

# *The Pulpit.*

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## **THE CLANK OF THE CHAIN.**

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Remember my bonds.—Col. iii., 18.

**A** MAN just past the middle prime of life, say sixty years of age, sits in his own rented dwelling in the City of Rome. If one had an eye to the picturesque, surely it might here be gratified. Rome is a city of 2,000,000 people. Part of them lordly, proud, rich, but groaning under a tyranny which they have neither the patience to endure nor the courage to throw off. Others are free-born, but servile, spending their time between the place where the largesses of corn are doled out, and the other places of amusement where they are stimulated by the races and the gladiatorial shows. When a people has come to that time in its history where they are divided between the hard struggle for bread on the one hand, and the search for amusement on the other, that people is on the high road to absolute and irretrievable ruin. Very many of the population are slaves brought from all quarters of the earth, at the same time that the provinces which they represent are despoiled and their wealth has been poured into the Eternal City. The vices of these populations have also been brought there, making Rome what it was called at the time, the "sewer of the universe."

In the center of the Forum is the golden milestone, from which all roads diverge to the various provinces of the empire, and to which they all converge again; all roads then as now, for Rome imperial as for Rome ecclesiastical, leading to the Eternal City. Triumphal arches, marble palaces, fine adornments abound. In a

shall give the fruitage to my kind. I will not waste my brains in pleasure, even of the highest sort—the pleasure of knowing that I know.

In the passage read in your hearing, from the second chapter of Philippians, a higher ideal is brought before us—an ideal that human speech cannot tell. There are no words which fully tell it, just as there are no words that can describe the shock which you feel when first you seize the electrode of a battery. You have to touch it to know. You have to touch this ideal to know. Begin at your leisure and read it through :

“Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus ; who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore—(sometimes the reverberation of an eternal thought of God can be heard in simple words. Sometimes the power of everlasting truth comes quivering into human hearts in a simple word). Wherefore, also God highly exalted Him and gave unto Him the name which is above every name ; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

That ideal let me lift up before you, who to-night have been thinking so indignantly of the deed of the Arab there in Alexandria. Omar wasted brains in pleasure, while Christ died for His enemies. He only lives who emulates the example of Jesus Christ.

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## LOOKING FOR THE HANDFULS.

By THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

(*Presbyterian.*)

And she went and gleaned in the field after the reapers.—Ruth ii., 3.

**W**HEN Ruth was gleaned in the barley-field of Boaz, the generous farmer commanded his young men to “let fall some of the handfuls of purpose for her.” They were told to “leave them, that she might glean them ;” and they were not to rebuke her for gathering them up. So she gleaned in the field until the evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was nearly a bushel of barley. Happy, honest toiler ! She

received her reward. Instead of consulting a false pride, and loitering the day in idleness, her brave industry brought her more than the ephah of grain. It made her the wife of lordly Boaz, the mistress of his mansion, and the ancestress of the promised Messiah. So they who humble themselves are often exalted.

But there is a rich spiritual truth to be gleaned from this beautiful incident in the pastoral of "Ruth." Just as the liberal heart of Boaz commanded his men to let fall the handfuls for the nimble fingers of the maiden, so God is wont to let fall His blessings for those who are diligent in doing His will. No true workman works in vain. Sometimes in the heat of the long day a Christian pastor is tempted to discouragement. He sees but few results. But, presently, God lets fall a handful of golden stalks to cheer his heart. Some souls are converted. Some fallow-ground hearers begin to show signs of a crop. His prayer-meetings begin to give token of a revival. Perhaps a project that lay very near his heart is taken up by willing hands and open purses. Or it may be that the conscientious toiler gets a marvelous blessing into his own soul—a new manifestation of Jesus as his personal guest and comforter—a new incoming of the Holy Spirit. Our Heavenly Father knoweth both what to bestow and when to bestow. There are thousands of pastors and Sunday-school workers who, after their Summer vacations, are just entering on a new season of gleaning. Let us give them the inspiring hint that, just at the right time and in the right way, the Master of the field will let fall the handful. Be not weary in well-doing. In "due season" (which always means God's time, and not ours) ye shall gather the precious blessing. It may not come in the way you look for it, or be of just the kind you expected, but it will fill your basket. You and I do not serve a stingy Master.

This incident in Boaz's barley-field has a beautiful application to Bible-study. Too many Christians never practice a careful gleaning of the inspired Word. In fact, to such careless readers, a large and precious portion of the Word is as utterly unknown territory as the headwaters of the Nile. They never *search* the Scriptures. But when we patiently go through the wonderful domain of truth with open eye bent down humbly to seek for the hid treasures, oh! what handfuls of fresh promises, and fertile suggestions, and marvelous teachings are dropped in our path. We pick up a truth never dreamed of in many an out-of-the-way passage.

In some historical incident, or some neglected verse of prophecy, or some dry chapter about Jewish rites and ceremonies, we find a whole sheaf of Divine teaching. God never put one page in His Book without a purpose. There is more than a bushel of barley in the Book of Leviticus. Many persons pass by this portion of the Word as a mere upholstery shop of priestly robes and Jewish ritualities. But to him who can discern the things of the Spirit, the Book is full of most rich and rare instructiveness. It typifies the Christian life most wonderfully. Even that long catalogue of names in the fourth chapter of the First Book of Chronicles furnishes a text for a capital sermon in that single name of "Jabez," the child of sorrow, who turned out to be a man of many virtues.

In every field which Providence opens up to us there is precious grain to reward our gleaning. Some of my readers may even now be treading a field over which the sharp sickle of adversity has passed with keen and cutting afflictions. Your hopes have been laid low. Has that stubble-field nothing left for you but the thorns of discontent and the brambles of unbelief? Will you be so blind and foolish as to prick your fingers with Satan's briars? My afflicted friend, the God of love will let fall some precious handfuls of comfort, if you will only search for them with the eye of patient humility. In fact, there are scores of golden passages in God's Word that were only intended for such as thee. They are as truly designed for thee as is the letter left by the postman with thy own name on the envelope. These passages of comfort are Christ's love-letters to thee. Never wouldst thou have received them if thou hadst not gone through the mown field of bitter disappointment or bereavement. Here is one handful of consolation let fall for thy gleaning, "My grace is sufficient for thee." "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." "I will be with thee in trouble, and will deliver thee." "All things work together for good to them who love God." "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Here are but specimens of the treasures of strength and comfort which God droppeth in the path of His chastisements, for His own to gather up.

What graces, too, are to be gathered in those stubble-fields of affliction! Abraham found there the noble commendation that he was "the friend of God." Daniel won his crown there. Job came out of that field, which the scythe had apparently swept clean, with

a whole armful of spiritual blessings. Paul never would have been the man that he was if the first crop of his selfish aims and ambitions had not been cut away. Then he turned gleaner for the Lord, and went home to heaven more richly laden than Ruth came home from the barley-field. To every one of us the Master appointeth his or her field of toil or of trial. He hath the handful for each, if we have but the faith to look for it. At the final hour of judgment the question to each of us will be: "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?"

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### THE VIRTUE OF BELIEF.

By REV. DWIGHT, L. MOODY.

(*Evangelist.*)

Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it —Numbers xiii., 30.

I WAS very much amused the other day to see in a newspaper the statement that a certain revival had been postponed for one month; as if anyone could tell when a revival was to take place or could postpone one. It comes in God's time and when He wills, and nobody has the power to hurry or to hinder Him. I believe that there is only one way to hinder God from working, and that lies in the very great unbelief that exists in the Church of God. Why, the world hasn't got the power of keeping God from working. All the unbelievers out of the church can't hinder Him one bit. It is the unbelief inside the church that is alone able to do it. Now, the question comes, shall we cross into Paran and Kadesh? Shall we go up and take the land? There is no trouble about it. We are able to go up and overcome it. If God be with us, who can be against us? What has God got on this sin-cursed earth to delight in but His own flock? Let, then, the question be decided this morning that we are able to get up and possess the land. You remember that the Israelites sent twelve spies into Paran and Kadesh to reconnoiter. I suppose they wanted to see if God's word was true. That's always the way with unbelievers. God had said to them: "Go over. I'll help you. It will be yours. It's a land flowing with milk and honey. All you've got to do is to go and take it." But they thought they would first find out for themselves what it was worth, and whether they would be able to take it. So they