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THE
Church Miscellany.

FEBRUARY, 1880.

First Congregational Church,

KINGSTON, ONT.

MEETINGS :

Sunday Public Services.....	11 A.M. AND 7 P.M.
Sunday School.....	2:30 P.M.
Church Prayer Meeting, Wednesday.....	7:30 P.M.
Bible Class, Monday.....	7:30 P.M.
District Prayer Meeting, Fortnightly, as Announced.	
Young People's Association, Fortnightly, as Announced.	
Ladies' Aid Society, Monthly, as Announced.	

The Church is the House of God and the services are free to all.
The entire revenue is derived from voluntary offerings.

"One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."

"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

1879/1883. 15/570 1886, 1887

Church Officers and Committee.

PASTOR :

DR. SAMUEL N. JACKSON.

DEACONS :

G. S. FENWICK, GEORGE ROBERTSON.
J. F. McEWAN.

SECRETARY :

JOHN DRIVER.

TREASURER :

GEORGE S. FENWICK.

GENERAL COMMITTEE :

The Pastor and Deacons, together with—

J. H. McFARLANE, HUGH JACK,
THOMAS HENDRY, THOS. SAVAGE, Jr.
WILLIAM D. HENDRY, JOHN DRIVER,
JOHN BOYD.

COLLECTORS :

J. H. McFARLANE..... *Weekly Offering.*
W. D. HENDRY..... *Open Collection.*
T. SAVAGE, Jr..... *Open Collection.*
D. SPENCE..... *Sunday Collection.*
E. MORHAM..... *Sunday Collection.*
W. D. HENDRY..... *Sunday Collection.*
W. RICHARDSON..... *Sunday Collection.*

CHURCH STEWARD :

GEORGE ROBERTSON.

ORGANIST :

JAMES SMITH.

CHORISTER :

THOMAS HENDRY.

USHERS :

ROBERT HENDRY, WILLIAM NEISH,
H. MILLER, L. B. SPENCER.

AUDITORS :

ROBERT HENDRY, DAVID DOWNS.

SEXTON :

E. SANFORD, No. 67 Sydenham Street.

CHURCH MISCELLANY.

The annual meeting of the Church and congregation held on the 11th instant was a very pleasant gathering in every respect, and one calculated to be of benefit as well as pleasure to all participating. The fact that although \$5,401.54 had been disbursed in various ways during the year, still no darkness of a deficit hung over us, was cheering. Besides an address from the Rev. R. Mackay and the reports from the various departments of church work, the members of the choir largely contributed to the pleasure of the evening by singing anthems, a quartette, a duet and a solo, all of which were rendered in their usual excellent way. The tea provided by the ladies was more than ample.

The pastor in his statement made reference to the work of the Church during the year past, the changes that had taken place in the Church and congregation, the reception of the Union in June, etc. The following statistics were given: Total number which have been on the Church roll from its formation until December 31st, 314; number remaining at that date, 95; number removed during the year—by death 2, by letter 4, in all, 6; number received during the year—by letter, 3, by profession 10, in all, 13; number of members remaining Dec. 31st, 102; increase on the previous year, 7; number of baptisms, 16.

Mr. George Robertson, the Treasurer, read the financial statement, which showed that there had been raised during the year the following sums: For Church Purposes, \$2,127.73; Fellowship Fund, \$55.77; Organ Fund, \$228; Ladies' Association, \$408.78; Sunday School, \$103.06; Denominational Objects, \$1,230.73; Catholic Objects, \$1,248.43; making a total for the year of

June 1926

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\$5,401.54, which, together with \$1,552.44 balances from last year, gives an income from all sources of \$6,953.98. The Church expenditures have been fully met, and the year 1879 is closed with an even balance sheet.

Mr. Thomas Hendry, on behalf of the Ladies' Association, presented their annual report. It indicated well attended meetings and the fact that both a sale and a bazaar have been successfully held during the past year. The amount to the credit of the Association at the beginning of the year was \$1,265.62; the receipts from all sources during the year, \$558.41; the disbursements were, \$149.63; giving a net increase for the year of \$408.78. This, together with the former balance, places \$1,674.40 to the credit of the Association. True to the interests of their Association, the ladies had a table in the adjoining Lecture Room filled with articles for sale, many of which were disposed of at the annual meeting, realizing about \$20; while the collection after the refreshments amounted to \$10.45.

The Sunday School Report was presented by Mr. J. H. McFarlane. The number of Teachers and Scholars on the roll at the beginning of the year, was 174, and the average attendance had been 141. There have been three deaths in the school, all of senior scholars, and each summons was very sudden. The receipts of the School for the various funds were as follow: Library Fund, \$32.60; Paper Fund, \$27; Missionary Fund, including a balance of \$21.64 from last year, \$38.06; Furnishing Fund, \$32.67; giving in all \$130.33.

The Children's Annual Festival held on the 12th inst. was a most enthusiastic meeting as usual. The large Lecture Room was crowded by scholars and their friends, and the "lashings" of pies and cakes disappeared almost as fast as they could be passed. The singing of the school was good, while "Mr. Savage's lambs" acquitted

themselves in a way so that their praises were on all lips, and Nelson Raymond gave an excellent reading. Addresses were made by the Pastor, Rev. R. Mackay, and Mr. Thomas Hendry. Two motions were moved and carried by the Scholars, one to the effect that \$15, should be given to the C. C. M. S., and the other that \$5, should be sent to the Labrador Mission. Two prizes had been pledged at the beginning of the year, one each to the scholar in the senior and in the junior divisions, who should give the best written answers to the prize questions published in the S.S. Times. Too few of the Scholars persevered in the effort, but the successful competitors were Miss. E. Monroe, and Miss. Gracey Mackay. These prizes were given by Deacons Fenwick and Robertson and were presented by the Pastor at the Festival, which was closed with a series of interesting sciopticon pictures, which the children very much enjoyed.

The third Annual Report of the Young Peoples Association, was presented by the president Mr. W. D. Hendry. The meetings of the association have been well attended and sustained. Aside from its regular fortnightly meetings, an effort is made to do special work in four departments, each of which is under a committee of its own. These embrace District Meetings, Foreign Missions, Bible Study, and Temperance. The District Prayer Meetings, as formerly, have been carried on, and the association has aided the ladies in their monthly meetings, by readings and musical selections.

The visit of the Rev. J. F. Stevenson, LL.B., to our city will long be remembered. Coming as he did at the request of Principal Grant to deliver one of the lectures of the Queen's College Literary and Scientific course, it was exceedingly kind in him to consent to remain over the following Sunday and preach in our churches, also to address the Ladies' Foreign Missionary Society and

the annual meeting of the Tract Society. If large audiences and great appreciation of his ministry in our midst will attract him, then may we hope for another visit in the future, to our gratification.

Last year the Directors of the Congregational College, placed each mission district in the Dominion, in the hands of certain agents to attend to the interests of the College. The report from this Eastren District indicates the following: All of the eleven Congregational Churches have sent remittances to the Treasurer, giving in all the sum of \$527.43, an increase on the previous year of \$34.93. Seven churches have increased the amounts of these subscription while four have slightly decreased. The whole amount has been raised without any expense to the College, or deduction from the subscriptions and with very little trouble to the "*Agent General*" further than correspondence.

While it must be a gratification to all that the Church was able to close the past year without a deficit in its finances, it should be borne in mind that had not a few made a special effort there would have been about \$100 short in the current expenses fund to add to the \$61 of arrears last year. Though this may not seem much when compared to the sum of \$5,400 raised, yet any sum however small is too much to be on that side of the account. Now that both years' arrears are cleared away, may we not hope that they will not be followed by their kind in the future?

In the Pastor's absence on Mission work, the Revs. Principal Grant and Professor Mowat will supply the pulpit on the 22nd instant with their usual kindness. The Rev. W. F. Clarke, pastor of the Petrolia Congregational Church, will visit our city next week, and may possibly address the meeting on Wednesday evening.

Received for MISCELLANY—"P.H.," \$1.50.



Michael Dodd's Trouble; or, God requireth the Past.

A TEXT FOR THE NEW YEAR.

ACCORDING to a good old custom in our town, the solemn "watch-night" of the last day in the year was succeeded by a special service, early on New Year's morning. A simple service of prayer and praise it was—praise for mercies past, and

prayer for the untried future—and very earnestly did the minister invite the poorer members of his flock to attend. to get a first word with their heavenly Father before the toils of a fresh period in their existence should commence. Not a few responded to his appeal by a timely appearance at this service, and much touched was their painstaking minister to see tokens of their presence, long before he entered the chapel. Here, resting against a pillar in the porch, was a spade, with trowel and hod; there, on a step corner, a carpenter's tool bag; then, a sweep's apparatus and soot bags. In a corner behind the scraper was a paint-pot, with its brushes, and there a blacksmith was evidently represented by a couple of stove bars.

"All right! That's Tom Parsons; that's Sam Rogers; and—yes"—here a flash of glad surprise lightened Mr. Morgan's face—"yes, surely that is Black Jack's bag! Oh, that, oh, that——"

What this "Oh, that!" was meant to express, we can only guess by observing that Mr. Morgan buried his face in his hands for a moment, and then, with a beseeching look, gazed upward, whilst a few inaudible words escaped his lips. He was asking the Holy Spirit's help and God's blessing on the words he was about to speak to the men who, doubtless chiefly to please their minister, had cared to assemble at so early an hour in the house of prayer. As for Black Jack, or, properly, Michael Dodd, he would not have been there at all, perhaps, if the unusual hour had not been rather lark-like.

"My friends," began Mr. Morgan, "I wish you all from the very depth of my heart, a truly happy new year; but still I wish you to remember that you have not done with the old year yet. Far from it. Listen to the text I have chosen to speak to you from. Listen attentively," and slowly and solemnly he read from his Bible: "God—requireth—that—which—is—past!"

Every eye was turned towards him, and amongst the many fixed in serious attention, Black Jack's were strikingly

conspicuous, as the white balls contrasted glaringly with his begrimed, if not actually sooty face.

“Perhaps,” continued the speaker, “some of us thought last night when the merry bells were ringing out the old year and ringing in the new, that they were bidding farewell to the past for us. But I tell you, my friends, that though they might ring out the year they had no power to ring out the past, for ‘God requireth’ it at your hands. You may think to bury it—as the saying is, ‘Let the dead past bury its dead’—but God will waken it out of your graves, when the secrets of all hearts are opened, and our sins meet us face to face at the great white throne. Is it not so? Listen again to God’s words: ‘We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether it be good or bad.’¹ Now what does that mean but the past returning on you? The things done in the body. *Done* is past; it is God’s to deal with, but yours to suffer the penalty of, or else to reap its golden fruit. *Do*, only, is yours in the present, it has no yesterdays, no to-morrows. ‘Do this and live,’ God says to you to-day, through His Holy Spirit; to-morrow it may be said to you, ‘If ye had done this; if ye had known in this, your day, the things which belong to your peace,’² and when once this is said to a soul, the doom of that soul is fixed, and, to its lasting woe, it finds that ‘God requires that which is past.’”

Then, in a few earnest words of entreaty, Mr. Morgan laid the sweet gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ before his hearers, telling them that though God did not promise for to-morrow, inasmuch as we know not what a day may bring forth,³ yet his offers of free salvation through Christ were so full for to-day, that were every sin-laden soul in the universe to go, each would find acceptance, pardon and peace for Jesus’ sake. Nor did he let them suppose that in their own strength they could do this apparently easy thing, “Believe, and be saved.” He plainly told them that

¹ 2 Cor. v. 10. ² Luke xix. 42. ³ Prov. xxvii. 1; James iv. 14.

they needed the Spirit's power, first to incline their souls for salvation, and then to draw them to it, or to Christ, who is salvation. " ' Lord, I believe ! Help Thou mine unbelief,' is a short prayer," he said, " but one that God loves to hear, when His Holy Spirit opens the poor penitent's lips to cry for help."

The service over, the men quickly departed, and shouldering their tools were soon on their way towards an honest day's work, each feeling pleased with himself, and therefore with all around him, for, apart from any spiritual good gained, the men were glad to see their minister's evident gratification at their having gathered in full force at God's house on this solemn occasion. Rather to his disappointment, Mr. Morgan heard no more of New Year's Day for some time, when one morning his housemaid came to him with a rather curious expression on her face, as she said :

" Please, sir, Black Jack's here, and he is so queer-like ; he will have it that your study chimney must want sweeping by this time. He is not in drink, for I never saw him soberer in my life. Indeed, 'tis said he has not been tipsy since New Year's Day."

" Since New Year's Day !" ejaculated Mr. Morgan.

" Yes, sir, and cook says as the milkman told her, 'twas all along of some words you spoke then."

" He wants to sweep this chimney, does he ? Let him come in, Anne."

Black Jack entered, but the eager, anxious glare of his eyes told of something more than his soot-bag.

" Well, Jack, so you think my poor chimney is bound to want sweeping ?"

" Sir, I was drived to know how to send in a message to you, 'cept through the chimney."

Mr. Morgan could not help smiling as he said, " Whatever you want to say, I see it is coming straight from your heart, and that's better than through the chimney, isn't it ?"

But Black Jack was too intent on his " message " for

anything but sober earnestness, so, tucking his bag tight between his knees, he said,

“ Please, sir, them requirements are more than I can stand. They’m just like a thousand ghosts let loose on me ; they most drive me mad by day, and as for the night, why, I daren’t go to sleep for the scares.”

“ ‘ God requireth that which is past ; ’ do you mean that, Jack ? ”

“ I do, sir. I never heard them words before, and when I heard you give ’em out, I was taken a bit a-back ; but then, says I to myself, ‘ Never mind, Black Jack, that’s old Scripture ; it’s nothing to you. ’ But when you comes out with the same thing, only stronger, from the New Scriptures, then says I to myself, ‘ Then it’s all over with you, for, from first to last, there isn’t a single back thing you’ve got to show that isn’t either a sham, or a sin, or a falsity. ’ Oh, sir, what can Black Jack do, when God requires the past of him ? ”

And overcome with emotion Jack wept like a child, then, raising his eyes still streaming with tears, he cried piteously—

“ Sir, I thought you could help me.”

“ I can’t, but Christ can, and will.”

“ If I only knew how,” sighed Jack.

“ Come over here ” (Jack was standing at the door), “ and I will show you how. There now, look in that looking-glass ; what do you see ? ”

Black Jack looked, but saw nothing but his own soiled face, which seemed all the more soiled by contrast with the streaks where the tears had run down his cheeks. He shook his head, on which Mr. Morgan said,

“ I tell you what I see : just what Christ will do for you.”

Jack turned round in amazement.

“ I see drops of water rolling down and washing away the stains from your cheeks, and they remind me of that text, which tells us what the precious blood does for us :

'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'¹ Oh, Jack, if you truly repent of your sins, Christ's blood will flow over the past, as those tears over your stains, and blot out as a thick cloud all your transgressions,² so that when God requires the past at your hands, you can point to the atoning blood, and say, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'

"Black Jack's sins," murmured Michael.

"Yes; no matter what he is called, or what his sins, there is forgiveness with God for sinners, though there is no toleration of sin; do you think you understand this, Michael?"

"Yes, sir; we must take our sins to Christ and let 'em bide there; that's it, isn't, sir?" He spoke eagerly.

"Yes; and then comes the new life, which men must lead who have left their past with Jesus. Are you willing to lead this new life, my friend?"

"That I am, sir."

"Are you able?"

"May be, sir, if God makes me willing, He'll make me able, too."

"No doubt about it, Michael." Mr. Morgan spoke so fervently that poor "Black Jack" started; then, with a smile that showed oddly on his sooty face, he said,

"Then it's all 'safe bind, safe find,' sir, and by God's help I'll try the new life to once."

"Remember, Michael, it is the Holy Spirit's work to make you both of these; to will and to do alike come from Him. If you would indeed lead a new life, your cry to Him must be with all your heart, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.'³ When you have this clean heart, washed in Christ's blood, and this right spirit set right by the Holy Spirit, then you will have new desires, and these desires will all tend towards a new life. Oh, Michael Dodd, this will indeed be a happy

¹ Isa. i. 18.

² Isa. xlv. 22.

³ Psa. li. 10.

new year if it finds you treading in the path of life, ‘in the pathway whereof there is no death.’”¹

Michael could only bow his head in reverent silence, as Mr. Morgan grasped his hand and bade him God speed and a happy new year.

“Ask, and ye shall Receive.”

AN EPISODE IN A STUDENT'S LIFE.



COMMON with many thoughtful young persons, I believed in the power of prayer—the prayer of faith—even before I knew what the saving change called conversion meant. But after my conversion and self-consecration to the work of the ministry, I experienced many remarkable and convincing answers to prayer. I have heard many sceptical persons, both young and old, scoff at the idea of prayer bringing down blessings on the utterer of the prayer, or winning answers from heaven. But I *know* from experience, that God does hear and answer prayer, and that sometimes in a way which appears to be little short of miraculous. Prayer is the telegraph of the skies; it “moves the hand that moves the world.”

I was not very rich in this world's goods in my student days. I had relinquished a good prospect in business, and had suffered some degree of hardship and contumely on account of my choice of the Church. I might have made a fortune in business, as my father did before me, had I chosen, but I refused, “choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God” than to yield my powers to the service of the world. I had been consecrated to the Lord's service by the prayer of a dying mother. She had held me in her arms, as the last breath was going, and besought the Lord that I might be spared and inclined to labour for Him. That prayer was answered. Although enticed by the

¹ Prov. xii. 28.

gains of business, I turned away, resolved not to betray my firmest convictions, and my most solemn aspirations. And since God had inclined me thus by His Spirit to walk in His ways, would He let me want? No, certainly not, while it could be said of Him, “The gold is mine, the silver is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.” So in all my straits appertaining to my student-life, I ever found that if I resolutely and regularly laid my wants before the Lord, He never failed to send me supplies.

Before the occasion to which I refer, I was much exercised in mind for lack of about a dozen educational works, which were imperatively necessary if I would pass the forthcoming examination for my degree of B.A. I had practised the utmost economy, spending my allowance only on bare necessaries, and denying myself all extra comforts, in order to preserve an honest name and “a conscience void of offence, toward God, and toward man.” I ever held it a most disgraceful thing for a student looking forward to holy orders, to go into debt, especially without a prospect of paying; but books are a student’s necessities; they are his tools, without which he cannot work if he would; and I knew not how to obtain books without going into debt. I had passed all my previous examinations with honour, and had been looking forward to the forthcoming one with a large degree of hopeful interest. And, much as I believed in prayer, I could not, as a sensible youth, ask the Lord, foolishly, to grant me success in the examination, if I went to it ignorant of the subjects upon which the examiners were to try me. So, after writing out a full statement of the case to my father, and enclosing a list of the books I needed, I left the matter until I could receive a reply from home.

The reply came, and it was unfavourable. My father either would not or could not spare me the money. He regretted his inability, but stated that it was utterly impossible, as I had cost him so much in other college necessities. What was to be done? I thought of another friend, a distant relative, but a very wealthy and miserly one, who

loved gold as his god, and to him I wrote a letter. A reply in the negative came back to me, advising me to betake myself to some honest business, and forsake my expensive studies. Thus I felt that I had—could expect—no help from man.

This, however, only served to cast me more thoroughly upon God. I walked out, sadly and slowly, pondering my way. It seemed encompassed by thick clouds; for if I failed to win my degree, I could not expect the preferment which I was promised; and if I could not get the books in order to study, I had no more chance of passing the examination than a mere elementary schoolboy. So I resolved to try the power of prayer—assured that if the petition were in accordance with the will of God concerning me, I should receive what I asked for. So I set apart a certain hour, each afternoon, to pray for this one thing—the supply of my necessities. And very sweetly did the promise come to me: “My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

A week passed by, and still the answer tarried. Time was very precious, and I began to feel despondent; still I suffered not my daily hour to pass without filling up the time with supplication, that, if God saw it to be a right and proper thing, He would grant me the supply of necessary books. One afternoon, after praying thus, I set off for a walk, wondering why the answer was delayed, why I was thus tried, whether I had mistaken my vocation, and a thousand other things of a like nature. As I returned home, my college-mate met me, with the words,

“You are a lucky fellow! You seem to have friends somewhere, who think of you. I have just paid eighteenpence to the carrier for a parcel of books; they are in your chambers now. You need not trouble now; pay me by-and-bye.”

I hurried in, wondering almost if I were in a dream, and with not a moment's delay, opened my parcel. There were several handsomely-bound books, and, singular to say, the

very books about which I had been praying. I looked them through—there were the precise number of books that I needed, not one more, nor one less, and the very identical ones. Again and again I searched the parcel through; again and again I examined my list of friends, to try and discover who it could possibly be who had thus befriended me, but in vain; there was not one line to indicate the sender, or to give a clue. I wrote home for an explanation, asking my father if he knew anybody who had sent them; but he knew nothing of the matter; and to this day I am ignorant of the donor's name. This, I think, was a direct answer to prayer.

I am otherwise circumstanced now, and have more of this world's goods than in my student days; but I never forget the lesson the Lord taught me in that time of literary need. Surely He fed me, as truly as He does the ravens. And as truly as I was heard and succoured in a time of want, so surely will others be relieved by the great "Hearer and Answerer of prayer." Fear not, despondent child of God. Sooner than reject your application, the Lord will make windows in heaven, and open them to you, "pouring down such an abundant blessing, that there shall not be room enough to contain it."

"Yet Not I."

A THOUGHT FOR THE NEW YEAR.



It is a heavy responsibility you are taking on yourself," I remarked to a friend about to engage in a work of Christian charity which would inevitably cost largely in toil and care and money.

"No," he answered quietly; "there will be no responsibility for me. There is a motto I learned long ago from the Apostle Paul, which is my shield and sword for all I may be called, as God's servant, to do or bear."

I expected to hear some such words as "Quit you like men; be strong," for my friend was one who had done

great things for God, one who wielded, wherever he might be, a very powerful Christian influence.

“It is a very short and simple text,” he continued, with a smile: “‘Yet not I.’ The words occur twice, you will remember, in St. Paul’s writings: ‘I live; *yet not I*, but Christ liveth in me.’ ‘I laboured more abundantly than they all: *yet not I*, but the grace of God which was with me.’”

Yes, of course I knew the words well; but I never thought over them before as I did that day, and many a day since; and especially when entering on any new stage of life’s journey, as we are doing this New Year’s Day, when tempted to anxiety or fear concerning the trials that may be before me, these words, so simple, yet so full, come home to me with fresh help and most practical teaching.

For they tell a truth, which realized takes away all such anxiety and fear connected with our own weakness and shortcomings. Well may he who can say with the apostle, “Yet not I, but Christ in me,” say also, like him: “I take pleasure, I will glory in my infirmities.”

“Yet not I,” we then may say, in the daily, hourly witness-bearing for God to which the Christian is called. It is alone by the shining in our hearts of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, that our light can so shine before men that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven. “Fair as the moon,” glorious with reflected sun-light, the Church of Christ is said to be. “In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation ye shine, holding forth the Word of life.”

Are we called to testify in word for our Lord? “It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you,” said our Lord to His disciples, called to bear witness to Him, “even beforetimes.”

“Yet not I,” in the trials and difficulties of active service for our God: “He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.” “Without Me ye can do nothing;” but “is anything too hard for the Lord?” “Yet

not I,” when called to meet some of the many claims of want and sorrow wherein this earth abounds. He undertakes it all for us, even as when He said to penniless and perplexed Peter: “That take and give for Me and thee.”

“Yet not I,” when in the hour of prayer I feel cold and dead and prayerless. “His Spirit maketh intercession for us.” “Therefore, however it go,” says the holy Leighton, “continue praying . . . and forget not that the ready way to rise out of this sad state is to be much in viewing the Mediator, and interposing Him between the Father’s view and thy soul. He hath declared it: ‘No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.’”

“Yet not I,” in the conflict with our fierce and untiring foes, the world, the flesh, and the devil. “Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God’s.” How are we sinners to reach this safe and blessed standing-place? Even by learning to say, with true penitence and faith, “I have sinned; yet not I;” “He became sin for me, who knew no sin;” “He loved me, and gave Himself for me.” From the hour we rest our hearts in this His full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, it is our glorious right to say yet further: “Not I, but Christ for me, stands in the presence of God; for I am become the righteousness of God in Him.” “Perfect through His comeliness which He hath put upon them,” do His ransomed brethren appear in His Father’s sight.

“So dear, so very dear to God,
Dearer they cannot be;
For in the person of His Son
They are as dear as He.”

Therefore is this precious “Yet not I” a shield of faith from all fear, not only concerning the trials of the present and the sins of the past, but the solemn prospects of the future; the hour of death, the day of judgment. “Have you no fear at the thought of appearing before God?” one asked a poor old Christian regress on her death-bed

“No; no fear,” she replied. “I shall just get behind Jesus Christ.”

And if all fear and failing of heart is dispelled by this “Yet not I, but Christ,” how utterly is also boasting excluded from the Christian life. How can any of His people glory in spiritual attainments, in power, or success, save “in the Lord”? Or how can we glory in men? how put our dependence in any, even the highest saint of God, so as to feel, if parted from such, we are in want; since all that we truly love and reverence in them is Christ Himself, and “Christ is ours”?

St. Paul teaches us in many passages of his epistles, notably in Romans vi., how practically to realize the privileges attending this our blessed relation to our crucified and risen Saviour: it is by “yielding ourselves” unto Him, putting away all those sinful corruptions to which in His death we died, every hindrance which could check the inflowing of His Spirit into our souls; giving up our will to Him in entire submission and trust. Yet does not this aspect of the Christian life, as might at first appear, destroy individuality and independence of character in a child of God. There is no resemblance whatever between this blessed union with his Lord and the self-effacement which some religions and philosophies, ancient and modern, have held up as the standard of perfected humanity. The Gospel has been fitly called “the safeguard of individuality.” “If we would know,” says Alexandre Vinet, “of what value in the Master’s eyes is the winning of each separate soul, let us remember how there is joy among the angels over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance. A being endowed with a free will is, in a sense, complete as God, and is of more value in God’s sight than an irresponsible universe; and to use his independence to do willingly what God’s universe does mechanically—to unite himself to the Divine life, and lose self in Him—this is the glory of man, and his only perfect happiness.”



To-morrow.

TIMOTHY RANDELL was our village shoemaker, and a good and clever workman he was ; no boots from the largest manufactory were better or lasted longer than those that came from Tim's little workshop ; as to repairing, Tim used to say—and I believe he spoke truly—that there was not a man in England who could put on a neater patch or cobble a shoe better than himself.

Tim might have made a good living and been comfortably off but for one great failing : he was always putting off doing his work till he was really driven to it by the importunities of his customers, or by the fear of offending them. If Tim had made up his mind to a particular motto, and had modelled his life to that motto, I think it would have been, " Never do to-day what can be put off till to-morrow."

If a customer asked Tim how soon he would have a pair

of boots mended, Tim's reply was always the same—"You shall have them to-morrow." But when the next day came, and the customer called for them, Tim generally had an excuse that he had been very busy and really hadn't had time to see to them, but "you shall be sure and have them to-morrow." And this sort of thing would go on till his customer would threaten to go elsewhere in future; and then Tim would set to work and finish, perhaps in an hour, what had been waiting to be done for weeks. Some of Tim's customers were often put out by his want of punctuality, and more than one had carried his trade to his rival at the next village; others had reasoned with him on his foolishness, and tried to persuade him to conquer his indolent habit, but nothing seemed to impress upon him the importance of doing each day's work in the day.

"Tim," said my father, one day, as he met him in the lane close by his cottage, "are my boots done?"

"Not quite, sir; but you shall be sure and have them to-morrow."

"To-morrow! you are always talking of to-morrow; that's what you said a week ago."

"You shall have them to-morrow, sir, without fail."

"Can't you send them home to-night, Tim?"

"No, I can't indeed, sir. I am so busy that I have not a minute to spare to-day."

"Ah! Tim, you are a foolish fellow. I shall have to go somewhere else in future; and I am a good customer to you."

"Yes, sir, you are, and I really beg your pardon for not having done your boots before; but I hope you will look over it this time." And Tim made a note in his mind that Mr. Lucas's boots should be the very next job.

That evening when we were sitting at home, my father reading, my mother working, and us boys learning our lessons, there was a knock at the door, and to my father's surprise, he was told that Tim had brought home the boots.

"Tell him to come in," said my father to the servant; and in a minute Tim stood at the parlour door looking as pleased and proud as if he had done some meritorious thing in having finished the work that ought to have been done weeks before.

"Why, Tim," said my father, "I thought you said you could not do my boots to-day."

"So I did, sir; but I have managed to do them, and I have brought them home."

"Oh well, you needn't have come on purpose, but as you have brought them, so much the better."

"I did not come on purpose, sir. I had to go to Mr. Sharp's, and, as I passed your door, thought I would save myself another journey."

"Why, you will have a long walk to Mr. Sharp's, Tim," said my mother; "and it is a rough night to be out."

"Yes, ma'am," answered Tim. "But I ought to have been there yesterday; and now Mr. Sharp has sent to say, if I didn't go to-night, he wouldn't give me the job, so I am obliged to go."

"Just like you, Tim," said my father, laughing; "always putting off doing things till you are pushed. Well, it would be a bad thing for you to lose your customer; but remember, that if you carry the habit into every other thing as you do into your business, you may meet with a greater loss than if your best customer left you."

"What can that be?" inquired Tim.

"Can't you guess what I mean, Tim? Then I must tell you," my father said; and he spoke a few kindly words of warning, pointing out the danger of delay even in comparatively small matters, and showing the great danger there is of putting off till some future time the things that pertain to the after life. My father spoke very gently and impressively, and poor Tim seemed to listen to him attentively, and promised to think of what he had heard.

"And now," said my father, as Tim was going, "I will

give you a proverb to think of, one that will make an altered man of you if you will act up to it: 'Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.'

"Boys," said my father, after Tim was gone, "try and take a lesson from Tim. He is a man that might have done well for himself if it had not been for his dreadful habit of delay. At one time, I remember, he kept two or three workmen, and had nearly all the trade of the country round. but he lost his customers, one by one, because he so constantly broke his word and disappointed them; and now, you see, he is obliged to work by himself, and unless he improves I am afraid he will lose his trade entirely. Nor is this the worst; for ever since I have known him he has been putting off attending to his eternal interests. He has promised me time after time that he will earnestly and seriously attend to religious instructions and strive to become a better man, but has never yet done so; and unless God takes pity on him and arouses him from his present state of carelessness, I fear he will delay too long, and at last lose all."

I may here say that although Tim was not what would usually be called a bad character, yet he was an entirely irreligious man, and, so far, had seemed to profit nothing by the kind and gentle persuasions of my father to look after the interests of his soul. Alas! that there should be so many who, like him, put off from time to time thinking of those things which should command the very first attention.

The habit of procrastination is one that is ruinous to the worldly interests of the man who allows himself to indulge in it. Many a fair prospect has been destroyed, and bright future spoiled, by this insidious foe. How many a man at the present moment is struggling with poverty, and living in obscurity who, if he had been able to conquer it, might have been prosperous and useful? It is utterly impossible to estimate the amount of suffering and misery that is

brought about by the habit of putting off till to-morrow what ought to be done to-day :

“ *To-morrow* you will live, you always cry :
 In what fair country does this *morrow* lie,
 That 'tis so mighty long ere it arrive ?
 Beyond the Indies doth this *morrow* live ?
 'Tis so far-fetched this *morrow*, that I fear
 'Twill be both very old and very dear.
To-morrow will I live, the fool does say,
 To-day itself 's too late, the wise lived yesterday.”

The next morning I had to be early in the village, and as I was passing Tim's cottage I noticed two or three people outside the door, engaged in what appeared to be a very interesting gossip. I should not have noticed this so much, but another thing caught my attention—Tim's workshop was not opened. What could be the matter? Surely something must be wrong, for Tim was always an early riser, and I never remembered being in the village before his shop-shutter was down.

Passing by the people, I heard one of them say, “Do you think he will live?” On hearing this question, I inquired what was the matter, and was told that on the previous night, as Tim was coming home from Mr. Sharp's, he had, in the dark, slightly diverged from the meadow path and walked over the edge of a chalk pit ; he had a fall of several feet, and was considerably injured : at first he was quite stunned, and how long he remained unconscious he could not tell, but when he came to his senses he found himself so stiff and bruised that he could not move, and had to remain where he was until some labourers passed by in the early morning. He had just been brought to his cottage in one of Mr. Sharp's waggons, and the doctor had been sent for.

When I heard all this, my father's words seemed to ring in my ear : “Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” Poor Tim ! little did he think how soon those words would be proved true as regarded himself.

It was a long time before Tim quite recovered from the

effects of the fall : it was found that his shoulder had been dislocated, and he had received severe injuries to his head ; but he had a good constitution, and, with careful nursing and attention, he did eventually get well.

Tim always afterwards looked back to that day as one of the happiest in his life. He said that, after he left our house on the night of his accident, the advice my father had given kept a fast hold on him, at least so far as concerned procrastination in his trade, and he quite made up his mind to try to conquer his enemy, and apply himself with vigour to his business ; for he had sense enough to see that if he did not alter his course he would soon have no trade left. But as regarded the more important advice, he thought that there was time enough for that, though he did mean some day or other to take it into consideration. Such were his thoughts before he met with the accident. But far different ones he had as soon as he recovered sensibility after his fall, and found himself unable to move. *Then* he began to think he had made a greater mistake in neglecting the things concerning his soul's salvation, than he had done in neglecting his trade. Now that death, as he thought, stared him in the face, he began to wish that he was prepared to meet the last enemy, and to meet his God. And as he lay where he had fallen, and hour after hour passed away, the poor fellow thought of what my father had said to him that evening, and from the depths of his heart he sent up a prayer to God that He would yet spare him, and help him from that time to live a better life.

This prayer God graciously saw fit to answer ; and when Tim was able to get about his work again, he did so in a far different way from what he had been used to. He works with a will now, and as he works he sings the praises of Him who by His providence has led him to the feet of his Saviour, and has called him out of darkness into His marvellous light.

If Tim ever relates his accident to any one, he is sure to dwell upon the danger of delay, and to point out how nearly

that habit had been his ruin, and earnestly to try to impress his hearers with the fact that "To-day is the accepted time;" "Now is the day of salvation"; not some future time; not even to-morrow, on which we should never depend, seeing we know not what a day may bring forth.

Uncle Will and the Extinguished Candle.



UNCLE WILL and the writer of this sketch were working together underground in one of the tin mines of Cornwall, digging in a singularly narrow place after the precious ore. It was a very unfrequented part of the mine, where the sound of another miner's hammer was not heard on the rock. Uncle Will was an old man, and so I let him sit upon a board a very little way behind the working, charging him to take care and keep his light burning, whilst I used the pick and iron wedges, cutting through the lode. Nearly half-an-hour, perhaps, had thus passed, and not a word had been spoken between us, when, by some mischance, I happened to strike the candle which gave us light in the working, and which was stuck to a fragment of the rock with soft clay, called Saint Ann's, with the point of the pick, knocking it amongst the rubbish, so that it was extinguished immediately. Looking back on Uncle Will, I was perfectly astounded to find that his candle, too, had gone out, with the exception of a spark of fire in the wick, at which the old man was blowing with all his might, endeavouring in vain to enkindle it. A puff or two more, and we were in utter darkness. I questioned my unwatchful comrade about it, and his reply was, "Oh dear, I caught a nod, and awoke just in time to see my candle falling."

And now what could we do? To cry for help would be utterly useless; as well might the wrecked mariner, floating on a board, call to the moon. To sound the rock, and give the understood signal with miners, would also be

fruitless, as we were too isolated for anything of this sort. Nor had we any means to strike a light, for this occurred before lucifer matches had been invented. If we remained there, it might be many days before any help reached us, and in that time we should suffer from hunger and thirst, and perhaps die of starvation. Seeing our position thus critically extreme, I addressed Uncle Will, saying there was no other way for us than to endeavour to grope our way through the great darkness to the top of the mine. It was a serious undertaking, but the only way likely at all to prove effectual. Better run this risk than sit there to die of cold and hunger in the sickly sulphurous cell. Should we try? And Uncle Will answered, "Yes."

Taking a pick in my hand to feel the way, I went before, and Uncle Will followed after. How slowly we advanced! Sometimes we had to ascend the face of the rock, where little notches were cut for our feet, the omission of one of which would be swift destruction. Sometimes we had a ladder to climb, and land upon the narrowest platform, full of holes, where a slip of the foot would be our ruin. Sometimes we had low workings to crawl through, where we could not stand upright, and flinty rocks to scramble over with teeth as sharp as swords. Then we had long levels to pass through, in which were deep sinks, with only a single narrow plank across them, which warped and bent as we came upon it, crawling over on our hands and knees. I often had to cheer Uncle Will with words of encouragement, bidding him to keep directly behind me, while we felt our way inch by inch, and foot by foot with the pick-handle. Now we had a set of ladders to mount, shifting this way and that way as we reached the top of one to gain the foot of the other, the ascent being no wider than an ordinary well. Slowly, silently, and solemnly we went; and in the pauses of our steps we could hear the beating of our hearts against our side. A single slip of the foot, and we should be lost in some grim excavation where we might lie undiscovered until the sea gave up her dead, and

the earth put on her flaming funeral shroud. Whenever we could, we felt the rock at our side, or under our feet; and with our previous acquaintance with the way, having been over it so often before, we knew within a few yards where we were.

But now we had to pass a shaft, where the footway was not more than three feet wide, which yawned under us some two hundred fathoms deep. There was no chain, or rope, or railing around it, or security of any kind. It was useless to strain our eyes to try to catch a gleam of light; we might as well have kept them closed, for the great gloom was as perfect as that in the house of the dead. This shaft was the most dangerous part of the way; and I cannot tell the reader how slowly we passed it. Sometimes a loose stone, disturbed by our movement, would roll into the void, and go sounding down the dreadful depths, until we could hear it no longer. Thus we stole onward, with the thought of home, wife, and children in our minds. Could we cross this cruel gulf hope would revive, for then the ladders would almost be in a direct perpendicular line to the top. At last we got over, and Uncle Will and his guide were again ascending. We felt now comparatively safe. This was the regularly-used way up and down the mine, and we might, perhaps, soon meet some one with a light; and if not, we felt almost certain of reaching the top. Up we go, up, up, ladder after ladder, ladder after ladder, each round bringing us nearer to liberty and home. By-and-bye, when looking upward, we saw a speck of light like a distant star in the firmament, and as we ascended higher, it became larger and larger, until its cheering rays shot down upon the ladder steps, gladdening our hearts more than the sweetest music. Grasping the last ladder, we felt the tears of thankfulness stealing into our eyes; and reaching the topmost round, and stepping into the dazzling light, we had to wipe them away with the sleeve of our flannel dress. We were saved by the guiding hand of our Father out of the darksome dungeon into the blessed air and glorious

sunshine! Yes, by untiring, persevering effort, we had climbed into the light.

And so shall it be with him who mourns in secret and trustfully lays his troubles before his Maker. Art thou sitting in darkness, poor weary one? and is thy candle extinguished in the conflict, like those of the two miners in the depths of the earth? To remain thus without an effort on thy part is eternal ruin. Arise and climb towards Him who is the Light of the world, and every step shall bring thee nearer to the region of purest joy, where the Sun of Righteousness rains His splendour upon the lovely land. Is thy daily labour much, and thy bread little, and do thy hungry children often look towards the empty cupboard and ask for food in vain? Tell it to Him who is the Guider of His people. Fling away thy garment and kneel before the Son of David, and in His own time deliverance shall come; the beauty of heaven shall beam upon thy path, and the shadows of sorrow flee away. Step by step, and the desert is passed; the gloomy ravine is left behind; the rugged ridge is surmounted; and the Canaan of repose is reached, which "hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

J. H.

Almost and Altogether.



WAS almost in time, but the train had started just two minutes before," said my friend, as he returned disappointed from the railway station.

"I almost saved him," I heard a man say, as he related a sad boat accident in which one poor fellow was drowned.

"I am almost certain this is the way," said my guide, as he pointed out a road, which in the end proved to be quite wrong.

In each of these cases what a fatal difference between

“almost” and “altogether!” “Almost in time” meant “altogether” too late; “almost saved” meant “altogether” lost; “almost certain” meant “altogether” in ignorance.

“Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,” said Agrippa; but the impression probably passed away, leaving him “altogether” a heathen. And so we see in all the concerns of life, to be “almost” is widely different from being “altogether.”

“Almost persuaded.” What does it mean? and who are they to whom the words may be applied? There are many, I fear, who may be thus called. They are those who acknowledge the necessity for a change of heart; they are melted to tears by a stirring sermon or a solemn scene; they can talk fluently on the great truths of the Gospel; they can discuss difficult questions of doctrine, and lament over the shortcomings of their minister or their neighbours. At one time they were dissatisfied with the life they were living—they began to be alarmed, and to fear that their state was not altogether a safe one. Like “Christian,” the pilgrim, they could no longer stay quietly in the City of Destruction; they began to cast about for some means of escape; they set out on the way to the Celestial City, but they cast many a lingering look behind; they could not make up their mind to break off altogether from their former companions, their former pleasures, their former sins. “There surely can be no harm in doing this or that, or in going to such and such place of amusement: God is not so strict as to expect us to give up all the pleasures of life; and we can make up for it by being more diligent at our devotions afterwards.” And so they go on in a miserable halting way, trying to serve God with half their heart, whilst they give the other half to the world. No wonder that they make no progress, that they do not seem to advance in the Christian life, that they get no happiness from their religion; it is an irksome task, a painful burden, always weighing on their mind and spirits, restraining and repressing them; and they sigh, and wish religion were a pleasanter thing.

My friends, it is not thus that the battle is to be fought, the race to be run, the prize to be gained. No half-heartedness of this sort will win it for us. If wishing would get us to heaven, who would not be there? But more, far more than that is needed. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Along the road which leads to it there is no room for mere idle "wishers" and loiterers; all are striving, all are fighting, all are pressing on. The gate is strait, the way is narrow—we cannot even enter on it without a struggle.

And there are but the two roads, the broad and the narrow, the right and the wrong. If you are not pressing earnestly along the one, you are as surely advancing along the other. There is no comfortable middle road, along which you can wander at your leisure, loitering on, until you can decide which of the roads you will take—keeping God waiting until you make up your mind whether you will serve Him or not. No. I will speak the truth. If you are only almost a Christian, you are no Christian at all.

And what is the alternative? To be altogether a Christian. That is, to give ourselves up altogether to Christ, to be saved by Him, renouncing all trust in any merits or goodness of our own, esteeming all our righteousness as but filthy rags, and trusting only to His all-sufficient merits; coming as helpless sinners to an Almighty Saviour, able and willing to save each one who comes to Him as such.

It is, to give up our wills and affections entirely to Christ, to be renewed and sanctified by Him; every thought and desire of our heart being brought into subjection to Him; our one wish to be conformed daily more and more to His likeness, and to have His mind formed in us. It is, to give ourselves up to lead a consistent Christian life, walking carefully and circumspectly, lest we should bring reproach on the name of Christ; endeavouring to let our light so shine before men that they may glorify our Father in heaven. It is a daily taking up the cross, a steadfast "looking unto

Jesus," an earnest "following on to know the Lord," forgetting the things which are behind and reaching forth to those before, not counting ourselves to be already perfect—no, very far from that—conscious more and more every day of our imperfections and shortcomings and sinfulness; but, having once "put our hand to the plough," pressing on with all the energy of our heart and soul towards the prize of our high calling; not stopping, or doubting, or casting one lingering look behind. Going on thus in the strength of God, our path will be as the "shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Like David, we can say, "With my whole heart have I sought Thee." Who does not know the advantage of having our whole heart in anything we undertake? What makes a man succeed in the world like earnestness and singleness of purpose? And depend upon it, in nothing is whole-heartedness more needed than in the service of God.

But here I must say a word, lest I should make the heart of any sad whom God has not made sad; lest I should discourage any timid, fearful Christian, who is humbly trying to follow his Master, yet fears it is presumption to hope that he may call himself "altogether a Christian." To such a one I would say: Are you conscious that you are trying to follow your Lord? Is it your earnest desire to walk more worthy of Him? Is it your constant prayer that He will hold up your feeble goings in His paths? That He will lead you in His truth, and teach you? Then, surely, you need not be afraid to hope that you are "altogether a Christian."

And now, my friends, let me beg you most earnestly and affectionately to give these few words, feeble and most unworthy though they are, your prayerful consideration. Find out whether you are altogether or only almost a Christian. Halt no longer halfway between Christ and the world. If the Lord be God serve Him with all the powers of your soul; and be sure, very sure, that to be altogether a Christian is the only way of safety and of the truest hap-

piness—the foretaste here below of the unending happiness of heaven. May God grant to you and me grace to follow this way, and may the words never be applied to us: “Almost persuaded to be a Christian.”

For Me!

OH! Jesus! let me realise
That true, deep, wondrous love of Thine,
Which brought Thee down from heav'n above,
To die for me, Oh Lamb divine!

Why should'st Thou die for me, O Lord?
All sinful, worthless as I be,
But dust and ashes in Thy sight;
Why such a sacrifice for me?

Upon that bitter cross of shame
My great Redeemer there I see;
The cruel thorns, the nails, the spear,—
What! All this suffering, Lord, for me?

Thine agony and bloody sweat,
That night in dark Gethsemane;
That cry—“Thy will, not Mine be done!”
Was uttered there, O Lord, for me.

For me! Oh, Lord! what can I do
To show my gratitude to Thee?
I can but give my heart to Him
Who gave His own life's blood for me.

I feel Thy tender love so near,
As unto Thy dear cross I flee;
I hear Thy voice, so soft and clear,
Whispering, “Sinner, come to Me!”

Casting away all care, I come
Close to my Saviour's wounded side,
And bathe my head, my hands, my feet,
In that all-cleansing crimson tide.

Thus washed and clothed in garments white,
With Jesus I shall ever be,
Safely within that heavenly home
My Saviour died to win for me!

Past, Present, and Future.

I WOULD be thankful, Lord, to Thee
For all the mercies Thou hast given,
In Thy great love to set me free
From earth, and raise my soul to heaven.

To me the earth is very fair,
Knowledge is sweet, though I but wet
My lips within her fountain rare,
Nor drink her copious stream as yet.

And even in life's daily round
Joy is not wanting ; that first day
Has yet to come wherein is found
No token of Thee by the way,

No message from Thee to my heart,
Convey'd by various means : may be
Dear friendship's sympathies impart
A thrill that can but spring from Thee ;

Or kindness from some saint of Thine
Whose heart Thy pure love richly knows,
Imparts a happiness to mine,
And bears me upward as it flows.

Or Thy blest Spirit's influence
That cometh as the gentle wind,
Breathing, though unperceived by sense,
Leaving a holy joy behind ;

Giving the gracious power in all
Thy varied dealings love to see
That, whatsoever may befall
Are means to draw me nearer Thee.

Teach me to love Thee not alone
For what Thou'st done, art doing still,
But for those bright hopes only known
To those who seek Thy perfect will.

The store of love and knowledge vast
To which my quickened powers shall rise,
When all the mists of earth are past,
And I soar upwards to the skies ;

When, as eternal ages roll,
Creating and redeeming love
Unfolding to my raptured soul
Shall fill the round of life above.

E. S. H.

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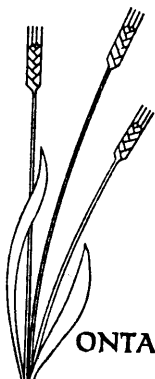
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