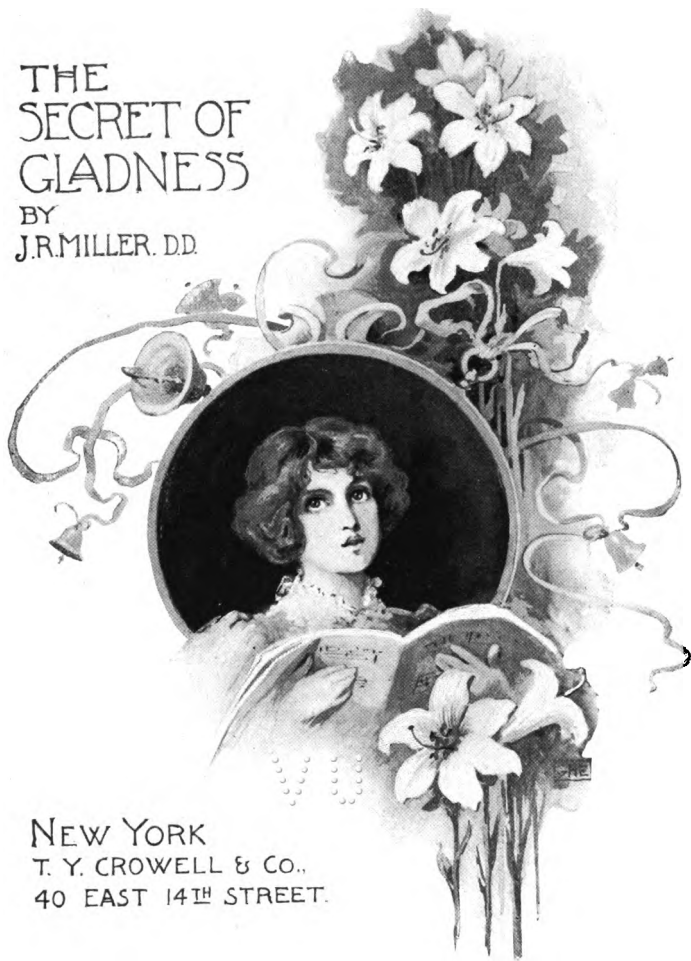


THE
SECRET OF
GLADNESS

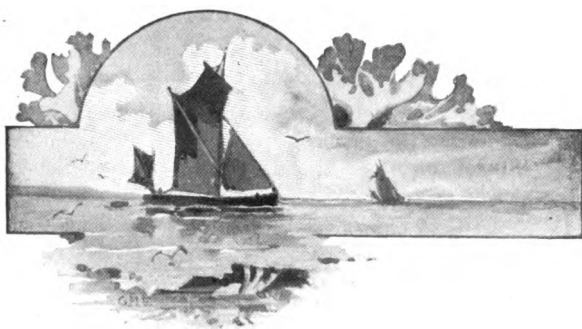
BY
J.R.MILLER. DD.



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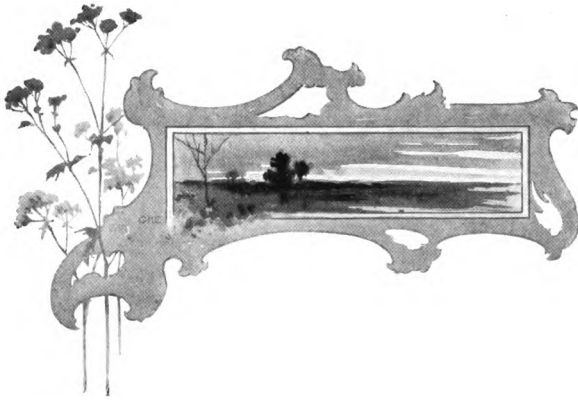
Dear Lizzie

From
C. W. ...

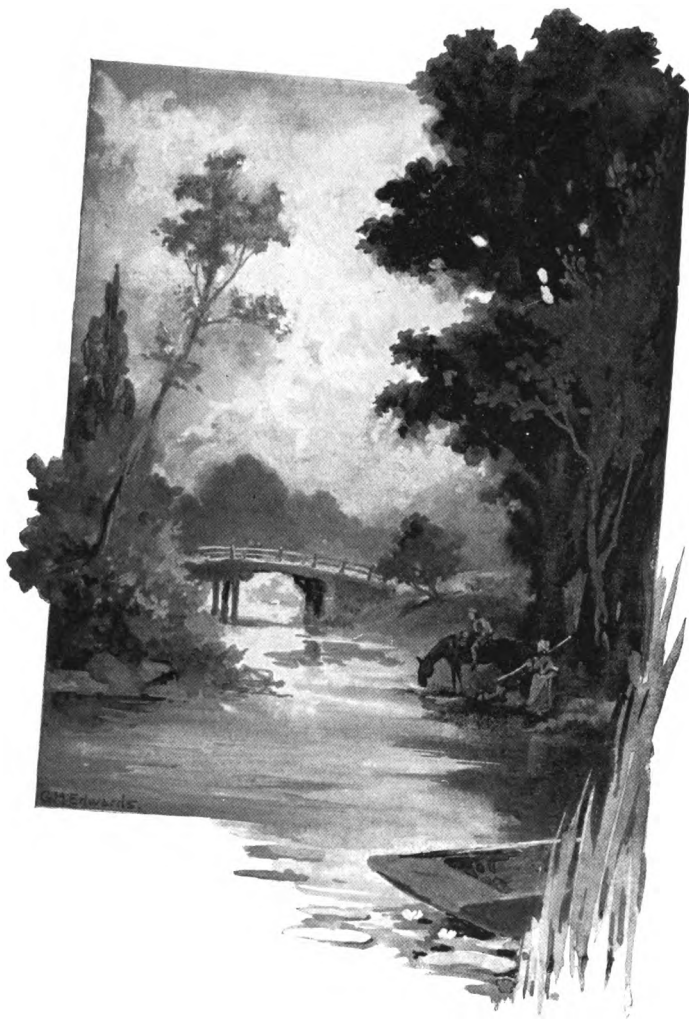
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THE SECRET OF GLADNESS.





It is worth while to be a singing bird in this world in which are so many harsh and discordant sounds and so many cries of pain. Even a bird's songs put a little more music into the air. It is yet more worth while to be a singing Christian, giving out notes of gladness amid earth's sorrows. For most of us it is not easy to be always glad; yet we should learn our lesson so well that whether amid circumstances of sorrow or of joy, the song shall never be interrupted.

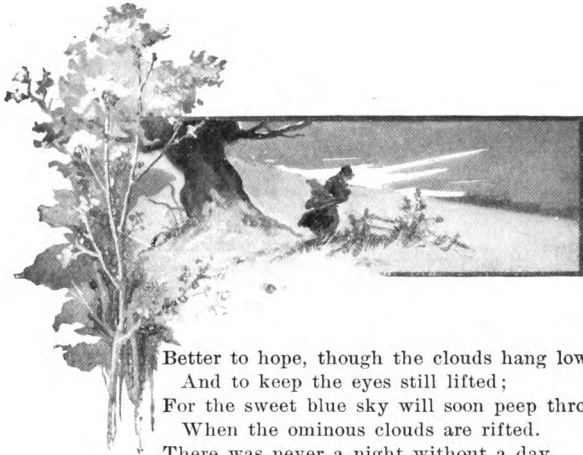
J. R. M.

PHILADELPHIA.

*"If thou art blest,
Then let the sunshine of thy gladness rest
On the dark edges of each cloud that lies
Black in thy brother's skies.*

*If thou art sad,
Still be thou in thy brother's gladness glad."*

*"There is many a rest in the road of life
If we would only stop to take it;
And many a tone from the better land
If the querulous heart would make it.
To the soul that is full of hope,
And whose beautiful trust ne'er faileth,
The grass is green and the flowers are bright,
Though the winter's storm prevaieth."*



Better to hope, though the clouds hang low,
And to keep the eyes still lifted;
For the sweet blue sky will soon peep through,
When the ominous clouds are rifted.
There was never a night without a day,
Nor an evening without a morning,
And the darkest hour, as the proverb goes,
Is the hour before the dawning.

CHARLES MACKAY.

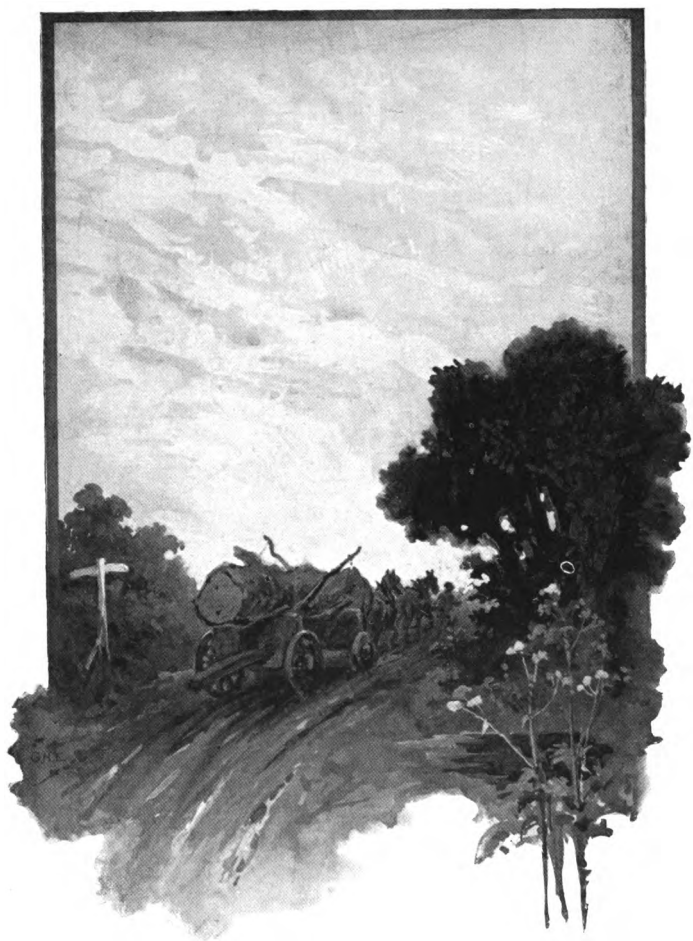
GLADNESS is God's ideal for his children. He means them to be sunny-faced and happy-hearted. He does not wish them to be heavy and sad. He has made the world full of beauty and full of music. The mission of the gospel is to start songs wherever it goes. Its keynote is joy,—good tidings of great joy to all people. We are commanded to rejoice always.

This does not mean that the Christian's life is exempt from trouble, pain, and sorrow. The gospel does not give us a new set of conditions with the hard things left out. The Christian's home is not sheltered from life's storms any more

than is the worldly man's home. Sickness enters with its hot breath the circle where the voice of prayer is heard, as well as where no heart adores and no knee bends before God. In the holiest home sanctuary the loving group gathers about the bed of death, and there is the sorrow of bereavement.

Nor is grief less poignant in the believer's case than in that of the man who knows not Christ. Grace does not make love less tender, the pang of separation less sharp, the sense of loss less keen, or the feeling of loneliness less deep. God does not give gladness to his children by making them incapable of suffering. This would be to make them incapable also of joy. For sorrow and joy come on the same stalk. A heart may be so dulled in its feeling as to be insensible to grief, but then it is no longer capable of love. Divine grace makes the heart all the more tender, and the capacity for loving all the deeper; hence it increases rather than lessens the measure of grief when separation comes.

But the gladness of Christian faith is something which lies too deep to be disturbed by the waves and tides of earthly trouble. It has its source in the very heart of God. Sorrow is not prevented by grace, but is swallowed up in the floods of heavenly joy. That was what Jesus meant when



he talked to his disciples of joy just as he was about to go out to Gethsemane. He said their sorrow should be turned into rejoicing, and that they should have a joy which the world could not take from them; that is, a joy which earth's deepest darkness could not put out. God's gladness is not the absence of sorrow, but divine comfort overcoming sorrow,—sunshine striking through the black clouds, transfiguring them.

THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL WORLD.

What is the secret of gladness? There are many things which help to make people glad. This is a beautiful world in which we live. When the work of creation was finished, God surveyed it and saw that it was very good. We do not think enough of what God has done for our pleasure in the way he has adorned this world, preparing it to be our home. He has spread loveliness everywhere. He has covered the fields with a luxuriance of vegetation. He has sown the earth with flowers. The wonderful variety in nature—mountain and vale, lake, river, and stream—gives an added charm to the marvellous beauty. Then over all this splendor God has thrown a vast vaulted roof of blue, in which, when night comes, instead of black darkness, thousands of star-lamps

are hung to pour their soft, quiet radiance over God's children while they sleep.

Many Bible scholars say that when Jesus speaks of the many mansions in the Father's house, he does not refer to heaven only, but means that this world is one of the mansions, and heaven is another. Thus earth is one apartment of the Father's house. Surely it is beautiful enough, glorious enough, for this. No doubt heaven will be more lovely, more resplendent, than earth; for sin has left its marrings here on everything. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain." Perhaps earth's storms and earthquakes and floods and other calamitous events and occurrences are in some mysterious way part of the fruit of sin. In the story of the fall we have hints of a sad change that came upon the earth in consequence of sin.

At least we know that the heavenly home will not have any of these sad things in it. Earth is not so beautiful nor so good as heaven. Yet this is really one of the mansions of our Father's house in which we are now living, and its wondrous beauty and splendor ought to make us glad. He who studies nature, and has an eye for its beauty, has found one of the secrets of gladness. There are scenes which have in them splendor enough to fill our hearts with rapture. He who has



learned to see what is lovely in field and forest and landscape has found an exhaustless resource of gladness.

THIS IS OUR FATHER'S WORLD.

Another thing that ministers to human gladness is the goodness of God in providence. Not only is this a beautiful world, but the heavenly Father's care for his children appears in all its life. Jesus taught this when he pointed to the birds and the flowers, and said that even for these, his lowlier creatures, God cares. "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they?" "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." The wondrous teaching which our Lord drew from this was not merely that God feeds the birds and clothes the flowers, but that his care for his own children is far more tender and constant than his care for his ravens and his lilies. "Are ye not of much more value than they?" "How much more shall he clothe you?"

It ought to be a great source of gladness to us

to know that vast as this world is, our Father's care extends to its smallest events, to the weaving of a tiny flower's beautiful garments and the feeding of a troublesome sparrow, as well as to the movements of planets. "If I could not believe," said one, "that there is a thinking mind at the centre of things, life would be to me intolerable." But the teaching of our Master is that a Father's heart beats in all nature and providence, and that a Father's love works in all events and experiences. On every leaf is written a covenant of divine love; on every flower and tuft of moss is found a pledge of divine faithfulness and care.

"We are not left of God
So long as a rose blossoms at our window-pane;
So long as the sun shines, and the soft rain
Calls forth the early violets from the sod.
If but a wild brier by our pathway nod,
After its wintry death wakened again,
Seeing its life we may forget our pain
Of unbelief. Who brings forth life but God?
He stains with tender tint the lily's lip;
Feeds with incessant care the insect crew;
Drops honey for the wandering bee to sip
In a white chalice set with pearls of dew.
The glow-worm hath its lamp; the firefly's light
Is but a pledge of love writ on the night."

A little story-poem tells of a shepherd boy leading his sheep through a valley when a stranger, meeting him, and looking closely at his flock, said, "I see you have more white sheep than



black." — "Yes," answered the boy; "it is always so."

It is always so with sheep; there are more white ones than black in every flock. But we may take a wider view, and we shall find that everywhere in life there is more white than black. It is so in nature. There are some desert spots on the earth; but these are few, and their extent is small in comparison with the broad, fertile fields which spread everywhere. There are some sad people in every community; but the number is far exceeded by the multitude of those who are happy. There always are sick and crippled and blind and suffering ones; but they make only a small proportion of the whole population of any place, the great majority being well, active, and strong. There are cloudy days in every year; but there are more days of sunshine and blue skies.

In any life, too, there is more white than black. Some people are not willing to confess that this is true with them. They imagine that the evil days are more in number than the good, that there is more cloud than blue sky in their life, that they have more sorrow than joy. But this is never true. There may be days when the darkness swallows up the light, but at evening time it shall be light. Really the list of mercies in

any life, if added up through the years, would make a measureless record, while the sad and painful things, if footed up, would show an almost inappreciable list. The trouble with too many good people is that one little spot of darkness bulks so in their vision that it hides a whole heaven full of stars. One sorrow blots out the memory of a thousand joys. One disappointment makes them forget years of fulfilled hopes. Many people have a strangely perverted faculty of exaggerating their molehills of trouble into mountains, and looking at their blessings through diminishing lenses.

It would minister greatly to our gladness if we had a firm faith in the goodness of the providence that rules in all the affairs of our life. There is infinitely more mercy than misery in the world, more pleasure than pain, more white than black. Then, even the things that seem adverse have hidden in them a secret of blessing. "All things work together for good to them that love God." In every tear a rainbow sleeps.

It is said that one of the great diamond fields of South Africa was discovered in this interesting way: One day a traveller entered the valley, and paused before a settler's door where a boy was amusing himself by throwing stones. One of the stones fell at the feet of the visitor; and

he picked it up, and was about to return it to the boy when he saw a flash of light from it which arrested his attention, and made his heart beat with eager surprise. The stone was a diamond. The boy had no thought of its value; to him it was only a plaything. To the passer-by it was only a common pebble which he spurned with his foot. But to the eye of the man of science, a gem of surpassing value was infolded in the rough covering.

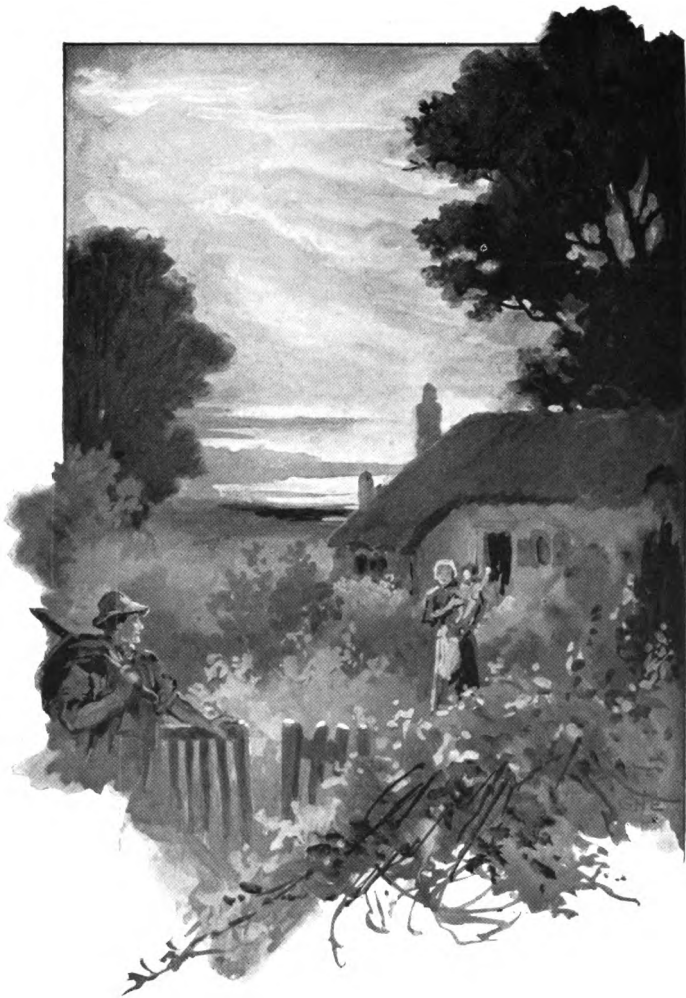
So it is that many of the events of providence appear to ordinary eyes as uninteresting, without meaning, oftentimes as even unkindly, adverse. Yet in each event there is wrapped up a divine treasure of good and blessing for the child of God. We need only eyes of Christian faith to find in every painful experience a helper of our gladness. Precious gems of rarest blessing are inclosed in the rough crusts of hardship, care, loss, and trial, which we are constantly coming upon in life's way. We shall find when we get home that many of the things from which we have shrunk as evils have been the bearers to us of our richest treasures of good.



A HAPPY HOME MAKES GLADNESS.

Another helper of gladness is a happy home. It need not be a home of wealth and luxury; it may be plain, without wealth, with but little adornment, yet filled with love. There hearts trust each other. Men who are out in the world all day must be continually on their guard, not knowing whom they may trust; when they come home at nightfall they may lay aside their reserve, for they are with those now who love them. Home is a resting-place for tired hearts. Many of us would never be able day after day to face life, with its struggles, its battles, its duties, were it not for the renewal of strength which we get in our home.

Many are the joys of a true home. True wedded life gives sweet happiness. Husband and wife live for each other, and learn to practise all of love's sweet lessons, — thoughtfulness, patience, helpfulness, kindness. Children bring new happiness; the meaning of the home-life deepens as they come. They add to the care, but in the care blessing is folded up. Love's burdens are light; they are gifts of God, and give to the soul what wings are to the bird. A true home is a little fragment of heaven, not with heaven's perfect purity and perfect happiness, but having in it



something of heaven's love, a prophecy at least of the full life of love in the Father's house beyond the shadows.

What scenes on earth are more beautiful than those which are witnessed in an ideal Christian home,—the family gathered at the table, or sitting about the evening lamp with reading and music and conversation, or bowing in prayer at the family altar! It is easy to be good and true with a holy home-life to inspire in us the things that are beautiful and worthy.

A GOOD CONSCIENCE INSPIRES SONGS.

A good life is also a helper of gladness. One who lives in neglect of God's commandments is making unhappiness for himself. Sin has its pleasures, but in the end they yield a harvest of briars and thorns. The later years are fields in which the sowings of earlier years come to ripeness. If we live disobediently and selfishly, we are destroying our own gladness, and preparing bitterness for ourselves. But if we live a holy life, we are writing the music of sweet songs which shall sing in our heart in the days to come, and even in the night of our sorrow. Nothing does more for our happiness than a well-watched past. Good deeds, gentle ministries, unselfish

kindnesses, and helpful words spoken, will make a memory of gladness.

What a wonderful thing memory is! There is a Persian story of a vizier who dedicated one apartment in his palace to be a chamber of memory. In it he kept the memorials of his earlier days, before royal favor had lifted him from his lowly place to a position of honor. It was a little room, with bare floors; and here he kept his crook, his wallet, his coarse dress, and his water-cruise — things which had belonged to his shepherd-life. Every day he went for an hour away from the splendors of his palace into this humble apartment, to live again for a time amid the memorials of his happy youth. Very sweet were his recollections; and by his daily visit his heart was kept warm and tender amid all the pomp and show, and all the trial and sorrow, of his public life.

It would be a wonderful promoter of gladness if every one, in the midst of life's responsibilities and cares, its temptations and struggles, would keep such a chamber of memory, filled with the mementos of youth's happy days. Most of us grow old too soon. We forget our childhood joys as we take upon us so early the serious burdens of maturity. We should keep one room in our heart as a treasure-chamber for the sweet joys that we



have left behind. Memory has marvellous power to make gladness for us.

“ It lies on our life like the stars on the sea,
Like the dew on the face of the flower,
Like the shade on the sun-dazzled stretch of the lea,
Like the snow on the storm-beaten boughs of the tree,
Like the light on the wings of the shower.

From the sunset-hued realm of the shadowy past,
Its wonderful light it comes winging,
Bearing odors of blossoms that drooped in the blast,
With star-beams that vanished when skies were o'ercast,
And music that hushed in the singing;

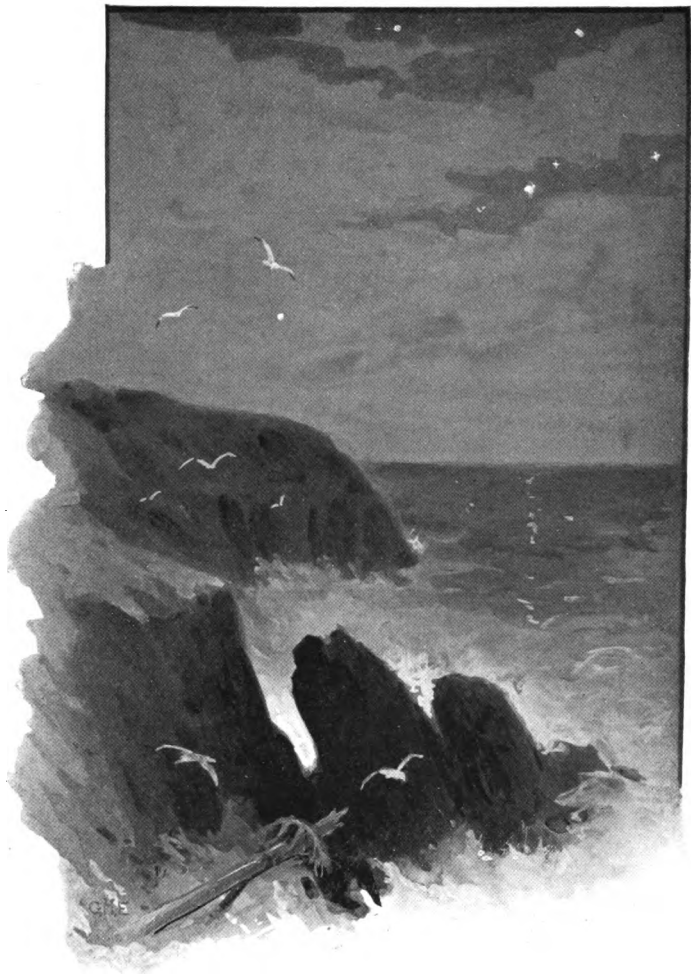
And scars of old sorrows, ghosts of dead pain,
That left us all faint and weak-hearted,
With droppings of tears that were once as hot rain,—
These, too, doth it bring us, and bringing again,
Reveals that their sting is departed.”

These are some of the many ways in which gladness is promoted. God has done a great deal to make us happy. He wants us to be glad. The word glad comes from a root which means to be bright, to shine: God wants us to be bright, shining Christians. A great deal is said in the Bible about the duty of Christians to be lights in the world. We are lamps which God lights that we may give light to all who are in the house. We are specially warned against having our light dimmed or obscured in any way. We are to be light always, not only in the daytime, but espe-

cially in the darkness, for there it is that most of all the world needs the light of our lamp. Nothing hides the light more quickly or more effectively than unhappiness. A Christian should be a lamp that always shines, not only in time of prosperity, but also in the day of adversity. We sin against God, and we rob the world of blessing, when our gladness fails us.

HONORING GOD IN SUFFERING.

A good man who had lived an unusually long and noble Christian life, honoring God in many ways, once expressed fear that he might fail to honor God in suffering when it should come. Not all Christians truly honor God in trial and sorrow. While all things go well with them, while there is no loss, no adversity, no sore sickness or keen sorrow, they are bright, shining believers — glad-hearted, rejoicing. But when trials come, the brightness grows dim. We should watch our life most carefully lest we fail to honor God when pain or trouble comes. We forget that it is quite as wrong to fail God in our witnessing in this way as it would be to fail him in truthfulness, in honesty, or in any of love's duties. Anybody can be cheerful, or ought to be, when there is only joy in the circumstances of life. But the test of Christian



life is in being glad when it is not easy, — of shining when it is dark all about us.

Indeed, our mission in this world is to lighten it; hence there is greater reason for shining when the darkness surrounds us. It is not for the daytime that we have lamps in our houses and on our streets, but for the night. They would be strange lamps that would burn while it is day, and then go out the moment it grows dark. Yet that is the kind of lights some of us are. We are bright and joyous while all goes well, and then when trouble comes the light in us goes out. That is not the kind of gladness our Master expects in us. We are to shine through the darkest nights. We are to rejoice always. We are to sing our songs of noblest faith in the times when the world's people are most cast down.

CHRISTIAN GLADNESS NOT A MOOD.

Gladness is not a mere privilege for a Christian, a quality which he may have in his life or may not have, according to his particular mood. It is not a matter merely of temperament. Some good people try to excuse themselves for being unhappy so much of the time, so easily cast down and discouraged, by pleading their natural disposition; they were not born with a sunny temper as was this or

that friend they name. Others plead depressing ill health; they are sufferers, or they have a disease which keeps them low-spirited. But neither of these excuses will avail, for it is not nature but grace with which we have to do. If one is naturally cheerless or gloomy, the sad mood is to be converted into saintliness. Christian gladness is oftentimes conquered sadness. The Spirit of God changes nature. We are not to follow out our impulses, to be glad or sad as we feel at the time. We are to be always glad. If we find ourselves lacking in this element, we are not to be content to remain thus wanting in such a vital quality of Christlikeness, but are to set about the filling up of what is missing in our character, until we shine like our Master.

One of the most remarkable incidents in the Bible is the story of St. Paul and one of his friends who were heard once singing in a dungeon at midnight. We cannot say in explanation that these men were of a naturally mirthful mood,—that they could not help singing. Mirthfulness of mood would scarcely account for such an unusual experience. Nor can we say that on that particular night they were experiencing an ecstasy of some kind; there was nothing in their condition to inspire ecstasy or rapture. We read the story in full, and we learn that they were prisoners, that



they had been beaten with a scourge the day before until their backs were terribly gashed, that they had then been dragged down to the foulest dungeon of an ancient Roman prison and cast into it, and that to add to their torture their feet had then been screwed in wooden stocks. This was their condition when the prisoners in the upper wards of the prison heard them singing. That was Christian gladness. It was not nature. They had something in their heart which overcame nature, and turned their cries of pain into songs. It was the joy of Christ which was in them, and triumphed over all their pain and suffering.

This is the kind of gladness which we should seek to have, — something which will shine all the more brightly in the darkness, and sing all the more sweetly in pain or trial. It is not an uncommon experience. We must not suppose that it was only apostles who could rejoice in such pain. Thousands of believers in Christ in every age, in our own age, have a joy which nothing can break or disturb. They experience earthly losses, but they know that their real possessions are laid up in heaven, where no moth can corrupt, no robber steal; and they rejoice in this security of their inheritance. They have sorrows which well-nigh break their hearts; but they sing in their chamber of grief, because they have the comforts

of divine love and grace, which make them strong to endure. They suffer affliction in manifold forms, but no pain smothers their gladness.

“One sad day, when the sun’s gold crown
 Jewelled the desolate, dreamy west,
 I came with a burden, and laid it down
 Under the lilies and leaves to rest;
 And weeping, I left it, and went my way,
 With the twilight whispering, ‘God knows best!’”

One sweet day—it was long ago,
 And thorny the paths my feet have pressed
 Since, with tears and kisses, I laid it low—
 Soul of my soul and life of my breast!
 But kneeling now in the dark to pray,
 There comes with a song from the sunless west
 The same sweet voice that I heard that day—
 The twilight whispering, ‘God knows best!’”

THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE.

What is the secret of this gladness? Where is it found? The secret is, abiding in the love of Christ. Climate is important. If we live in a malarial region, we need not be surprised if we have malaria. It steals into our heart, and poisons our blood. If we move to a place where there is pure, sweet, wholesome air, we may expect to be well and strong. There are spiritual climates, too, some wholesome, some unwholesome; and we should choose our abiding-place where the influences will promote gladness. Christ tells us we can live in his love, as an atmosphere, as one



would stay in the sunshine. We are exhorted also to keep ourselves in the love of God, not to keep ourselves loving God, but to keep ourselves in the blessedness of God's love for us. That was the way St. John lived, staying in Christ's love; and we know how the sunshine got into John's soul, and made his face shine, and made his whole life a benediction of gladness, for which all the world is happier, sweeter, and richer to-day.

If we would find the Christian's secret of gladness we must refuse to live in the shadows, amid doubts, discouragements, and depressions; and must persist in living ever in the brightness and beauty of God's love.

"Is it always foggy here?" asked a passenger, of the captain of the steamer, off the banks of Newfoundland.

"How should I know, madam? I don't live here."

Yet there are too many Christians who seem to live always in the fogs of fear and unbelief. They are all the while questioning and doubting, seeing troubles afar off, complaining and murmuring. They are discontented Christians. Then they wonder why they do not have the joy of the Lord. But the joy of the Lord is never found in such climates. We must dwell in the uplands of God if we would know the secret of gladness.

A little while before his death Robert Louis Stevenson went back in his memory to the old Scotch Highlands, and lived over again the days whose associations were so tender, writing his last lines under the spell of these early scenes : —

In the highlands, in the country places,
Where the old plain men have rosy faces,
And the young fair maidens
Quiet eyes;
Where essential silence cheers and blesses,
And forever in the hill recesses
Her more lovely music
Broods and dies;

O to mount again where erst I haunted;
Where the old red hills are bird-enchanted,
And the low green meadows
Bright with sward;
And when evening dies, the million-tinted,
And the night has come and planets glinted,
Lo, the valley hollow
Lamp-bestarred!

O to dream; O to awake and wander
There, and with delight to take and render,
Through the trance of silence,
Quiet breath!
Lo! for there, among the flowers and grasses
Only the mightier movement sounds and passes;
Only winds and rivers,
Life and death.

That is beautiful, — the dying man, far from the home of his childhood, remembering, while the fever was consuming him, the cool breezes of his loved Highlands, and longing to be back

again in the old haunts, that he might hear the bird-songs, look upon the green meadows, and breathe the fragrance of the flowers.

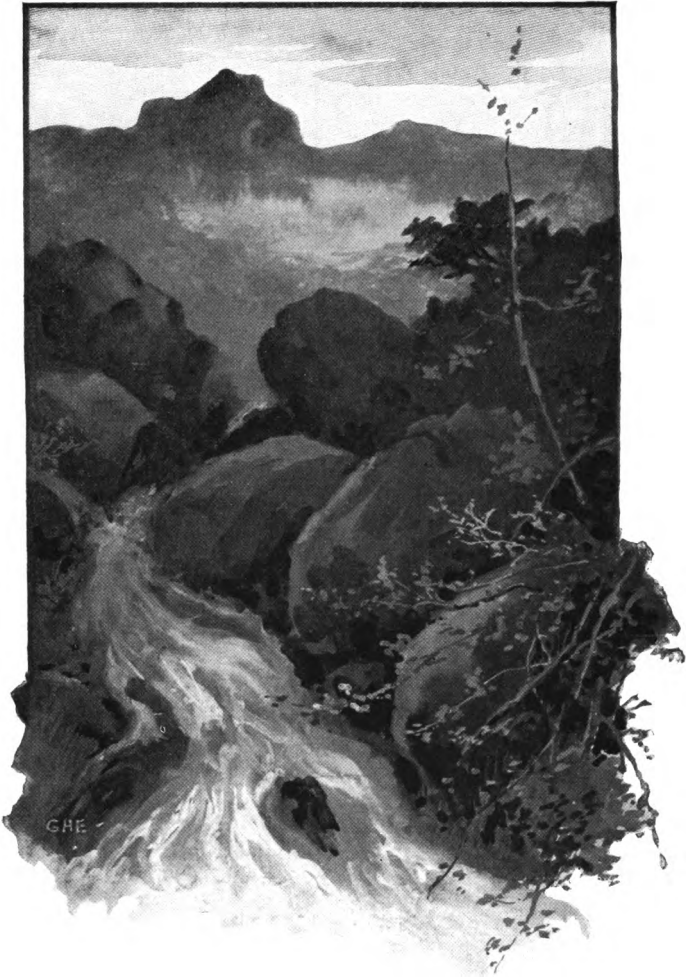
But the pathetic incident suggests the spiritual Highlands to which we may climb, away from the low vales in which too many of us live. There, too, the old plain men have rosy faces, and the gay fair maidens quiet eyes. There the silence is holy with the presence of God, and among the hills breaks sweetest music of joy. There streams burst from the rocks, and gurgle down through grass-fringed channels. There one may get away from the dusty streets and the noisy strife, and in the quiet hush meet God, and hear his voice of gentle stillness. It is because we live too much in the foggy, marshy lowlands that we know so little of the gladness of God. If we would learn the blessed secret, we must climb into the uplands, where the streams are heavenly pure, and where the air is sweet with the breath of God.

GLADNESS A LESSON TO BE LEARNED.

Far more than we suppose is gladness a lesson to be learned. It does not come naturally to many of us at least, although there is a great difference in temperament, and some learn the les-

son much more easily than others do. To none is it natural to rejoice in sorrow; this is something all of us must learn. Nor can we, merely by resolving to be glad, go through all the days thereafter with a song in our heart and sunshine in our face. The lesson can be mastered only through years of patient self-discipline, just as all life's lessons must be mastered.

It will help us in this experience if we keep the ideal ever before us,—that we are always to be glad, that failure here is sin, and grieves God. It will help us, also, if we will keep our heart full of the great thoughts and words of God which are meant to inspire gladness. Longfellow gave a young friend this advice: "See some good picture — in nature, if possible, or on canvas — hear a page of the best music, or read a great poem, every day. You will always find a free half-hour for one or the other, and at the end of the year your mind will shine with such an accumulation of jewels as will astonish even yourself." This is good counsel for any Christian who would learn the lesson of gladness. To this may be added, Take into your heart every day some cheering word of God. Listen to some heavenly song of hope and joy. Let your eye dwell on some beautiful vision of divine love. Thus your very soul will become a fountain of



light and joy, and gladness will become more and more the dominant mood of your life.

It will help us also to let Christ be our teacher as we learn this great lesson. "Learn of me," is his invitation. His life is our lesson written out for us, and his Spirit is our teacher. The lesson is not impossible for any Christian; the saddest of us can learn to rejoice always.

We allow ourselves to be convinced too easily that it is impossible in this world to do more than dream of the heavenly life, that we cannot enter into any great measure of its blessedness, joy, and beauty until we pass from earth. In truth, however, heaven is not far away. It begins in us the moment we let the kingdom of heaven into our heart. The everlasting life is not something we shall enter when we die: "he that believeth *hath* everlasting life." The fruits of the Spirit which come into our life here are the beginnings of heaven. The privileges of communion and fellowship are heavenly privileges.

The life to which we are called as believers is the heavenly life. We are taught to pray that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven; that is, that heaven may come down now into our heart. No doubt heaven's life in its fulness of joy must remain still and ever un-

reached on earth, even after all of earth's striving; heaven will still be far sweeter, holier, richer, diviner, than the saintliest life of this world. Yet heaven is not far from true Christian faith; we are in its borders, at least, in all holy living. We may attain even here a large measure of its blessedness.

We know that gladness is heaven's law, — not an occasional rapture of delight, not gladness on fair days and in happy conditions, then dropping again into sadness and tears on dreary days, but gladness unbroken, perennial, filling all the life. Should we not try to learn the lesson while we stay here? We have the same God now we shall have then, loving us, too, as he will then. We are God's children as truly now as we shall be then. All things are ours, even in this land of changes. Why can we not learn to sing heaven's songs in this world? The secret lies in simple, childlike faith. If our mind is stayed upon God, he will keep us in perfect peace. If our will is lost in our Father's, we shall have no crosses. If Christ live in us, and if we abide in Christ, the gladness of our heart shall be a song unbroken by any sorrow of earth.

The ministry of gladness is one of incalculable power. We cannot make the world better or happier by going about in it with sad face and

heavy heart and desponding speech. If our religion is not able to make us rejoicing Christians, victorious over all pain, loss, and sorrow, it will not impress the men and women about us who are bowing under their burdens, and longing for help. But if Christ is to us a Friend and Helper who can enable us to overcome, not only every spiritual enemy, but also every sorrow, loss, and trial, and to sing in the darkest midnight, the weary and heavy laden ones of earth who see our life will be eager to find the secret of our gladness. We can serve the world in no other way so well as by being glad Christians. Then light will shine from us wherever we go, and we will be true revealers of God. Then men will want our Saviour for theirs, a Saviour who can turn their grief to gladness, who can make them victorious over life's sorrows.

Yet, after all, our dream of gladness will never be fully realized in this world. There will always be something wanting. At best, earth's best is still incomplete. We may learn to sing our songs of triumph in the thickest of life's struggles, in the deepest of sorrow's midnights, and to be inspirers of others through our victorious gladness; yet ever on before us will move the vision of perfect joy, leading us and cheering us forward by its sweet hope, yet still unreached, still call-

ing us to something better. It will not be until we close our eyes on earth that we shall attain the fulness of joy in the life of perfect attainment.

“The luring and illusive Joy we chase
Down life's long vista, till our parting breath,
Who knows but that we first behold her face
The hour we look on Death?”

