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Poetry.

TRUST IN GOOD.

BY MARY A. WHITAKER.

O'er the world that somehow good
Will be the final goal of all.

Enter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God

Stretch labor hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff and call
To what I feel is Lord of all
—And faintly trust the larger hope.

—*Traveller.*

No "faintly trust," O soul alive!
Nor "faintly" in dust where shadows fall;
Let no "faint" trembling hands be thine,
Thy Father is the "Lord of all."

O labor not thy "weight of cares"
To him who has the "weight of care"
Though steep "the great world's altar-stairs"
They lead to life and light above.

Trust more with brave and earnest heart,
Bear well the burden; God's dear hand
Clasp thee to guide thee, and impart
New strength to tread this darkened land.

His searching eye beams on thee now,
To him no darkness—'all is light';
If shadows rest on all below,
Look upward, where the scene is bright.

The mists of doubt are falling fast,
The glories of that radiant sphere
Whose faith and love smile at last,
Will shine upon thy pathway here.

Faint not, true heart, "neath cares and woes"
That bow the faithless in the dust,
Be thine the holy, deep repose,
Of souls who live to toil and trust.

God lives, and therefore all is well—
God rules, and therefore all is right—
God works, His words His wisdom tell—
God loves, and there is no more night.

The Pulpit.

Faith Illustrated by Noah.

BY ROBERT BOYD, D. D.

It is the very nature of sin to spread like a deadly leprosy. Though in the days of Noah the world was but yet in the very infancy of its being, yet sin had deepened and widened as it rolled along its dark course, till hatred of law and truth and goodness had become almost universal. The wickedness of man had grown to gigantic and fearful proportions. That guilty race were deluged in sin before they were deluged in the waters of the flood.—Had they not been first buried under the accumulated pollution of their guilt, they would not have been engulfed in the avenging waters.

In the midst of such an appalling disregard of God, Noah stands up before us a noble spectacle. His simple and child-like faith, and his unflinching and persevering obedience, are truly sublime. There is exhibited holy integrity in the midst of universal corruption; an unwavering adherence of right,—when it was the object of popular contempt and scorn; the fullest recognition of God's superior right to govern and to be obeyed, when all had sunk into unbelief, and revolted against His laws. It is only when men are brought into circumstances that test and try them thoroughly, that we know what they are. We are told that the man who is tried is blessed, and the more severe the trial the more glorious is the triumph of Divine grace when it brings him off unscathed.—And to every man there comes his testing time—his time of trial; and the worse the state of society around him, the more conspicuous becomes the integrity of the man that stands boldly up for God. Thus Noah stood like a rock amid the swelling torrent of abounding sin around him, and not for a moment was the purity of his purpose shaken. There he stood, a true, faithful, unbending witness, for God; his meekness under insult, his deep piety shining bright in its solitude, and his undaunted heroism exciting our warmest admiration. To thus stand faithful among the faithless against something more than a mere religion of form or ceremony; it requires the power of God's mighty grace rooted in the deepest depths of our souls, and a firm hold upon God's truth, which the rudest shocks of time can never relax.

Noah, in the course of God's providence, was made a public man—a representative man—whose foot-steps were to leave deep prints upon the sands of time. But for his public work, he got all his strength and power in secret communion with God. It

is in the depth of his devotion that we are to find all the source of his fidelity to the public interests committed to his care. If he was a man of power it was because he was a man of prayer. He fought a good fight, but it was because he was clad in armor burnished in the light of heaven. His trust was in God—a trust that was not disappointed, for the same waves of desolation that brought destruction to the wicked, only floated him nearer to his gracious Friend. All external to him was uproar and confusion, but all within him was the sweet calm of God's peace. He found a safe retreat, a holy repose, in the center of all life and blessedness—the favor of the Almighty Love. Although his lot was cast upon evil times, he found a sweet calm, a holy pavilion under the shadow of the eternal throne. What though the whole world was against him, when he had the testimony from the lips of Jehovah: "Thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."

Noah was a man of strong faith.—He was warned of God of a coming evil, not likely to take place, so far as human wisdom could see. For centuries the laws of nature had rolled on in their undisturbed and placid course. The seasons had come and gone in regular succession; rain had fallen only to bless the earth! The rivers and brooks had borne their waters safely to the sea, and that waste world of waters had been kept in place by the fixed decree, "Hitherto shalt thou go and no farther." Men began to speak about the fixed laws of nature, and then as now, felt as if they were so fixed that God himself could not change them. It is no new thing for men to wish to make God the slave of his own laws, and to argue that things which God has said shall be done cannot be done, because they will interfere with the laws of nature. No doubt there were some of these very people in those days, who sought to show how impossible it was that a flood could take place, and laughed to scorn the warnings of the man of God, as the ravings of fanaticism, as they entrenched themselves behind what they called the laws of nature. But Noah firmly and implicitly believed God. The Lord had said it, and that was enough for him. The arguments of the philosophers were no more to him than the chirping of the grasshoppers, when the voice of eternal wisdom was sounding in his ears.

But it appears that Noah's faith in the first place, operated by fear. "By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." Some people think that if a man has any fears, it is a sure proof that he has no faith. But this is a mistake, for faith often intensifies fear. When the sinner honestly believes the threatenings of God's law it drives him to Christ. When a man believes himself in danger of drowning he takes a firm grasp of the rope that is flung to him. John Bunyan says: "I was brought into such a dread and horror of the wrath of God, that I could not help trusting in Christ; I felt that if he stood with a drawn sword in his hand I must even run right upon its point sooner than endure my sins. If fear was to have no part in man's turning to God, why has God put so many terrors in the Bible? Why did one say, in view of the dangers of sinners, 'Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy laws?' Why did Paul, say 'Knowing the terrors of the Lord we persuade men?' No doubt the great power of the gospel is love; but it also utters its stern voice of terror in the words, 'He that believeth not shall be damned!'"

On this subject Dr. Guthrie says: "God indeed tells us of hell, but it is to persuade us to go to heaven; and as a skillful painter fills the background of his picture with his darker colors, God puts in the smoke of torment and the black clouds of Sinai to give brighter prominence to Jesus, the Cross of Calvary, and His love to the chief of sinners. His voice of terror is like the scream of the mother bird when the hawk is in the sky. She alarms her brood that they may run and hide beneath her feathers; and as I believe that God had left that mother dumb unless he had given her wings

to cover her little ones. I am sure that He, who is very pitiful, and has no pleasure in any creature's pain, had never turned our eyes to the horrible gulf unless for the voice that cries 'Deliver me from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom.' We had never heard of sin had there been no Saviour, nor of hell had there been no heaven. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof; and never had Bible-light flashed before the eyes of the sleeping felon to awake him from his happy dream, but that he might see the smiling form of Mercy, and hear her, as she says, with pointing finger, 'Behold, I have set before thee an open door.'—*Baptist Record.*

Selections.

God Seen in Nature.

We need a clearer insight, a more spiritual mind, to enable us to see the Divine One above, around and beneath us, working in nature and history and through the activities of men, to realize His holy purpose. How many men are filled with wonder at the account of the creation thousands of years ago, who see the earth created anew year after year without a quickened heart-beat! Joshua commands the sun to stand still mid-heavens, and thirty generations have read the story with subdued and awe-struck hearts, while the sun had risen morning after morning, flooding the world with beneficence and splendor, without awakening a single surprise. It is not the miraculous and divine that are wanting, but eye to see and heart to feel them. We do not complain that men are so ready to believe the legends, the marvels and miracles of the olden time, but that they believe only these—that they are blind to the wonder, mystery, and awe which fill and enchant the world to day, and insensible of that divine presence which glows in and glorifies everything that is. We are children of mystery. We live in a miraculous world. This life of ours is a perpetual wonder. Every step we take is into infinity; every time we open our eyes we behold a new creation, and every heart-beat marks a new influx of the divine life to repair the waste of the system and inspire us anew for work and joy. The spiritual is all about us; and we ourselves are spirits, or—nothing.

The last word of science is that the constant element, the vitality of matter, is force. What science calls force philosophy calls cause, and religion calls God; and that God is potentially and actively present in every atom of matter, every bead of dew, in the pencils of light that paint the spring landscapes with inimitable beauty, and the fragrance that exhales from flowers and shrub. He who filled Eden with beauty and Gethsemane with gloom, waves His wand of enchantment over the reviving earth to-day, and pours out new wine to refresh every faint and sorrowing soul. He who walked in Paradise at the cool of the day, and gave Isaiah his message, and shed His glory into the face of the Anointed One, lends His arm to whoever will lean upon it for support, pours His spirit into every heart that is open to receive it, and transfigures all who ascend the mount in supplicating, grateful adoration.

"Rock of Ages Cleft for Me."

In the pleasant county of Devon, and in one of its sequestered passes with a few cottages sprinkled over it, mused and sang Augustus Toplady.—When a lad of sixteen, and on a visit to Ireland, he had strolled into a barn, where an illiterate layman was preaching; but preaching reconciliation to God through the death of his Son.—The homely sermon took effect, and from that moment the gospel wielded all the powers of his brilliant and active mind.

Toplady became very learned, and at thirty-eight he died, more widely read in fathers and reformers than most dignitaries can boast when their heads are hoary. His chief works are controversial, and, in some respects, bear the impress of his over ardent spirit. In the pulpit's milder agency, nothing flowed but balm. In his tones there was a commanding solemnity, and in his words there was such sim-

licity that to hear was to understand.

Both at Broad Hembury, and afterwards in London, the happiest results attended his ministry. Many sinners were converted; and the doctrines which God blessed to the accomplishment of these results, may be learned from the hymns which Toplady has bequeathed to the church—"Rock of Ages, cleft for me;" "A debtor to mercy alone;" "When languor and disease invade;" and, "Deathless principle arise"—hymns in which it would seem as if the finished work were embalmed, and the living hope exulting in every line.

During his last illness, Augustus Toplady seemed to lie in the very vestibule of glory. To a friend's inquiry he answered, with sparkling eye, "O, my dear sir, I cannot tell the comforts I feel in my soul; they are past expression. The consolations of God are so abundant that he leaves me nothing to pray for. My prayers are all converted into praise. I enjoy a heaven already in my soul." And within an hour of dying he called his friends, and asked if they could give him up; and when they said they could, tears of joy ran down his cheeks as he added: "O, what a blessing that you are made willing to give me over into the hands of my dear Redeemer, and part with me; for no mortal can live after the glories which God has manifested to my soul!" And thus died the writer of the beautiful hymn, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me."—*Devot.*

"Professors are no Better Than Others."

This is on the lips of thousands, and in the hearts of a great many more. It has become fashionable thus to berate church-members. It polishes the shaft of ridicule in the "liberal" magazine, and gives zest to the song of the drunkard over his cups, and soothes the heart of the sinner when awakened by the voice of God.

There is some plausibility in the plea. The indifference of many professors, the inconsistency of others; the apostasy of some, the detection of heinous sin in some ministers—all give color to the idea that "there is no reality in religion." Yet there is a radical difference between the righteous and wicked; and the time will come when it will be seen. In the days of Elijah there were seven thousand true worshippers of God; but even the prophet could not see them. While the virgins in the parables all slept there was no manifest difference—but when the bridegroom came, and they arose and trimmed their lamps it was visible enough.

There are several reasons why this difference may not always be apparent. One is; that the gospel has done a great deal to elevate and purify those who hear it, but who do not profess to be Christians. It is not fair to take a sinner, whose conscience has been molded, and his moral code formed by the gospel, and set him by the side of a professor of religion, and say, "I don't see any difference." To judge correctly, you should take a sinner who has never heard the gospel, and set him beside the Christian, and see if there is no difference.

Here are two mothers, one is a professor of religion, and the other is not; and you say, "I don't see much difference between them: they are equally faithful and tender and loving to their children." But suppose you go to the Sandwich Islands, before they received the gospel, and see the mother dig in the ground of her hut, throw in her living infant, draw the dirt over it, trample it down with her feet, and sit down and smoke her pipe: you can see the difference between that mother and the Christian mother—she is a mother without the gospel.

You take a man of business and say, "There is as much integrity and truthfulness among those who do not profess religion as among those who do." But do you know there is not the slightest reliance to be placed in the honesty or truthfulness of a heathen? The Cretans were not the only nation that were "always liars." Not a heathen nation can be found that can be trusted. Neither science nor philosophy has ever corrected this evil.

So you may say, "I don't see but

the young who make no pretensions to religion, are as virtuous as those who do." But if you would see what they would be without the gospel, read the latter part of the first chapter of Romans—a description which the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum have verified to the letter, and which is a transcript of the character of the most civilized nations now. Set them beside the young Christian, and see if there is no difference.

So in regard to humane and benevolent institutions; many who do not profess to be Christians are liberal with their money; but in all heathendom there is not a hospital or an asylum for any class—deaf, dumb, blind or deranged. So in every development of character or life, place the Christian beside those who have not been influenced by the gospel, and there is a heavenwide difference.—*American Messenger.*

Letter From Bishop Pierce.

Mr. Editor:—On my way to the Bishops' meeting in Louisville, I stopped two days at Cartersville, Rome District, North Georgia Conference, and found a District meeting in progress. The Presiding Elders, preachers, and delegates, were on hand in large number, and seemed to be all of one accord, and filled with the Spirit. God was present not only in the religious exercises of the occasion, but in the counsels and intercourse of the brethren. The Divine blessing rested like a cloud upon the assembly of his people, now radiant with light—and anon descending in showers of grace. The signs were infallible. Every man's consciousness attested, "This is the house of God and the gate of heaven." The word of God was in power and demonstration. The love-feast was a time of refreshing—the Lord's Supper solemn, sanctifying. The only discount upon the meeting was, that the time allowed was too short, compelling us to hurried action on many important subjects. Nevertheless, the reports were well digested and well composed, and their circulation in printed form (and this was provided for) will carry light and stimulus to the Churches.

Permit me to say, I was delighted with the manifestation of the status of the District. The Presiding Elder is up to his work—appreciates the responsibilities and capacities of his office—is zealous, abundant in labor, inventive as to plans of operation, does not travel in the old ruts, is not afraid of enlarging his field, and possesses the art of infusing his own activity into others. The District is alive; future prospects enlivening. The institution of District-meetings was an inspiration. It is capable of immense usefulness. In my judgment it is not only a substitute for some things grown obsolete, but is an expedient "elect, precious," specially adapted to these times. May they live and prosper!

Perhaps no District in any of our Conferences can furnish such a body of local preachers, so many, so good, so active—such intelligence, so much education, and all in perfect harmony and co-operation with our itinerancy. The laity, too, are men of substance, position, influence, fully awake to the wants and obligations of the Church. This region of Georgia is one of the strongholds of Methodism, and is destined to be, perhaps, the strongest. Population increases, and the climate and soil are inviting both foreign and domestic immigration. May this region of corn and wheat, grass and clover, become a garden of the Lord, filled with the trees of righteousness, and watered with the river which makes glad the city of God.

On my way to Cartersville I met our mutual friend, the Rev. Dr. A. A. Lipscomb, just returned from Europe, greatly improved in health, his mind enriched with the observations of travel, on society, systems of education, the types of civilization, and the prospects of the Churches, Roman Catholic and Protestant. It is a treat to hear him talk. He does talk like a book.

But O! how the lights and shadows mingle! Our meeting was saddened by tidings of the death of the Rev. Jno. W. Glenn, of the North Georgia Conference. Brother Glenn was a great and good man; plain, humble, modest; only a few of us knew his real value. But he, was wise in counsel, judicious

in administration, fervent in the pulpit, in personal character a model man; ripe in holiness, he has gone to his reward. Blessed be his memory! I love him well, and shall miss him much. Verily, our old men are passing away. But the light of those setting suns lingers in the heavens. How mellow! how inspiring.—*Nashville Advocate.*

The Bible Against Dancing.

The Rev. Dr. Patton, in an able article in *The Independent*, on the subject of dancing, thus sums up his conclusions:

Having carefully examined every text in the Old and New Testaments in which the word occurs, we are led to the following conclusions:

1. That dancing was a religious act among idolaters as well as worshippers of the true God.
2. That it was practiced as the demonstration of joy for victories and other mercies.
3. That the dancing was in the daytime.
4. That the women danced by themselves; that the dancing was mostly done by them.
5. No instance is recorded in which promiscuous dancing by the two took place.
6. That when the dance was perverted from a religious service to a mere amusement, it was regarded as disreputable, and was preformed by the "vain fellows."
7. The only instances of dancing for amusements mentioned are of the worldly families described by Job—the daughter of Herodias, and the "vain fellows."—Neither of these had any tendency to promote piety.
8. That the Bible furnishes not the slightest sanction for promiscuous dancing as an amusement, as practiced at the present time.

The dancing professor of religion must not deceive himself with the impression that he is justified by the Word of God. If he still holds on to the practice, let him find his justification from other sources, and say frankly, I love the dance, and am determined to practice it Bible or no Bible.

Natural Causes of Death.

From the commencement of life to the moment of death there are mechanical and chemical changes constantly and uninterruptedly going on in our bodies. For example, we eat and drink for the express purpose of providing materials for repairing the waste of matter resulting from the working of the machinery. A soft, oily fluid is poured into the joints to prevent a friction, just as oil is poured into an axle-box of a car-wheel to prevent it from wearing away the metal. Our bones are all frequently renewed as well as our flesh, from infancy to age; but not in a day or an hour. Nature acts persistently, but accomplishes nothing by spasmodic efforts.

As soon as a particle of lime which was held in solution in food is placed in the stomach, it is carried to the heart by appropriate vessels, and from thence conveyed into an artery to be distributed to a point where most needed in some bone. There the little particle is deposited, and becomes incorporated with the substance of the hard structure where it was left.—It becomes vitalized in its new connection. An old particle, or, as it were, an old brick is detached from the wall to give place to a new one. It is carried out of the body as useless matter, as its vitality has been expended. So particles are perpetually changing places. The new go in and the old go out. This is vigorous life and health so long as this vital process is regularly performed.

In the lapse of time the vital artisans, such as the liver, spleen, kidneys, heart, stomach, etc., are weary by years of incessant toil, and fail to act with that systematic activity characteristic of younger days. By this relaxing new particles are not sent forward often enough, nor are the effete ones removed quickly, and consequently there is a mechanical irregularity and a chemical one also. Thus, we wear away, and finally die of old age. When disease sets in it is a sudden clog of the wheels, as it were.—The vital action by which life and consciousness is maintained can not be suspended, but a moment at farthest, without the hazard of death.—When a man is drowned the machine stops.

The only hope for the pulpit in these days is inspiration. Culture is necessary; polish is necessary; oratory is necessary; but important and grand as these graces and powers confessedly are, they are of little account and can accomplish little without the quickening that comes from the spirit of God.