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(Continued from page 1)

regaining semblance to the former self. Budd by intoxication, he can look into the face of all men mindful of their pity or their scorn. Without the stimulant to blind his eyes he sees himself as he is, a man who has made shipwreck of life.

Gladly would he forfeit life, but he dare not destroy what is not his own. Something within says "you must not" and he turns aside to see what authority is speaking those commanding words to him. The inner consciousness, long unheeded and forgotten, is again making its appeal. Long hidden beneath the accumulating debris of life, the seed of truth sends forth its tiny shoot.

Men listen to its promptings and remember that they brought nothing of intrinsic value with them into this world and all accumulations of property or of wealth must be left behind. In that respect the rich man's poverty at birth was greater than that of the poor beggar who called at the rich man's door in the days of his prosperity on earth. It was as unrequited blessings fell to his lot that he gained wealth and influence with men, but it was as he distributed his goods and his kindly acts among men that he heaped to himself treasures in heaven.

He sees that a man's life does not consist of the number of houses and bonds which are to his credit. He comprehends Jesus as the true and living way of life. Despondency leaves him and he takes his place among his fellow men as one who values character and humanity above riches.

Through affliction and remorse he has been led to the old trail which he will now follow. He has become a faithful steward of life and substance and has gained through rugged experience a clearer vision of God's way for man.

This Lenten season points to the sublime way of duty. It calls you from forbidden paths and bids you make your peace with God. It speaks in no mistaken language of the folly that would convert the means of happiness into an end within itself. It rediscovered the incentive to noble conduct.

Man was not made for the gratification of selfish desire. As individual units men may be counted as the grains of sand. And the pebble has greater endurance than man. It has might to withstand the onslaughts of the ocean. Let contagion come, it does not molest the pebbles. It has no aches or pains, no hunger, no thirst; surely if this life were all, it were better to be a pebble, to rest from year to year at high water mark near the sea-side, awaiting the ceaseless ebbs and flows, than to be a man without faith, without hope, without love.

The vast Sahara desert, the pyramids, the mosques and the many relics of antiquity cause Egypt to be of much interest to those who travel there, but somehow, it seems that the Sphinx, in her majestic silence, holds the key to the situation. As you behold that face, forever mute, you instinctively await the revelation of the mysteries of the Nile in ages past, hoping that she may disclose to you the secrets of the Nile.

In some such way as this, we approach the Easter time. But not in vain. The triumphant life of Jesus, the Christ, which opened the grave and defeated death, was the answer to the universal cry of man throughout the ages. When a man dies he may live again. The crucifixion of self in the cause of truth shall not go unrewarded.

We may say with Victor Hugo: I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest which has been more than once cut down. The new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, towards the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds. You

say that the soul is nothing but the resultant of bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul the more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head but eternal spring is in my heart. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairy-tale and it is a history.

Let us recall the events of Good Friday. In a jail at Jerusalem two prisoners await certain death. Their atrocious crimes have brought them to this destiny. As they reflect over the events of their former days they see how that from youth their one desire has been to despoil other men. Steadily, yet certainly, this inevitable day has been approaching.

The jailor comes, their hands are clasped with the manacles from the prison and they are led forth through the streets of the city.

The darkness and the appall of certain death has settled over them. They are to experience the terrible necessity which wickedness affords. Full grown sin conceives and brings forth death.

In another quarter of the city there is a man who has committed no crime. For thirty-three years he has lived without sin. He has had many severe temptations, yet has resisted every approach of evil. His faith in God and his love for his fellowmen have been as pure and fragrant as the flower which gladdens the face of nature. His every deed falls upon men as a benediction from heaven. Last evening while he was praying in a garden on Mt. Olivet, Roman soldiers came and took him captive. Jealous Jews accused him of being a Prince of Devils and intimated that he was ambitious to establish a kingdom that would rival the great Roman Empire. He has said that his kingdom is not of this world but the e. l. d. brutal, calculating unbelief of the Roman magistrate has yielded to a clamor for his blood, and now he is being led away.

The two processions meet at the place of common execution. The three men are placed upon the cross. Once from the central cross there comes the cry of utter abandonment. "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me? Sin is not content with the destruction of malefactors. It lays its icy fingers upon the innocent and rejoices to see them suffer. Here the Son of God may be beside the vilest of the race, for with man justice is, oft-times thwarted. When the life of purity is made to suffer and sight when sight is silenced we instinctively await the future, confident that he in whom we trust, will over-rule the acts of lawless men. "Ye men of Israel hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, him, by the hands of lawless men ye did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. Thus Jesus did God raise up, of whom we are all witnesses."

To lead the Christian life of purity and good-will toward men while engaged in the usual vocations of life is the straight path to the christian goal. Then, were eternal death impossible. But, we have sinned, when we were tempted, and this power of a resurrection life to open the prison doors of death has been greatly weakened. The disobedient man, like Samson of old, indulges in sin until his strength is taken away and when he rises to exert himself the enemy gains the victory.

And now the Good Friday scene reappears. We behold a robber of the crucifixion casting reproaches with his dying lips and his reproaches fall upon the Son of God. The evil man suffering the penalty of his just deserts is reveling the good companion of his sufferings who has done nothing amiss. The other malefactor asks in faltering words - "Dost



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thou not fear God?" Then, casting his eyes upon the Son of God he says, beseechingly. "Lord when you come into your kingdom remember me." And that day when the eyes of the dying thief were closed in death, he, too experienced the power of the resurrected life.

"I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, says the writer of Thessalonians, that ye sorrow not, even as others, that have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them which sleep in Jesus will God bring to him. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

It is faith in Jesus as the Son of God that robs death of its terrible sting. Perhaps, Mr. F. S. Stanton had this in mind when he wrote what is a beautiful description of the death of a Christian.

"Dying they lifted his curly head
And he looked to the East,
and smiling said, -
"It's light on the hill!"
And he went away in the morning bright,
With the last sweet grieving word of light
On the lips Death hissed to a silence long -
So ends the sighing and so ends the song."

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