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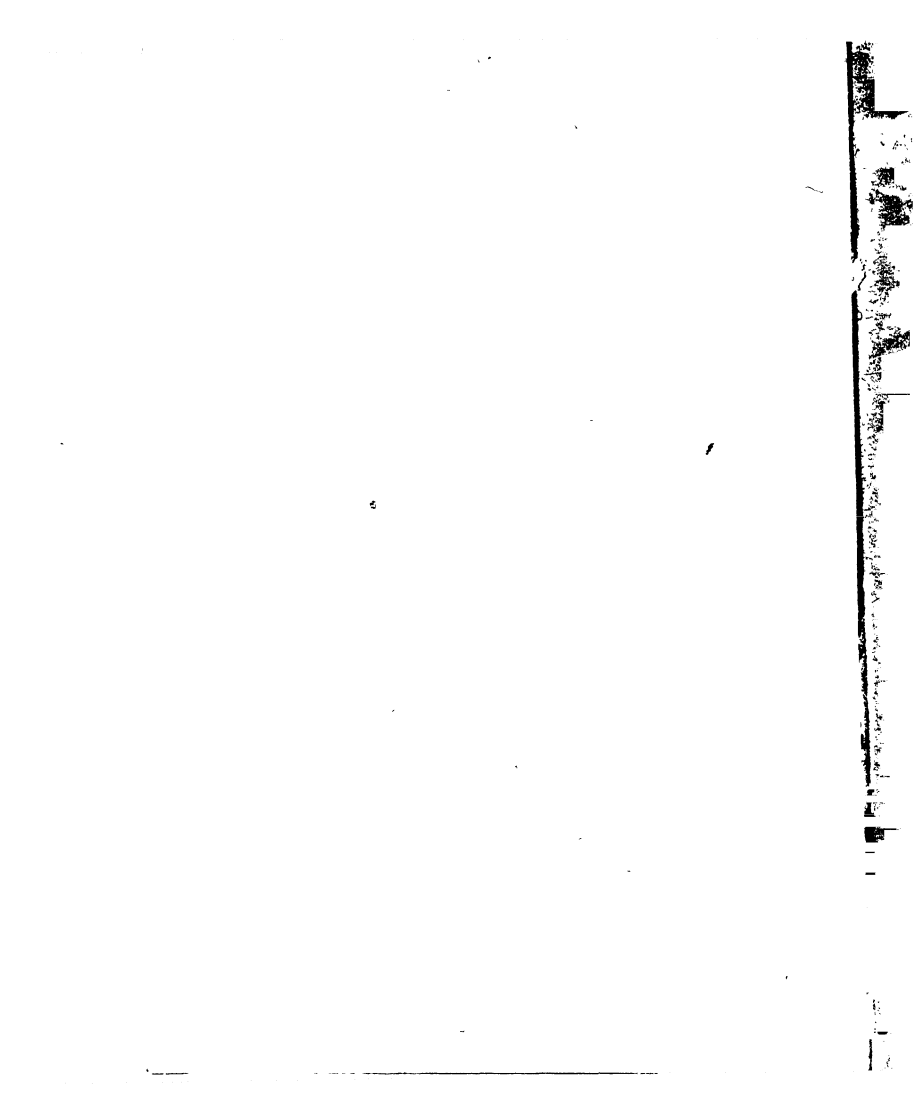
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ACCEPTABLE SERVICE.

(*What it really is .*)

Illustrated and Enforced from
HOLY WRIT

by

Sarah R. Geldard 1875.

Honble. F. Dillon 1880.

Rev. Geo. Wright 1809.

A

MODEL and a BEACON

for

CHRISTIAN WORKERS.

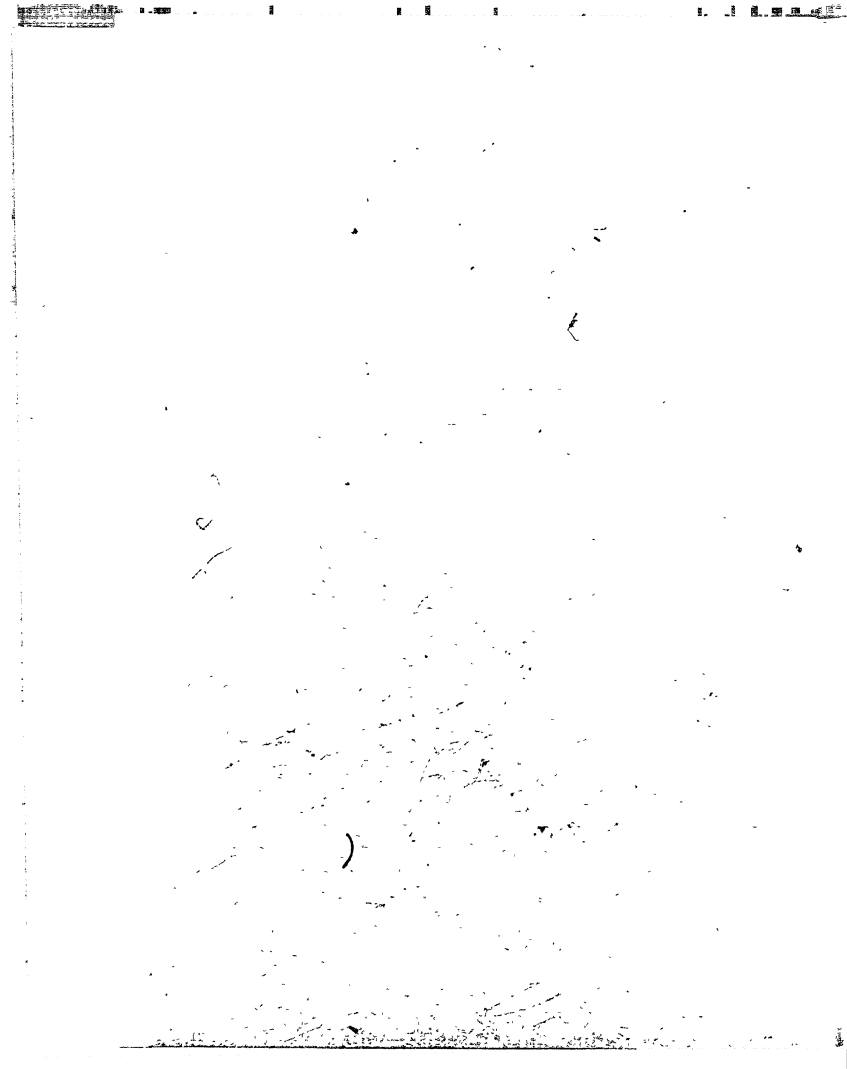
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A. D. FORDYCE

FERGUS (Ontario)

1880.



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OCT. 19, 1954

1954

ACCEPTED OFFERINGS.

(*Exodus 35.25.*)

Rendered cheerfully and promptly.

[1] Fine or fancy work—(agreeable service.)

“And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun.—*of blue and of purple—of scarlet, and of fine linen*”.

“Was it but a waking dream,

Formed by fancy's viewless fingers?

Strangely clear the pictures seem :

Still, in memory's ear there lingers,

Music of a chanted song:

Echoes of a woman's voice

Oft are with me 'mid the throng,

Bidding still my heart rejoice.

On the desert's level dun

Lay the tents in dark and bright :

While the fiery pillar shone,

ISRAEL slept beneath its light.

But, within one lighted tent

Sat a woman singing low,

While her eager eyes were bent,

And her busy hands intent

On a thread as white as snow.

Sweet and low her murmuring song,

For her children slept around :

And the thread grew smooth and long.

All in cadence with the sound—

“I am spinning for the LORD.

Blessed distaff! Happy hand!

Blest the ears that heard His word,

For I spin at His command.

Not for *daily bread* I spin ;
 Daily is the manna sent ;
 House nor land I toil to win,
 Happy, in this moving tent.
 Far away in Canaan's land,
 Rich with olive, corn, and vine.
 Given by the LORD's own hand,
 An inheritance is mine.
 Not my *sins* my work demand ;
 Sacrifice the LORD provides :
 Even now my husband's hand
 Through the wild, the scape-goat guides.
 On that guiltless victim laid,
 All my sins were borne away :
 ONE shall suffer in *my* stead,
 On some far-off future day.
 I have toiled in days gone by,
 For my children's raiment poor :
 E'en that need doth GOD supply,
 For their clothes wear out no more.
 So 'tis *love*, 'tis *love alone*,
 Bids me spin with thankful song :
 Telling what the LORD hath done
 Makes His feeble ones grow strong.
 "Forth from Egypt's gloomy land
 Have His ransomed people come ;
 Through the desert, shall His hand
 Guide our children safely, home.
 Through the ocean's depths we trod,
 Praised Him on the Red-Sea shore :
 Saw, when swayed by Moses' rod,
 O'er our foes its billows roar ;
 Tasted how His wondrous power
 Made ~~sait~~ Marah's waters sweet ;
 Praised Him, when to Elim's bower
 He had led our weary feet.

Heard the dreadful trumpet thrill,
 Shaking Sinai's mighty hill ;
 Saw the cloud, the smoke, the flame,
 From its riven rocks that came ;
 Shuddering knelt we, to implore
 We might hear His voice no more.
 Yet that voice hath many a tone—

Not in thunder, not in wrath
 Speaks He to the heart alone,
 Cheers me on the desert path ;
 Tells me that His name is LOVE !
 At the thought, my eyes grow dim ;
 Blessed proof, all thanks above,
 He will let me work for Him !

" *He shall have my very best—*
 Thread, thou must be smooth and fine ;
 So, while others round me rest,
 I am spinning for *His* shrine.
 Rougher work may well be done,
 While the sun is hot and bright.
 But the smoothest thread is spun
 In the dewy cool of night.
 And a pleasant thought will come :
 Not alone my work I do,
 Well I know in many a home,
 Sit my sisters spinning too.
 Out of sight, and oft unknown,
 Thus, our separate work we ply :
 But, when all our threads are spun,
 They shall mingle by-and-by.
 Differing threads, yet all unite :
 Blue and crimson blend their dyes,
 While *my* thread is stainless white,
 As the manna from the skies.

"Thou shalt go, thou favored thread,
 Where no woman's foot may tread—
 Where the wondrous veil is hung,
 And the golden censer swung;
 Where the golden lamp is glowing,
 And the mystic oil is flowing,
 Where the priests alone may go,
 In their vesture white as snow.
 In the High-Priest's raiment fair,
 Thou, methinks may'st have a place:
 Not for me to weave thee there,
 Nobler hands have won that grace.
 Bezaleel is wondrous wise,
 Threads to weave, that we have spun:
 Well he blends their gorgeous dyes,
 Like the clouds at set of sun:
 He may twine thy stainless white
 Where scarce venture Aaron's feet:
 Where the inner veil is bright
 With the changeless holy light,
 Shining o'er the mercy-seat.
 Not for me thy place to choose;
 Only let my work be done,
 So that God may deign to use
 What His servant's hands have spun.

"Soon, I know that eager groups
 Glad, will bring their treasured store.
 When the women throng in troops
 Round the Tabernacle door.
 Scattered *here*, we *there* unite;
 Gladly, *there* our hands shall bring
 Gold, and gem, and mirror bright,
 For the temple of our King.
 Soon the *time* for gifts is done:
 Soon the *time* for work is o'er;

Quickly must my thread be spun,
 Ere God says, '*I need no more.*'
 I am spinning, Lord for Thee ;
 Thou wilt keep my hands from stain :
 Now I rest, that I may be
 Ready for *thy* work again."

(SARAH R. GELDARD.)

ACCEPTED OFFERINGS.

Rendered cheerfully and promptly.

[2] Coarse or *plain* work—(less pleasant service.)

"And all the women whose heart stirred them
 up in wisdom, spun *goats' hair.*" (*Exodus 35. 25.*)

Every one whom God called to help in the making of His Tabernacle, had his or her own proper work to do ; and we may be sure these 'wise-hearted women' whose work it was to spin *goats' hair*, were quite content to help in this way, even though their work was not so interesting as that of the others, or made so much show when it was done. So it ought to be with us now. We ought to do whatever work the Lord appoints for us, and not care so much what the work itself is, or whether we get credit for it. The following suggests one train of thought connecting this homely but consecrated service of the days of yore, with much humble but acceptable work for the Lord in our own day.

1. *The goats' hair must have been rough and unpleasant to spin, and incapable of producing such a fine and even thread as the "scarlet, blue and purple, and fine linen."* Is this unlike the circumstances under which we sometimes see the children of God obliged to

work? their line of service seeming to them not only a homely and humble one for "wise-hearted" and gifted natures—but also to be full of checks and hindrances, to have to be worked out in bits: little "odd jobs" here and there, when they would by nature enjoy a systematic and connected course of work?

2. The goats' hair *was all of the same uniform color.* Those who spun the brightly colored materials must have had a great deal of interest, not only in the beauty, but in the variety of their work, which the patient spinners in grey or black could not enjoy. Is not this the case now? Do not some live a working life where their circle of service is so small and unchanging, and their outward privileges perhaps so scanty, that it is well if they do not cast an envious eye to their fellow-workers in the great centres of labor, whose greater strain of toil is they think, so tempered by its constant excitement of variety?

3. The goats' hair curtain when finished, *occupied a kind of middle position in the coverings of the Tabernacle.* It neither canopied the holy things—"like the beautiful inner curtain," nor did it protect the Sanctuary from rain and storm, like the rough covering of 'badgers' skins.' Yet the goats' hair curtain was a most necessary covering to the Tabernacle. The other curtains could not have done its work. Nor can the Church of Christ do without that army of quiet workers, who represent in these days, the spinners of goats' hair in the wilderness. Those who are 'content to fill a little space—so, God be glorified'—ever lending a helping hand; taking a Sunday class here, a bit of district work there, to stop the gap "sudden illness" or affliction have made: sitting with an invalid to enable others to keep an engagement; amusing children to relieve a tired mother; those who conscious that it is a Father's hand that has put them among 'the plants and hedges.'—do their monotonous

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work there cheerily and faithfully : and those who, while longing for direct work for Him, yet are fully convinced that they "came not to their place" of small home duties "by accident" and occupy it carefully "till He come"—all these are needed, and by none more than by those, who either serve the Lord with gifts and graces, or stand in His very hottest battle.

How great must have been the joy of the "high day," when the Tabernacle was raised up ! When the workers saw the glory of the Lord resting on their handiwork, thought they, can we imagine, whether it had been goats' hair or rich color? No more will such a thought enter our hearts, when—"all rapture through and through, in God's most holy sight," we shall hear His "Well done good and faithful servants ; you have been faithful in a very little, I will make you rulers over many things."

It is not the nature of the work we do, but the spirit in which the work is done that consecrates it ; and for the humblest as for the highest, the only test of value that God will own, is given in the simple but far reaching motto : "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." — (HON. F. DILLON.)

[From an article in "Woman's Work in the Great Harvest Field March 1880," slightly accomodated for application to all Christian workers. A. D. F.]

Note.—The "Religious Monitor for 1809" contains an article on the 'danger of delaying to forward the work of the Lord,' by the Rev. Geo. Wright of Markinch, afterwards of Stirling. It is subjoined as a fitting accompaniment to the preceding papers—finding its counterpart it is to be feared, far too often in the Church in our own day.

REJECTED OFFERINGS.

(Exodus 36.6.)

Rendered by constraint and tardily.

When Moses was commanded to raise up the Tabernacle, the people were invited to contribute materials. As soon as this was known through the camp, men and women came in crowds, bringing the Lord's offering. Gold, silver, brass, linen, jewels, and bracelets, were consecrated to the God of the whole earth. Yea, their hearts were so stirred up, and their spirits made so willing, that at last it was found necessary to cause it to be proclaimed saying, "*Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing.*" It is evident however, that these offerings were not made by all whose circumstances would have enabled them to contribute. The contributors are denominated *as many as were willing-hearted, and all the wise-hearted*; a mode of expression which implies that there were some who wanted this willingness and wisdom of heart. The proclamation for restraining the people from giving their offerings any longer, would occasion many varied displays of character and feeling. Scenes something like the following, would occur among the people—

The appointed heralds sound the trumpets: the people run to learn the cause. Amongst them a young woman listens to the proclamation, and hears with grief, that the time for making offerings has expired. Her aged mother had lifted up the corner of the curtain of the tent, and seen her daughter returning in tears; she inquires the cause. The young woman answers, "Oh mother, you would not allow me to offer these ear-rings yesterday,

and now it is too late!" "Comfort, my child," says the mother, "I have a broken bracelet here, which I will send this evening as from you." "Ah mother, you know that my father Eliezer always said, *Give unto the Lord the best*. I would give the ear-rings were they a thousand times better, but alas, it is too late! nothing will now be accepted; they have more than enough for the work." "Is it even so? Then my child, it is most plain that you ought to be well satisfied. You have your ear-rings—and yet the sanctuary is amply provided." "Alas this is my grief, that I am shut out, or rather that I have shut out myself from the pleasure of glorifying God with my substance. Oh, that I had remembered sooner another saying of my father's, *Hast thou a design of doing good hasten to accomplish it*.

In another part of the camp, a man of the tribe of Manasseh is seen burdened with a load of brass. Meeting a friend, he lets down the load from his shoulders, and stops to talk as follows: "Why," says he, in great anger, "this is intolerable, to issue their orders to-day, and to alter their orders to-morrow—as if, to be shut out from the whole world in a wilderness, were not grievance enough." "Go what is it that you refer?" "Why, to the business about the offerings. They ordered us to bring the best of our possessions; and now, after I had brought a load from one end of the camp to the other, they told me that they would not take it in." "Nabal," replies Caleb, "you are wrong; you were not *ordered* to bring an offering, you were only permitted if your heart inclined you." "To be ordered and to be permitted is much the same thing to me, in the present state of my family." "Your family is your greatest honor, and ought to be your greatest comfort." "Why, I do not deny that they are comfortable enough to me in many respects. But ever since the passage of—" "Hold, Nabal, I am a-

fraid that you are going to speak unadvisedly. The fervid devotions, and exalted strains of praise, expressed by your wife and her three daughters, after the passage of the Red Sea, were like the inspiration of the Almighty.” “Well, as to that, I say nothing. But this business of the offerings has been, from first to last, a trouble to me. You know, that in Egypt I dealt in brass, and in all the camp, I may be bold to say, there is not a better judge of brass than I am, and this piece of brass which I was carrying, I affirm to be more precious than gold. As soon then, as the business of the offerings came abroad, my wife and our daughters gave me no rest, till I should promise to present it as an offering for the sanctuary. I gave them some evasive answer, and carried another piece of brass to the elders. But, fool that I was, I could not keep my own secret. I told them that the one would answer for the work as well as the other, and that I was still rich in my brass. My wife presently trembled, and fainted away. When she came to herself, she looked upon me, and upbraided me; wept bitterly and said that she was most miserable. I urged her to explain her meaning—she was silent. I besought her—she was still silent. I conjured her in the name of the Lord. She then said, ‘Oh Nabal my beloved Nabal, Oh that this brass of thine had gone down with the Egyptians to the depths of the sea; I have an awful foreboding that it shall prove thy ruin, unless it is now offered to the Lord. I am afraid thy soul shall soon be required of thee, for thou hast lied to the Lord God of Israel.’ I saw that she was greatly affected, and I promised to contribute this brass also. She and her daughters spent the whole night in prayer, and, from what I overheard, I am persuaded that their affection for me is very strong. In the morning I set out with the offering. I heard by the way, that they would accept no farther contribution. However, as I greatly

wished to be done with it, I went forward and entreated them to accept my offering. They told me that there was one rule for the rich and for the poor, and that they had no power to depart from it." "Oh Nabal, what can riches profit in the day of wrath? Thou art not judged worthy to have thy brass laid up in the presence of Jehovah; thou mayest still call it thine; but, never shalt thou have another such opportunity of consecrating it. If thy soul is thus shut out from God, ah! what horrors of deep darkness follow."

At the place for receiving the offerings, a multitude of all descriptions is collected. Here a man is seen with a parcel of badgers' skins dyed red: there is a woman with blue, purple and scarlet, and fine linen—her neighbor has in one hand a beautiful box of jewels, and in the other a pot of precious spices; while, before them stands an old man with his two sons, bearing a heavy load of shittim wood. Some are clamorous, some are weeping. One while they speak to each other, explaining the hardships of their several conditions, in losing the opportunity of offering. Again they address the elders with arguments and entreaties. The answer of the elders is always the same. "We have no power of dispensing with the proclamation."

"Well," says a man, as he turns to go away with a bundle of badgers' skins on his back, "I take you all to witness, that I was willing to have offered all these skins and there are a dozen of them. But, if they will not take them, what can I do but carry them home again." "Why I am sure, Esau, thou couldst have brought them some days ago." "Yes, to be sure I could; but if I chose not to bring them till now, what is that to thee?" "Perhaps it is nothing to me," replies the elder, "but it seems to say, that thou hast but little reason to complain; for hadst thou been at all anxious, thou couldst have made thine

offering sooner."

"Was ever anything so unfortunate," cries a woman in the crowd; it was always in my mind to bring this yarn, but I thought that there was no need to be in such a haste as some of my neighbors were; and now I shall be the only woman in our six tents, whose offering has been rejected." "Daughter," says the old man with the shittim wood, tapping her on the shoulder, "remember hereafter, whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with all thy might. For my own part, I only wish that I had offered, all at once, all that I had to offer." "Nay, father Uzzah," says one of the elders to him, "thou art too covetous of the pleasure of offering. How canst thou blame thyself? Thou hast brought several presents of that wood and they are found to be of very great use in the work." "Oh," cries the old man, "is He not the God of all my mercies? He has redeemed me from all evil; He has led me, and fed me, these fourscore years; what can I render unto Him for all His benefits unto me? I wish that I had been here yesterday." "Father," says his elder son "only remember how you were employed yesterday. To convert a sinner from the error of his ways is as acceptable a service, as to assist in raising the Holy Place. The Lord knoweth, for He searcheth all hearts, and He it was who taught us,—He knoweth that it is in our hearts to offer ourselves, and all that we have, to Him."

On their way home, Uzzah addresses his sons thus:—
 "Remember, my sons, that whom God calls to any duty, He calls to it *now*. To *delay* is to *refuse*. I saw in the crowd to-day a friend of mine, who is a very worthy man in other respects, but he is strangely unwilling to begin to do anything. I am almost glad that he lost the opportunity now, as I hope that the grief, which I am sure he will feel, will help to correct his tardiness."

The Lord is strengthening the cords of Sion. The

wise and the willing-hearted are allowed to consecrate a part of their gain to the service of the God of the whole earth. Let us see that we do not linger long, as the slothful. Time is too short, and the advances of death too rapid, to allow a mortal creature to be dilatory. He who indulges a disposition to delay, will likely leave unaccomplished some good purposes, which he might have overtaken if his zeal had been more fervent.

How many are there in the habit of hearing the gospel who have only got the length of intending, at some future period, to begin to lay to heart its doctrines! Alas—they know not, nor will they understand that this is the very rock on which thousands have split. An *intention* of believing, which is never followed by faith, cannot profit at present, him who forms it; and hereafter he will find, to his confusion, that, when he stands speechless before the Judge, it is too late to begin to attend to the gospel. *Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation. *To-day*, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. Yet there is room: but very soon, it shall be said, the door is shut. (REV. GEORGE WRIGHT.)

(These pages have been printed on behalf of the cause of Missions for the LADIES' AID SOCIETY of St. Andrew's Church, Fergus. It may be noticed that the last piece had been re-printed many years ago, by a much respected friend of the compiler, and communicated to him very recently. By the Divine blessing, it is hoped this little compilation may prove serviceable to the Missionary cause, in which, many willing-hearted ones are engaged.)
