

THE CHRISTIAN SUN.

IN ESSENTIALS, UNITY; IN NON-ESSENTIALS, LIBERTY; IN ALL THINGS, CHARITY.

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Poetry.

WHEN?

If I were told that I must die to-morrow,
That the next sun
Which sinks should bear me past all fear and sorrow
For any one,
All the fight fought, and all the short journey
through,
What would I do?
I do not think that I would shrink or falter,
But just go on
Doing my work, nor change, nor seek to alter
Aught that is gone;
But rise and move, and smile, and pray
For one more day.
And lying down at night for a last sleeping,
Say in that ear
Which hearkens ever, "Lord, within thy keeping
How should I fear?
And when to-morrow brings Thee nearer still,
Do Thou Thy will."
I might not sleep for awe, but peaceful, tender,
My soul would lie
All night long; and when the morning splendor
Flashed o'er the sky,
I think that I could smile, could calmly say,
"Welcome this day."
But if a wondrous hand from the blue yonder
Held out a scroll,
Upon which my life was writ, and I with wonder
Beheld unroll
To a long century's end its mystic clue,
What should I do?
What could I do, O, blessed Guide and Master,
Other than this—
Still to go on as now, not slower, faster,
Nor fear to miss
The road, although so very long it be,
While led by Thee?
Step by step, feeling Thee close behind me,
Although unseen;
Through thorns, through flowers, whether the
tempest hide Thee,
Or heaven's serene,
Assured Thy faithfulness cannot betray—
Thy love decay.
I may not know, my God, no hand revealeth
Thy counsels wise,
Along the path no deepening shadow stealth,
No voice replies
To all my questioning thought, the time to tell,
And it is well.
Let me keep on, abiding and unfeeling
That will always,
Through a long century's ripening fruition,
Or a short day's,
Thou canst not come too soon, and I can wait
If thou come late.

Selections.

THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST.

In a memorable passage, "the disciple whom Jesus loved" intimates that he and the three disciples were assured their Master was the Only-begotten of the Father by his fullness. That marvellous plenitude of being human indeed, but divine too, of which they "all received, and grace for grace," was the crowning proof of his proper quality. And when his earthly life was over, when his no longer knew him after the old familiar fashion, this fullness was still more manifest. The veil of flesh was rent, and Pentecost cleared their minds of the last remains of doubt and misapprehension. They could declare, "The Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us."
Another of the apostles, one who had not shared with the rest the privileges of intimacy with the Lord during his earthly life, testifies that "in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Paul, not less than John or Peter, received out of Christ's fullness, "and grace for grace"—grace upon grace; grace instead of grace; grace according to his varying needs and answerable to his prayers. Hence he could assure others, as for instance, he assured the Philippian church, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Hence, too, he was persuaded that in Christ "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," unsearchable riches available through faith for the replenishing of all the souls of men with life and love. The fullness of Christ is Paul's continual boast.
We sometimes dream that it would be easier for us to live the Christian life if Christ were now upon the earth. Without arguing this point, it is beyond dispute that personal influence is not dependent upon cotemporaneousness or intimacy of association. A poet grandly puts this, when he tells us of "the dead but sceptered sovereigns who rule us from their urns." Augustine in his Confessions, Luther in his Commentary on Galatians, the nameless author of the Invitation of Christ, and Dr. Arnold in his Letters are each more potent in their person-

ality now than they were among contemporaries and friends. Death and time have augmented their personal force and refined it also. And as it is thus with the servants, so it is with the Master. It is not necessary to our participation of Christ's fullness that we should see him with our bodily eyes. He certainly intimated this when he said, "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed." The faithful reception of the testimony of "apostles of the Lord and Saviour" brings the sense of his fullness into our souls, and draws out from the believing heart such reverence and love as his first disciples only in their best moments rendered. As he filled them with a sense of God which flooded their souls like an ocean-tide, so he will fill ours; and we, too, though we see him not, yet, believing, shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.
Our common experience affords some faint illustrations of the fullness of Christ with which the disciples were so deeply impressed. Now and then we meet with a man who seems to be endowed with qualities and powers sufficient for several ordinary mortals. We say of such an one, "He is more than two or three of us." We are amazed at the largeness and quantity of his being. Dr. Chalmers was always on the look-out, as a theological professor, for students whom he called, in broad Scotch, "Men of acch?"—men of large personality, rather than mere clever, brilliant fellows. He sought eagerly for indications of this quantity or fullness of being, deeming it the characteristic of real greatness. Christ's fullness was not simply fullness of mind. Probably the fishermen of Galilee could not have appreciated merely mental greatness. Nor was it the fullness of superhuman power. That they did see in him, but that they could appreciate, as plain, straight-minded men, familiar with the hard realities of common life, was just that which they felt in his company. It was his moral nature that they found so great and so full. Perhaps they hardly have expressed their feelings, but they knew he was altogether different from their most notable scribes. What empty creatures, compared with Him, were they who sat in the seats of authority in Church and State! What a large heart he had, and how miserably narrow and contracted beside him were the very best people of the religious world! The common people heard him gladly—why? Because, behind the words which spoke authoritatively to their hearts, there was a mingled sweetness and light which told of heaven opened and of divine love pouring itself forth in his person upon the world. It was the fullness of grace and truth, seen and felt in his teaching, his deeds, his life. "To as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God," and they said as Peter did, "Lord, to whom shall we go; thou hast the words of eternal life: and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ the Son of the living God."
This fullness of Christ is more evident to us than it could have been "in the days of his flesh." Calvary and Olivet have set in a clearer light.—All the ages of Christian history have augmented the force of his personality. More and more evident does it become that "by Him all things consist." They who know him as "the living bread which came down from heaven" can never hunger, for their souls are in vital union with the fullness of the life of God.—*Religious Herald.*
A GENTLE REBUKE.—A lady riding in a car on the New York Central Railroad was disturbed in her reading by the conversation of two gentlemen occupying the seat just before her. One of them seemed to be a student of some college on his way home for a vacation.
He used much profane language, greatly to the annoyance of the lady.
She thought she would rebuke him and, on begging pardon for interrupting them, asked the young student if he had studied the languages.
"Yes, madam, I have mastered the languages quite well."
"Do you read and speak Hebrew?"
"Quite fluently."
"Will you be so kind as to do me a small favor?"
"With great pleasure. I am at your service."
"Will you be so kind as to do your swearing in Hebrew?"
We may well suppose the lady was not annoyed any more by the ungentlemanly language of this would-be gentleman.

DAILY BREAD IN HARD TIMES.

"It's dreadful to live this way! I do wonder why God doesn't answer your prayer and send you some work, father."
"Are you hungry, mother? I'm sure I thought we had a very good breakfast. And what a nice pleasant house this is that we live in!"
"But we've nothing for dinner!"
"But it isn't dinner time."
"Well, I must confess I'd like to know what we are to have just a little while before dinner time."
"God has said our bread and water shall be sure, but he has not promised that we shall know beforehand where it's coming from."
"Father," said little Maggie, "do you suppose God knows what time we have dinner?"
"Yes, dear, I suppose he knows exactly that. I've done my best to get work, and I'll go out now and look around, and you go to school, and don't be the least bit afraid, Maggie. There'll be some dinner!"
"But we're out of soap and starch and saleratus," said the mother.
"As for saleratus, you couldn't use it if you had it, unless you had some flour. I'm sure I had soap when I washed my hands this morning."
"Yes, a little bit. But it's not enough to do the washing."
"But the washing won't come till next Monday. As for the starch, it isn't one of the necessities of life."
"If I had some potatoes I could make some," said Mrs. Wilson, musingly.
"Well, I'm going out now to try and find some work. You just cast your burden on the Lord, mother, and go about your household just as if you knew what was coming next, and don't go and take the burden right up again. That's the trouble with you. You can't trust the Lord to take as good care of it as you think you would, and so you take it up again, and go round groaning under the burden."
"Well, I do wonder he lets such troubles come. Here you've been out of work these three months, with only an occasional day's work, and you've been a faithful, conscientious Christian ever since I knew you."
"I've been an unfaithful, unprofitable servant, and that's true, mother, whatever you may think of me," replied Mr. Wilson, humbly. "God is trying our faith now. After he's provided for us so long, what will he think of us if we distrust him now just because want seems to be near, before ever it has touched us?"
Mr. Wilson went away to seek work, and spent the forenoon seeking vainly. God saw that here was a diamond worth polishing. He subjected his servant's faith to a strain, but it bore the test. I will not say that no questions or painful thoughts disturbed the man as he walked homeward at noon. Four eager, hungry little children, just home from school, to flad the table unspread and no dinner ready for them; an aged and infirm parent, from whom he had concealed as far as possible all his difficulties and perplexities, lest he should feel himself a burden in his old age, awakened to a realization that there was not enough for him and them—these were not pleasant pictures to contemplate, and all through the long, weary forenoon Satan had been holding them up to his view, and it was only by clinging to the Lord, as drowning men cling to the rope that is thrown to them, that he was kept from utter despondency.
"Thou knowest, O Lord, that I've done my best to support my family. My abilities are small, but I've done my best. Now, Lord, I'm waiting to see thy salvation. Appear for me! Let me not be put to shame."
"Increase my faith, increase my hope, Or soon my strength will fail."
So he prayed in his own simple fashion, as he walked along.
It was all true as he had said. His abilities were not great. Some frivolous young people at prayer meeting smiled at the phraseology of his prayers. But there were educated men and earnest women who were helped and strengthened by those very prayers. Religion had raised a man above mediocrity to whom Nature had been niggardly. Without it he would have been a cipher in the community—or worse than a cipher.
He drew near to his own door with something of shrinking and dread. But the children rushed out to meet him with joyous shouts.
"Come right in, father; quick! We've got a splendid dinner all ready. We've been waiting for you, and we're fearfully hungry."
The tired steps quickened, and the strongly drawn lines in the weary

face softened to a look of cheerful questioning, such as was oftentimes seen there. He came in and stood beside his wife, who was leaning over the stove, dipping soup out of the big dinner-pot with a ladle.
"How is this, mother?" said he.
"Why, father! Mr. Giddings has been over from Bristol. He came just after you went out. And he says a mistake was made in your account last August, which he has just found out by accident; he owed you three dollars more, and he paid it to me. So I—"
"I don't think it was by accident, though," said Mr. Wilson, interrupting her.
"Well, I thought as we had nothing for dinner I'd better buy some meat and—"
"Do you think it was accident that sent us that money to-day, mother?" persisted the thankful man.
"No, I don't think so," said his wife, humbly. "I think it was Providence. And I'm thankful, I'm sure. I did try to trust; but I'll try harder next time. You haven't heard the whole, though. Mr. Giddings wants you next Monday for all the week, and he thinks for all summer."
The grace at table was a long one, full of thanks and praise, but not even the youngest child was impatient at its length.—*Christian Weekly.*
PRIVATE PRAYER.
How often does many a child of God find prayer difficult wearisome! How often must he grieve to think that his desires have been vague, his mind wandering, his faith weak, and therefore his prayers vain.
The following hints, drawn from the experience of some tried in like manner, may help you in private prayer. Some may suit one person, some another, but all the following counsels have been tested:—
1. Think before you kneel to pray: God is here; God is holy; God is my Father; God knows my wants.
2. Be definite in your prayers: divide them in some way like this:
a Confession in sin.
b Thanksgiving and praise.
c Prayers for myself.
d Prayers for others (Intercession.)
It will greatly help you to be definite if you keep a little book, or even a sheet of paper in your Bible, and note down on it, in a very few words, the subject (under each of those heads) which from time to time you wish to lay before God.
You might take thanksgiving and prayer for yourself one time of the day; confession of sin at another (say in the evening); intercession at another.
3. Intercession, or prayer for others, is a most useful way of kindling your faith when unable to pray for your own wants.
4. Sometimes it is a great help to pray aloud, in a voice just audible to yourself.
5. Avoid repetition; say nothing which you have not well thought of, and which your heart desires and then lay it, very simply in the plainest words, before God, through Jesus Christ.
6. When you ask for particular things, or persons, write down privately what you have asked; then when God gives the answer, your faith will be most deeply strengthened, and your thanksgivings increased.
7. Depend after all on the Holy Spirit, who dwells in you. "He maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."—(Rom. viii. 26.) Many a prayer unuttered, only felt, may be more truly accepted than one well expressed in words. Each hearty desire for spiritual growth and blessing is inspired by the Holy Spirit, presented by Christ, our great High Priest, and received and answered by the Father.
Pray without ceasing.
READING FOR MOTHER.—There is nothing in the recollection of my childhood that I look back upon with so much pleasure as the reading aloud of my books to my mother. She was then a woman of many cares, and in the habit of engaging in every variety of household work. Whatever she might be doing in kitchen, or dairy, or parlor, she was always ready to listen to me, and to explain whatever I did not understand. There was always an undercurrent of thought about other things, mingling with all her domestic duties, lightening and modifying them, but never leading her to neglect them, or to perform them imperfectly. I believe it is to this trait of her character that she owes the elasticity and makes her under the weight of four-score years. How much I owe to the care and sympathy she gave to my childish years, I cannot measure.—*Mary C. Ware.*

THE UNJUST STEWARD.

In a letter received from the Rev. Dr. F. A. Farrar, the author of "The Life of Christ," is this paragraph: "The view of the Parable of the Unjust Steward," which you have been good enough to communicate to me, is entirely new to me and seems worthy of attention. Pray let me thank you for your kindness in calling my attention to it."
The trouble with the usual interpretation of this parable, which Dr. Farrar has also adopted, is that it appears to make our Lord commend a course of knavery in the overseer of the estate in question. The wisdom of this man, which was set up as an example to "the children of light," was, by this explanation of it, a fraudulent and swindling operation into which he had persuaded the farm hands; a combination to save himself by cheating his employer. The best face that can be put upon the matter, as thus regarded, is, that we are to suppose ourselves on the plane of a low, worldly prudence, which is not to be approved, and was not either by Christ or the owner of that estate; but the commendation is merely of the shrewdness of the culprit's management to extricate himself from the danger which threatened. A splitting of a very thin ethical hair, as every body confesses.
It seems surprising that the entire run of popular commentators on the gospels should have been content to take up with this suspicious rendering of this parable; that another view of it which looks to be "well worthy of attention," as Dr. Farrar admits, should also not have occurred to this latest traveller over the field of our Lord's instructions. But, as long ago as 1864, Dr. John A. Albro, of Cambridge, Mass., printed in the Boston Review (but without a name) a careful and, so far as any one appears to know, a quite original exegesis of the scripture, which, being communicated to Dr. F., in the early months of 1876, brought back the answer already given. Dr. Albro's understanding of the passage is briefly this:
In accordance with the general practice of Eastern countries, this "steward" had farmed out the estate of a rich landholder, just as the taxes and other revenues of a province were and often still are sold or let to a collector for a stipulated sum of money, while he takes the chances of repaying himself and considerably more by fleecing, at pleasure, the people thus turned over to his exactions. In this case these exactions had been so heavy that complaints had reached the proprietor; and, though he had not been personally injured by this misconduct, the interests of the estate were prejudiced. The steward is, therefore, called to account. To shield himself, he makes friends with the laborers and tenants; not by persuading them to defraud the owner, with whom they had no direct relations, but by abating largely his own demands on them, which he had an entire liberty to do and ought to have done, so far as these demands were extortionate. Thus, by an act of knavery, but of justness, he secured his position with his master and his subordinates, and is praised for the wisdom of a good deed, and not for the cunning of a crooked craftiness. This explanation has no serious difficulty from the text of the parable. The only seeming objections are merely verbal, as the agent was accused for wasting his lord's goods, which means no more than a bad malfeasance in office; and, further on, the question which he put to the farmers, "How much owest thou unto my lord?" which also may find a fair significance as a general inquiry how much they had been assessed as tenants on the property of this "certain rich man," and from which heavy assessments, due to the steward of the proprietor, they had carried a complaint directly to the proprietor himself. If this treatment of "the well known *crux interpretum*," the parable of the unjust steward," as the editors of *Lange* call it, will stand in the judgment of scholars, it would seem to be about time to unload our commentaries of the old and perplexing, not to say provoking interpretation.—*J. T. Tucker, D. D., in Independent.*
A little child who has just lost her mother, was asked, "What do you do without a mother to tell you troubles?" She sweetly said: "I go to the Lord Jesus. He was my mother's Friend and He's mine." When she was asked if she thought Christ would attend to her she replied: "He says he will, and that's enough for me." What was enough for her is enough for all.

Farm and Fireside.

AGRICULTURE AT THE SOUTH.

Agriculture is certainly the leading industry of the South, and our people may with just propriety be called an agricultural people. The natural advantages that we enjoy favorable to agriculture are as great, evidently, as those possessed by any other nation. Our territory includes the mildest and most healthful section of the temperate zone, and the fertility of our soil needs only the skillful hand of industrious labor to render it as productive as any portion of the globe. Indeed a large proportion of the land of the South is not excellent in natural fertility by that of any spot in the world. Joined to this, we have every possible variety of soil and a very wide range of climate, so that there is scarcely a crop or plant on the earth's surface that may not be grown here in perfection and with profit. We have few barren wastes, and little land that might not be turned to some agricultural use.—Even our rugged mountain sides are susceptible of tillage, and the beds of our rivers and bays may be and are being made profitable as breeding grounds for vast stores of fish and oysters. Turn where we will throughout the broad South, and everything marks the country as one vast food-producing region. Were all its available land under the plow, and with no better skill than at present prevails, and the result would feed and clothe the world.
Nor are the native population of the South unsuited to the land and climate they occupy, but seem well fitted and amply competent to utilize and profit by their natural advantages. They are strong, robust, active, enterprising, and ambitious, and are generally actuated by a laudable desire to acquire honorable independence and competence. They are not afraid to work, and readily endure hardships and privations from which many would turn away in dread. The domestic history of many of our self-tilling farmers, were it written, would sound like a pleasing romance or poetic myth from a land of fable.—Early uniting their name, fortune, and destiny with that of some rural nymph, whose virtue, prudence, industry, and domestic skill are only equalled by their beauty and charms, the happy pair go forth, without money and without means, and sell down fall to join to the raptures of conjugal bliss the lasting competency and independence that come of honest toil and self-denying labors.—In the course of a few years a numerous progeny surround their board, and these sharing the daily labor of the parents are trained to habits of industry, economy, and virtue, and go forth in their turn to establish new homes of their own. These settle not far from their childhood's home, and thus from the original pair a little society of loving and endeared friends springs up, and the same multiplied ten thousand times the country over, has made of our beloved South a country prosperous and happy, knit together by the indissoluble ties of kinship, one in soul and sentiment, "solid" in the best sense of the word.
This is, in brief, what our agriculture is to-day. What it will be in the future no one can say, but so long as our people cling to their virtue, industry, economy, and loving regard for each other, the South will ever remain solid and secure—too solid for tyrants to abuse or conquer—secure in all that pertains to a great and prosperous nation. That such may be her destiny we earnestly pray and to this end all our influence and zeal will be given.—*Kural Messenger.*
THE Staunton, Virginia Valley Farmer, furnishes the following indications of vigor in fowls, and the lack of it, when ought to be known by you who take an interest in feeding and rearing poultry: Healthy, vigorous fowls may almost always be detected by the rich color of the comb, which is a sure indication of health. The comb of a diseased fowl always loses color in proportion as the disease approaches its worst stages, in some instances turning black. We would advise those who suspect disease among their fowls to give the matter of the color of the comb a close study. AIVER NUP is a well selected and for sale. It is comfortable, what the pulse of the human system is to the physician.
"ONE cow, horse, mule, sheep, &c. &c. log, well fed and cared for is more profitable than two fed on the amount that will keep one well."

WHITE CLOVER.

From a recent letter in the London, England, *Agricultural Gazette*, we learn that the farmers of Leicestershire and other parts of England have a saying, "The more white clover, the more the beef;" and in many of their pastures this plant occupies a prominent place and is much relied upon. In this country, at least in this part of it, white clover, so far as we are aware, has seldom been used as a forage crop. It is, however, more or less spread over the country, and all know it to be a plant that furnishes most excellent grazing for all kinds of stock; agriculturists also assure us that it is the first among forage plants for beef.
As a plant the white clover is far more hardy and good less dainty in its choice of soil than its first cousin, the red clover, and seems much better adapted to the warmer climate of the South. As a sward plant for parks, lawns, and cottage ground it is not inferior to wire grass, and when grazed closely by calves or poultry, makes a smooth, beautiful, and velvety turf very agreeable to walk upon and always pleasing to the eye.
In view, then, of its many good qualities and adaptability to our section, it becomes a question whether we have been making the use of it that we should. Wherever a permanent pasture that will not run out is wanted, and one also that will yield a second handsome profit in honey, we do not know of a better plant than white clover. To us of Virginia permanent meadows and grazing ground are a matter of the first importance. Among the very short list of plants that, once well established, will hold their own with perennial thrift in any well managed pasture, the white clover is one of the best. This cannot be said of the other species of clover, or of many of the grasses usually cultivated. Nothing but absolute neglect or eternal shade will destroy a white clover sward, and with annual top dressing with barnyard or other course litter, and plenty of sunlight, it produces a sward almost equal to red clover. It is a pity that the rough and broken land that almost everywhere abounds in the South should remain valueless, when all of it might soon be clothed in a sward of white clover that would furnish grazing for all the farm stock, and feed numerous colonies of bees at the same time. We thus briefly call attention to this crop, believing that many farmers would derive great benefit from it if no more than their lawns and grounds around their dwellings were sowed down to it.—*Rural Messenger.*
THE DRAFT HORSE.
No horse is scarcer, or cost a better price than the large, coach or carriage horse. Even at our auction marts we are looking, under-sized, for a mere song, and they possess speed all 2:50 to 3:30. A coming from Nashville, Tenn., find a pair of superlative horses here, but not a pair by some 10 or 15 miles. It is comfortable to hear of in the best breed speaks in strong the best breed can use in favor of them to be profitable family parts in the last bred—the carriage (that shirt horse). Breed entirely a new may, there's made of the best number of them stand on your home use. I stand on your the different husbands (and of purpose). I and buy them a set good repair give them money breed them rigging. horse; men and boys, if you and feel good—if you finished be happy—buy BIGHAM'S RIGHTS of your humble servant agent for this town. It caps (is what everybody has been trying for years.)
T. T.
Wanted, Black Tear at 50c. Better beget at \$1.25. at WEBB'S DRUG STORE.
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Bass now occupied by Mr. J. B. Darden & Eley.
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