

What is Religion Worth?

In connection with the subject of giving, Mr. Spurgeon tells the following anecdote. A gentleman went round with a paper to raise the minister's salary. He went to a poor man who had attended the church twice, who put down £10. The gentleman asked if he did not mean 10s. "Ten shillings?" said the man, "do you think that the spiritual benefit and comfort that a man gets from such a minister as ours through a year is only worth ten shillings? I reckon it to be worth a great deal more, but really I can not afford to give more." "Well," said the man who was collecting, to himself, "if this man can afford £10 I can afford £25." He had never before given more than ten shillings. When a man gives sixpence, says Mr. Spurgeon, who is laying up thousands of pounds, I can only consider that he forms a pretty accurate measure of the value of his religion. A man who was pulled out of the river by another, offered him fourpence. "No, thank you," said the man, "I don't want to take your valuation of what you are worth."

A Few Mistakes.

The Boston Transcript discourses thus to morbid complainers:

It is a mistake to suppose that the dimly pious man has had a change of heart. The change is in his liver, if anywhere. It is a mistake to suppose that your friend is consumedly interested in your eloquent description of your liver troubles. On the contrary, he is excessively anxious to tell you of his catarrh. It is a mistake to suppose that physicians know how to treat your constitutional disorders as well as you do yourself. You know well enough what is best for you, but you dislike to undergo the proper regimen. You employ a doctor, paying him for shouldering the responsibility of your sickness, and handicap his efforts with all your unhealthy habits and practices.

MRS. STOWE ON THE DUTIES OF EDITORS.—What is exacted of an editor now-a-days seems to be a sort of general omniscience. He must keep the run of everything—politics, science, religion, art, agriculture, general literature. The world is alive and moving everywhere, and he must know just what's going on and be able to have an opinion ready made and ready to go to press at any moment. He must tell to a T just what they are doing in Ashantee and Dahomey, and what they don't do and ought to do in New York. He must be wise and instructive about currency, and taxes, and tariffs, and able to guide Congress; and then he must take care of the Church—know just what the Old Catholics are up to, the last new kink of the Ritualists, and right and wrong of all the free fights in the different denominations. It really makes my little head spin just to hear what they are getting up articles about. Then there are all sorts of writing men and women sending pecks and bushels of articles to be printed, and getting furious if they are not printed, though the greater part of them are such hopeless trash that you only need to read four lines to know that they are good for nothing; but they all expect them to be remailed with explanations and criticisms, and the ladies sometimes write letters of wrath that are perfectly fearful.

—A silly woman in a fine dress bears a strong resemblance to a fifteen-cent dahlia in a two-dollar flower-pot.—Ralph Waldo Emerson. That is all very well indeed. But it was a great deal better put some three thousand years ago! "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman without discretion."—Proverbs.

The City of the Pueblos

BY MRS. GOV. LEW WALLACE

The great mass of the people is very swarthy, and there are but few who have no Indian blood in their veins. The traveler in New Mexico may breakfast in a rancho where the occupants have the clear cinnamon hue; dine at another, where the faces are ashen like the Malay's; and pass the night at a third, where the courteous host will show the deep Vandyke brown of the negro. The explanation is easy. The different inhabitants of the several places are sprung from various tribes. The Ute has a dingy tallow complexion, the Apache is a dirty ashen gray, while the Mohave girls have cheeks of almost Spanish transparency.

Among the common people is one distinguishing trait, the utter lack of beauty. I have frequented every day crowds, and haunted churches, where they are to be seen at their best; and have found not one attractive face. Nowhere on earth comes age so fast or in such repulsive shape. A lovely baby changes to the plain young girl, somewhat comely, at fifteen. At twenty-five not a vestige of freshness remains; not a line to remind one of beauty vanished forever. And oh! the hideous hags squatted against the walls! There is no speculation in those eyes, fixed as the eternal gaze of the Sphinx. They look old as that grim female, and I would as soon think stone lips could part into a company smile, displaying false teeth, as that these could break into laughter or song. I wonder what they are thinking about, if they think at all, or if an earthquake would make them jump. Assuredly they are the most opaque of terrestrial bodies, and, under the old black shawl, they sit immovable, as though all the forces of the universe (rarely heard from in Santa Fe) could not start them from their secure poise.

Dr. Holmes says "the finest human fruit, and especially the finest woman we get in New England, are raised under glass. Protection is what the transplanted Aryan requires in this New England climate." I fancy "protection" is what the woman needs in the "excessive," the territorial climate analogous to that of Central Asia. On this bleak, elevated plateau, where the dryness is so intense that meat is cured without smoke or salt, the juices of the human body evaporate, leaving only wrinkles. I have seen men in high health return from a month of camping among the Rocky Mountains with crow's feet woefully deepened and the appearance of having "aged" in a very short time.

Perhaps dirt and low diet have helped to finish the completed ugliness of the Santa Fe witches; but we know extremes of every sort waste nervous force, and hasten the steps of the common enemy, who sharpens his scythe for the faces of women and shakes the sand in the glass when he measures their years. Moisture, when it does come, is not the gentle rain from heaven, swelling bud and flower, as well as human hearts, to thankfulness. There is no dew; nor is there showering mist, like that which went up from the earth and watered the garden eastward in Eden. We have, instead, high wind-storms, rain streaming in torrents, preceded by an atmosphere where men and animals are acting lightning-rods and the "lee thunder" of which Byron sung. Suddenly the mighty music stops. The sun flashes out in unveiled splendor, flooding the world with blinding light, and we are tempted to tread a sun-dance in worship of the glittering god of the Pueblos, who inhabits eternity, lord of heaven and earth, son of the morning and father of all the days.—The Independent.

HIGH SCHOOLS IN MASSACHUSETTS.—Formerly, the high schools in Massachusetts were regarded with more favor than the private and endowed academies, and were thought to furnish a better education. Now according to President Eliot of Harvard University the contrary opinion prevails, and the academies are multiplying, while the high school has relatively declined. A bill has been prepared to be presented to the next legislature, providing that any town in the commonwealth which is required by law to maintain a high school may instead thereof, send its high-school pupils to an academy or private school provided there is one within its bounds which gives competent instruction of the kind required, and which is not controlled by any religious sect or denomination.

—The last Standard contains a brief notice of the death of Bro. Wm. Baxter, a graduate of Bethany, and preacher of nearly forty years' service, and the author of the biography of Walter Scott and of Knowles Shaw.

Wonders of Growth.

BY UNCLE PAUL.

We were speaking of gulls and terns. Among such larger birds the wonder of growth seems even less wonderful than as seen in bodies more delicate. Your canary, Alice, that sings so sweetly and is so much company for you, is a greater marvel than ever you stopped to think. I never see one swinging in its cage, and singing as if all its little form were liquid sweetness, without marveling anew over its mechanism and its gifts.

The very smallest of all birds—the dainty humming-birds—are as wonderful as if never but the one pair of them grew; and if they were so rare as that how wonderful the species would be thought! There is one variety of the humming-bird, by the way, that is not a bird at all, though it looks like one, and acts like one, and I sometimes think the books tell a something that isn't so, when they say it isn't a bird. The books pretend that what I allude to is only a humming moth; and it does lack one or two bird features, I confess. But see it on the wing, and you will say it must be a humming-bird—just the littlest, cunningest one that ever sipped honey or glistened gold—and capture one, as I did once and you will not readily change your mind. It is about midway in size between a bumble bee and the ordinary humming-bird.

The next smallest of all birds, after the humming-bird, is

The Sun Bird.

which I don't suppose any of Our Boys and Girls ever saw.

It is never seen in this country, being a tropical bird. The young folks in Africa, and Southern Asia, must see many Sun birds, for there they are abundant. The name Sun Bird is very appropriate, since the sunlight has a remarkable effect on his plumage, making it resemble gold and precious stones. This appearance is really produced by the bird, as he moves his tiny muscles and changes the position of his feathers, throwing every movement into a different light.

The sun bird is quite like the creeper in shape, and resembles the humming-bird in the brilliancy of its plumage, and in its feeding on the juices of flowers, which it sucks with its long, delicately curved bill. It does not flutter on the wing, when feeding, however, like the humming-bird, but perches on or beside the flower. You will judge how dainty and sensitive a bird it is, and what an addition it would make to our list of feathered beauties could we but raise it here.—Ex.

Fourteen Keeps.

He will keep thee as the apple of his eye. He will keep thee in all thy ways, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. He will keep thy foot from being taken. Lest any hurt thee, he will keep thee day and night. He will keep thee as a shepherd doth his flock. He will keep thee from the evil that is in the world. He will keep thee from falling. He will keep thee from the hour of temptation. He will keep thee in all places whither thou goest. He will keep thee in the way, and bring thee into the place which he has prepared. He will keep the feet of his saints. He will keep that which thou hast committed to him.

"Las' nite as I was toatin' my heels an' gwine to sleep by de cook-stove," began the old man as the notes of the Limekiln Club triangle died away, "do ole 'oman axed me if I didn't find dis world was growin' awful wicked. Dat put me in mind of de fack dat almos' ebery day I hear people sayin' dat dey can't believe nobody, nor trust nobody any more, an' dat it am harder to find an honest man dan it is to diskliver water runnin' up hill. Gem'len, Ize been pokin' round dis world about sixty y'ars, an' it am my experience: 1. Dat de man who groans ober de general wickedness of de world will steal a wheel-barrow ebery time he gits a chance. 2. Dat de man who goes 'round lamentin' dat he can't trust nobody is de wery chap who'll gin you away ebery time. 3. Dat de pusson who finks de world am full of cheats an' liars will trade you a blind hoss an' den sneak into de barn at midnight an' steal all de shoes of his feet. Dar's wicked folks on y'arth, of course, but de man who does de squar' thing will never run amiss of squar' people. Ize got along so fur as well as could be 'spected, an' de look ahead am all serene. De only man I shall look out fur am de man who was bo'n fur an angel but grew up to wa'r pants an' butes."—Detroit Free Press.

—The stoics say: Turn in upon yourself; there you will find repose. This, however, is not true. Others say: go forth from yourselves, and seek happiness in diversion. Neither is true. Disease will come. Alas! happiness is neither within us nor without us. It is in the union of ourselves with God.—Pascal.

—A good name keeps its luster in the dark.

MISCELLANEOUS.



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