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feeling of the pulse, and rough in his answer to the mother's anxious question; but the years roll on, and there has been one dead in his own house; and now he comes into the sickroom, and with tearful eye he looks at the dying child, and he says, "Oh, how this reminds me of my Charlie!" Trouble, the great educator! Sorrow—I see its touch in the grandest painting; I hear its tremor in the sweetest song; I feel its power in the mightiest argument.

Grecian mythology said that the fountain of Hippocrene was struck out by the foot of the winged horse, Pegasus. I have often noticed in life that the brightest and most beautiful fountains of Christian comfort and spiritual life have been struck out by the iron shod hoof of disaster and calamity. I see Daniel's courage best when I find him on the foundering ship under the glare of the lightning in the breakers of Melita. God crowns his children amid the howlings of wild beasts, and the chopping of blood splashed guillotine, and the crackling fires of martyrdom.

It took the persecutions of Marcus Aurelius to develop Polycarp and Justin Martyr. It took the pope's bull, and the cardinal's curse, and the world's anathema to develop Martin Luther. It took all the hostilities against the Scotch covenants and the fury of Lord Claverhouse to develop James Benwick and Andrew Melville and Hugh McKail, the glorious martyrs of Scotch history. It took the stormy sea, and the December blast and the desolate New England coast, and the war whoop of savages to show forth the prowess of the Pilgrim Fathers—

When amid the storms they sang,
 And the stars heard, and the sea;
 And the sounding aisles of the dim wood
 Rang to the anthems of the free.

THE LIFTING UP OF THE NATION.
 It took all our past national distresses, and it takes all our present national sorrows, to lift up our nation on that high career where it will march along after the foreign despots that have mocked, and the tyrannies that have jeered shall be swept down under the omnipotent wrath of God, who hates oppression, and who by the strength of his own red right arm will make all men free. And so it is individually, and in the family, and in the church, and in the world, that through darkness and storm and trouble men, women, churches, nations, are developed.

Again, I see in my text the beauty of unflinching friendship. I suppose there were plenty of friends for Naomi while she was in prosperity; but of all her acquaintances, how many were willing to tudge off with her toward Judea, when she had to make that lonely journey? One—the heroine of my text. One—absolutely one. I suppose when Naomi's husband was living, and they had plenty of money, and all things went well, they had a great many callers; but I suppose that after her husband died, and her property went, and she got old and poor, she was not troubled very much with callers.

All the birds that sang in the bower while the sun shone have gone to their nests, now the night has fallen.

Oh, these beautiful sunflowers that spread out their color in the morning hour! but they are always asleep when the sun is going down! Job had plenty of friends when he was the richest man in Uz; but when his property went and the trials came, then there were none so much that pestered as Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite.

Life often seems to be a mere game, where the successful player pulls down all the other men into his own lap. Let suspicions arise about a man's character and he becomes like a bank in a panic, and all the imputations rush on him and break down in a day that character which in due time would have had strength to defend itself. There are reputations that have been half a century in building which go down under some moral exposure, as a vast temple is consumed by the touch of a sulphurous match. A hog can uproot a century plant.

In this world, so full of heartlessness and hypocrisy, how thrilling it is to find some friend as faithful in days of adversity as in days of prosperity! David had such a friend in Hushai; the Jews had such a friend in Mordecai, who never forgot their cause; Paul had such a friend in Onesiphorus, who visited him in jail; Christ had such a friend in the Marys, who adhered to him on the cross; Naomi had such a one in Ruth, who cried out, "Treat me not to

leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if I ought but death part thee and me."

OUT OF DARKNESS INTO LIGHT.
 Again, I learn from this subject that paths which open in hardship and darkness often come out in places of joy. When Bath started from Moab toward Jerusalem, to go along with her mother-in-law, I suppose the people said: "Oh, what a foolish creature to go away from her father's house, to go off with a poor old woman toward the land of Judah! They won't live to get across the desert. They will be drowned in the sea, or the jackals of the wilderness will destroy them." It was a very dark morning when Ruth started off with Naomi, but behold her in my text in the harvest field of Boaz, to be affianced to one of the lords of the land, and become one of the grandmothers of Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory. And so it often is that a path which starts very darkly ends very brightly.

When you started out for heaven, oh, how dark was the hour of conviction—how Sinai thundered and devils howled, and the darkness thickened! All the sins of your life pounced upon you, and it was the darkest hour you ever saw when you first found out your sins. After awhile you went into the harvest field of God's mercy; you began to glean in the fields of divine promise, and you had more sheaves than you could carry, as the voice of God addressed you, saying, "Blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven and whose sins are covered." A very dark starting in conviction, a very bright ending in the pardon, and the hope, and the triumph of the Gospel!

So, very often in our worldly business or in our spiritual career, we start off on a very dark path. We must go. The flesh may shriek back, but there is a voice within, or a voice from above, saying, "You must go;" and we have to drink the gall, and we have to carry the cross, and we have to traverse the desert, and we are pounded and assailed of misrepresentation and abuse, and we have to urge our way through ten thousand obstacles that have to be slain by our own right arm. We have to ford the river, we have to climb the mountain, we have to storm the castle; but, blessed be God, the day of rest and reward will come.

On the tiptop of the captured battlements we will shout the victory; if not in this world, then in that world where there is no gall to drink, no burdens to carry, no battles to fight. How do I know it! Know it! I know it because God says so. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes."

NOAH AND THE SCOFFERS.
 It was very hard for Noah to endure the scoffing of the people in his day while he was trying to build the ark, and was every morning quizzed about his old boat that would never be of any practical use; but when the deluge came, and the tops of the mountains disappeared like the backs of sea monsters, and the elements, lashed up in fury, clapped their hands over a drowned world, then Noah in the ark rejoiced in his own safety and in the safety of his family, and looked out on the wreck of a ruined earth.

Christ, hounded of persecutors, denied a pillow, worse maltreated than the thieves on either side of the cross, human hate smacking its lips in satisfaction after it had been draining his lost drop of blood, the sheeted dead bursting from the sepulchres at his crucifixion. Tell me, were there ever darker times than those! Like the booming of the midnight sea against the rocks, the surges of Christ's anguish beat against the gates of eternity, to be echoed back by all the thrones of heaven and all the dungeons of hell.

But the day of reward comes for Christ; all the pomp and dominion of this world are to be hung on his throne, uncrowned heads are to bow before him on whose head are many crowns, and all the celestial worship is to come up at his feet, like the humming of the forest.

(Continued on fourth page.)

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.