

The Orphans' Friend.

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"GOD KNOWS."

Oh! wild and dark was the winter night,
When the emigrant ship went down,
But just outside of the harbor bar,
In the sight of the startled town!
The winds howled, and the sea roared,
And never a soul could sleep,
Save the little ones on their mother's breasts,
Too young to watch and weep.

No boat could live in the angry surf,
No rope could reach the land;
There were bold, brave hearts upon the shore,
There was many a ready hand;
Women who prayed, and men who strove
When prayers and work were vain,—
For the sun rose over the awful void
And the silence of the main!

All day the watchers paced the sands—
All day they scanned the deep;
All night the booming minute-guns
Echoed from steep to steep.
"Give up thy dead, O cruel sea!"
They cried athwart the space;
But only a baby's fragile form
Escaped from its stern embrace!

Only one little child of all
Who with the ship went down,
That night, when the happy babies slept
So warm in the sheltered town!
Wrapped in the glow of the morning light,
It lay on the shifting sand,
As fair as a sculptor's marble dream,
With a shell in its dimpled hand.

There were none to tell of its face or kin,
"God knoweth," the Pastor said,
When the sobbing children crowded to ask
The name of the baby dead.
And so when they laid it away at last
In the church-yard's hushed repose,
They raised a stone at the baby's head
With the carved words—"God knows!"
—St. Nicholas.

THE CHANGES IN PREACHING.

That an important change is now in progress in the American pulpit, is evident to even a careless observer. The preachers now coming upon the stage are studying methods and arts as they have never done within our memory. A most important fact began, fifteen or twenty years ago, to manifest itself alike to teachers and disciples, viz, the fact that the great masses were slipping more and more out of the reach of the church, and that the preacher was losing his power, even over his own flock. It was hard for men trained in the old ways to understand the causes of this misfortune; but it became apparent at last to one, here and there that a theological skeleton, unclothed with flesh and blood, and without a warm heart behind its ribs, was not an inspiring object. It became apparent that the world was sick of theology, and, if it could not have the gospel, would not have anything. There are still many among the preachers who suppose that theology is the gospel, but they are rapidly passing away.

A very successful preacher, in a recent conversation, said that his theology was a sort of dry cod-fish which he hung up in his study by the tail, and whenever he wanted any of it he cut out a chunk. Another, of almost equal eminence, said, that while it seemed to him very important that a preacher should be well grounded in Christian doctrine, and have definite and well settled opinions on theology, he should never think of taking theology into the pulpit! Both these men are earnest men, and remarkable preachers, but they have made the clean jump into the new order of things. Can New England ever comprehend this—that a preacher can be in dead earnest, and yet, without any reservation, say that theology is a thing for the study and not for the pulpit? Of course it is nothing less than a revolution, but toward this is the drift of the

day.

Revivals have become necessary to the advance of Christianity, simply because of the incompetency of the ordinary preaching; and the moment the revivals come. In the nature of things, there ought not to be much for a revival to do in any church which has had the simple good news preached to it, and in which the heart and life and better motives have been affectionately and persistently addressed. Revivals are nothing but a make-shift. It is not a very high idea of the Father of us all that supposes him any more willing to convert men at one time than another. Preachers full of the learning of the schools go on from year to year with their dry discourses, and wonder that nothing comes of them. Then a Christian ignoramus comes along, with burning love and zeal in his heart, and no theology to speak of in his head, and bad grammar on his tongue, and the long winter breaks up, and the waters flow once more, and the meadows blossom again. And this is done over and over, with some good results and many bad ones.

With the passing away of the theological essay, will pass away much of the necessity of written discourses; and it will be noticed that very nearly in the proportion in which the character of preaching has changed, has the oral supplanted the written discourse. We think it is seen now, with great distinctness, that, in addressing motives, direct speech from heart to heart is almost infinitely superior to the reading of pages conceived and framed in the study. If instruction were needed upon this point, the history of Methodism in this country would furnish it in abundance. With a ministry confessedly inferior in scholarship, at least in its beginnings, but with direct address from every pulpit to the heart and life, the success of this denomination has been enormous. With high culture on the part of its teachers, its progress would possibly have been wider, but they have at least proved that the direct, spoken discourse is a power which every pulpit should assume and use as soon as it can. The question whether a young man who cannot acquire the ability to speak well without reading has a call to preach is, to say the least, an open one. At any rate, this ability is what all divinity students are striving for.—Scribner for June.

THE THREE SOUTHERN HEROES.

John Esten Cooke furnishes the following for the columns of the Philadelphia *Weekly Times*:

The death of the famous cavalry man produced a deep and painful sensation, in some degree akin to that produced by the death of Jackson. The Southern people had indeed become accustomed to couple together the three great names, Lee, Jackson and Stuart, valuing each for his peculiar qualities. No comparison is intended to be made between these three distinguished soldiers, but it is interesting to notice how sharply contrasted they were in character, and how peculiarly

each was fitted for the sphere in which he moved and his special functions. Lee, the head and front of the struggle, was the born commander-in-chief, fitted for the conception of great campaigns, ever wide awake, a man of august dignity by nature, calm, suave, grave, taking good and evil fortune with the same imposing serenity; in person, one of the most noble and graceful men of his epoch, and the finest rider in the Southern army; in character, simple, pure, patient, binding to himself both the love and respect of men. Jackson was the infantry leader, the "right arm" to execute what Lee conceived; in person not graceful, in manner silent, reserved and often abrupt; cautious to council, but, rapid and terrible in execution, going to the battle with muttering prayers on his lips, leaving all to Providence, but striking with all the power of his arm to do his part, and in many ways resembling the Ironsides of Cromwell. Stuart, on the contrary, was the cavalier, essentially belonging to the class of men who followed the fortunes of Charles I., ardent, impetuous, brimming over with the wine of life and youth, with the headlong courage of a high-spirited boy, fond of bright colors, of rippling flags, of martial music and the clash of sabres—in all the warp and woof of his character an embodiment of the best traits of the English cavaliers—not of their bad traits. Although his utter carelessness as to the impression he produced subjected him to many calumnies, it is here placed on record, by one who knew his private life thoroughly and was with him day and night for years, that he was in morals among the purest of men—a faithful husband, absolutely without vices of any description, and if not demonstrative in his religious views, an earnest and exemplary Christian. His love for his wife was deep and devoted, and on the death of his little daughter, Flora, he said to me with tears in his eyes, "I shall never get over it."

FLOATING GARDENS.

In the beautiful valley of Cashmere, among the Himalaya Mountains, lies a lovely lake called Dal. Floating about on its surface, sometimes carried by the winds from one end of the lake to the other, are numerous small islands, on which grow the fairest cucumbers and the most and the luscious melons known. The way in which these floating gardens are made is very curious. All about the main shores of the lake grow quantities of reeds, sedges and water-lilies. When these grow very thickly together people cut them from the roots which hold them near the shore. The leaves of the plants are then spread out over the stems, making a sort of trestle-work to support the soil with which it is next to be covered. After this has been done, the seed are planted, and the floating garden is left to care for itself until the fruit are ready for picking.—St. Nicholas.

When is a man given to lying compelled to keep his word?—When no one will take it.

SACRIFICE OF A HINDOO WIDOW.

News of the widow's intentions having spread, a great concourse of people of both sexes, the women clad in their gala costumes, assembled round the pyre. In a short time after their arrival, the fated victim appeared, accompanied by the Brahmins, her relatives, and the body of the deceased. The spectators showered chaplets of mogree on her head, and greeted her appearance with laudatory exclamations at her constancy and virtue. The women especially pressed forward to touch her garments—an act which is considered meritorious, and highly desirable for absolution and protection from the 'evil eye.'

The widow was a remarkably handsome woman, apparently about thirty, and most superbly attired. Her manner was marked by great apathy to all around her, and by a complete indifference to the preparations which for the first time met her eye. From this circumstance an impression was given that she might be under the influence of opium; and in conformity with the declared intention of the European officers present to interfere should any coercive measures be adopted by the Brahmins or relatives, two medical officers were requested to give their opinion on the subject. They both agreed that she was quite free from any influence calculated to induce torpor or intoxication.

Captain Burnes then addressed the woman, desiring to know whether the act she was about to perform were voluntary or enforced, and assuring her that, should she entertain the slightest reluctance to the fulfilment of her vow, he, on the part of the British government, would guaranty the protection of her life and property. Her answer was calm, heroic, and constant to her purpose: "I die of my own free will; give me back my husband, and I will consent to live; if I die not with him, the souls of seven husbands will condemn me!" * * *

Ere the renewal of the horrid ceremonies of death were permitted, again the voice of mercy, of expostulation, and even of entreaty was heard; but the trial was vain, and the cool and collected manner with which the woman still declared her determination unalterable, chilled and startled the most courageous. Physical pangs evidently excited no fears in her; her singular creed, the customs of her country, and her sense of conjugal duty, excluded from her mind the natural emotions of personal dread; and never did martyr to a true cause go to the stake with more constancy and firmness, than did this delicate and gentle woman prepare to become the victim of a deliberate sacrifice to the demoniacal tenets of her heathen creed.

Accompanied by the officiating Brahmin, the widow walked seven times round the pyre, repeating the usual mantras, or prayers, strewing rice and coories on the ground, and sprinkling water from her hand over the bystanders, who believe this to be effica-

cious in preventing disease and in expiating committed sins. She then removed her jewels, and presented them to her relations, saying a few words to each, with a calm, soft smile of encouragement and hope. The Brahmins then presented her with a lighted torch, bearing which,

"Fresh as a flower just blown,
And warm with life her youthful pulses playing,"

she stepped through the fatal door, and sat within the pile. The body of her husband, wrapped in rich kinkaub, was then carried seven times round the pile, and finally laid across her knees. Thorns and grass were piled over the door; and again it was insisted that free space should be left, as it was hoped the poor victim might yet relent, and rush from a fiery prison to the protection so freely offered. The command was readily obeyed; the strength of a child would have sufficed to burst the frail barrier which confined her, and a breathless pause succeeded; but the woman's constancy was faithful to the last.

Not a sigh broke the death-like silence of the crowd, until a light smoke, curling from the summit of the pyre, and then a tongue of flame darting with bright and lightning-like rapidity into the clear blue sky, told us that the sacrifice was completed. Fearlessly had this courageous woman fired the pile, and not a groan had betrayed to us the moment when her spirit fled. At sight of the flame, a fiendish shout of exultation rent the air; the tom-toms sounded, the people clapped their hands with delight as the evidence of their murderous work burst on their view, whilst the English spectators of this sad scene withdrew, bearing deep compassion in their hearts, to philosophize as best they might on a custom so fraught with horror, so incompatible with reason, and so revolting to human sympathy. The pile continued to burn for three hours; but, from its form, it is supposed that almost immediate suffocation must have terminated the sufferings of the unhappy victim.—Mrs. Postan.

—We were struck the other day by the reply of a musician to a friend who had asked him to play on a piano which was out of tune. Some one was present who had not before heard the pianist. "Do play for us," said the musician's friend, "Mr. Blank will make allowances for the condition of the piano." "Make allowances!" replied the pianist, "I have heard that all my life, and it never was and never will be true. Nobody 'makes allowances.' If a pianist plays on a bad piano, or a tenor sings when he has a sore throat, or an orator gets out of his death-bed to make a speech,—the audience is disappointed because he does not do his best work, and it carries away an impression of the performance which is likely to last for a lifetime. It's the same in house-keeping, and dressing, and business, and everything else. People expect the best under all circumstances. There is no such thing as 'making allowances.'"—Selected.