

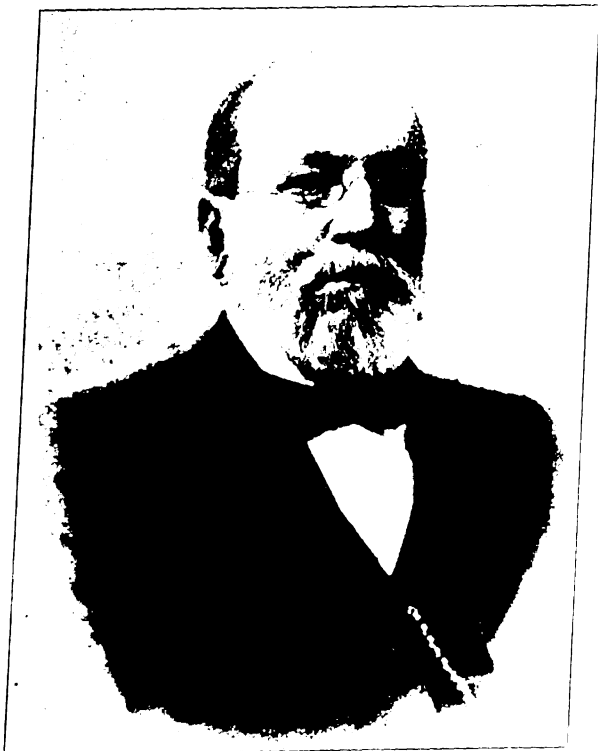
Northwestern Christian Advocate.

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Editorial Passing Comment.

AN EDITORIAL PACIFIC MISSIVE.

PASADENA, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, Feb. 18, 1899.

It has not been necessary, during the past fifteen years, for this writer to forward from a distance to THE NORTHWESTERN whatever he may have had in mind to say. He has been within reach of the office during all that time and is now reaping somewhat of a penalty for that exclusive and almost unwise service. Being here, on this beatific western edge of our immense American continent, one almost wonders why the eastern Atlantic edge does not tip up because of the westward rush of people to this kindly land of summer-like winter. Hatless and coatless, I am writing near an open window, through which streams a quality of sunshine that warms one's marrow and a clarity of light that seems to lure yonder Sierra Madre mountains almost within touch, though they really are seven miles away. One knows that men and women live upon those sunny slopes and wonders why they never are visible. The best of field-glasses does not reveal anything more than the dots that represent dwellings, and the searcher below at last perceives that the distance is real and that this rarefied atmosphere betrays the eye and deceives the judgment. Point thus comes into the story about the puzzled "tenderfoot," or recent arrival, who was found stripping off his clothes on the edge of a narrow ditch over which he easily might have stepped. Being asked his intentions, he declared that he did not propose to be humbugged any longer. The canal might look very narrow, indeed, but he had learned his lesson at last and would swim across, and thereby be sure and, at the same time, safe from the fellows who had ridiculed him long enough.

When one's laundryman ornaments his returning bundle of cleansed linen by attaching a bunch of fresh violets, or roses, large enough to fill your hat, you begin to suspect that local conditions account both for the harvest of flowers and for some other things on this western shore of the continent. Walking along a sidewalk the other morning, I stopped suddenly to verify the startling figures that express the recent dreadful sub-zero weather outside of southern California. As I paused and read and listened I heard a gentle buzzing in the pepper tree above my head. Sure enough, hundreds of Italian honeybees were singing their perpetual harvest song, while a half-dozen wild mocking-birds carolled their tipsy courting-songs, where-with to win the admiration and marriage vows of the feathered

dames who at the moment were seeking eligible sites for their post-nuptial nests. The saucy songsters interrupted their frantic notes for scarcely a moment and then sang on confidently, thinking that the human stranger either did not note the wooing or would respect their human-like confidences. While I shivered sympathetically as I read the news of that below-zero weather in the eastern dispatches, I stopped again to congratulate and admire a superb rosebush that does not read the papers, but indulges its happy mission to fill this world with sweetest of perfumes, and is innocently sure that sunshine and warmth are universal. Glancing over and beyond the laden rose branches, I saw that winter lurked close even to Pasadena. A northern blast had swept to the nearest verge of the crests of the neighboring sierra, where it surprised an unsuspecting rain cloud and grimly pressed out its burden of moisture, the chilled and horrified drops of which fell to the earth, blanching the rocks and prominences and gulches with sheets of snow. One could easily recall the days when Indians lurked around the same elevated mountain brims of these happy valleys, hoping for the unsuspecting night in which they might descend and murder the innocents, quite as a sneaking frost actually did blight the calla lilies and heliotropes, one night last week. Like some other contrasts in human life, this geographical paradise also has its extremes. It often is possible, and has been since my arrival here, to obtain a warm bath in the sea, to pick from its parent stem a rose for your buttonhole and, within two hours, to enter a snowball match on Mount Lowe, near the place in which I am writing. These, of course, are truisms to those who discovered them long before I did.

I find it difficult to get accustomed to some simpler things. When you are "back East," as people say here, you recognize the earlier blossoms as those of the peach tree. I asked a friend about some distant flowering orchards, and thought him a trifle daft when he told me I was looking at almond trees in bloom. Other friends have pointed out camphor trees, English-walnut trees, prune trees, olive trees, acacia trees, banana trees or shrubs, and I cannot rid myself of a suspicion that I am being mistaken for a "marine," and am being "jollied" accordingly. A. C. Manwell, once of Upper Iowa, told me yesterday that he has in his yard a shittim tree, out of the like of which the ark of the covenant was made. My impulse to jump out of the carriage was checked only by a glance at his guileless face. I confess to having had a temptation to ask him which of the visible mountain-peaks might be Ararat or Olivet or Lebanon, or if he could guide me to Moses' grave.

This ought to be a happy hunting-ground for the botanist and ornithologist. The perplexed visitor hears the initiated speak of forty kinds of eucalyptus, twenty kinds of acacias, nearly a score of palms, half a dozen rare native pines, of deodars, dracenas, cedars of Lebanon, yuccas, agaves, laurels, brilliant California poppies whose golden petals already begin to appear, magnolias, and a host of other trees and shrubs whose names are legion and a wonder to the stranger. I am astonished to witness the brave battle this vegetation and flora are making against long protracted drought. A great laugh was caused, the other day, when someone said that he would do so and so, "if it does not rain." The remark was almost as if the condition were a fall of manna like that Israel found in the desert. It does rain at long intervals, but all signs of rain fail during the dry times that have afflicted southern California for the past three years. I have seen two showers, and have warmly applauded the pluck and gratitude with which the blessed water was received by the thirsty roots, branches and flowers. Every drop of the precious rain was appropriated, and every fiber in growing plants and trees made the most of the refreshing downfall.

The majority of those who live west of the 100th meridian of longitude must soon make the subject of irrigation a controlling, vital study. Nearly two-fifths of our national domain are prac-

them." Justice and chivalry demand that we shirk no duty and throw down no burden which, because of our neglect, a weaker must face. To do such a thing would be to seek rest at the cost of manliness and a good conscience. There is only one true way of finding rest, and that is by adjusting ourselves to God's great purpose for us in life."—*Mrs. Booth.*

A LIFE OF LABOR.

A life of grace is a life of close industry, of patient experiments. It is bound to make heavy demands on our pluck, on our hopefulness, on our humility, on our spiritual energy. We should never think it strange that it should be so if we could only turn again and again and throw our eyes around this great world about us of human labor, where men learn and bear and endure hardness, and win their pittance of bread by the sweat of their brow without protest and without surprise. As is their lot so is ours; as is their work so is ours! As with the body of man so with the spirit. They do not flinch, or complain, or fear, or refuse—why should we? It is the work that we are given to do. It is a world of work into which we have been called, this kingdom of the Spirit; it needs the like temper, the like courage, the like energy and the like hope. Take heart, then, beloved—take heart! On darkest days, when you seem to yourselves to be ever beginning again a thankless and profitless business without gaining an inch; when the religious life which had begun in such gladness has lost its glory, and has turned into a grim and heavy grind; when you strive and strive and cannot attain; when you wonder why it has been made so very hard to be a Christian—look up and say: "It was to be work; why am I disheartened because it conforms to its type? God is a worker and knows what I am feeling, knows how it drags, knows where it pinches, knows where the weight tells, knows the fatigue of this dull drudgery and this rusty routine. Ah, not only knows, but is a fellow worker in it, sharing in the burden, working himself in me, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, according to the mighty working of his power by which he slowly subjected all that is in me to himself. I will work, however long and stern the strain, 'for in me and with me the Father worketh hitherto and the Son works also.'"—*Canon Holland, in Christian World Pulpit.*

GOLD DUST.

God reveals his will to those who wait in faith and patience. He does not speak to unbelieving and unwilling ears.

Now that the children of God may grow by the word of God the apostle requires these two things of them: 1. The innocency of children. 2. The appetite of children.—*Robert Leighton.*

Act according to your faith, do the works of your faith. You believe that God is holy, and that your life should be pure; you believe that God is love, and that we must love even to sacrifice; do this, and I venture to say to you that to-morrow you will have more faith.—*Eugene Bersier.*

The consciousness of power comes from conquering obstacles. Hindrances are, after all, our opportunities. God must regard our struggle. And that he has a purpose in it all we are forced to believe from the way he treats us and gives us all, at some time, a battle to fight.—*Roderick Stebbins.*

The thing we have most to fear from is not the liveliness of the sinners, but the deadness of the saints—that remoteness from God, that inexperience of the great realities that makes God a name and a report rather than a felt person, and the superb verities the possession of the few rather than the realization of the many.—*Dr. Parkhurst.*

The heart of our creed is what we believe about God; and we believe that he was revealed in Jesus Christ to take away the sin of the world, that in all the past his plans of blessing have been maturing, that in the present these same plans are moving toward their consummation, and that some time he will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.—*A. H. Bradford, D.D.*

That life which we dream of in ourselves we see in Jesus. Where was there ever gentleness so full of energy? What life as still as his, was ever so pervaded with untiring and restless power? Who ever knew the purposes for which he worked to be so sure, and yet so labored for them as if they were uncertain? Who ever believed his truths so entirely, and yet believed them so vividly as Jesus? Such perfect peace that never grew listless for a moment; such perfect activity that never grew restless or excited; these are the wonders of the life of him who,

going up and down the rugged ways of Palestine, was spiritually walking on "the sea of glass mingled with fire."—*Christian Work.*

If we do not share our blessings and our joys, the beautiful flower of unselfish love will dry up and die in our hearts. When we give of our means and see the blessings we have sent bringing such joy and happiness into the sin-sick lives of others, our hearts are filled with a greater love than ever before to God who gave us these blessings, and so, more and more, he pours in upon our hearts, thus open to receive it, his love, that we may in turn pour this love out upon others.

The influences which do the world's great work, which fertilize it, which mature its harvests for the garner of glory, are the patient, persevering, steady, silent operations; the Sunday-schools, which line upon line repeat the gospel lesson and keep alive in our youthful millions some fear of God; the good mothers, who begin with cradle hymns; the weekly Sabbaths, which softly overflow the land, which when they ebb again leave everywhere the freshness and fertilizing elements conveyed in their heaven-descended tide. Patience is power.—*Dr. James Hamilton.*

The Family.

"FOUR FEET ON THE FENDER"

Four pictures I see, in a frame quaint and olden,
Aglow in the twilight, half-gloomy, half golden,
Where big beechen logs, all the fireplace filling,
From out their rude caskets their rubies are spilling,
To roll o'er the hearth in a river of glory.
The wind in the chimney is crooning a story:
On walls and on ceiling the shadows are shifting,
And down the wide flue a few snowflakes are drifting
Where brother and sister sit, winsome and slender,
And face answers face, with "four feet on the fender"

Then later I see the young man and the maiden,
Whose low, wooing language with fervor is laden,
I hear his fond question in fear and in trembling,
Her gracious reply without guile or dissembling;
Then every blithe robin that ever had nested
Within the brave beech tree, or ever had rested
Inside its green tent, when it stood in the thicket,
Seemed singing again with the shrill little cricket,
O, sweet was their song when the lass did surrender,
And hand answered hand, with "four feet on the fender."

Once more I can see the happy pair mated,
Inclosed in the paradise love has created,
Around them the children, with riotous laughter,
Flood all the old room from the rug to the rafter,
They play in the splendor the fire is flinging
Across the broad floor, and the kettle is singing
Its cheery defy to the storm that is piling
The gables with snow, and the wee baby smiling
In dear mother's arms makes the father's face tender,
And heart answers heart, with "four feet on the fender."

We sing of the paradise where we are going:
O, fair are its gardens with pure waters flowing,
The amaranths blooming, the azure skies arching
Above the white host of the ransomed ones marching;
But I, sitting here, in my loneliness yearning
For one who has gone whence there is no returning,
Oft picture that place as my own Father's dwelling,
Where she whom I love to the angels is telling
That kindly old Death soon her sweetheart will send her,
And heaven will begin, with "four feet on the fender."

—*Rev. Robert McIntyre, D.D., in Zion's Herald.*

THE DUTY OF BEING AN ENCOURAGER.

REV. J. R. MILLER, D.D.

There are two simple rules which, if faithfully followed, make life victorious in itself, and also an inspirer of hope and victory in others. These rules may be tersely stated thus: Never be discouraged; never be a discourager.

Someone may say that the first of these rules is impossible of observance, that no one can go through the varied experiences of common life and never be discouraged. No doubt it is impossible for anyone to live many years without experiences which tend to disheartenment. There is no life without its disappointments, its lessons, its struggles, its sorrows. There is scarcely a day which does not bring its antagonisms, its trials, or its weight of care, by which at first the sensitive heart is disposed to be cast down.

It is very easy, if one has formed the habit of yielding to every pressure of discouragement, to find something, almost any hour, to make the heart grow faint. But discouragement is like any other sin—it comes first as a temptation from without, clamoring for admittance. It cannot enter our heart, however,

unless we open to it. Temptation is not sin—sin begins when we yield to the evil influence. A disheartened feeling is not yet discouragement; the discouragement begins when we let the depression into our heart to master us.

It should be the aim of every follower of Christ never to come under the sway of discouragement. Discouragement is sin. Its influence over the whole life is most hurtful. It puts out the light of hope and leaves one in darkness. It paralyzes the energies—a discouraged man is no longer puissant and skillful, is no longer at his best. Discouragement oftentimes leads to serious and disastrous consequences. Many a life with great possibilities has been wrecked under its fatal influence.

Our Master never was discouraged. It was foretold of him in prophecy, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged," and the prophecy was realized. There were many things in his life which were calculated to dishearten him, but through them all he moved with sublime courage, never once showing any tendency to discouragement. He even endured the cross with joy, despising the shame, because he knew that the cross led to glory and blessing. He is the Prince of our faith, and we are to follow him. He never promised an easy life. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," he said plainly. But in the same sentence he said also: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." He overcame, and he will help us to overcome. It is possible, therefore, with Christ as helper, to learn to live without being discouraged, without yielding to the spirit of disheartenment. It is an attainment in Christian life which should be every Christian's aim.

St. Paul seems to have learned the lesson. There is not a gloomy word in any of his letters, although many of them were written in circumstances which were naturally depressing. The life to which he exhorted his friends was an overcoming life, with no exception to the victoriously. He told them that they should be more than conquerors through him that loved them. "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice," is his ringing word from a prison. The New Testament, from beginning to end, is a call to cheer and courage.

Only such a life can realize life's best possibilities. He who is never discouraged is always strong. He is master of himself, and can always do his best. He is victorious in every struggle. Even in direct earthly failure, the man himself does not fail. He brings gain out of every loss, good out of evil, and joy out of the deepest sorrow. He may lose money or goods, but his character is ever unharmed, untarnished. In keenest disappointment he sees God's way pressed into his life instead of his own way. His faith gets him the victory in everything, and he goes through the world with songs on his lips. The motto of the truest and worthiest life is, "Never be discouraged."

The other rule is also very important: "Never be a discourager." Some people are always discouragers. They make life harder for every other one on whom their influence falls. They say disheartening things wherever they go. They call upon a sick friend, for example, and talk so gloomily that he is worse for their coming. They meet one in sorrow and have so many sad words to speak that the grief is made more keen. When they come upon one who is bearing a heavy load they make his heart less brave by their miserable dispiriting.

The work of the discourager is most unchristian. He is a diffuser of darkness instead of light. He goes about putting out the lamps, leaving the world darker. He quenches other men's joys and hopes. He makes it harder for his friends and neighbors to get on in life. The discourager is a misanthrope. He is not a good Christian, for his light is not shining for the glory of God. He is a hinderer, not a helper, of others.

But the encourager goes out every day on a mission of blessing. He is one of God's angels, sent to carry light to men. He is a benefactor. He sheds everywhere the light of joy and cheer, and the world is brighter for his passing through it. It is easier for others to be good and brave and strong because of his victorious living.

This is a matter which should not be left to moods and feelings. Many persons are one day encouragers and the next day discouragers, according to the way the wind blows, or their liver works, or their affairs go. But that is not Christian living—that is living by natural impulse. The love of Christ, which is the motive in every true Christian life, is not dependent upon conditions, but is full of sweet courtesy, kindly inspiration and comforting cheer, on dark days as on bright, in pain as in pleasure, when things are going wrong as when things are prosperous.

Our influence on others is something we dare not leave to the

fickleness of our natural temperament. Too much depends upon it. If, in an hour of discouragement, we hurt a gentle heart or give a wrong touch to a life, it will be no worthy excuse to plead that we were depressed at the time. We must so master our moods that we shall ever be under the control of our better self, that we may always be encouragers, never discouragers.

LOVE.

There's never a home so low, no doubt
But I in my flight can find it out;
Not a hut so hidden but I can see
The shadow cast by the lone roof-tree!
There's never a home so proud and high
That I am constrained to pass it by;
Nor a heart so happy it may not be;
Happier still when blessed by me!

What is my name? Ah! who can tell.
Though in every land 'tis a magic spell!
Men call me that and they call me this,
Yet the different names are the same, I wis.
Gift-Bearer to all the world am I.
Joy-Giver, Light-Bringer, where'er I fly;
But the name I bear in the courts above,
My truest and holiest name, is Love.

—Julia C. R. Dorr.

THE STRESS OF LIFE.

A man is specially and divinely fortunate, not when his conditions are easy, but when they evoke the very best that is in him; when they provoke him to nobleness and sting him into strength; when they clear his vision, kindle his enthusiasm and inspire his will. The best moments in a man's life are often the hardest and the most perilous; but he thinks no more of personal discomfort and exposure than a thousand other brave men have thought of these things when the hour of destiny had struck. When the bugle rings across the field, the deadly line of fire that must be crossed is forgotten in the response to the duty which beckons from the heights above. Happy are they to whom life brings not ease and physical comfort, but great chances of heroism, sacrifice and service!

The great ages have never been comfortable ages; they have demanded too much and given too much. The comfortable ages are those which neither urge a man to leave his fireside, nor offer him great rewards if he does so; the great ages are those which will not let a man rest for the multitude of choices of work and perils they offer him. In easy, comfortable, money-making times men grow callous to suffering, dull of insight, sluggish of soul; in stirring, growing, stimulating times they draw in great breaths of mountain air, they are afield with the sun, consumed with eagerness to lavish the gift of life in one great outpouring of energy. One who knows what to be grateful for would thank God for Drake's chance to die, sword in hand, facing his foes half a world from home; for Sidney's opportunity to pass on the cup of water to one whose thirst had less to assuage it; for Livingstone's noble home-coming, borne in sorrow and silence out of the heart of the dark Continent on the shoulders of men who could not measure his greatness, but who revered his spirit.

AN ALTAR MADE OF ICE.

Outdoor Russian church services, with the altar made of ice, are common all over the dominions ruled by the czar. They begin at the season of Whitsuntide, in May, and are held at intervals during the month that follows.

The altar of ice is supposed to be typical of Whit (or White) Sunday, and the services are held by the priests of the Russian church to induce the people to give up their evil habits and live a pure and holy life. The sight of one of these gatherings, with the priests and choir arrayed in spotless white garments, is indeed an impressive one, and the singing and chanting which accompany the kneeling of the congregation before the altar are never forgotten by those who have been present.

Many people attend this service who do not go to church as a rule. They are anxious to let the world know that they believe in religion, and they imagine by thus publicly attending an open-air service of this kind they prove their love for God and their church. The services often last for several hours, owing to the large congregations.

Some of the altars look a great deal more beautiful than others, for some men are masters of the art of ice-cutting and are able to model the altar just as they please. In the villages it generally consists of a rude block of ice surmounted by a cross.

The decorations of some of these altars of ice are as beautiful