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SALVATION AND SONG.

FROM ZION'S HERALD.

All along the ages God's people have been a singing people. Sacred poetry, psalms, and songs make up a large part of the Old Testament Scriptures. The grandest music which was heard in ancient times was in the Hebrew Tabernacle and Temple, where the sublime songs of Moses, David, and Asaph were sung in their hallowed courts, with the accompaniment of harp and cymbal, and sounding trumpets. And the sweetest and sublimest poetry, as well as the most magnificent and inspiring strains of music in the Christian era, have been written and sung by those whose intellects, hearts, and voices have been made the inspiration of the Bible and of the Holy Ghost. Let us bend our ear for a little while, and listen to the music of the ages.

The first strains rise up from the shores of the Red Sea, in which Pharaoh's host have just "sunk as lead in the mighty waters." Was ever victor's song more glorious or triumphant? This is followed by the song of Deborah and Barak, when "the stars in their courses" had fought for Israel, and a wondrous victory had been achieved. How grandly its strains floated over the vast plain of Esdraelon, and were echoed by the rocky sides and summit of Tabor! And as we listen further, we are charmed with a whole volume of song from the royal "Psalmist," "the sweet singer of Israel," a volume of song which has filled the world with the sweetest, saddest, and most triumphant strains which the human ear has ever heard. These are followed by the beautiful songs of Solomon, and the sublime strains of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Habakkuk.

The New Testament opens with the "song of angels," filling heaven and earth with its jubilant strains. We do not know whether or not Jesus sang often with his disciples; but we know that He sang once with them, for it is written that "when they had sung a hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives." That hymn was, doubtless, the Hallel, sung by the Jewish people on the occasion of the Passover, but sung now with a wondrous significance; as Christ, who led in the grand hymn, was "our Passover," so soon to be "slain for us."

The next strains which fall upon our ears are from the Philippian prison-house. Paul and Silas are there, in the inner prison; feet fastened in the stocks; backs welled, and ridged, and stained with unwashed gore; midnight stillness all around. Then up from the dungeon rises the voice of prayer and praise. "At midnight they prayed and sang praise to God, and the prisoners heard them." Yes, and God heard them; and the angels heard them; and the ages all along have heard them. That is a wonderful utterance of the Apostle, where he says, "Be not drunk with wine"—as the followers and votaries of Bacchus are in their feasts—"but be filled with the spirit." And he immediately adds, "speaking to

yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart unto the Lord." Here is recognized the fact that the fulness of the Spirit in the heart inspires the tongue and the voice, and calls forth songs of praise. Thus "the ransomed of the Lord are returning, and coming to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads."

Pliny tells us that the early Christians were accustomed to meet together before day-dawn, and "to sing a hymn to Christ as to God." Yes, Governor Pliny, and they are singing such hymns to Him still, only in louder strains, and in larger numbers, and not only before day, but in the night, and all the day long. So a-down the centuries ring out the songs of Clement, Gregory, Theophanes, Stephen of Damascus, St. Hilary, Ambrose, Bede, Abelard, St. Bernard and others. And while their songs are still lingering on our ears the sound of Luther's trumpet-voice "rises gradually, in strains that roused and startled the nations." His hymn, "A strong hold our God is still," is the imperishable psalm of the Reformation.

Nor must we fail to recognize the hymns of Hans Sachs, the shoe-maker of Nuremberg, to whom that Reformation owes so much for its spread among the masses of Germany, Switzerland, France, England, Holland, Spain, Italy, became vocal with these spiritual songs. Then, after a little pause, during which the voices of many had been hushed in exile, blood and death, a new reformation, a spiritual revival breaks forth, and the world is again ringing with Christian song. Watts, Doddridge, Montgomery, Cowper, Toplady and Newton, and a host of others are heard; and rising above them all, the sublime, scriptural, imitable songs of the Wesleys and Thomas Oliver. So, in every grand revival of religion, the church receives additions to its hymnology which will never die, notwithstanding much that is ephemeral and mere doggeral. So, in 1857, and so, in the great recent revival of holiness in our churches, songs of full salvation are being sung over all this world.

And may we not add that the music of these songs is often the sweetest and sublimest to which the world has ever listened? Look at the list of the grand composers of sacred music, and at their productions; and is not this assertion verified? Handel, and Haydn, and Beethoven, and Mozart, and Mendelssohn, and others have set to music these lofty songs of the Christian Church and the music, as well as the songs, have charmed and inspired the world. What music more grand, more sublime, or more sweet than the chants, anthems, oratorios, and many of the tunes sung in our Christian churches? The music of the opera may be more bewitching, enchanting, and voluptuous, and thus may be more pleasing to the goddess throng; but the strains of music which echo from the courts of Zion are the most welcome and inspiring to earnest, longing, bur-

dened souls.

We think that it furnishes evidence of a decline in grace when the tongue, once vocal with praise, becomes "dumb with silence." Is it not true that when the heart is full of love the mouth will be filled with praise? The voice may not be adapted to singing, but the song will somehow find expression. We evidently need more singing in our homes, our closets, our congregations, our social means of grace. The double melody, the melody of the heart and the melody of the voice, is acceptable to God. We trust that the day is not far distant when the people, all the people, will praise the Lord in our assemblies for his worship. Thus we shall not only join with "the ten thousand times ten thousand" before the throne in praising the Lord, but we shall take up and send on to the future the songs of the church in the past ages:

"Their song to us descendeth;
The Spirit who in them did sing
To us his music lendeth;
His song in them, in us, is one;
We raise it high, we send it on—
The song that never endeth!"

From the Companion.
Shipwrecked.

I had once an escape from shipwreck which seems, as I look back upon it, almost miraculous. I was at the time mate on board the *Napier*, a merchant vessel trading between Glasgow in Scotland and Norway.

We had had rough and foggy weather for some days, and were driven hither and thither among the islands to the north of Scotland, and scarcely knew where we were.

At last the weather cleared a little, though the wind was still fierce and the sea running high. We found, however, that we were near Hoy Sound, and determined to steer for it. But steering and getting there were two quite different things.

The currents round these islands are strong and treacherous, and only the native fishermen understand how to cope with them. We tried our best. The captain and I had not had any rest for several nights, but we were wide awake now, and made every effort to get safe in the sound.

It was of no use. We had to make a point of land consisting of high-jagged rocks. As we neared this we saw the mouth of an enormous cave, yawning like the jaws of some vast monster to devour us. And, O horror! the waves seemed in a conspiracy with the monster to overwhelm us.

It is doubtful whether it would have been of any use to take to our boats if we could have done so, but there was no time for it. With one great gulp, as it seemed to us, the cave swallowed us up. We were hurled in with tremendous force, and the good ship *Napier*, in which we had so much pride, was dashed into fragments.

How it happened I cannot tell, but awaking as from a long sleep, I found myself bruised and torn, lying stretched on the rocks. I had evidently been thrown there when the ship went to pieces, and had remained a long time in a state of unconsciousness. The cave was almost dark, so that I

could scarcely see where I was.

I shouted to see if any of the crew of the *Napier* were near, but no answer came, except the dull reverberation of the walls of the cavern and the dash of the waves on the rocks below.

When I tried to move, I found myself so stiff and sore it was with difficulty I could stir, so I lay still, and you may imagine what my thoughts were during that long night. No help seemed possible, and I was a prisoner doomed to perish by the most dreadful of deaths,—starvation and thirst.

At sunrise, however, the mouth of the cave being towards the east, its furthest recesses were flooded with light, and a beam of hope fell on my despairing heart. Impelled by thirst I roused myself, and crawled into a cleft in the rock, where I thought I heard the trickling of water. I was not deceived.

I caught a few drops in my hand, and what was my delight to find that the water was fresh. It took me some time to slack my thirst in that way, and then the stomach began to assert its claims.

At first it seemed in vain. There was nothing in the cave to satisfy hunger. The tide was now going out, and when it had fully ebbed I noticed some mussels and limpets sticking to the rocks, which with extreme difficulty I managed to reach, and which served to keep me alive.

The third day the dripping of the water in the cleft ceased, and I had to depend on the liquor in the shell-fish to allay my thirst. This diet was of course, quite insufficient as well as unwholesome, and I suffered almost constant torture from thirst. I found, however that my limbs became less stiff, and that I acquired some skill in clambering over the wet and slippery rocks. As I had no prospect of living long in the cave, I determined to attempt at any risk to escape. At low water I thought by clinging to a slight ledge and wading I could get round the opening.

The first time I was too slow. The rising tide overtook me, and I was almost drowned. The second time I succeeded in getting outside, and with almost incredible toil in climbing up the face of the cliff, and making my way to the village of Stromness.

It was Sunday. It was on Monday afternoon that the *Napier* was wrecked. The people were all at church. I thought I could not do better than go in and give thanks for my escape. I forgot what a figure I was. Pale and haggard, my clothes in tatters, it seemed as if the sea had given up one at least of its dead. The people were fearfully startled, but received me hospitably and I soon recovered from the effects of my hermit life. I was the sole survivor of the wreck.

Funerals.

It is a delicate matter to speak to a man about his feelings and actions when he is attending the funeral of his friend: still there is some advice that should be given in this thing. Departed friends should have decent, or as

we often say, "Christian burial." But there is a great deal of bad judgment and false taste shown on such occasions, and because it is a delicate matter to speak about, nothing is said. First, there is needless expense, which the majority of the people are not able to meet. The coffin or casket is too costly with its silver trimmings, to say nothing of the expensive material of which it is fashioned, and its elaborate finish. To be moderate in our estimate, if we consider present prices, it costs a hundred dollars where it should not cost over twenty. The hearse is also more expensive than is necessary, either for good taste or judgment. Two horses, and sometimes four, where one will do. Plumes on both the horses and hearse when they look much better and more in keeping with the occasion without them. A large number of hacks and carriages, which the friends or family of the deceased must pay for, and often there are more in attendance than there are people to fill them. There is also an elaborate array of flowers in forms of crosses, arches, crowns and wreaths, which are very beautiful and appropriate both as symbols and as ornaments; but they are expensive, costing in some instances, a hundred and sometimes more than a hundred dollars. In fact it has become a practice, and it is growing to be more common, to give the undertaker a *carte blanche* and let him fill it out, and the bills to be brought in against the family or the estate.—Now all this may do where there is ample wealth to afford it, but the influence of it is bad, because those who are not able (but who are just as proud,) follow suit and run in debt to do it. There is a false sentiment that prevails in the community on this subject, and it has become one of the most expensive events in a man's life to bury a member of his family who has died. We very much doubt that even an ordinary funeral can be attended for less than a hundred dollars, if we include a change of attire with other expenses. And how few there are, comparatively who can pay even this amount. There is another matter that should be considered in this connection, the time set for the funeral. Many people choose the Sabbath for the occasion, because a large number of people will be at liberty to attend; and they often appoint it at an hour when it will conflict with the service in the churches, or with the arrangements of the clergyman who is invited to officiate; and if he declines on account of other engagements or duties, the feelings of the friends are so sensitive that he falls in their estimation. In nothing are men so governed by their feelings as in this matter; and because it is such a delicate subject, very little is said about it. But that is no reason why these mistakes should not be corrected. There are also other mistakes of which we might speak, but will not. Our deceased friends should have Christian burial, decently and in order, but without display or needless expense.—*Providence Journal.*