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"EVEN AS WE HAVE BEEN APPROVED OF GOD TO BE INTRUSTED WITH THE GOSPEL, SO WE SPEAK; NOT AS PLEASING MEN, BUT GOD WHICH PROVETH OUR HEARTS."

VOLUME XXXVI.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1884.

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For Table of Contents, see Page 16.

GOLD, FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

GOLD, frankincense and myrrh, they brought the new-born Christ—
The wise men from the East—and in the ox's stall,
The far-brought precious gifts they heaped, with love unpriced;
And Christ the babe looked on and wondered not at all.

Gold, frankincense and myrrh, I, too, would offer Thee
O, King of faithful hearts, upon thy Christmas Day;
And, poor and little worth although the offering be,
Because Thou art so kind, I dare to think I may.

I bring the Gold of Faith, which, through the centuries long,
Still seeks the Holy Child and worships at his feet,
And owns him for its Lord, with gladness deep and strong,
And joins the angel choir, singing in chorus sweet.

The frankincense I bear is worship which can rise,
Like perfume floating up higher and higher still,
Till on the wings of prayer it finds the far blue skies
And falls, as falls the dew, to freshen heart and will.

And last I bring the myrrh, half-bitter and half-sweet,
Of my own selfish heart, through sacrifice made clean,
And break the vase and spill the oil upon Thy feet,
O, Lord of Christmas Day, as did the Magdalene.

Gold, frankincense and myrrh—'tis all I have to bring
To thee, O, Holy Child, now throned in heaven's mid!
Because Thou art so kind, take the poor offering,
And let me go forth blessed, as once the Wise Men did.

MARY, THE SINNER.

BY JOHN B. TABB.

MARY—'tis a tender plea;
Love is strong as Infamy;
In the shadow of thy shame
Reverencing His mother's name,
Lo! He pardons thee!

ST. CHARLES' COLLEGE, ELLICOTT CITY, M.D.

A CANDLE'S LIGHT:

ON THE STUDENT'S LIBRARY TABLE.

BY JOHN JAMES PIATT.

O humble and yet bright!
Making thy sacrifice so noiselessly,
Burning thy lovely life away to light
Diviner light for me!

In my hushed room around,
In thy wise circle, come the Great and Good,
Masters of men, yet servants, without sound
They visit my solitude.

Holy and high they shine,
Bapt faces, charming me with courage on
To follow beauteous guides, in paths divine.
Through darkness into dawn.
The scholar's lonely snn,

Thou risest for him, when all the world repose,
O'er golden fields of thought, where, fortunate one,
He reaps even while he sows!

Within my soul deep down,
I read a lesson by thy sinking flame:
To wear a steadfast purpose like a crown,
Without regard of Fame;

Like frankincense to burn
Unnoted life that man may see to read
Diviner words—though asking no return,
A candle for his need!

U. S. CONSULATE, QUEENSTOWN, IRELAND.

A BAGATELLE.

BY PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

Not all the roses God hath made
Can love the sun aright.
The white rose is too chastely staid
To praise his warmth and light;
But great red roses, they can love
With their deep hearts their king above.

Nor nightingales, by night that sing,
Can love alike the moon;
Nor all the flowers that come with Spring
Can praise aright Spring's boon.
One nightingale feels most night's power;
And Spring is dearest to one flower.

Not all the gulls that skim the sea
Delight alike in storm;
And never man, sweetheart, to thee
Gave love so true and warm
As this which at thy feet I lay,
For thee to take or throw away.

LONDON, ENGLAND.

THE CRY, AND THE ROPE OF RELIEF.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

THE well-tried friends are always the dearest, and the well-worn truths are the most profitable and the most precious. We indulge in some rare and costly luxuries at a Thanksgiving dinner, or a wedding feast; but the daily bread is indispensable on every table. So there are soul-wants that need constant supply, troubles of heart that can only be satisfied by frequent draughts from God's own living springs. Look into the Bibles of those who hunger and thirst, and you will find that the passages which are the most thumbed and pencil-marked are those which meet the soul's deepest demands, and reach its every-day experiences.

I will venture to say that one of these well-worn passages is that which opens the One Hundredth and Thirtieth Psalm: "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord!" Human life is not a velvet path over a level plain. It has its ups and downs, its rugged cliffs and dark ravines and valleys of the death-shade. The "depths" with one person may be sore bereavements; with another it may mean a bitter disappointment; with still another the severe compunctions of neglected duty; with not a few it may describe habitual melancholy. Under all such experiences of trial one privilege belongs to us, and that is to cry out. Satan's surest victory is to gag a sufferer or a sinner, and to stifle the voice of prayer. There is no hope for a man who has fallen into a well if he is so stunned that he cannot make himself heard by those who are up at the top; and there is no help for a soul whom remorse, or despair, or unbelief, has stricken speechless. Until you cry out, you will never get out.

Of all the "depths" in this world, the deepest and the darkest is a state of guilt. Many of the griefs that people worry over and weep over are only shallow pools.

They don't drown anybody, and will soon dry away. But *sin* is a deep pit. And the reason it is so deep is that it carries us down so far from God, and from the light of his countenance. It is "a horrible pit and a miry clay." Outside losses and calamities do not affect us like sin, because sin reaches the very core of character. It is abasing and debasing, and degrading and damning. It is not a mere misfortune for which we are responsible, or a mishap occasioned by somebody else. When a man feels that sin is an utterly abominable thing, committed against a God of love, then he is at the very bottom—which is the only true place to start from if he would reach a higher place, and be able to shout from these heights his song of deliverance.

The starting-point of all genuine Christianity is a right view, a scriptural view of sin. Here lies the dividing line between true and false theologies. If sin is a light, venial thing, then no atonement is necessary, and the Cross of Christ becomes a superfluous tragedy; it is a pathetic incident, but not a redeeming sacrifice of the God-man for human guilt. We have no doubt that the secret cause of the indifference of most impenitent persons is that they do not think sin worth punishing, or believe that God will punish it tremendously in the next world. It is indisputably true that he, or she, who does not feel sin, will never feel the need of a Saviour, any more than the person who does not feel sick will ever send for a physician. Nor can any one who does not thoroughly hate sin ever love and adore the Redeemer who died for him.

(2.) Realizing that you are in the depths, and have plunged yourself there, what is the first step toward deliverance? It is to call upon God. The sooner, the louder, the more fervently, the better. As Maclaren has pithily said: "If out of the depths you cry, you will cry yourself out of the depths." Sir Walter Scott describes one of his heroines as driven by the inrushing tide of the sea to a narrow shelf of rock at the foot of an awful precipice. To climb up is an impossibility. The hungry waves are rising higher every moment. Her only hope of rescue is to shout for help; and the shout brings the rope of relief that is lowered down the side of the cliff. "Lord, hear my voice!" shouts the self-conscious sinner. He does not belittle his danger, or excuse himself for having got into the place of guilt and peril. "Lord, if thou shouldst mark iniquities, who could stand?" The only attitude for him to take is the attitude of self-condemnation; the only prayer that stands any chance of being heard is: "God be merciful to me a sinner!" No drunkard is thoroughly converted from his cups so long as his tongue is fluent in excuses and apologies about "appetite" and "bodily disease," etc. It is only when he loathes himself as a criminal before God, and repents of his crime in dust and ashes. The cry must be a cry out of the depths; the confession must be a confession, "Against Thee, O God, I have sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me." There is no other way out of the pit of drunkenness or any other pit of sin, but to cry unto God in honest, self-condemning confession. That cry brings the rope of relief.

"There is forgiveness with Thee" was the rope that lifted the psalmist out of the

depths. The only religion in the world that lowers the rope of mercy is the religion of the Bible. Heathen deities can punish; they cannot pardon. Nature never forgives. If you break her laws, you must pay the penalty. The prodigal's remorse does not restore to him his lost health or his squandered money.

But the sweetest and most soul-cheering article in the creed of Christianity is "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." The very heart and core of the prayer our loving Lord has taught us is, Forgive us our trespasses! It rests entirely with God whether he will punish or pardon; for sin is committed against him; and it is his pardon that changes our position toward him. If my little boy plays with the Parian statuette which I forbade him to touch, and breaks it to fragments, it rests entirely with me how I shall treat him. He may deny it, and double his guilt and his punishment. But if he brings me the shattered pieces, and sobs out "Papa, I did this; won't you forgive me?" I may answer: "Yes, my child, I forgive you; but you must not do so again." My pardon does not mend the Parian, but it does mend the breach of law; it does not restore the statuette, but it restores the relation between my boy and his father. On what condition does God forgive? Simple confession of guilt? No. Jesus is the one and only medium of forgiveness. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself and not imputing their trespasses unto them." Here is pardon, because here is propitiation. Christ has suffered for me; Christ has paid my debt; and God may freely pardon me, if I come only in Jesus's name.

Grasping this Heaven-sent rope of relief, this rope of Christ's atoning grace, the forgiven sinner is lifted out of the depths; lifted out of the horrible pit, and set upon the rock. He stands on the heights; a new song is put into his mouth, even praise to our God. His exultant shout is "I wait on the Lord and in his word do I hope. With the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption." Henceforth he is cleansed from the past, and Christ gives him a new power to keep out of the pit and to walk in the clear, bright upper land of God's countenance. What a glorious Gospel is this to proclaim! What a weapon to melt hard hearts is the forgiving grace of God in Christ Jesus! What a foretaste of Heaven it is to be pardoned! How this rope of love that rescues us ought to bind us to Christ in constant and happy obedience! What a Christly work it is to sound this message of love to those who are yet in the pit of darkness! The cry from the depths may become the prelude to Heaven's Hallelujah!

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

BREAKFASTS WITH SAMUEL ROGERS.

LITERARY RECOLLECTIONS.

II.

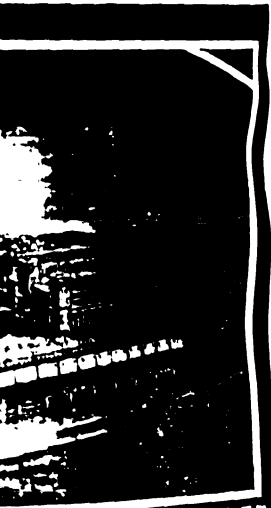
BY CHARLES MACKAY, LL.D.

LORD GLENELG, MR. ROBERT CARRUTHERS,
LORD ROBERTSON, MR. WM. JOHNSON FOX.

It was always a literary treat to breakfast with Samuel Rogers. He had the happy art of knowing how to choose his company; to introduce celebrities to celebrities, and otherwise to bring congenial people together; to keep them in good humor, and to send them away well pleased

JANUARY 1st, 1884.
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