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Poetry.

A Sketch at Sunset.

BY CAROLINE DENT.

BRIGHTLY in the burning west
Seeks the sun his place of rest;
And a golden glory flings
Full on all opposing things.
Stately trees have caught the glow,
Casting deeper shade below.
Lift thine eye, and let it stray
Where the evening breezes play;

Mid the boughs so light in air;
Watch the sudden shadows there
On the trunks of fervid tone
By the chequ'ring foliage thrown.
Bathed in brilliance, how they stand!
Forms of beauty simply grand,
Back'd by clouds whose masses dread
All the eastern heaven o'erspread.

Raindrops fall—a summer show'r
Lends its fragrance to the hour;
Still the sun is bright, and, low!
On the cloud the radiant bow!
Softly, fervently it glows,
And an arch of glory throws
Upward o'er the silver fir,
And the trees encircling her.

Fade not, magic scene, away!
Sinking sunbeam, longer stay!
Morrow's eve may not bestow
All the contrast and the glow.
Vain request! the vision fades,
Sets the sun, and fall the shades,
Ere the pencil's aid can give
Passing glooms through years to live.

Christian! work while day may last,
Soon the hours of light are past;
Catch the moment's favoring glow,
Quickly do thy task below.
Christian! rise where sunsets never
Leave unfinished high endeavor,
Where the cloud is only known
By the rainbow round the throne.

THE GREAT DIFFICULTY OF THE INQUIRER.

Those who remain long convinced without being converted, frame to themselves manifold reasons, why they do not repose their souls on the Lord Jesus, as made over to them in the offer of love. But they shrink from looking at the true reason, which is their *not believing the truth comprehended in that offer.* Once suppose a soul awakened and desiring salvation, and all that is wanting in order to peace, is simple faith. The pleas which are commonly urged by the inquirer, that his sin is too great to be pardoned; that his case is peculiar; that he has forfeited all possibility of grace; that his heart is hard; that he has not been humbled enough; or dubs not feel darker enough or grief enough; in a word, that any conditions remain unfulfilled; all these pleas spring from disbelief of the fulness and gratuity of salvation. All this lingering betrays erroneous doctrine in the mind, or denial of true doctrine. All proceeds from narrow, dishonourable, and therefore false views of Christ and his work. The moment the soul apprehends the Lord Jesus Christ as he is, no longer a taskmaster demanding conditions, but, as a Surety, fulfilling them, it falls into his arms. You doubt him; it is the same as want of faith. You doubt him; hence your evil conscience. You doubt his power, his love, his truth, his willingness to save. He has saved others, but you doubt his readiness to save you. The very instant that complete truth gains possession of your soul, you will surrender. It is the simplest thing in the world, but the hardest, where the truth is not believed. Even true Christians, who have some faith, are not always in the exercise of faith in high degrees. The sun is not equally bright in the soul's firmament. But when relief comes, it comes by seeing this truth and believing it. As the truth, which is the object of saving faith, relates to Jesus Christ, or rather as Jesus Christ is himself the Truth; the best of all directions to the inquirer, and the doubter, and the backslider, and the mourner, is contained in the trite phraseology that he should be continually "*looking unto Jesus.*" If life depended an your seeing the sun, whither, I beseech you, should you be bending your eyes, but yonder, eastward, where the reddening dawn, breaking into streaks of gold, harbingers the approaching orb of fire? Set up before your mind the one great aim of faith, JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS. All our exposition, argument, exhortation, and entreaty can only reiterate the cry, Behold him! behold him! Infinitely below the reality are all our representations of his graciousness and earnestness to save. Angels and sainted spirits would hardly recognize the Jesus whom we delineate. Prophecy and Gospel combine to represent him as waiting to save. This is precisely what you disbelieve. In your careless hours of open sin, you scarcely considered whether he would save or not; you entertained no genuine estimate of the *Christ that is*, in beauty and glory; you believed nothing. Now, though you have a partial illumination breaking through chinks of the dungeon, enough to reveal loathsome horrors, you nevertheless have not yet enough to show you the Son of God, standing in grace and beauty, yearning over you with compassion, and offering to make you his at once. Still we cry, Behold him! behold him! He is holy, he abhors your unholiness. But he offers you redemption which includes your being holy. Keep your thoughts directed to the gracious form, who dignifies the Altar and the Cross. See him your priest. See in him your sacrifice. "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!*"—*J. W. Alexander.*

LONG AFFLICTIONS.—Long afflictions will much set off the glory of heaven. The longer the storm the sweeter the calm; the longer the winter nights, the sweeter the summer days. The new wine of Christ's kingdom is most sweet to those who have long been drinking gall and vinegar. The higher the mountain, the gladder we shall be when we get to the top of it.

THE tongue blessing God without the heart, is but a tinkling cymbal; the heart blessing God without the tongue, is sweet but still music; both in concert make that harmony which fills and delights heaven and earth.

Correspondence.

THE RELATIVE POSITION OF COURAGE IN THE CIRCLE OF CHRISTIAN GRACES.

BY REV. E. E. ADAMS.

COURAGE is energy of heart; firmness of soul; settled purpose; strong force of will; intelligent self-trust in view of danger, opposition, duty, reproach and death. It is not bustling, boastful, noisy;—but silent, modest, calm. It sits in the soul as a divinity, not revealing its presence by throbs and flashes, like clouds overcharged with electric fire, but, by a steady, burning beam as from the solar glory; not by impulsive, fragmentary action, but by constant pressure like the equable law of gravitation. It lives in the man, and grows strong by its trial. It acts against the world's voice—often against the judgment of the wise, great and good. It is not a passion, not a mere *impression*, but a life. It does not enter the soul from without, it is born in it.

Manliness is *native* elementally, where it exists at all. It sets opinion at defiance, although modestly *respecting* opinion. It does not worship success, nor seek to be worshipped *because* successful. It endures sorrow, reproach, neglect. It calmly bears accusation.

Scipio, accused of appropriating the public funds, would not wait for vindication, but in the presence of the Tribunes, tore in pieces the scroll which would have proved his innocence.

Courage is more than boldness. We may be bold because we outnumber the foe; because we have better armor; or because the public mind sustains us. A man may boldly defend our Government amidst a loyal population; but he needs courage to do so where only rebels hear him. Courage does not reckon on numbers, on means, on the public will. It stands alone in its own conviction. The Spartans asked in battle—*not* how many, but *where* are the enemy? Courage does not reason, nor always weigh probabilities; although in its completeness, it is partly a result of reasoning. Often it takes a stand against probabilities, deeming suffering and death the noblest victories. It is more than bravery, not hasty, transient, fitful; not stimulated by music, by martial array, nor by popular applause. Courage is independent of such extraneous influences. The soldier may be brave when the eye of his leader is on him; and the noise of battle sounds in his ear, but utterly lose heart when borne wounded from the field. Courage would render him joyful, even sportive in his agonies. Socrates smiled at his condemnation. Sir Thomas More was playful on the scaffold. Paul gloried in tribulation.

Courage is not stoicism. The courageous man has sensibility. His nerves may quiver at the burning touch of pain. He may fear death. He may dread wounds, and shrink at the sight of suffering. Yet his courage surmounts all these, and from deep principle, from right, from conviction, he will "do what he is *afraid* to do!" He will press down every throb of feeling, and hush every clamor for ease, comfort, safety, reputation, and march into flames, and floods, and thundering batteries; and what is often more terrible, into battalions of critics who condemn what they cannot compass; into a whole continent of superficial sages, who sneer at convictions and sentiments too lofty, too *pure*, for their minds and hearts.

Courage may exist with wrong. But not where the man is conscious of wrong. He must believe himself right, or his heart will fail. Even the madman, whom no persuasion, no terror can deter from his deadly purpose, is first deluded into the conviction that he is right; or, which amounts to the same in effect, is utterly free from the impression of wrong.

There are many forms of courage, such as intrepidity in battle, oblivious of life, breasting the sea of bayonets; standing erect in the leaden rain, and marching with steady pulse into the hot *focus* of the strife. And yet to that high quality may be wanting the still nobler attribute of moral firmness which "endures the cross, despising the shame." There are present those possibly, whose courage would bear them through the most appalling dangers—through torture, blood, and flames, and yet in the gentler scenes of home and social life they have not the moral principle to "endure as seeing him who is invisible."

There is literary courage moving a man to write histories, to lay before his mind the work of years; to go through dim and blotted manuscripts, to sift old traditions; compare conflicting testimony; and finally record the facts as they are found, against the beliefs of men; against preceeding histories, against the deductions of statesmanship and learning; to compose an epic which contemporaries cannot fathom, which must lie entombed like the "Paradise Lost," and wait for future ages; to discover and announce truths and laws of science, like Kepler, and be called a dreamer, a madman, a heretic, deserving the flames; but inwardly assured that his day of vindication will come, that truth shall triumph.

The man of courage says—"This I do! This I utter. This I write. The world may be behind it; let the world come up with it. I cast it forth on the sea of humanity, and of time. It shall float, and reach a shore. It shall be found, and taken up, and tested, and proved to be *worth!* It is truth, I plant my soul on truth, and risk all! Nay—risk nothing! That is true insight, true *foresight.* Such a mind masters, while it refreshes us. Our thoughts bloom and ripen in its light. To such, as Goethe says "thoughts come like blessed children from God." A great thinker is courageous. He fears not contradictions. He has no reverence for names, and forms, and opinions. He worships truth, works for it, would die for it. He is more than willing to drop a creed which he cannot keep and defend. He walks along the line of paradox and heresy that he may find the boundary of truth. Those who always live on one side of a stream are ever looking across it; they need to stand on the other side and look back sometimes, to get a broader, more harmonious view.

There is the courage of adventure. It sometimes happens that a man has a great problem to be solved; a grand scheme to develope; but wants the courage to propound it,—to meet the expense, the resistance; the questioning, the ordeal to which it will subject him. He needs an *executive. He* has *found* the law, another must apply and prove it. His *conception* is *bold*, but *courage* is wanting to give it realization. Columbus both conceived the bold idea of another continent and had the courage to find it, though courts, and superstitions, and poverty, and clamorous men, and storms, and the spirit of the age, and *oceans* lay between him and the goal.

The man of courage is genuine, aboveboard. He makes no pretension, has no affinity with sham; creeps through no by-paths—has no underground mole-tracks by which to reach his ends. He never takes you by the button to whisper in your ear suspicions against a neighbor. He does not rage at you, neither does he fawn. When needful he speaks, but is often greatest in silence. He is a man. He knows himself. He feels the dignity and worth of manhood. He is not *afraid* to study his own heart, and character. His life is greater than time—he has grasped immortality.

Courage is the vital pillar about which all the graces of the heart and life cluster and bloom. It gives harmony to the whole circle of virtues. It is generous in its strength, and self-reliance—it is benevolent, for it belongs to the suffering. It is humble in its towering exaltation. It is sublime in its humanities, conciliating where it might overwhelm. Like a broad and lofty oak, stretching its arms to the air, offering its protection to the warblers that hide in its leaves, casting its shadow over the weary laborer, nor despising the daisy and the violet that bloom modestly below,—courage gathers the gentler graces to itself, gives them its protection, and blends its majesty with their sweetness.

It has a place in Christian life. Add to your faith virtue. That is, courage, manliness, intrepidity. It will cost much to avow and hold the *faith* of the Gospel. It may cost reproach, labor, suffering, death. You will need courage. Not a blind force of will, not ignorant belligerency—but intelligent self-reliance. Therefore add knowledge, and, that the intelligence may be unimpared, that the mind may act and resolve healthfully, be moderate in meats and drinks, in all lawful pleasures; in the exercise of that intrepid purpose which would defend the faith at all hazards. For indulgence makes the mind turbid, gives wildness to fancy, prevents culture, and leaves *courage* only a blind giant wasting its energies and destroying the treasure it is set to defend. And, as in the practice of moderation you will have to resist and endure, add *patience*—the *power* of suffering, and the willingness to suffer. Discipline the soul to resistance. The appetites will clamor for indulgence. Do not yield. Bear the pain of temptation. If moderation fail, knowledge will be invaded, courage will become a brute power, and the whole Christian life go to decay.

To patience add Godliness. Be like God in patience, who bears with the errors and sins of the universe though he might if he desired it, sink the sinning universe in utter death. Let the motive of your patience be in his long suffering. Be patient toward others' fears, others' ignorance; toward their falls under temptation. Strengthen your own faith, courage, moderation, and contribute to the increase of your knowledge and richness of your experience by *enduring hardship.* Be like God in goodness. Let likeness to him add its glory to your highest manhood.

Then, that your piety may have, as it is designed, the complement of its God-ward relation, add brotherly kindness. Let your firm, intrepid purpose in the Christian life, bear the gentler affections, bending to welcome brotherhood with the weak; thus exalting your manhood by its harmony with that of the Son of God. Crown all with charity, the grace "that lives and sings,"—that fills the Godhead and shines through all his works; that gives man his noblest altitude, his fullest breadth and depth,—that adds power to faith, informs the understanding, quenches the arrows of temptation; makes endurance easy, gets its light and life from God; and like a glorious angel, leads courage to its mightiest achievements.

Courage, though a virtue "greatly independent" is roused and invigorated by hope. To work, and fight, and endure without hope were impossible. The discipline of labor and of sorrow has no blessing in it if there be nothing to hope for. Life here has no purpose if there be not perfect good beyond. Courage is sustained by the hope of another life, of self-culture for immortality, of conscious right forever, of results which are not subject to change.

This virtue then, bears an intimate relation to all the Christian graces. Their action is mutual, love and hope inspire courage; make us strong to do and bear. Every sentiment and purpose of the frame springs to the conflict when love calls. They press their way through brazen barriers when hope waves her garlands. Courage in return increases the intensity of love and the power of faith and hope. What we have fought for we love the more. We *value* most that which *costs* most. We have seen that courage is joyous—it is also peaceful. The man of firm purpose does not need to contend, and bicker and chafe himself. In peace he gathers up his energies and waits for the hour when he can best expend them. He wastes not his strength on lonely sentinels, but pours his crushing thunders on the hosts. Courage promotes peace. As in warfare an army hesitates to attack a strong, a resolute foe, so distracting passions and cares are slow to assail the intrepid heart—the heart that rests on truth—on immortality and God.

It requires no small amount of courage to *live.* When we take in the whole of life, or as much of it as our poor faculties can compass, its relations, its agencies, its tests of virtue, its sad failures, its eternal consequences,—we feel that they are too much for us, and it puts all our firmness to the proof. We are obliged to look away from the deep mystery—from the deluge of conflicting devouring forces—to the hope laid up for us; as the lone dove turned her timid eye from the whelming waters, and sped breathless to the ark. Some of Rome's heroes to whom she decreed an apotheosis, committed suicide. They dared not live.

We need courage to suffer—to seek truth—to *know and defend* justice, liberty, love, purity, religion. To do our life-work in the face of ignorance, scorn, prejudice, violence and death. These are days in which all that is great in purpose, in honest, brave, constant resistance of evil and of wrong, is called into action. Friendship may plead, power may threaten; scorn may curl the lip; anger may vent its fires;—what shall we *say* to all? "I am sorry to oppose your tenderness, to inflame your hatred, to be the object of your derision; but I am not moved by your opinion. I know the right. You can do without my sympathy, and co-operation—I can dispense with yours. Henceforth we go to our respective work. I can honestly commend my own purpose. I appeal to the highest judgment in the universe." Says John Foster, "His strong phrase, "The last decisive energy of a rational courage which confides in the supreme power is very sublime, it *makes* a *man*, who intrepidly dares everything that can oppose or attack him within the whole sphere of morality, who would retain his purpose unshaken amidst the ruins of the world, who will still press toward his object, while death is impending over him."

Daniel braving the decree which consigned him to the lions, and the three youths who were not careful to answer the king's messenger when the glare of the furnace flashed in their eyes, afford examples of sublime courage and heroism. Nor is the firmness of Moses at all inferior, who choses rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Lady Macbeth, as a dramatic character, as a possibility, is the sublimest sinner out of hell—she was intrepidly, consistently wicked.

Abdiel, standing, amid fallen potentates, in flaming zeal of adoration, hurling his fiery logic at the great arch-angel:

"Among innumerable false unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,"—

turning toward heaven, and dooming the towers of Pandemonium to destruction—is the grandest conception in Milton's great epic. But an intrepid soul like that of Deborah, and Joan of Arc, and Madame Roland, and Perpetua the martyr child; like that of Paul, and John the Baptist, and many another—*then*, and *now*—whose *life* was, and is martyrdom—is a creation of God—above angels!

Heaven's doors are shut against the *cowardly.* Among those who sink into "the lake of fire," are the "*fearful*," who resist not evil, who dare not meet truth, who *strive* not against sin, who *fear* to suffer for the right, who are *ashamed* of Christ *and his words.* Perfect love *casteth out* fear, *Charity* is the last analysis of heroism.

The times in which we live demand courage. Not so much to fight with gun and sword; not so much to march hungry and bare-foot; to lie in trenches and in swamps,—as to *await* unmurmuring the will of God. We are impatient. We are disposed to take the sceptre and the throne—

"To snatch the trembling helm away from God."

It is highest courage to obey. We cannot govern. We cannot put our hand on the secret springs of the universe. What we want is perfect repose in God. Let him drive us by his tempests to cast out the wares from the ship of State; to give up our idols—whether they be commerce, liberty, wealth, or greatness. Let us look life in the face! Let its discipline come. Let its fears thicken! It is courage still to believe that God is working our own highest good; the greatest blessings for the Church and the world; the largest happiness for man and glory for himself.

And yet, it is our noblest privilege and duty also, along with the submission and assurance, to pray for the triumph of the right—because the right does not succeed alone—to pray for the survival of our Government, and its perfect victory too. To stand forth in the presence of treason, of ignorance, of delusion, of depravity and madness,—to plead for man, for the best thing that God *has* for man—namely, an intelligent, Christian freedom. To advocate for the crushed and fallen *everywhere*, whatever claims a common humanity urges for what is just and equal—for whatever character merits and capacity can fill.

Why should Christian men, belonging to a higher kingdom than any upon earth, glorified even now with a *divine* citizenship, fear to suffer, since we were *born* from suffering; since to suffer is the law of life; since we have been the occasion of suffering in others. We are *greater* for suffering. Sorrow is a divine worker for our souls—for nations; for all true life. Shall we ask timidly what will become of us if we do this and that, *right* act? If we pursue this or that honest, humane, true, Christian course? When we conscientiously, with the light we have—and all we *can* have for the time, enter on a course of action—of what we believe to be Christian action—we are to leave ourselves and our work with God. We cannot control results. We cannot see the end from the beginning. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor yet bread to the wise." All agencies fail unless *God* give success; the poorest effort succeeds if he wills it.

Are we called to defend our civilization, our national unity and life, by measures which avarice and pride, or which caution, and even honest conviction may condemn; shall we who belong supremely to God's kingdom, though subordinately to the earthly, be afraid, and tremble at any possibility of sacrifice?

We do tremble—it is not in human nature to be altogether fearless. But shall Christian men fear to walk in the light of history and of Providence? Are they willing to carry in their bosoms souls *fettered* and crushed by apprehension, or enslaved by the madness and depravity of the present and the past? We are bound to obey the powers that be as ordained of God—to obey them even though they are sinful; and *all* are sinful—all vastly below the sublime standard of righteousness; and therefore all unfit for the control and guidance of immortal minds; but if we are to obey the appointed Government, though it err and sin; are we under less obligation to obey and sustain it, when it would uphold a great national religious duty, of emancipation, of unity, and of brotherhood? When it would slay the fiend of treason, and smite with barrenness the womb that gave treason birth? I would cling to the government to-day—though I knew it would be disolved to-morrow; then accept the best thing that remained for me. Government first, then liberty—for without Government there can be no liberty,—but *both* if possible. We are summoned now as ministers, and people to offer one another, and offer others all that we possess of sympathy, of influence, of religious power, of eloquence, of ministration, of example; to stimulate devotion, and sustain courage, to infuse into souls a lofty religious endurance; to give the sanction of God to every act, every sacrifice, every true generous utterance for the nation's salvation!

We need courage to confess our sins; to surrender our will to God; to cast off all dependences but God; to restrain our hearts and school them to true piety. We need to rise into the high sphere of confidence; to take hold of our great King and be lifted above the world's rage and ruin,—and then look down on the world with prayer and pity.

We need courage to hope for the church. In these times the sympathies and beneficence of Christians are turned into unwonted chanels. There is fear lest she shall *forget* her grand mission! I do not fear this. It is well for us now and then, to be turned aside from the track in which we have been moving as by mere habit, almost forgetting our life and duty acting only mechanically—to have the path disturbed and blocked up—that we may have new appliances; be stimulated, *disciplined* to sacrifice,—have our whole nature roused to unwonted development—and then if need be, to resume our rectilinear line of action.

This God has *done* of late; and yet it has not greatly disturbed our benevolence; our devotion. It has not prevented revivals. It has not lessened moral conviction, but rather increased it. There is more *belief* now than there used to be; more generous expansion of soul. Property is held more loosely. We have lost some of our idolatry. We learn to study a higher order of providences. We see more wonders in truth. The Bible has become a living book to us. Prophecy arrests our thought, and we begin to look toward the end. The kingdom of God seems greater and more glorious. All the stable and valuable things of time are seen to be less than God's throne—and yielding to the final consummation!

We want courage now to speak for God—to act for dying souls: To stand out before the ruins of time, and earth, and proclaim the immortal kingdom. Courage gets its life from immortality.

We must have courage to break from sin, from old, dead opinions, from a world of dying philosophies, and false maxims and habits; and look forth to the glory to come—to what God has promised—what Christ shall fulfil—to what the church shall be. To warn the ungodly, and persuade them to repent. To take bereft, dying souls, and lead them to the sure rock—to the living waters.

We need power with God. This is gained by courageous faith; by firm devotion to truth; by conscientious suffering for law and godliness; by cultivating holiness of life. If, in all respects we were right in the sight of God we would have power with men. "The people that do know their God, shall do exploits." Were we such a people we would soon see our enemies scattered as chaff before the wind. Nothing could rise up against us and prosper. The Lord God would be a wall of fire about us. He would set his seraphim along our shores. The light of their swords would flash across the ocean, and blaze over the mountains, and prairies! But has he not occasion to say of us—"O that my people *had* hearkened unto me, and Israel *had* walked in my ways: I should soon have subdued their enemies, and *turned my hand* against their adversaries."

We may yet have a larger demand for Christian firmness. The upheavings of our social fabric may have only just begun.

The whole world may soon totter and labor as in a tempest. Opinions may clash; battles rage, commerce fail; kingdoms and republics fall before the throne of the Great King. So let it be. It is well to look away from the transitory and vile; to the permanent and pure. Oh, for the hope that shall enable us to say—though "clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." "Thy judgments are a great deep"—like an unfathomed sea—but "thy righteousnesses are like the great mountains"—surrounding the sea, running beneath it, as a foundation, so that the anchor of hope cast into the deep shall sink through the judgments, and hold to the mountain base below! "Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed." We look for a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness!

LESSONS OF WAR.

NUMBER XIX.

ADVERSITY.

War is a keen dissector of human life. It reveals the hollowness of many things that appeared of great importance during peace, and the significancy of others that had passed unnoticed in the unthinking repose of quiet times. It uncovers the frame-work of human affairs, and lays open to view each obscure ligament and vein, that serves to bind together and sustain the whole.

The attentive reader of history must have been often struck with the importance the greatest apparent trifles sometimes assume, in the perilous emergencies of war. When Xenophen, in the famous retreat of the ten thousand Greeks, came to the river Centrites, which was the boundary of Armenia, he discovered on the opposite bank, at some distance from the river, a body of horse prepared to oppose his advance. At this sight the Greeks were greatly discouraged, for they saw not how it was possible to pass so deep a river, in face of such formidable opposition, especially with the hoste of the Carducians hanging upon their rear. In the midst of this suspense, two soldiers straying in search of fuel, happened to see on the other bank, an old man with some women, apparently hiding bags of clothes among the rocks that reached down to the very river. From this they concluded that it would not be unsafe to pass to that part of the shore, for it was evident from what they observed, that it was deemed inaccessible to the enemy's horse. Having stripped, they began to cross, intending to swim; but, before the water had reached above the waist, they found themselves at the opposite shore. Thus safely over, and with no enemy in sight, they seized the bags of clothes, and returned. Having in this way ascertained at once where the river might be easily forded, and that a landing could be effected on the other side without danger from the enemy, they repaired to Xenophon's tent, who heard them with joy, and poured a libation to the gods in gratitude for such welcome discoveries.

Thus in the moment of pressing danger, an occurrence so trivial as that of an old man concealing his household stuff in the cavern of a rock, is able to arrest the eye, awaken the attention, and convey information that involves the safety of thousands of human lives.

There are two discoveries made by this story. One is, the importance of the smallest things, and the true and real dependence that great interests may have upon them. The other is, the effect of adversity in giving things their proper weight, and bringing their importance into view. When the channel of our life is flowing tranquil and full, we take but little notice of things as they occur about us, and as they exist within us, and nothing but what is of seeming consequence succeeds in arresting our attention. It is when the stream is beginning to fail, and its waters to dry away, that we discover what is lying at the bottom. It is when the cup begins to be emptied, that we see what it was that imparted the sweet or the bitter to its contents. When our affairs are brought to extremity, every perception of mind and heart is quickened, the will becomes strong and daring, we can delude ourselves no longer, and we extort from our breasts a faithful confession of the true ingredients of our character, and the nature and extent of our errors and our dangers; whilst everthing within us and without, is closely inspected that may possibly contain an intimation of any means of sound and lasting deliverance. Not in the full stream nor overflowing cup; not in the deep, wide, exuberance of prosperity and quiet, do we learn the existence and locality of our follies, and the true sources of our disappointments and sorrows. Neither is it in these we are effectually taught where strength and redress are to be found.

The jeopardies of life are its profoundest schools. One hour, filled to the brim with peril, is of more value to the heart, than many years of peaceful study and observation. It removes the loamy surface, and brings us to the solid rock; making us at once humble and strong, correcting self-confidence and vain-glory, and compelling us, by an inevitable and divine necessity, to look for the honor and protection that come from God.

It is not, however, great losses and bereavements, nor the heavy stroke of sickness and bodily pain, that usually prove the means of bringing men to the knowledge of God and of themselves. These things leave a man's pride unbroken; for it is a thing that can feed upon misery itself. But those forms of affliction that humble him in the sight of others; that fill his face with shame; that render him helpless; that rob him of his glory; that wound his pride and independence; that strike at his hopes and reputation; that expose him to the contempt of little men, and fulfil the prayer of his enemies; these are the things that are wont to rectify his inveterate folly and self-confidence; that bring him to value the divine favor, and betake himself to the divine help; to read with *sharp* attention the chart of his own condition, to sound the channel of his own heart, and discover the passage to eternal rest.

S. P. H.

Selections.

"THE HARVEST IS PAST."

How solemn are these words! How startling should they be to the thousands who are pressing on through life careless and unconcerned! The harvest is past! Yes, it is past! What has been gathered is safe. What has not been gathered is lost—lost, it may be, forever. The summer is ended—ended forever! It can never return. Its weeks and days are with the past. The record is made; the page is closed: and what is the result? Are we saved, or are we lost? One or the other is our condition. There is no neutral ground upon which we can stand. These months past have been full of spiritual blessings and privileges. God has been forbearing and long suffering. The Saviour has been pleading and waiting; the Holy Spirit has been striving; and yet how many have neglected all these things! They have passed through the summer; life and health have been continued; and yet they are not saved! Neither the mercies, nor the judgments of God have had any apparent effect. Thousands upon thousands have fallen all around them, and yet they are careless. They heed not the calls of mercy, nor the thunders of judgment.

But it will not always be so. To many, the last summer has come and gone. The falling leaves, the fading flowers are the last they will ever see. Before another summer shall begin, they will have passed to that shore "where days and years are known no more." How solemnly are they admonished to put their houses in order, and prepare for their departure! If they are still unsaved, they have not a day to lose—no, not an hour. The summer of privilege and of hope is past. The autumn has come, and at any moment they may be summoned to their great account.

To all, the past summer has been one of special blessing and of special trial. God has crowned it with abundance of every kind. The fruits and grains have abounded beyond almost any preceding year. But strife and carnage have filled the land with lamentation and woe. Every dwelling has been darkened, and every heart has been saddened. The scenes through which we have passed will render the summer of 1862 not only memorable in history, but memorable in every family throughout our land.—*Parish Visitor.*

LONGING FOR THE SALVATION OF SOULS.—It has been remarked of the godly *Alleine*, that he was "infinitely, insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls." Matthew Henry was accustomed to say, "to win a single soul from Satan to Christ would afford me greater joy than to possess a mountain of silver and gold." And Samuel Rutherford told his people, "my witness is above that your heaven would be two heavens to me, and the salvation of you all, as two salvations to me." Oh that all Christ's ambassadors had the devout, fervent aspirations of these excellent men! Then would sheaves of grace and glory be largely multiplied.

THE OLD CONGREGATION.

The members of the old congregation [illegible] gone to loftier courts, and we shall see t[illegible] no more. The grandmothers in sober [illegible] that came tottering in with their white [illegible] kerchiefs smoothly folded and laid on [illegible] arms; the fair browed girls that sang the [illegible] and the air; the children with the spr[illegible] caraway and dill; the deacon whose [illegible] blossomed like an almond tree hard by the [illegible] pit door; the woman that in Winter [illegible] brought the tin-footed stoves for a so[illegible] the little paper fans that waved when [illegible] were Summer like so many little wings [illegible] the church, as if the old minister had a[illegible] ly cherubim for the audience; the old do[illegible] gy they used to sing last in the aftern[illegible] the trembling benediction, like the bles[illegible] of a patriarch, they received—the[illegible] shall never see and hear again a[illegible] were.

No longer, in Sabbath noons, do the [illegible] upon the grass beneath the old populars [illegible] talk in tones subdued, while taking [illegible] frugal meal; no longer do they linger a[illegible] the old gray gravestones of the bur[illegible] ground, that is since a "cemetery," and [illegible] template the stone willows that neve[illegible] forth a leaf; for the times have cha[illegible] and there is but one sermon a day, and [illegible] who brought their dinners of old, hav[illegible] down, the most of them, to the feast o[illegible] Lamb, where the tree of life, the tree o[illegible] ven, and no poplar, is blooming forever[illegible]

The deaf who sat on the pulpit st[illegible] these old times, can hear the waving [illegible] seraph's wings to-day; for the daughter[illegible] music," have been lifted from the dust wh[illegible] in they were lying. The old blind, m[illegible] whose doubtful feet young eyes did gu[illegible] lives now in morning light. And old bla[illegible] Jonah, that stole softly in, and sat dow[illegible] in a pew beside the door, has been ma[illegible] white at last and bidden to come up [illegible] higher.

We think it ought to be set down upo[illegible] map somewhere, the old church was very nea[illegible] the "house not made with hands"—only [illegible] graveyard's breath removed. We thi[illegible] ought somewhere to be written, "The h[illegible] that they builded of old, let it remain [illegible] ever."

Give to time the silvering of the wall [illegible] have hallowed; let the wind end the [illegible] the dead singers began, and the rains g[illegible] fall on its echoless threshold.—*Bem[illegible]*
F. Taylor.

STEPS IN BACKSLIDING.

1. NEGLECT of secret prayer.—Job [illegible] Isa. xliii. 10.

2. Disregard of the Bible.—Jer. [illegible] Hos. iv. 6.

3. Forsaking the means of grace.—[illegible] x. 39; Heb. x. 25.

4. Worldly-mindedness.—2 Tim. [illegible] 1 John ii. 15.

5. Levity in conversation.—Eph. [illegible] iii. 11.

6. A quarrelsome spirit.—Isa. xxix. 21; [illegible] 1 Cor. iii. 3.

7. Dwelling on the faults of others.—[illegible] vii. 3-5.

8. Readiness to take offence.—Pro[illegible] 17, xviii. 19.

9. A murmuring, repining spirit.—[illegible] x. 10; Phil. ii. 14.

10. A critical hearing of the word.—[illegible] iii. 4; 2 Tim. iv. 3.

11. Covetousness.—Luke xii. 15; Col[illegible]

12. Light thoughts of sin.—1 King[illegible] 41; Matt. xxii. 5.

13. Intemperance.—Prov. xxii. 29.

14. Love of pre-eminence.—Prov. x[illegible] 3 John 9, 10.

15. Indulgence in secret sin.—Num[illegible] 23; Eccles. xii. 14.

16. Falling into outward sin.—Pro[illegible] 4; Hos. iv. 17.

Thus far a true believer may fall, and [illegible] al corrections will be the consequen[illegible] Ps. lxxxix. 30-32; Micah vii. 9; Matt [illegible] 75); but the false professor may descen[illegible] er still.

17. Into scoffing and infidelity.—2 [illegible] iii. 3.

18. Persecuting the righteous.—Act[illegible] 52.

19. An awful death.—Prov. xiv. 32.

20. *Final perdition.*—Matt. xxv. 41.

Turn to the Scriptures attached to [illegible] step in the ladder—ponder them. An[illegible] unto Him that is able to keep you fro[illegible] ing, be glory and majesty, domin[illegible] power, both now and for ever. Amen.

—*Christian Treas[illegible]*

THE ITALIAN PRIESTHOOD AND POPE'S "TEMPORAL POWER."

The London *Times'* Turin corresp[illegible] refers to the movement against the [illegible] poral Power," even among the Romish [illegible] hood in Italy:

Already we know that a petition [illegible] Pontiff, requesting him, "for the sake [illegible] Church of which he is the visible he[illegible] lay aside that temporal power which [illegible] bane not only of the country, but also [illegible] religion and morality," has been signi[illegible] no less than 12,000 members of the [illegible] clergy. By keeping the Pope at Rom[illegible] closing against the Italians the gates o[illegible] capital, the Emperor of the French h[illegible] that religious reform which could hard[illegible] to follow close upon political revo[illegible] 12,000 priests are a powerful spiritual [illegible] If Pius IX. disregards their just and [illegible] appeal, what else will the petitioners [illegible] but a leader to seek the emancipation [illegible] national Church in a schism which will [illegible] Rome spiritually, as it already stand[illegible] politically? The leader himself is no [illegible] ing, for, although the Chaplain-G[illegible] Monsignor Caputo, died recently at [illegible] and with him the anti-Papal movem[illegible] one of its mainstays, Father Passaglia[illegible] living at Turin, and his doctrines ga[illegible] selytes among the best educated an[illegible] clergy of Upper Italy in sufficient [illegible] to offer a safe support to the gove[illegible] whenever they dare to hurl defi[illegible] Rome.

MUCH IN A SMALL PLACE.—A ver[illegible] lebrated Scotch divine says.—"The [illegible] which we inhabit must have had an [illegible] must have consisted in a cause; th[illegible] have been intelligent; that intelligence [illegible] have been efficient; that efficiency m[illegible] been ultimate; that ultimate pow[illegible] have been supreme; and that which [illegible] was and is supreme, we know by the[illegible] God.'