

THE CHRISTIAN SUN.

IN ESSENTIALS, UNITY;

IN NON-ESSENTIALS, LIBERTY;

IN ALL THINGS, CHARITY.

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Poetry.

BE OF GOOD CHEER.

Though tangled hard life's knot may be,
And wearily we rue it,
The silent touch of Father Time
Some day will surely undo it.
Then, facing, wait;
Nothing is late
In the light that shines forever.

We faint at heart, a friend is gone;
We chafe at the world's harsh drilling;
We tremble at sorrow on every side,
At the myriad ways of killing.
Yet say we all,
If a sparrow fall,
The Lord keepeth count for ever.

He keepeth count. We come, we go,
We speculate, toil, and wait;
But the measure of each woe and woe
God only can give or alter,
He sendeth light,
He sendeth night,
And change goes on forever.

Why not take life with cheerful trust,
With faith in the strength of weakness?
The slenderest daisy rears its head
With courage, yet with meekness:
A sunny face
Hath holy grace
To woo the sun forever.

Forever and ever, my darling, yes—
Goodness and love are undying;
Only the troubles and cares of earth
Are winged from the first for flying,
Our way we plough
In the furrow "now!"
But after the sowing and growing, the sheaf;
Soil for the root, but the sun for the leaf—
And God keepeth watch forever.
—Mary M. Dodge.

Selections.

THE GUARANTEE.

Very heavy burdens are carried in this world. Christians have these burdens laid on them, as well as unbelievers. Indeed, it is not unlikely that Christians suffer more than men of the world. The latter do not think; they often take life easy. Then there is a class of afflictions, the bitterest of all, which do not reach the unbeliever. The Christian mother's heaviest sorrow is, perhaps, on account of a son, for whose salvation her spirit knows no rest. Her sorrow may have passed even that point. Then, again, it is through affliction that God prepares his chosen ones for the kingdom above. It is in the fire that the gold is to be refined until it is thoroughly purified of all alien principles. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." "Exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." We think it is a great mistake to paint the Christian life as a path of flowers. "And others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword."

The early Christians courted martyrdom. They carried it to a point of fanaticism. It was their idea that by sealing their testimony with their blood, they earned a crown that ordinary Christians would not receive.

We know very well that the noblest traits of the human character are developed by a life of hardness, and we know very well that the tears that silently steal down the cheeks of the mourner are like drops from heaven to nourish within all Christian graces.

What shall the poor Pagan do—what shall the unbeliever in a Christian land do, when his heart is wrung with anguish? when the night grows so deep that he can see nothing but the blackness of darkness? Where shall the eye be turned to pierce that thick veil?

And, oftentimes, the Christian is so hedged in, and the wheels of his chariot are so slow in coming, that hope almost dies. Blow follows blow. Years succeed years, and there is no relief. What then?

In that case, we may recall the phrase, "God, that cannot lie." We do not doubt his power to deliver, or, if deliverance be not well, to overrule in a better way. He has also promised to stand by us. So that here are the Power and the Promise—and then we are assured that it is "impossible for God to lie." Darkness reigns supreme; you cannot see anything to comfort. The case seems without remedy. Then, we urge, "it is impossible for God to lie." (Titus i. 2.)

"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and

which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." (Heb. vi. 18.)

We have said nothing of God's LOVE:

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Central Presbyterian.

THE DIVINE GLORY AS A MOTIVE IN CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Noble and potent are many of the incentives to duty which arise from within our better natures, or are excited by the calls of need from without. Such are a deep conscientiousness, the love of the right for its own sake, a sense of the absolute authority of all truth, a delight in purity, sympathy in suffering, and love for our fellowmen. But no one of these motives, nor all combined, can insure the integrity of character, and the fulfillment of the highest mission in life. The grand incentive is that which was the constant and all-swaying thought of our blessed Master, supreme love for His Father in heaven, and devotion to His glory.

This will be found to be, in every way, most hopeful. Especially will the light from the divine glory guide us along the line of duty when the path is dark, and we are in doubt as to the most excellent way. Our best purposes often get entangled among our wisest thoughts about the method of accomplishing them, until at length we doubt the merit of the original intention, and are easily tempted to abandon it. Starting upon a journey through the dense wilderness, my guide, who could not be with me at the time, gave me this counsel: "If you miss the path, remember that the place you are to come out lies just east; keep that direction and the path will find you. It must come in there, however much it may wind." So the divine glory is the moral east, the end of all paths of duty. In all doubt of the detailed steps take your direction by the great end. Consecrate yourself anew to the will of your heavenly Father; be sure that you have that unselfish impulse to serve only him; then go ahead as best you can. You will probably soon discover the path lying at your feet. And if the path never appears to the satisfaction of your judgment, you may have the better satisfaction of knowing that it will end in what is just right and best; for this is the promise, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

But this incentive, if faithfully followed, will not only guide us in the way of duty, it will inspire us with strength to pursue it. No other motives are sufficient to keep the moral energies persistent and forceful in their operations. The staunchest conscience sometimes gets limp under temptation, like a hickory bow when wet, so that it fails to send the arrow of duty straight to the mark. So love and sympathy, however strong at the start, often fail to keep us up in the way of doing good, through, perhaps, a misunderstanding between us and the object of our kindness; or our charity loses tone when we find that it is not sufficiently appreciated. These reservoirs of motive are not high enough to raise the stress of action to the highest duties. It will be found that for the unselfish and unworshipful career demanded of the Christian, there will be need and incentive out of self and beyond the world. For this there must be inspired a "passion for God, a conscientiousness which is enamored of divine holiness; a sympathy and love which are sustained by the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us." When our ambition is raised from the baubles that glitter along the earth like perishable dew-

drops, to the divine glory which fills the heavens, as the eagle is said to soar with his eye upon the sun, then the promise will be verified in our experience: "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."—Illustrated Christian.

THE SUNNY HOME.

I know a room where sitters, and there is a brazier and mignonette in the room ever I think of it. There a man comes home and throws off overcoat and hat without looking to see what becomes of them. There is a broad table in the light, strewn with papers and magazines, women's work, with a litter of rose leaves dropping over from a central vase. There is a wide sofa of the days of the Georges, fresh covered in chintz, with ferns and haremalls for patterns, and a tired man goes down there with a great ruffled pillow under his shoulders, and opens parcels and letters, dropping them on the floor, as the most natural place for them. A girl has been painting, and her water-colors and papers lie on a side table, just as she left them to rush for an impromptu ride. I have never been able to discover any disarrangement of the household economy by this flight. Somebody left a shawl on a chair. There will be nothing said about it at breakfast next morning.

There are no laws here against playing with the curtain tassels, no regulations as to how often the snowy curtains may be put up or left down. They do not last the season out, crisp and speckless as the neighbor's do across the way, but the only consequence is they are oftener new and clean. There is nothing very fine about this house, but things are renewed oftener and look brighter than they do in other houses. The chairs have no particular places, and anybody feels at liberty to draw the sofa out when it pleases him. There is no primness about the place. If there is grass on the lawn, it is meant to be mowed on, and the geraniums are faded and petted and caressed as if they were children. Do you know there is a magnetism in green leaves and growing flowers derived from the earth's heart, that makes it good to handle and feel them? This house is known as the place where one dares to break fast. There is no ceremony of waiting. Coffee and cakes are put where they will be hot; the table is cleared to suit the housekeeper's convenience, and a small one set for the late comer.

Nobody lies awake at night till the light ceases to shine under your chamber door, if you want to sit up and read a volume through. There is an unwritten law of convenience for the household which regulates better than any Code Napoleonic. And the benefit of allowing people to be a law unto themselves is, that they are much better-natured about it when they do obey. There is indulgence and repose in this lovely home, and a great deal of time for things which most people cut short—an hour's play with the children, a "right-down good" chat with a neighbor, a day of letter-writing once a fortnight. Disorder does not imply dust or soil of any kind. It does not include shabbiness or mean chaos. It means "leave to be"—in most cases, thinking of people more than things. Order is simply harmony of a few notes. Disorder is the flowering, branching melody of one theme—and that theme, individuality.—Southern Churchman.

THEN I HAVE GOT IT.

Some years ago I was leaving a hall in Glasgow, in which I had been preaching the gospel, when a respectable man, with a very eager face, stretched out his hand and grasped mine saying, "Sir, I am very anxious to get salvation."

"Then," I said, "God is very anxious to save you."

He listened earnestly to hear what I would say to him, hoping some word would give him peace; but I only put the gospel to him in the most familiar text of Scripture. As I reminded him that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but should have everlasting life," he stopped me by saying:

"But I do believe in Jesus." I replied, "Jesus said, 'He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.'"

A look of astonishment and joy immediately broke over his face as he said, "Then I have got it! Thank God, I have got everlasting life."

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NO SABBATH.

In an essay on the Sabbath, written by a journey-man printer, in Scotland, there occurs the following passage. Read it, and then reflect for awhile what a dreary and desolate page would this life present if the Lord's Sabbath were blotted out from the recollection.

"I think how the abrupt result of the Sabbath would hopelessly enslave the working classes and mixing us are identified. Think coal &c. Two going on in one monotone of eternal cycle, limbs forever on the rack, the fingers forever straining, the brow forever sweating, the feet forever plodding, the brain forever throbbing, the shoulders forever drooping, the loins forever aching, and the restless mind forever scheming.

"Think of the beauty it would efface, the merry-heartedness it would extinguish, of the giant strength it would tame, of the resources of nature it would drain, of the projects it would wreck, of the groans it would extort, of the lives it would immolate, and of the cheerless graves it would prematurely dig!—See them toiling and moiling, sweating and fretting, grinding and hewing, weaving and spinning, strewing and gathering, mowing and reaping, raising and building, digging and planting, striving and struggling—in the granary and barn, in the factory and in the mill, in the warehouse and in the shop, on the mountain and in the ditch, on the roadside and in the wood, in the city and in the country, on the sea and on the shore, in the day of brightness and of gloom. What a picture would present if we had no Sabbath!"—Gen. Presbyterian.

OUT OF SELF.

The question of prime importance to you is not, Are you a Christian? but, is Jesus Christ your Saviour? These questions may seem to aim at the same point; but they involve very different processes of mind in their answering; and herein consists the superiority of the latter form over the former. Your hope of salvation must not rest on what you are, but on what your Saviour is and does. If you look at yourself to find a ground of hope, you will never be satisfied—unless you are deceived. But if you look at Jesus, you can see reason enough for hope. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners—not Christians, but sinners. If you are a sinner, you may be sure that you are one of the very class Jesus Christ came to save. If as a sinner you trust yourself to Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners, He will not fail you: you may be sure of eternal safety. The question, Am I a Christian? has troubled many an anxious mind for weary years; and the more the inquirer has pondered it, the less hope there has seemed of its settling. But there need be no such trouble in settling the question, Is Jesus Christ my Saviour? Whom did Jesus Christ come to save? Are you one of that class? Do you want him to save you? Is he able to do so? Is he willing? Do you trust yourself to him? These are the questions for you. The more you look away from yourself, and the more you fix your gaze on Jesus, the firmer your ground of hope will be. There is a great deal of time wickedly wasted on self-examination that might be profitably given to the contemplation of the Saviour.—S. S. Times.

ANOTHER HOOP.—Two neighbors, says Spurgeon, a cooper and a farmer, were spending an evening together. Both were professors of religion, but of different communions. Their conversation was first upon topics relating to practical religion, but after a time it devolved to the points of difference between the two denominations to which they belonged. It first became a discussion, and then a dispute. The cooper was the first to perceive its unprofitable and injurious tendency, and remarked, "We are springing apart from each other; let us put on another hoop—let us pray." They knelt down and prayed together, after which they spent the remainder of the evening lovingly together, conversing on the things of the kingdom in which they both felt an equal interest.

A GENTLEMAN had a board put up on a part of his land, on which was written, "I will give this field to any one who is really contented." And when an applicant came, he asked, "Are you contented?" The general answer was, "I am." And his reply invariably was, "Then what do you want with my field?"

THE DEAD PRAYER-OFFICE.

What becomes of the answered letters? Thousands of them find their way to the dead letter office. Some never reach the person for whom they were intended because the postage is not paid; some fail because they are directed to the wrong office; some cannot be sent because the address is illegible; and some because the matter enclosed is unmailable. These float through the mails, are examined at different offices, marked "miscellaneous" and finally they fall into the dead letter office. There they are opened and read, and, if valuable, are forwarded, if not they are given to the flames. Such is the accuracy and skill of the postal officials that very few letters ever fail to reach their destination.

Some prayers never reach God because they are not addressed to God's office. They are directed to the audience. Here one preys a "sharp cut" to some stubborn brother, or rebukes some error in theology in another, or drives some keen-edge blade of censure into another, directs a severe criticism to some who are rushing into fashionable follies, and sometimes (shame on us) the very supplication which we offer in tenderest tones, in behalf of the weeping widow and helpless orphans, is intended more for those who kneel in mourning before us than for God who sits in glory above us. God's office is not in our neighbor's care, and if we direct our prayers to that point, they will certainly go to the "dead prayer office."

Again, there is a prayer upon which the address is illegible—not because it is a rough scribble "handwritten"; these can always be deciphered, but because it has so many extra flourishes. This prayer is uttered in a pompous, grandiloquent style. It is full of long words, scientific terms and classical quotations. The writing on the envelope is very much in keeping with the style on the inside. The ink was fancy, and it soon faded, the pen was the tongue, and it did not see the color in the prayer. How different when indited by the heart! It is no wonder that this prayer gets lost, and finds its way into the "dead prayer office."

The last prayer we notice is the unavailable prayer. There is a great latitude allowed us in the postal matter of our government, but there are a few things which cannot even get into the mail bags. Sharp-edged tools and corroding acids, no matter how securely wrapped will not be transported through the mails, these are put in a separate box and sent to the dead letter office, and they are captured by the first postmaster that handles them. Many of our prayers, if answered, might be a blessing to us, but they would fall like a shower of daggers upon our neighbors. Sometimes in our prayers we half way complain of the strange providence which has befallen us, and argue the case with God; then the prayer is full of sharp-pointed arrows. Is it at all strange that kind answers are not returned? The corroding of selfishness or sensuality or pride is sometimes in our prayers. Such a prayer is lost on the way. It is poured out in midair. It is never answered, and well for us that it is not.

"No legally 'stamped,' sincerely directed and well-meaning prayer is ever lost. The answer may be delayed, but the prayer is 'on file.'"—Advance

AN AMUSING INCIDENT.—In a little village in Virginia there lived a family named Ransom. They were not very pious people, and never went to church. Once however, during a revival, the family were prevailed upon to attend preaching. When they made their reluctant and tardy appearance the services had just begun, and when they had scarcely taken their seats, the minister gave out the first hymn, reading it somewhat thus: "Return, ye ransom sinners, home." "All right!" cried the head of the Ransoms, getting up in a rage, and clapping his hat on his head—"Come along, old woman and gals, we'll go home fast enough, and everybody in the old church knows we didn't want to come."

I say it deliberately, and with profound convictions, I am thankful of God that I am a poor man; a thousand times have I felt a profound sense of gratitude to God that my Father was a poor man. I think it not unlikely that if in my youth I had money to spend free, I should have gone to destruction.—Marcin.

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Farm and Fireside.

A LITTLE LAND WELL TILLED.

Many a farmer has learned that "a little land well tilled, a little house well filled, and a little wife well drilled," are among the greatest and most invaluable of earthly blessings. Thrones, riches, and fame are less productive of real happiness, and he who enjoys health and a country home, with some rural queen for his companion, needs not to travel far for earth's richest gifts and pleasures. From the earth springs every good and satisfying gift, and a well tilled farm may be regarded as the source of everything that man needs.

But the term "a well tilled farm" is indeed a comprehensive one. In its fullest sense, it means a thorough and continual development of every resource and capability of the farm that can tend to the best. Every plant of the farm is turned to some account. Few farms, perhaps none, are thus thoroughly developed. Agriculture has not yet arrived at this state of perfection, but we rejoice to believe that it is gradually approaching that coveted goal. When land shall be fully developed, when the cultivation has become thorough, when every recourse shall yield results, when every foot of soil shall drop its monthly, quarterly, or semi-annual gift into the hands of the industrious and skillful husbandman—when farming from the perfection of art and science shall seem more like a healthful recreation than laborious and exhausting drudgery, when all the powers of nature wisely directed shall lift from man the burden of toil—then will one acre yield the result of five now, and a "little farm" will excel many a great one of the present day. Then the farmer who does not have some crop growing and something maturing at all seasons will be regarded as very much behind the times—the one who cannot go to his farm any month in the year and get something to bring him "a dollar or two," will be looked upon as extremely unfortunate.

To this height agriculture is tending, and will attain at no distant day. The time is coming when it will not be deemed necessary to employ a score of laborers to perform some paltry and perhaps profitless job. The farmer himself on his little farm, preparing for one crop as he gathers another, sowing while he is reaping, and garnering at the same time that he is planting,—and doing all with the slow and easy movement that insure perfection, will realize more from his own efforts than many a planter gleans from the service of twenty laborers. Escaping a world of vexation and ill-temper arising from the ignorance or stubbornness of the laborer, his only assistants those of his own household, who cannot see that farming will then be a pleasanter employment than now—that the little farmers will be the thrifty and independent farmers of the land.

That these results are not only possible, but particularly attainable in a short series of years we positively assert. The whole secret of it lies in concentration—concentration of labor, energy, manure, skill, thought, and acres. Men must learn to measure the size of their farms by their available amount of the above articles. It is idle to expect to make money, or even a decent living, on a large farm without adequate means. If you are on a large place fear not to curtail your cultivable area to suit your means. One acre well fertilized, thoroughly cultivated, and rapidly rotated, will yield more profit than five given to a single crop. Better own a little land and till it well than a large farm without the means to develop its capacities.—Rural Messenger.

IRREGULAR WEAR OF HOOFES.

In cases of irregular wear of the hoofs the only remedy consists in removing the excessive growth by paring with a knife. Only so much should be removed as to give the foot an approximately natural shape. If this is attended to regularly once a month or every six weeks, no further trouble may be experienced. Such deviations in the natural shape of the hoofs are generally the consequence of want of wear, as in cases where cattle are kept indoors during a long period. In paring such feet due care must be exercised not to cut too close to the vital part or to draw blood, in which case bad results may follow.—Western Rural.

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SALT FOR TREES.

Young fruit trees can be made to grow and do well in places where old trees have died, by sowing a pint of salt on the earth where they are to stand. After trees are set, continue to sow a pint of salt around each tree every year. I set twenty-five trees in sandy soil for twenty-one of seven years, and only succeeded in getting one to live, and that only produced twigs a few inches long in nine years. Last spring I sowed a pint of salt around it, and limbs grew three and a half feet long. In the spring of 1877 I set out twenty-five trees, putting a pint of salt in the dirt used for filling, and then sowed a pint or more on the surface after each tree was set. All grew as if they had never been taken from the nursery. Last spring I set 30 more, treating them in the same way, and they have grown very finely. The salt keeps away insects that injure the roots and renders the soil more capable of sustaining plant growth.—Es.

SETTING ORCHARDS.

Mr. Wm. Saunders, horticulturist in charge of the public gardens and grounds at Washington city, observes that the outside rows of trees in an orchard always grow more thrifty than interior rows. He attributes this to the cultivation of the soil in the fields alongside of the orchard giving room for the ramification of the roots in cultivated soil. He thereupon suggests that trees be set in two rows, twenty-five or thirty feet apart, then a space of 300 feet or more, and two more rows of trees, and so on over the ground; the intervening 300 feet of ground to be cultivated in such crops as may be desired, and the space between the rows of trees to be put in grass as soon as they begin to bear. He thinks the cultivation of the ground would keep the trees healthy, and conduce to their bearing fruit. Mr. Saunders thinks double rows of trees would shelter the crops between, and be beneficial in that way.

FENCE POSTS.

"The decay of wood imbedded in the earth is difficult to guard against; but a single precaution, costing neither money nor labor, will increase the durability of posts put in the ground by 50 per cent. This is by simply taking care that the wood is inverted, i. e., placed in the opposite direction to that which it grew. Experiments have proved that oak posts put in the ground in the same position as that in which they grew, top upwards, were rotten in twenty years, while their neighbor, cut from the same tree, and placed top downwards in the soil, showed no signs of decay for several years afterwards. It is supposed that the capillary tubes in the tree are so adjusted as to oppose the rising of moisture when the wood is inverted. Whatever the cause, the fact is of importance."

LEAF AND FLOWER IMPRESSIONS.

Oil a piece of white paper on one side; hold the side that is oiled over a lamp or pine-knot smoke till quite black surface, as the veins and fibres of the leaf show plainer on the under part; now press it on all parts of the leaf and put the black oiled sides on the page of a book (made for leaf impression) with an extra piece of paper on the top to prevent smutting the opposite page; press it a few moments; then remove the green leaf, and the impression will be left on the page as beautiful as an engraving. Flowers of single corolla can be pressed in like manner. Many of the geranium leaves make beautiful impressions. The impression book may be made still more interesting by giving botanical classifications of each leaf and flower.—The Garden.

PRESERVATION OF FRUIT BY BURIAL.

Last January a California fruit dealer took two hundred fresh lemons fresh from the tree and buried them in the ground to see how they would keep. Four months after he dug them up and found them in perfect preservation, as sound and fresh and nice as the day they were buried. Every one knows how well potatoes keep when properly covered by earth. Apples would doubtless do equally as well; and possibly the same method may answer for grapes and other more perishable fruit. It would not cost much to try a few experiments in this direction, and success could not fail to be advantageous.—

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