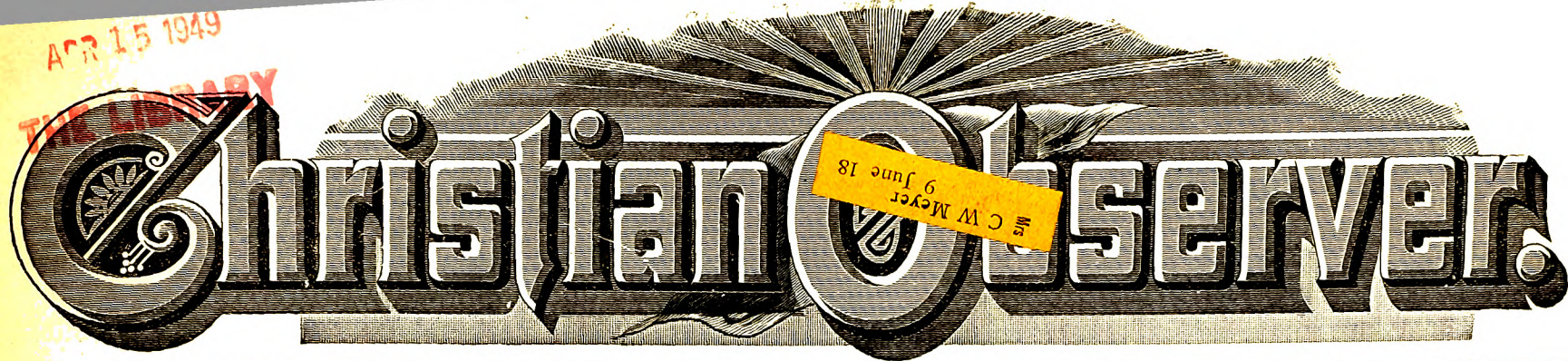




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Postmaster-General.

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Rev. Charles A. Walton, D. D., of Los
Angeles, California, was elected moderator of
the General Assembly of the Cumberland
Presbyterian Church, meeting in its eighty-
eighth session at Dallas, Texas, on May 16.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

A full report of the proceedings of the
General Assembly in Durant, Oklahoma, now
in session, will be published in the "Christian
Observer." Dr. David M. Sweets is attending
the Assembly to prepare the report. He is
assisted by Rev. W. F. Galbraith, pastor of the
Oak Cliff Presbyterian church, Dallas, Texas.
In this issue will be found the proceedings up
to Monday morning. The proceedings in full
will be published in a separate supplement in
our issue of May 29.

The honor of presiding as moderator of the
Durant Assembly was conferred on Rev. James
I. Vance, D. D., pastor of the First Presby-
terian church, of Nashville, Tennessee. Dr.
Vance was born in Arcadia, Tennessee, Sep-
tember 25, 1862, and is a graduate of King
College, Bristol, Tennessee, and of Union
Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.
He was ordained to the ministry of the South-
ern Church in 1886, becoming pastor of the
church at Wytheville, Virginia. He later
served the following churches: Alexandria,
Va., 1887-1891; Norfolk, Va., 1891-1894; First
church, Nashville, Tenn., 1894-1900; North
Reformed church, Newark, N. J., 1900-1910.
In 1910 he accepted a call to his former charge
in the First Presbyterian church, Nashville,
Tenn., of which church he is still pastor. The
church is one of the leading churches of the
denomination, having a membership of 1,625.
Dr. Vance has written a number of books
which have had a large circulation. He is also
professor of Homiletics in Vanderbilt Univer-
sity at Nashville.

Dr. Vance is proving himself a model mod-
erator. His genial, kindly manner, and his
freedom from any semblance of partisanship,
have brought to him the confidence of the en-
tire Assembly. His appropriate suggestions
have expedited the business of the Assembly
on more than one occasion. His election at
this time was eminently appropriate, for evi-
dently the heart of the Assembly is throbbing
with profound sympathy with the war work
of the Church in which Dr. Vance is vitally
interested.

The Napoleon Avenue Presbyterian church,
of New Orleans, Louisiana, was unanimously
selected as the place for the next meeting of
the Assembly in 1919. A cordial invitation
was extended to the Assembly by the pastor,
Rev. U. D. Mooney, D. D., seconded by the
Presbytery of Louisiana, the mayor of New
Orleans, the Governor of Louisiana, and the
New Orleans Association of Commerce. The
Assembly has not met in Louisiana since the
Synod of Louisiana was organized eighteen
years ago.

Rev. J. Franklin Smith, D. D., of Dallas,
Texas, was elected moderator of the General
Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.,
(Northern), meeting on May 16 at Columbus,
Ohio. Dr. Smith's closest rival for the honor
was Rev. John B. Rendall, D. D., of Lincoln
University, Chester, Pa., the vote on the
second ballot being: Dr. Smith, 453; Dr. Ren-
dall, 231. The Assembly then voted to make
the election unanimous. Dr. Smith is a native
of Tennessee, and was born in 1868. He was

educated at Bethel College, McKenzie, Tenn.,
and at Cumberland University, Lebanon,
Tenn., and is a graduate of Union Theological
Seminary, New York. He was ordained to the
ministry of the Cumberland Presbyterian
Church in 1892, and since 1896 has been pas-
tor of the Central Presbyterian church, Dallas,
Texas, the church in which the Northern
Assembly met last year, and the largest church
of the denomination in Texas, having a mem-
bership, according to the 1917 Minutes, of 945.
In 1901 Dr. Smith was the moderator of the
Synod of Texas, U. S. A., and is a member of
the Board of Church Election. He is the
author of a popular devotional volume entitled,
"My Father's Business and Mine."

The Assembly in Durant has been most
expeditious in the transaction of business. By
Saturday evening the Assembly had transacted
a larger amount of business than any previous
Assembly had ever done in the same time.
There is an air of intense earnestness about
all the commissioners and it is very evident
that they are here, not for a pleasure trip, but
for the transaction of serious business that
will hasten the coming of the Kingdom of
God.

The attendance of commissioners on the
General Assembly at Durant was very slightly
below the usual attendance, in spite of the agi-
tation for postponement or reduction of repre-
sentation from the Presbyteries. Two hun-
dred and thirty-eight commissioners had been
enrolled through Saturday. The Presbyteries
were entitled to send 272 commissioners.
There were only thirty-four absentees, there-
fore, on Saturday.

Never in any Assembly that the editor has
attended has there been such a thrilling and
blessed service as that held on Friday night in
the interest of the War Work Council. The
three speakers, Dr. Arthur G. Jones, Rev.
Trigg A. M. Thomas and Dr. E. T. Wellford,
brought burning messages from the scenes of
activity in the army camps and cantonments,
where the Presbyterian Church is seeking to
meet its duties and responsibilities to the
soldiers and sailors who are going forth to
fight for the world's freedom. With breath-
less interest the vast Assembly hung on the
words of these workers without fatigue until
eleven o'clock.

There were few in the vast audience Friday
night who did not have some loved one in the
ranks of our splendid Army or Navy, which
was described as "the finest and cleanest
Army the world has ever seen." All were
thrilled by the assurance of the workers that
the soldiers want to hear the Gospel preached.
Dr. Wellford put it in this concise way: "The
soldiers want three things—food, work, God.
The Government will give them food. The
Huns will give them work. The Church must
give them God."

The pastor of the church in which the As-
sembly is in session has won all hearts by his
kindly, cordial and courteous care for the com-
fort of the commissioners. He has proved
himself the very embodiment of hospitality,
and no detail has been too small for him to at-
tend to. His noble people have manifested

DAY OF PUBLIC HUMILIATION, PRAYER AND FASTING

Proclaimed by President Wilson for May 30.

In response to a resolution adopted by Congress and earnest petitions from many individuals and organizations, President Woodrow Wilson, on May 11, issued a proclamation, designating Thursday, May 30, as a "Day of Humiliation, Prayer and Fasting." The people of our nation, regardless of their religious or political tenets, are asked to gather that day in their places of worship and to offer fervent supplications to Almighty God for the safety and welfare of our cause, His blessing on our arms and a speedy restoration of an honorable and lasting peace to the nations of the earth.

This day should be observed universally, by the people of the United States, with religious solemnity. God is pleased with the unaffected spirit of humiliation, prayer and fasting that will indicate our recognition of God's sovereignty, His supreme control of all the affairs of this world and His willingness to give the victory to the right.

Whenever a nation boasts that it can win a victory with material weapons *alone*, apart from God's divine blessing and leadership, it is on the way to defeat. God is the "God of battles" and He can give victory in the face of overwhelming obstacles.

Pastors and church sessions should plan at once for a public observance of this day in their churches and should call the people to humiliation prayer and fasting, with the same fervor and fearlessness that the prophets of old called Israel to repent, to fast and to pray. The service should be one of prayer and humiliation, rather than one for formal preaching.

The President's proclamation is published in full on page 15 of this issue.

TABLET OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Attached to County Courthouse.

For the first time in history, so far as is known, the Ten Commandments have been displayed in a large bronze tablet in a county courthouse, in Allegheny county, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. This bronze tablet was formally presented with appropriate addresses on April 8. A concerted movement has been made by the International Reform Bureau of Washington, D. C., to compel every citizen of our country to face the Ten Commandments in 1918-19. Copies of the Commandments, printed in stout paper wall charts 30 by 40 inches, are being placed in school rooms, court rooms, industrial plants, churches and military camps and posts throughout the land.

It is well that courthouses in our country should display what is their real cornerstone, laid by Moses centuries ago when he promulgated the Ten Commandments in the form in which we now have them.

Dr. Wilbur F. Crafts, Superintendent of the International Reform Bureau, in his address in presenting the tablet in Pittsburg, said: "Never so much as in this war, in which one side has torn laws in pieces as 'scraps of paper,' do we need to keep law as the alternate of war before our people. Napoleon said in substance, 'Morale is three times as important as munitions in war.' And what is 'morale'? As the name implies it is an outgrowth of 'The Moral Law,' as the Decalogue is called. It is the faith and hope and courage of an army and a people that believe this world is not flying unguided in space, but is God's world, controlled by a wise and loving Providence, who overrules the plots of bad men for the good of the race. Like Moses, we 'endure as seeing Him who is invisible.'"

Mr. A. Leo Weil, a much respected Hebrew

attorney and civic leader, in making the speech of presentation in behalf of the donors, said, in part:

"These Commandments, engraved upon enduring bronze, upon the entrance to this Hall of Justice, proclaim the basic principles upon which all law is founded, and by which all law should be interpreted and enforced. If the feet of Justice were always firmly planted on these Commandments, then would her figure rise majestic, until her head reached far above the clouds, into the heavenly heights, and the scales and the sword would drop from her hands, and the bandage from her eyes, for she would have need of none of these. What more fitting place for these Commandments, except upon the heart, than the entrance to this Hall, where the people will come to trans-

act their community business, and to lay before the judges their demands for justice and for the enforcement of their rights? These Commandments cover the inherent rights of man—personal, property, and social. All other rights are corollary. They also cover duty to God. They epitomize religious, social, and civil obligations. They are all-sufficient, as a rule of action for man, as law has been defined. Shall a man keep the Commandments and a nation defy them? Shall each, alone, be bound, but all together be free to violate, to refuse to observe? Hundreds of thousands—millions soon—will have given their best-beloved, and be willing to give themselves if need be, to safeguard these Ten Commandments, to continue them as a rule of conduct for men."

For the Christian Observer.

Moderator's Sermon.

BY REV. JOHN M. WELLS, D. D.

Sermon preached at the opening of the General Assembly, Durant, Oklahoma, May 16, 1918.

"But my God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."—Phil. 4:19.

Only a few years ago the world seemed rich beyond man's fondest dream. The harnessing of steam and electricity; the invention of reaper, tractor and gin; and the quickening of the pulses of commerce had provided food, clothing, material possessions vastly beyond any previous age. Barns were overflowing with corn. Elevators and warehouses were bursting with golden grain and fleecy staple. There was food enough and to waste. There was clothing enough, and to throw away, at fashion's fancy. Humanity was complacently saying: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many days." The race was eating, drinking and making merry.

When, suddenly, as by the touch of the wand of the magician out of the "Arabian Nights," the feast vanished, the plenty disappeared; and once again the world was brought face to face with its abject want. Vast needs were thrust upon us. Inconvenient regulations, increased cost, the cry of Belgium starving, the call of Armenia, desperate and dying, reminded us that the world needed food. The call of the Red Cross reminded us that the world needed medicines to cure and bandages to bind up its gaping wounds. And finally the call of our country for money in billions, for munitions and armament and ships unnumbered, for men in millions, drove home to the most thoughtless the vastness of the world's need.

Like the Laodiceans of old the world has said, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," and suddenly awaked to find out that it was "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."

And to this world in need; this world in dire need; this world in abject need, comes a burst of light out of the gloom, the promise of our text. "My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus."

Passing by the exegesis of the text, we find that it contains the promise that in Christ Jesus, God will richly supply all our needs. And I come to you, in this day, with this message: Jesus Christ meets our deepest needs. Let us see, one after the other, what are the deepest needs of today, that we may see how, in Jesus Christ, they are met.

1. The World Today Needs Food.

Christ meets the world's deepest need for food. We are living in a world that is hungry. Fifty million men have been called to arms. Twenty-five million of these probably came from the plow. The fields lie fallow for the lack of workers. Fields of grain, barns, food, in the path of the armies, have been destroyed. Great elevators and warehouses filled with food have been burned. Noble ships, laden

with food for hungry lands, many of them neutral, have felt the fangs of the adder of the sea, and gone down.

The world needs food: Now there is a sense in which Christ meets this need. The tired farmer, cultivating those extra acres, often does this, even though unconsciously inspired by the spirit of Christ. The switchman, who, with frosted feet and fingers, braves the winter blizzard that trains of food may run, has caught the spirit of the Master and, unconsciously but really, is obeying His injunction, "Give ye them to eat." The sailor who braves the tempest and the lurking submarine to carry food to starving Belgium is carrying out the spirit of the Master. Yea, the great mass of the money for Belgium or Armenia has come from those who gave it "in His Name."

But you know that the world has a deeper need for food. It needs the Bread of Life for starving souls. Great as is its need of "the meat which perisheth" greater is its need of that "meat which endureth unto everlasting life." The trouble with our enemies is that they have not fed on "the true bread from Heaven." Like those Orientals who, feeding on that fatal drug instead of bread, and crazed by it, run amuck down the crowded street carrying death or wounds to every passer-by, so feeding on false ideals, false philosophy, false soul food instead of Christ, a great nation has run amuck down the crowded way of Twentieth Century civilization carrying wounds and death. Our enemies need the true Bread of Life. The heathen world needs it—as it has always needed it. And we need it. That we may be strong in the time that tries men's souls; that we may triumph over the gloom, the heartache and crosses of the time; that we may rise above hate into the spirit of the Master; that our souls may live here and hereafter: We need the Bread of Life.

Now, because Christ is the "true Bread from Heaven," because the world needs this true Bread as perhaps never before, let us relax no effort to give the Bread of Life to the starving world. Men have gravely proposed that we give up all mission work during the war, both at home and abroad. No surer way of losing what we seek could be proposed. We need our nation's life strengthened morally and spiritually by the Bread of Life, not weakened by its loss.

Do all that you can to provide wheat for a starving world. Plant as you have never planted before. Toil as you have never toiled before. Save as you have never saved before. Do all this in Christ's Name, that you may hear Him say: "I was hungry and ye gave Me meat to eat." And then: Remember the world's deeper need that comes from starving souls. Sow, beside all waters, as you have never sowed before. Toil for a dying world, as you have never toiled before; and give

to feed this hungry, dying world as you have never given before.

2. The World Today Needs a Way.

Christ meets the world's deepest need here. A way for transporting food, munitions, men, across the ocean is needed. The call has gone out for a bridge of ships. The submarine menace has been to some extent successful. And the vastest undertaking that a nation ever undertook, in warring across an ocean, is ours. The way must be provided. The bridge of ships must be built. There comes to our ears harsh clamor as millions of rivets are driven home in hundreds of steel ships. Hundreds of stately wooden ships are being made ready to glide down their ways into the ocean. Great concrete ships, new and novel in design, but promising great usefulness are being rushed to completion.

Over and over again comes the statement: "Our greatest need today is ships." Let us not be understood as saying a single word that would minimize that need. Let us throw all our strength into the building of ships; appropriating all the money that is needed. Let every private building enterprise give way. Live in the old house; let the old store building stand, while ships are being rushed to completion. Let every machinist, every carpenter, every concrete worker give himself to this great patriotic, philanthropic task.

And when you have done all that, remember this: There is another way more important, and more necessary than the bridge of ships: And that is the way from the lowlands of sin and shame to the highlands of grace and glory. The supreme need of humanity is a way over which lost, sinful, guilty humanity can pass to cleansing, righteousness, holiness and Heaven.

Thank God that way has been provided. Isaiah's promise, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness," has been fulfilled. The Master Himself said: "I am the true and living way!" And over that way wretched humanity may pass from its lost estate under the guilt of sin, under the power of sin, under the wrath of God, to its saved estate of salvation, renewed, cleansed, transformed, glorified.

And even today, when we see the utter shattering of much of our civilization and cherished ideals, remember this: The only way in which humanity can pass from its injustice, cruelty that crushes the weak, its oppressions that injure and destroy childhood, womanhood and old age, its cruelty, its hate, to justice, love, equity and righteousness, is in Him who said: "I am the way." Force, however necessary for protection, for correction, cannot transform. Christ alone is the way of such a transformation.

3. The World Today Needs Freedom.

Christ meets the world's deepest need for freedom. One of the great phrases of today is this: "That the world may be made safe for democracy." And this is merely another way of saying that men may be free.

Men are demanding the right to be free to think, free to speak and free to act. Men desire that they may be free to rule themselves. The small as well as the great nations and peoples feel that they have the right to be free. If the Napoleonic wars meant the awakening of the spirit of nationality in the nineteenth century, vastly more is the present war quickening the demand for freedom. Especially the weaker peoples of the earth feel their need of freedom.

Now there is a sense in which this very political freedom comes by Christ. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" is writ large on the pages of history. For the more and better men come to know Christ the more there springs up in their hearts that which will not permit them to be in bondage to any man. The peoples that know Christ best are the freest peoples.

But there is a bitterer bondage and a more needed freedom than civil bondage and civil

freedom. "Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin." "All have sinned." The world is in bondage to sin and a bitter bondage it is; a bondage to evil deeds that curse, a bondage to the law that binds.

Never was the world's bondage to sin more manifest than today. Education cannot set men free. Culture cannot. They did not set Greece free. They have not set Germany free. Only Christ can set men free. "If, therefore, the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." They only are truly free whose chains have been forced off by Him. And the glorious thing about this freedom is that it lifts us above earthly conditions. Paul wearing the chains was yet freer than Nero on the throne. Edith Caveil, facing the firing squad, was freer than the Governor General of Belgium. The repentant robber on the cross, though held fast by cruel nails, was in that moment a freer man than the soldier there at the foot of the cross.

Thank God German chains nor Turkish chains can bind that soul to whom Christ has given freedom. When Christ makes you free you are free indeed.

4. The World Today Needs Victory.

Christ meets the world's deepest need for victory. Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. We are longing, hoping, praying for victory. You seize the morning paper, you eagerly purchase the newspaper extra, you scan the bulletin when you see the crowd gather there. Why? Because you hope to read of victory. You purchase bonds, you make sacrifices, you give yourself or your son. Why? That the cause you believe right may secure the victory over error, oppression and brute force. Well, I have faith to believe that the Christ who rules will send the victory in His good time; when we have learned the lesson He has to teach us, when we have corrected the mistakes that we have made; when we have repented of our national sins; He will send us this victory. He used Assyria, Syria, Babylon to chastise His people, and then delivered and comforted His people and ground Assyria to powder.

As a recent writer has said: "God has never allowed devilry, lust and tyranny finally to triumph in His world."

But great as is this need, there is another need of victory that is more important still—and which need Christ will supply. And that is spiritual victory over sin and death and hell. This is the high victory that Christ sends. It means victory over sin. That old serpent the devil winds his crushing coils very close around us.

As I looked upon the Laocoon, and saw the folds of the serpents crushing the priest of Apollo and his two sons, saw the heroic despair in the father's face, I was irresistibly reminded of Satan and his coils. Struggle as the sinner may, there is no escape in himself. The only victory is that which comes through Christ. He can tear those coils away. He can give deliverance from sin. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory over sin.

It means victory over death. Man dreads death. It is more than the mere pain he fears. Death means a radical change of being. Death means separation from loved ones. Death is shrouded in the mists of mystery. Death means loneliness. Alone one goes down into the valley. Alone he fares forth into the future. But most of all "the sting of death is sin." Remorse for the past; a sense of guilt; dread of the judgment on them. Man dreads death. Jesus Christ giveth us the victory over death. And the only one who can give us the victory—can take away the sting and the fear of death—is our Lord Jesus Christ who giveth us the victory even over death.

Victory; when the last battle in this war is fought; when there flashes that wonderful word—Victory. How we shall hail that victory. The bells will ring—the cannon crash—the bands play, our whole country will rejoice.

Victory—it is the bleeding world.

How Heaven rejoices now, Over one sinner that repenteth, to God, which giveth us the victory and death "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

5. And Finally the World Today Needs Peace.

Christ meets the world's deepest need for peace. Righteous peace, peace through victory, enduring peace, how the world needs it, how the world is longing for it. That is the ideal that is on the horizon. That is what we are giving our money for. That is what we are giving our sons for. "That peace may over all the earth its golden mantle fling."

We want the lanes of the sea free from the lurking submarine. We want the paths of earth free from the "ghastly dew, of the nations' aerial navies, grappling in the central blue." We want men to dwell under their own vine and fig tree.

We need peace. And we are grimly facing that burning hell over yonder to secure a righteous lasting peace.

But this is but the external of a still deeper need. We need spiritual peace. And Christ alone can supply and does supply this need. We need peace in our hearts from haunting remorse. This Christ gives. "My peace I give unto you."

We need peace in our hearts from strife and hate toward our fellow men. Our danger today is that in the loathing of the cruelty and baseness of our enemy, we will pass beyond hating the sin and come to hate the sinner. Where hate is peace cannot dwell. Only Christ's gift of love can drive out the personal hate and establish peace within. We need peace with God in our hearts. And here, after all, is the supreme need. A peace that comes from sins forgiven, from hearts cleansed, from lives transformed is needed; and this need Jesus Christ supplies.

All your need supplied by Christ Jesus! Let this be true, and who dare doubt it, how His Church should gird itself anew to the task of taking Christ to every soul. The very difficulties of the times should inspire us.

Is money needed? He shall supply all your need.

Are men needed? He shall supply all your need.

Is time for work needed? He shall supply all your need.

With a faith that trusts His promise; with a zeal that never flags; with a self-sacrifice that through Him is complete, let us go forward into the year.

And "God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

HYMN FOR OUR SOLDIERS AT THE FRONT

(Tune, "Faith of Our Fathers.")

O Lord of Hosts, whose mighty arm
In safety keeps mid war's alarm,
Protect our soldiers at the front
Who bear of war the bitter brunt.
And in the hour of danger spread
Thy sheltering wings above each head.

In battle's harsh and dreadful hour,
Make bare Thine arm of sovereign power,
And fight for them who fight for Thee,
And give Thine own the victory.
O, in the hour of danger spread
Thy sheltering wings above each head.

If by the way they wounded lie,
O listen to their plaintive cry,
And rest them on Thy loving breast,
O Thou on whom the cross was pressed.
And in the hour of danger shed
Thy glorious radiance o'er each head.

When pestilence at noonday wastes,
And death in triumph onward hastes,
O Saviour Christ, remember Nain,
And give us our beloved again.
In every ward of sickness tread,
And lay Thine hand upon each head.

O Friend and Comforter divine,
Who makest light at midnight shine,
Give consolation to the sad,
Who in the days of peace were glad.
And in the hour of sorrow spread
Thy wings above each drooping head.