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Clear Heavens

By Richard Burton

THE sky is wind-swept, and the golden air,
Rain-washed, is crystal-clear and keen to breathe.
The hills since yesterday have shaken off
Their dim aloofness, and uprise so near,
Clean cut and purple 'gainst the brow of morn,
They startle you. There is a brilliancy
Set like a seal on earth and heaven; it seems
As if all Nature made her ready for
Some festival, some august guest to come
And tarry for a day. Some joy-to-be
Haunts in the fields, inhabits all the woods,
And thrills the blue; nor e'en night's darker mood
Dispels the strong illusion: since the stars
Shine brighter than their wont, and breezes blow
The message, "Patience, it will all come true."
Minneapolis, Minn.

Editorial

Love before Knowledge To know another fully is sometimes to love the one who is known. On the other hand, to love another sincerely may be the cause and means of knowing that person as he could not be known before such love. The higher the plane of such knowledge and love, the more surely is this the order of progress and attainment. Archbishop Trench recognizes this truth when he says:

"Things earthly we must know ere love them: 'tis alone
Things heavenly that must be first loved, and after known."

Duty of Doing the Impossible Doing the best thing possible is a fair measure of performance. Many are satisfied with that as an attainment or as an effort. But doing the impossible when it ought to be done is a performance that sometimes appeals to a true-hearted child of God as his absolute duty,

and then he who responds to this call is doing better than his best. From the day when Jesus directed his disciples to do the impossible, in giving the multitude food beyond the utmost ability of the disciples, it has many times been a disciple's duty to do the impossible, and in God's strength he has risen up and done it. "Go, and do thou likewise."

Going With or Against the Crowd

It is a good thing to go with the multitude when one can do so with a good conscience. It is better to be in harmony with one's fellows than to quarrel with them, if peace and righteousness can be harmonized. And it is a mistake to cultivate differences about small matters, and thus needlessly weaken their respect for our judgment. But, as this world is constituted, it is not always possible to escape the necessity of dissent and resistance to the judgment of the multitude. The only multitude that ever rises to the highest level of truth and righteousness is "the great multitude which no man could number," which John sees before the throne. Earthly crowds commonly rise no higher than the lower average of sentiment and opinion in their own ranks. They are liable to the contagion of fear, hatred, and other passions. Even the good people among them are not always at their best, and have to be on their guard against "following a multitude to do evil."

Fulness of Life

A future life like the definition of a line,—length without breadth,—would not be worth while. Length of life demands largeness of life. How satisfying, how substantial, the conception of life which Jesus gives! Eternal life standeth in the knowledge of God. Life is correspondence to an infinite environment, touching God and true to God at every point of feeling, thinking, willing, loving. Christ was alive at every pore to his Father's world. Sky and field, birds and flowers, rain and fruitful season, the wedding feast or the home of sorrow, the Temple and "the place" at Olivet, Jewish rulers and little children,—everything interested him and drew him out. Let us feel the breadth as well as the height of our calling. Life more abundantly is Christ's dower. Littleness cannot abide in his presence. His rivers ever widen, and the fragments of the feast are more than its first spreading. Enlarge we then our borders and widen our outlook. Power shall come full in play and match each new task, and fulness of joy justify an endless life.

Power of a Great Presence

A sense of littleness makes one bigger, for this sense of littleness comes from a realization of that which is above and beyond. One needs to feel that there is something bigger than himself before he can feel himself little. He needs to stand in the presence of the majestic, the vast, and the sublime, before he can appreciate his relative insignificance. This is his humiliation which is exaltation. Spurgeon once advised his people to save up their money for a tour through

Switzerland. He was not advising them to go there to study the cold facts of geology, or mineralogy, or botany. He wanted them to stand in the presence of that which was overpoweringly vast. He said: "If you do not find your head grow on both sides, and have to put your hands up and say, 'I feel as if my brains are straining with their growth,' I do not think you have many brains to spare." The soul grows by these glimpses. Reverence is not to be instilled into the soul of child or man by mere talk about reverence. Inspiration must grow in the presence of that which is inspiring. Not every one can go to Switzerland, nor is it necessary. Contemplation of the heroic and the noble in real life is open to all. Sublime conduct is a source of free inspiration to the world.

Rights of the People who Don't Like Us

PEOPLE who do not like us have doubtless missed a great opportunity,—so, at least, it is perfectly natural for us to feel. Whether they ever realize how much they have lost depends a great deal, however, on our manner of treating the situation, and it can hardly be said that our natural method of dealing with it is very likely to better things. We may suspect that the only way to have such people ever come to like us is to cordially recognize their right not to. It is one thing to like to be liked, a quite natural and proper feeling; but, unless we watch ourselves, we soon find that we are demanding that people shall like us as one of our birthrights in this world, which is quite a different matter. One of the wisdoms which comes latest in life is the discovery that there is nothing fundamentally wrong in people's not liking us.

What entirely different attitudes different men assume when they discover dislike toward themselves! One man gets angry, and proposes to retaliate; he will return dislike with worse dislike. Sometimes he will preposterously go to work to make people like him. Another sees that this is not a matter about which he can properly do anything, or, if there is anything to be done, he goes at it by the short cut of doing it to himself. It is told of Jowett, Master of Balliol, who was very slow to let people know whether he liked them, that he was once talking with a nephew who was something of a stranger to him, and trying the meanwhile to make out what was in the fellow. In the course of conversation, the nephew made the casual remark that, when a man insulted him, he always made it a point to ask him to dinner. "You'll do, you'll do!" joyously shouted the Master, who felt that, after this evidence of social maturity, he need not worry about his nephew. While most of us may find it inconvenient to go as far as the dinner point with antagonistic people, we can at least recognize that many of them are thoroughly worthy of a good dinner, and give them the next best thing, which is a little extra politeness.

It is to be feared that many people are making like and dislike the whole story of their life. Hence

From Contributors

The Apocalypse of the Apostle John

By President Robert Ellis Thompson, S.T.D.

APOCALYPTIC writing is a development or specialization of prophetic writing. It differs from prophetic writing in giving a chief prominence to elements already present, but not so prominent, in prophecy. The prophet speaks at times of things to come, although his chief employment is with the present. He is a teacher of social duty, much more than a predictor, but he does predict. His very certainty as to the meaning of existing situations leads him to do so. He understands "the signs of the times." The apocalypst deals with the future almost exclusively. It is, indeed, from the study of the apocalypsts that the common idea of prophecy as prediction is derived, and it has reacted unhappily upon the interpretation of the prophets. It has led people to look everywhere for predictions, where none were intended or to be found. In fact, prediction is not essential to prophecy. Hosea is always classed as a prophet, although his book is not predictive, and the other prophets deal more in exposition of the present than in announcements of things to come.

The second element which is subordinate in prophecy, but dominant in apocalypst, is symbolical vision. Here also some prophets have more and some less of this, while the apocalypst has a great deal. The prophet was a speaker rather than a writer, and symbolical visions are not an effective way of putting a case to an audience. The apocalypst was a writer rather than a speaker, and could afford the use of this form, which is most attractive to the Oriental mind.

The transition from prophecy to apocalypst is seen in the later chapters of Ezekiel and in Zechariah. Ezekiel's visions of the new temple and the new holy land are apocalypstic in substance. They are symbolical visions of things to come, added to work purely prophetic. The same is true of Zechariah's vision of the white horses and the olive-trees, while other parts of his book are so distinctly prophetic that some critics have ascribed the two to different authors. But it is in the Book of Daniel, which the Jews did not number among the prophetic books, that we first see apocalypstic vision in its full development. It is the model upon which the succeeding apocalypsts model themselves.

For, once the model was set, it became a favorite form of writing among the Jews. Apocalypst followed apocalypst in the period between Malachi and Matthew, the greatest being the Book of Enoch, in which the saint of the days before the flood was made to disclose the course which events were about to take in the days of the Has-monean kings.

From the days of Ezekiel, and, still more, from those of Daniel, apocalypst is cosmopolitan as well as national. It represents the new interest in the world at large, which was born of invasion, conquest, and captivity. It puts the elect people into the central place, but it speaks also of the nations round about, and not as if their ruin and overthrow were all that could be foretold of them. God must be interested in them no less than man. The biblical apocalypsts of the Old Testament represent the new idea of a world-wide kingdom of the coming Messiah. It is only the apocalypsts outside the canon which express Jewish narrowness and exclusiveness in this respect, and even here the Book of Enoch is biblical in spirit.

In the New Testament there is but one apocalypst, and that is the greatest of the series. Many others were written, and enough survive to make a respectable volume, but only one had the apostolic weight, the literary worth, and the historic importance, which give it a lasting claim to our attention. Tradition ascribes it to the beloved Apostle, but this tradition has been widely challenged. Even as early as the third century, Dionysius of Alexandria declared that the writer of the excellent Greek of the fourth Gospel and the great Epistle could not be the writer of the bad, ungrammatical Greek of the Apocalypse. He therefore supposed a different John, called John the Presbyter, to have written the Apocalypse. It is very unlikely that the same man, in the same mental state, should have written both. But the late Dr. Edwin H. Sears suggests a reasonable explanation of the difficulty. He points out that the Apostle, in writing

the Apocalypse, was probably in an "exalted" mental state, such as is seen in dying folk. Now one of the marks of this state is the recurrence of its subject to the speech of childhood. The dying Scotchman, though the "Doric" may have been strange to his lips ever since his boyhood, speaks the Scotch of his childhood. George Macdonald makes use of this fact in one of the scenes of his "Robert Falconer." In the Apocalypse, therefore, we may have the broken, ungrammatical Greek of John's boyhood, while the Gospel and the Epistles which bear his name represent the Greek which he had learned to write through long contact with the Greek-speaking world.

If this primary difficulty be removed, it will be found that there is a remarkable internal resemblance of the Apocalypse to John's other writings, especially the Gospel. What is thought or fact in the latter becomes vision in the former. Thus, as Dr. Sears reminds us, John alone of the evangelists notices the piercing of our Lord's side by the Roman soldier's spear. In the Apocalypse "they which pierced him . . . shall mourn over him." The Fourth is the only Gospel which presents Jesus as the Lamb of God. He is called by that name twenty-three times in the Apocalypse.

The structure of the Johannine Apocalypse is such as naturally divides it into three sections. The first concerns itself directly with the church, represented by the seven churches of the region in which the Apostle spent his later years. This part corresponds rather to prophecy than to apocalypst. There are symbolical expressions,—"the white stone," "the new name," "the pillar in the temple,"—but no symbolical vision. And the contents are predictive only in the most general way.

The Apocalypse proper begins with the fourth chapter, and falls into two sections. The first is concerned with the Christian church in its relation to the Jewish nation. Jerusalem is the city of evil deed and influence, around which the seven trumpets are sounding, as around Jericho in Joshua's days. But with the sounding of the seventh comes a transition to a broader, a world-wide, field of interest. Jerusalem gives place to Rome, the harlot city of the seven hills, whose overthrow, following that of Jerusalem, shall introduce the age of the new heavens and the new earth. It is pagan Rome, not papal, that is meant; for papal Rome, by adding the Vatican, and enclosing it by the Leonine walls, became a city of eight hills, not seven. Under various figures the age of pagan persecution which succeeded Jewish is portrayed, ending with the surrender of the world to "our Lord and his Christ." The closing vision is one of a perfect human society, living under the rule of God on this earth. The apocalypstic figures used are frequently applied to the state of the saints after death. The application may be not unjustified, but that is not the primary sense.

John's guide says to him, "I am one of thy brethren the prophets." The expression points to the close relation of the Apocalypse to the prophetic books of the Jewish canon. Especially close is his affinity with Ezekiel, whose prophecies John must have studied with especial closeness, and from whom he may have taken the apocalypstic bent. The vision of the four living creatures is Ezekiel's living creature with the four aspects. The sealing of the elect out of the twelve tribes is Ezekiel's marking of the loyal Israelites out of the inkhorn, and with the old Hebrew letter "T," which is cross-shaped. The pure river of the water of life from the throne is Ezekiel's flood from the gates of the new temple. That temple itself suggested the vision of the new Jerusalem. The outcry over the fall of Babylon recalls Ezekiel's lament over Tyre. And so on through scene after scene.

The prophet was more likely than the apocalypst to reproduce the environment in which he spoke or wrote. Yet a recent critic finds in the Book of Enoch and other extra-canonical apocalypsts reminiscences of the wild, rocky scenery of the wilderness of En-gedi, where dwelt those Essene communities in which he supposes those apocalypsts to have been written. John reproduces, as Dean Stanley shows in his "Sermons in the East" (Scribners), the scenery of Patmos and its neighborhood,—the mountain islands, the strangely contorted rocks, the volcanic Thera, and the sea itself in all its moods, as nowhere else in the Scriptures.

The book is the work of a great poet, a great prophet, a great apocalypst. Its existence gives us the vision of another side of John the Divine. It shows him not

merely the devout mystic and the devoted chronicler, but the student of the world's history and of its largest social question. In John's Gospel, Frederick Maurice used to say, we have the best manual of theology; in his Epistle, the best guide to ethics; in the Apocalypse, the true key to politics.

Philadelphia.

A Life Fight for Life

By the Rev. Edson C. Dayton

The characteristic of genuine heroism is its persistency.—EMERSON

THE subject of this sketch was born April 24, 1826. His father was a "moderate drinker." The child's first employment was in a brickyard, and there he carried liquor to the men, for which he was occasionally rewarded with a drink. He can remember being drunk when he was eight years old. He cannot remember a time when he did not like liquor undiluted, and infers an inherited taste. When he was nine years of age, his mother died. There was no strong paternal restraint, and habit grew. At thirty he was unable to read or write, but secretly learned to do both.

He was converted at forty-two, and entered upon the struggle which was to reveal in its course splendid, persistent, triumphant heroism.

Imagine this scene:—He is passing an open saloon on his way to work. He carries before the door. By sheer force of renewed will he pushes on to the next saloon, and the next, one after another, of the thirty or more on that long street, until, in his agony, he cries out: "My God, this is as by fire! this is as by fire!"

He is walking with a friend in the public park after prayer-meeting, when suddenly he steps in front of the other, puts his hands on his shoulders, looks him straight in the face, and, with great earnestness and solemnity, says: "Brother, it sometimes seems to me that, when we do right the things which it is easy to do right, God doesn't make much account of them; but when we do right the things which it is hard to do right, then we please God."

The tempter approaches him: "You are aging, you are not strong, you have a family to provide for, you should use a certain patent medicine and exercise self-control." The assailant is exposed and rendered powerless, and a way of greater safety in time to come lighted up, by this warning from a friend: "Suspect any suggestion that comes to you along the line of natural inclination."

Where shall we find profounder, nobler soliloquy than this? "Ought I to ask God to take away this appetite? Maybe, if he did, I shouldn't hunger and thirst so after righteousness."

Year after year, this is the most he will say for himself, with the deliberation of one who expects to be justified or condemned by the words of his mouth: "I am trying; I would not take the world in exchange for the hope I have."

A helpful pastor, about to preach a farewell sermon, met him before service in the vestibule, and said in cheerful tone: "Brother C— we shall meet again in heaven." "Did my pastor know that, or did he just think it?" were questions pondered long afterward. He had felt he understood the command, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;" and the pastor's confidence was, that all the time God was working in and with him.

He had been on a spree, and is still stupid. Urged to pray, how can he? Another prays for him and waits. At last the cry goes up: "All-righteous Father, thou knowest I will not try again unless thou wilt help me." God helps him. The depression is overcome for the first time without stimulant, and he has not fallen since.

John Vine Hall overcame in six years. This man was falling and rising for eighteen years, but the last six or seven of that long period he had the conviction, unexpressed to a living soul, that God would give him the victory before he died; and he has not drunk in fifteen years.

There is no boasting: "Now, for all this village is worth, I would not take a drink even of sweet cider." His sympathies are with the class out of which divine grace has lifted him. "Don't give up hope for one who is struggling to be free from alcohol. I know some