  
That still is mine, or once has been,  
How teach me I am but a Pilgrim here.

Without a home, and dwelling at an Inn,  
There have been days when stormy gusts were  
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Yet then when grief was nigh,  
My soul could sometimes cry  
Out of the depths of sorrow and of sin,  
That at the worst I was but a Pilgrim here.

With home beyond, while dwelling at an Inn,  
I complain not of this life of mine,  
I live of shade have had than the sun;  
The gracious Father, with a hand Divine,  
Has crowned with mercies His unworthy one.

My cup has overflowed,  
And I His will adore,  
He has blessed His blessings in sin,  
As I forgot I was but a Pilgrim here,  
Homeless at best, and dwelling at an Inn.

Look at me, Lord! Have I not need to pray  
That this fair world, which gives so much to me,  
I may not lead my steps so far astray  
That at the end they leave me not with Thee?

Dear Lord, let not this be  
My prayer, but let me see  
Beyond this life my way, a Pilgrim here,  
Rejoice that I am dwelling at an Inn.

Dear God! by whom this world was made,  
Yet homeless had not where to lay Thy head;  
Not 'as by kindred was Thy body laid,  
In Joseph's tomb—thou Lord of quick and dead.

By Thy example lead,  
Of me may it be said,  
When I shall rest and peace begin,  
And find my home while dwelling at an Inn.  
—Home at home.

### The Pulpit and the Pew.

When do you attend church, Mr. Gage? I had of a friend, not of my own denomination, who had recently removed to a new town, and was asked by a friend, "What do you do there?" "I go to church," he replied. "And how often?" "About once a week," he replied. "And how do you like it?" "I like it very much," he replied. "And how do you like the pulpit?" "I like it very much," he replied. "And how do you like the pew?" "I like it very much," he replied.

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## Do You Confess?

I do not ask you now what your opinion is about matters controverted in the present day. I ask you a plain, practical question. Do you know anything of the daily habit of confessing sins to God?

You will not pretend to say that you have no sin at all. Few probably are so blind and ignorant in the present day as to say that. But what do you do with your sins? What measures do you take about your sins? Do you use any steps to get rid of your sins? Answer these questions, I do beseech you, to your own consciences. Whether you are rich or poor, young or old, Churchman or Dissenter, matters little. But it does matter a great deal whether you can reply to the inquiry—Do you confess your sins to God?

Reader! if you know nothing of the habit of confessing sin, I have only one remark to make—your soul is in imminent danger! There is but a step between you and hell! If you die as you are, you will be lost forever! The kingdom of God cannot be silent subjects. The citizens of the heavenly city are a people who have all kinds of gifts, and confessed their sins.

I give you one simple warning: You will have to confess your sins one day, whether you will or no. When the great white throne is set, and the books are opened, your sins will all be exposed before the world! The secrets of all hearts will be revealed. You will have to acknowledge your transgressions before the eyes of an assembled world, and an innumerable company of angels! Your confession at last will be most public! And, worst of all, your confession will be too late!

Where is the man who would not shrink from the idea of such an exposure? Where is the woman whose spirit would not fail at the very possibility of such an exposure as this? Reader, this public confession will be the portion of millions. Take heed lest it be yours. Do you confess?

I invite you, in my Master's name, to begin the habit of confession without delay.

Go this very day to the throne of grace, and speak to the great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, about your soul. Pour out your heart before Him. Acknowledge your iniquity to Him, and entreat Him to cleanse them away. Say to Him, in David's words, "For thy name's sake pardon my iniquity; for it is great." Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities." Cry to Him as the psalmist did in the psalm, "O God, be merciful to me, a sinner." (Psalm 119:136.)

Arise, dear reader, and call upon God. If Christ had never died for sinners, there might be some excuse for doubting. But Christ having suffered for sinners there is nothing that need keep you back. Only acknowledge your iniquity, and seek wholly on God's mercy in Christ, and life, eternal life, shall be your own.

Thought your sins be as scarlet, they shall be thought white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18.) But, dear reader, begin to confess without delay. This very day begin to confess your sins.

—J. C. Rule.

## Wandering Thoughts.

"I thought of almost everything in church to-day except of what I ought," said my roommate early. My own conscience made me the same confession. Yet the association of our respectable pastor and the mental vigor of his colleague should have prevented wandering thoughts.

Did Satan make forbidden things unusually attractive in God's house, or was the current of my worldly thoughts through the week so strong and unbroken that the Sabbath could not arrest it?

How many Sabbaths have I thus mispent! How many blessings for myself and others may have been lost by my failure to join in the prayer, how much food for my soul by intention to the sermon!

How few of these preparation seasons may have been known only to him who bends over the congregation to note the pulses of our spiritual life.

Let me then, by constant watchfulness and prayer, seek strength through this easily besetting sin; and let me enter the house of God, meditate on the sacredness of the place and the great interests at stake.—Overseer.

## The First Step.

There is an old Latin motto, often quoted, which is designed to convey in concise language a lesson of vast importance in moral language—a lesson of the beginning. However insignificant the fault may seem to be, however slight the departure from the strict line of rectitude, if we are but careful not to take the first step in the downward course, we are safe. If there be no first error, there certainly can be no second.

On the other hand, if we yield to the first temptation, we shall be less able to resist the second. The indulgence we have already allowed prepares us for another. Gradually, and more easily than we are apt to suppose, habits are formed; and that which might have been a chain tightly fastened at the beginning has become a chain that binds us in a cruel bondage.

The traveler on an Alpine height amused himself with setting in motion a small mass of snow; ere long an avalanche spread round through the valley, and the children at play on the Holland dike were delighted to guide the little rolling rills into mimic waterfalls, which their little hands controlled at will; ere long a mighty tide covered over the fields its devastating floods. The first step—the first theft—the first outburst—the first Sabbath desertion—how easy it seemed to wander to retreat his step, and regain the straight path from which he had only begun to swerve! Was it easy? Alas! almost impossible.

That first ungentle word, wounding the heart of a friend, how easy it had been to repress it; how ready to retract his step, and regain the straight path from which he had only begun to swerve! Was it easy? Alas! almost impossible.

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## Died Yesterday.

Every day I written this little sentence, "Died yesterday." Every day a flower is plucked from some sunny home—a branch is made from some happy circle—a jewel is taken from some treasury of love by the ruthless hand of the angel of death. Each day from the summer life of life some harvest disappears. Yes, every moment some cherished sentinel drops from the rugged ramparts of time into the surging waves of eternity. Even as we write, the church-bell tolls the doleful funeral knell of one who "died yesterday"—his solemn tones chill the blood in our veins, and make the heart sad and sad.

"Died yesterday." Who died? Perhaps it was a gentle, innocent babe, sinless as an angel, pure as the sapphire's gentle music, and whose laugh was as gushing as the summer rills loitering in a rose-bower—whose life was but a perpetual litany—a my-time crowned with blooming, delicate flowers which never fade. Or mayhap it was a youth, hopeful and promising—possessing the fire and animation of perennial life—whose path was strewn with sweet flowers of rarest beauty and verdure, with no serpent lurking beneath—one whose soul panted for communion with the great and good—but that heart was cold yesterday, and "died yesterday."

"Died yesterday." Daily, in men, women, and children are passing away; and hourly, in some lonely, silent graveyard, the cold, cheerless drops upon the coffin-lid of the dead. As often in the morn we find some rare flower that had bloomed sweetly in the sunset has withered forever, so daily, when we rise from our couch to go to our post, we miss some kind, cheerful soul, whose existence, perhaps, was dearly and sacredly entwined with our own, and had served as a beacon-light to our weary footsteps. But they are now gone, and future generations will know not their worth or appreciate their precepts. Yes, remember each day some sacred pearl drops from the jewel thread of friendship—some sweet heavenly lyre that we have heard went to listen has been hushed forever.

—Miss Notice.

## Religious Intelligence.

### South Africa.

Extract of a letter from the Rev. William H. Milward, dated Edendale, Jan. 29th, 1865:

I have accomplished the quarterly visitation of the classes in this Circuit for the June quarter, and making up my numbers, I am rejoiced to find that we have now about one hundred persons, young and old, on trial, as the fruit of the gracious spiritual quickening we have been favoured with during the present year. For nearly four months we have had the satisfaction of seeing one or more added daily, who were either inquiring the way to the Saviour, or rejecting the offer of peace with God through faith in Him. More than two months have rolled away since the last of these visits, and during that time one only has returned to the yoke of bondage from which she had been freed. At least, I cannot ascertain that any other has grown weary of the Lord's service. We who toil and earnestly pray for, but who seem bent on their own destruction, and determined to drag down to everlasting death as many souls as they can. Under these circumstances, we may perceive that while we have indeed much cause for rejoicing, yet we "rejoice with trembling." But we "pray for peace and earnestly" will the Pentecostal shower, the "Holy Ghost sent down from heaven."

You will doubtless have heard from other quarters what times of commercial depression in this colony these are. Our people here are suffering severely. We had hoped to get up the shell of the chapel this winter; and I have endeavoured to induce the people to give labour instead of money. Many have promised to do so, and one or two have already commenced to make bricks in performance of their promise.

Our school matters, I hope, than a turn for the best. If a Missionary needs the grace of patience more in one part of the world than another, I am disposed to think that part is South Africa, and I am really doubtful whether a Missionary can be tried more in his respect in any part of South Africa than at Edendale. Well, I will not complain. I expected difficulties when I left the shores of England, and of course I have not been disappointed. Still no disappointment has been more than I have been enabled to bear, and I yet believe that for every coming trouble God will make a way for my escape.—Miss Notice.

### Western Africa.

Extract of a letter from the Rev. Joseph May, Native Minister, dated Freetown, May 19th, 1865.

Progress of the Work.—It will, I am sure, afford you satisfaction to hear that in this Circuit we are going on with encouraging prospects of success. Through the blessing of God, the health of our Missionaries is good. The General Superintendent, who arrived here a few months ago, (last November) suffering in a great measure from the heat of the summer in England, after an absence of so many years in the West Indies, appears now improving. His family, I am glad to be able to say, are well.

The Lord is pouring out His Spirit upon us. In several places we have evidence of His Divine presence and blessing. The attendance on our religious services continues good. All our chapels on the Sabbath morning are filled with attentive hearers, and in most places the services are well attended, and frequently the word preached evidently has been in demonstration of the Spirit and power.

The preacher could not but be cheered when

## The Gospel in Burmah.

The results of evangelic labour in Burmah have been to solve the problem of the best method of dealing with rude and degraded races. An opinion still lingers in those 'high' quarters which are so long haunted by the ghosts of departed errors, that it is hopeless to press religious truth to the mind of such a people; till they have received the light of the Christian religion, and the arts of civilized life. There is no such thing as a graduated line on the social scale to mark the point at which men rise above the zero of brutish torpor into a state of religious susceptibility. The wild Karens were not first polished and then proselytized;—with them the Christianizing and the civilization went hand in hand, and as the moral character of their minds was raised, the physical was improved comparatively. Burmah has remained comparatively unpolished, unchristianized, and unenlightened, and is still in a state of barbarism. The results of evangelic labour in Burmah have been to solve the problem of the best method of dealing with rude and degraded races. An opinion still lingers in those 'high' quarters which are so long haunted by the ghosts of departed errors, that it is hopeless to press religious truth to the mind of such a people; till they have received the light of the Christian religion, and the arts of civilized life. There is no such thing as a graduated line on the social scale to mark the point at which men rise above the zero of brutish torpor into a state of religious susceptibility. The wild Karens were not first polished and then proselytized;—with them the Christianizing and the civilization went hand in hand, and as the moral character of their minds was raised, the physical was improved comparatively. Burmah has remained comparatively unpolished, unchristianized, and unenlightened, and is still in a state of barbarism.

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