

# The Independent

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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."

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For Table of Contents see Page 10.

## THE HERRING WEIR.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

BACK to the green deeps of the outer bay  
The red and amber currents glide and cringe,  
Diminishing behind a luminous fringe  
Of cream-white surf and wandering wraiths of spray.  
Stealthily, in the old reluctant way,  
The red flats are uncovered, mile on mile,  
To glitter in the sun a golden while.  
Far down the flats, a phantom sharply gray,  
The herring weir emerges, quick with spoil.  
Slowly the tide forsakes it. Then draws near,  
Descending from the farmhouse on the hight,  
A cart, with gaping tubs. The oxen toil  
Somberly o'er the level to the weir,  
And drag a long, black trail across the light.

WINDSOR, N. S.

## STREWING THE GOLDEN GRAIN.

BY KATHARINE LEE BATES.

STREWING the golden grain,  
Sowing for sun or rain,  
Shall this suffice that our souls may eat?  
There is whiter bread than is made from wheat.

Ah, for the irksome deed  
Time plucks up as a weed!  
But myrtle and lily and balsam leaf,  
How came these in our harvest sheaf?

'Tis our angels softly go  
After us down the row,  
And the broken hope and the hidden need  
Sow in our furrows for beauty seed.

WELLESLEY, MASS.

## FOUR THINGS.

BY HENRY VAN DYKE, D.D.

FOUR things a man must learn to do  
If he would make his record true:  
To think without confusion clearly;  
To love his fellow-men sincerely;  
To act from honest motives purely;  
To trust in God and Heaven securely.

NEW YORK CITY.

## DAYS OF JUNE.

BY HARRIET TROWBRIDGE.

"To me," she said, "the fairest days of June  
Are not so fair as those of long ago,—  
O long, and long ago!  
Then light more golden filled the air,  
The roses bloomed more rich and rare,  
And hearts were never out of tune,  
In that dear long ago!

"But now," she said, "the winds blow keen and cold,  
And linger as they did not long ago,—  
O long, and long ago!

Then April's smiles were soft and rare,  
And May's sweet odors filled the air,  
And hearts were never sad and old,  
In that dear long ago!

"But then," she smiling said, "I know that soon  
Will come to me those days of long ago,—  
O long, and long ago!

On that near shore, bathed in celestial air,  
Wait eager hands and hearts to ease my care  
And Love to make an endless day of June,  
Like those of long ago!"

CLINTONDALE, N. Y.

## WHEN TO KEEP STILL.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

"I WAS dumb; I opened not my mouth because thou didst it." So spake Psalmist David in what Ewald styles the most beautiful elegy in the whole Psalter. If we render the Hebrew very closely, it would read: "I was silenced; I will not open my mouth because thou hast done it." Why was the most melodious singer of those days silent? Was it because his heart was so utterly crushed that he could not speak? There are, indeed, many cases in which overwhelming grief has made the sufferer speechless. It is the most hopeless form commonly which grief can take. But in David's case the silence was from a totally different cause; he is kept silent by a filial submission to his heavenly Father's chastisements. The same submissive spirit prompted President Woolsey, of Yale College, to inscribe on the monument which covers the forms of all his children, swept from him at one stroke by the scarlet fever: "I opened not my mouth because Thou didst it."

When a true-hearted Christian comes up face to face with the tremendous fact that God is dealing with him, then trial assumes a totally different aspect. When he sees that it is God's hand which is put on his back, he is ready to put his own hand on his mouth, and keep still. Then he is ready to quiet himself as a child that is weaned of its mother. It is a glorious discovery that we make when we discern the hand of God in either the experience of a great joy, or of a great sorrow. An injury inflicted on us by a fellow-creature may arouse our resentment; we may scold him for his carelessness, or rebuke him for his unkindness. But when we recognize the fact that our Heavenly Father has administered the chastising stroke, then our duty is to practice a sweetly submissive silence. Sharp questionings will do us no good, for God keeps his own secrets. Rebellious murmurings will only chafe our already smarting heart. Push as far as we can, and press as hard as we choose, we cannot get beyond this tremendous truth—*God did it!* And when we reach that truth, and open our eyes to it and look at it just rightly, it teaches us why we ought to lock our lips in submissive silence.

1. The first thing we learn is, that an *all-wise* Father did it, and therefore there could have been no reckless blunder in the stroke. Of course, it is not possible for such a short-sighted creature as I am to know the why and the wherefore. I cannot comprehend the wisdom of God's dealings with me any more than your little boy can comprehend the inner workings of the clock on your wall. He looks at the face of the clock, and reads on it the letters "VIII." He knows that those letters mean eight, and therefore starts for school. The fact is enough for him, and he does not try to go behind the clock-face. God's providential orderings are wrapped in mystery; he is "a God that hideth himself." We have no right to demand explanations, and we would not get them if we did. "Be still, and know that I am God." This is not blind fatalism; it is intelligent trust that knows *whom* it is trusting. We cannot know this glorious and eternal truth about God unless we are "still"; and, on the other hand, that knowledge will tend to keep us still. No human parent feels bound to explain to his child the reasons for his conduct; and our Heavenly Father has never promised to answer all our questions; he has only promised to supply our wants, and faith must silently accept his word when he says that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

"Behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow,  
Keeping watch above his own."

2. There is another precious truth wrapped up in the words: "Thou didst it." For it means not only that an all-wise, but a *loving* Father did it. That is a most blessed discovery; for we can the more willingly bear any trial when we are sure that love prompted the stroke. Love never wrongs us. Love never tortures us with wanton cruelty. Love never lays upon us one needless load; every burden it ever puts on our backs is intended to make us stronger. The love that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to die for us all can be trusted behind the darkest mystery or the heaviest blow. Some Christian who is suffering the stroke of God's hand, will probably say: "I cannot understand how a loving Father can treat me as he is now doing." My friend, this is not the world for clearing up mys-

teries, or receiving explanations from God. Here we see through a glass darkly—or, as the text literally reads, "in an enigma." Heaven is the place for explaining enigmas. There we are assured that "we shall know even as we have been known."

3. In this world the great purpose of our divine Teacher is the development of character. This is the school life. You and I are little scholars. If we had our own way we would not work out any problems except in addition and in multiplication. But our all-wise and loving Teacher sometimes sets us at awfully hard sums in division and subtraction, and they cut deep into our incomes, into our families, or into our cherished plans. When such a teacher as our Lord and Savior is speaking, his child should keep still. When he appoints us hard lessons, we should learn them. When he uses the rod of chastisement, we should submit. The hardest lesson to be learned is to let him have his way. Our brains are not big enough to comprehend the mysteries of Providence; but our hearts may trust God enough to say: "I am dumb; I will not open my mouth, because thou didst it."

This grace of silence under trial is one of the most rare and difficult graces; but it is one of the most pleasing to God, and most conducive to strength and beauty of Christian character. None of us loves to suffer, and we all shudder at the sight of the probe or the amputating knife. But when the infinite Love is engaged in cutting out a selfish lust or cutting off a diseased limb, our duty is to submit. "Keep still, my friend," says the surgeon to the patient in the hospital; "for restlessness may produce false cuts and aggravate the process." If the brave fellow is wise, he will say: "Doctor, go as deep as you choose; only be sure to fetch out the bullet." Ah, the battlefield often requires less courage than the hospital. The onset of service, with drums beating and bugles sounding, does not so test the mettle of our graces as to be thrown down wounded, or be commanded to *lie still and suffer*. To shout a battle-cry at the mouth of the cannon is easier than to put our hands on our mouths and be silent because "God did it." If he is silent as to explanations of trying providences, let us be silent in our filial submission. God knows what is best for us; that is enough.

"He knows the bitter, weary way,  
The endless strivings day by day—  
The souls that weep—the souls that pray  
He knows.

"He knows! Oh, thought so full of bliss,  
For tho' on earth our joys we miss,  
We still can bear it, feeling this:  
He knows.

"God knows! Oh, heart, take up thy cross  
And learn earth's treasures are but dross,  
And he will turn to gain our loss:  
He knows! He knows!"

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

## TWO NOBLE KINSMEN.

I.

BY ETHELBERT D. WARFIELD, LL.D.,  
PRESIDENT OF LAFAYETTE COLLEGE.

"It is a holiday to look on them."  
—"Two Noble Kinsmen," Act II, Scene 1.

"I have heard  
Two emulous Philomels beat the air o' the night  
With their contentious throats, now one the higher,  
Anon the other, then again the first,  
And by and by outbreasted, that the sense  
Could not be judge between them: so it fared  
Good space between these kinsmen."

—"Two Noble Kinsmen," Act V, Scene 3.

It is not for me to retouch the ancient portraits of brave Palamon and noble Arcite. They have been drawn with all Boccaccio's skill, and the first artist's work has been again and again rewrought and presented to the world of the English tongue by Chaucer singing in the dawn, by gay John Fletcher of the "Mermaid" crew—it may be even with Will Shakespeare's aid, who knows?—by Dryden and by Davenant. Who would be so bold as to attempt to throw a new light or to remove an old shadow on such portraiture? My story is not of these heroes of the misty age of Grecian chivalry, that strange institution sprung from the union of classic fable and medieval romance in the imagination of Provençal troubadours and monkish story-tellers; nor is the