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[For the New Orleans Republican.]

SUMNER.

BY T. FINLEY MORRISON.

Rest, patriot, in death's dark shade;
Thy task is finished, thy duty done,
Thy trident on the altar's laid—
Freedom, justice and the rights of man.

Rest with thy long departed peers,
Whose lives were wed to liberty;
Whose names, through unforgotten years,
Come back with sweeter melody.

Where e'er the song of freedom is sung,
Or sculptured shaft to genius reared,
Or lisps the praise of human tongue,
Thy long loved name will be revered.

Friend of humanity, farewell to thee,
Grand are thy triumphs, and so nobly won,
Wed to virtue and to liberty;
Peace to thy ashes, nature's nobleman.

May, 1874.

CAPE HORN POSTOFFICE.

[From the Overland Monthly.]

We had grouped around upon the forecastle, preparing to take things eazily. Eight bells had struck, our watch was over, there was no special work to be done, and it seemed that at last we should be able to smoke our pipes in contentment. Suddenly, however, from the quarter-deck came the order to heave-to. We started up, and, as we took our stations, gazed inquiringly at each other. To our minds it was the place of all others where we should not tarry. An open sea, indeed, it might be safely done; but here, with the land lying low and dangerous only two miles away, it seemed a greater risk than any present emergency would warrant. The air was warm and balmy, for it was the commencement of the Antarctic summer; but the wind was light and baffling; the sails at times scarcely drawing, at other moments idly flapping against the masts, and, with our best exertions, we could get out of the brig not more than three or four knots. Beneath the surface of the water, so smooth and glassy, were unknown currents that might drift us into destruction at any hour, and far off into the south was a long low bank of dark clouds that might stand for sudden squalls or for three days' gale, but, at the least, portended rough weather. Therefore, it was not without apprehension that we gazed askant into each other's faces, wondering whether the captain had gone suddenly mad, or, on the contrary, might be up to some trick of seamanship beyond the best of us.

"Cape Horn postoffice, I reckon," growled forth Bill Gallard, as he wound the line around the belaying-pin, jerking his head toward the shore. "Has been and married a young wife, has the old man, and, as is natural, I suppose he wants to send her a billy doo."

"To be sure—in course," chimed in the others, seeming satisfied with the explanation. As for myself, I was at first a little puzzled about the matter, but in a moment I recollected having been once told of the chained cask upon the Patagonian coast, in which outward bound vessels would deposit their letters. There was, of course, a very great chance that the letters would never reach their destination; but still, a possibility that homeward bound vessels, running near the coast, might visit the cask and carry away the precious contents, thus at times enabling anxious wives and mothers to hear news in advance of the more regular yet more distant mails from China and the Sandwich Islands. To vessels from California or the South American ports, this extemporized postoffice was of little value; but for whalers, with no especial ports marked out for them at which to stop, it often proved of very timely service.

"See here," said the second mate, approaching me as soon as all things were made fast, and the old brig was lying with her main topsail flat to the mast, riding easily on the long swell, "get into the starboard quarter boat, and be ready to go ashore. And you, Bill Askins, go with him."

Bill Askins was the oldest man on the vessel, and bent and wrinkled as it would seem only a long course of life before the mast can make a man. He was a silent sort of fellow, seldom breaking out in the least appearance of sociability, and caring little for enjoyment of any kind, excepting his drink. This was his failing, and several times already he had been brought up with a rope's end for drunkenness. Apart from that, he was a first-class seaman, never shirking duty. So that it was with surprise I saw him turn away, as though he had not heard the order.

"Do you mind, Bill Askins?" said the second mate, eyeing him sharply, and with no good will. For the two were not exactly friends, and moreover the second mate was a rigid disciplinarian, and would not have stood much hesitation from even his twin brother. "Do you mind, there?"

"Seeing that my hand is sore for pulling a boat, Mr. Skippy, couldn't some one else go in my place —— ?"

Upon that, without waiting to hear the end, Mr. Skippy jumped thrice straight up and down the deck and opened upon Bill Askins incontinently, consigning him to the lowest possible regions of woe; sending thither, also, to keep him company, his father and his mother, his brothers and his sisters, and, incidentally, all the rest of his relations, with a running commentary of uncomplimentary suggestions about the origin, habits, general career and expectations of each, and all because Bill Askins had hinted that some other person who had not a sore hand might prove a good substitute for him at the oar. There was nothing further to be said, consequently, and Bill, with his usual furtive, hang-dog expression, and, as it seemed to me, a glance of apprehension toward the shore, repaired with me aft and took his place at the quarter-boat.

Here the captain—or, as we called him, the "old man"—handed me some letters for the post, and bade us be speedy, as the vessel could not wait long. He was not an old man, by the way, being scarcely thirty-five, and good looking enough to have a handsome wife at home, anxious to hear from him at every opportunity. His own correspondence was doubtless the real reason for delaying the vessel, though with his letters were those of three cabin passengers for the Sandwich islands, and hence he could easily make of a desire to accommodate them a pretense for serving himself. Taking these letters, I dropped into the boat, and in a moment more we were lowered and on our way to the shore.

It was not an easy matter. Tranquil as seemed the sea, there was a long rolling swell which greatly embarrassed our efforts, while at first we failed to pull in proper unison. But after awhile, by my watching Bill's stroke, we did better; and as the afternoon was warm for that latitude, and the situation a novel one, I soon got into the spirit of it, though regretting my interrupted smoke on the forecastle. It was a queer thing, indeed, this slipping over the glassy rollers toward an unknown and rock-bound coast, the cape pigeons circling round our heads with piping screams of dismay at the intrusion, and here and there a great white albatross asleep with his head under his wing, so close that we could almost have touched him with the outstretched oars.

Gradually we left the brig farther behind, and soon the rugged shore loomed up close before us. A flattened coast, running back in an irregular series of undulations, covered at that time of year with long tough moss, and an occasional scraggy bush—not green, but yet, at the distance and in contrast with the far off background of peaked mountains with their perpetual coating of glittering ice and snow, giving the scene a semblance of freshness. In front the shore-line sloped almost to the level of the water, but the outline was notched and irregular, and bordered with setting of black outlying rocks, so that even the smooth sea was there broken into foam and swept alternately in and out with the noise of great guns.

All the while Bill Askins had been rowing with head bent down, morbid and unsocial, but muttering to himself in a half crazy way detached and fragmentary sentences, the purport of which I could not gather. Now, as we approached the shore, he turned his face to mark our bearings, and scanned the situation with a sort of dazed, half frightened expression. A stranger would have said that he had been drinking too much; and, for the moment, I was inclined to the same opinion. But, after all, there was something different in this from the look of a drunken man, and I saw that in reality he had never been more sober in all his life, and that his manner was rather owing to some disturbing mental influence.

"Starboard, Jerry!" he said, as he threw back his glance again. 'There is a little cove around yonder bend into which the boat will just fit."

"Then you have been here before, Bill?" I asked.

"Did I say so?" he retorted. "May not a man guess that there is a landing place not far off, without having been there himself? Well, yes, Jerry," he added, after a moment, during which the momentary heat with which he had spoken seemed to die away, or rather to become stifled by some strong inner effort, "I was here, indeed, many a year ago. For where will not an old sailor, at some time or other, turn up in thirty years? Well, well—a little to the starboard—and so here we are!"

Turning the projecting point the small cove opened upon us—just about large enough, as Bill had suggested, for our boat to fit closely in. Resting for a moment, we caught the next swell, and so with one powerful sweep rowed in safely, jumped out and hauled the boat up in security from tide or roller.

Before us in plain sight was the postoffice. An old spar had been set up between two boulders, and by it hung, by a stout chain, the little cask. It was canvas-bound and well pitched upon the outside, and at the top was a circle of sheet iron, fitting close and working on a stout leather hinge. The whole hung low enough to escape, in some measure, the tempest's blasts, yet sufficiently raised to avoid impediment from the winter's snow. Whoever had first placed the apparatus in position had arranged all things with a kindly forethought, for though the cask had hung there for so many years that the traditions of the oldest seaman went not to the contrary and the chain was already half rusted away, the whole was still firm, and would probably do good service for another generation. That is, if any service continued to be made of it at all. At present it seemed falling into disuse, for there were no letters in it. Possibly its lack of service at that moment was a mere accident. It is certain that we, at least, broke the spell; and as I dropped the package of letters inside, and saw them lie white and glistening at the bottom, I wondered whether they would ever reach their destination, and if so, whether it might not be only after years; and how that they would then be dark and discolored, and many of the persons for whom they were destined be dead and gone. In fact, I thought over all those commonplaces that so naturally would arise upon such an occasion. Looking at the many chances against any real benefit coming from this, it was the proper thing for the captain to run the risk of ——

"See here! are you never coming?" broke in Bill Askins. "It's roughening up already, and if we do not hurry we'll hardly get back at all."

I left the post and ran back to the boat. Bill stood there, having never made more than the first step on shore, or turned his eyes away from the distant vessel. In silence we pushed the boat off and prepared to tumble in; but before we could do so, it was lifted upon a heavier roller than usual, and hurried back, throwing us both sprawling upon the shore. Raising ourselves, we gazed around, taking more minute notice of the scene. In every direction the swell was increasing, and the smooth surface of the rollers broken into little caps. Even as we gazed, the waves increased in size and irregularity, and the whole scene became a seething, boiling mass. The sky, which had been so clear, except for the distant line of cloud, was now almost completely overspread, the cloud having worked up with startling rapidity—not creeping up slowly, as a storm will gather in more temperate climates, but rushing forward, wildly and impetuously, with jagged, rifted edges, momentarily changing their figure, as though broken squadrons of cavalry were plunging across the sky. It was no settled storm, in fact, but a sudden squall, which might last an hour, and, on the other hand, might lead to prolonged gales. It had seemed to come in an instant, without preparation, as though it were a train of mischief kindled by the sudden dropping of a spark. At one moment we saw the gentle rolling and unbroken sea, and the pure, clear sky; at the next only the wild frolic of waves and the fierce scud of angry vapor.

We gazed half petrified into each other's faces. The situation was not a pleasant one. The sun was already behind the distant snow-tipped mountains, and the darkness had commenced to fall. With that troubled surface upon the sea, we could not hope to ride it in safety were we now to launch the boat again. The frail shell would not have lived two minutes outside the point of shelter. And even had we hope of navigating it securely, whither now would we go? For, looking across the gathering gloom, we saw that foresail and jib had been set, and that the little brig was standing out from the land, with intent to creep away from the dangerous coast as speedily as possible. We remained on shore deserted.

"They will run in again to-morrow, will they not, Bill?" I said, in a vain attempt to re-assure myself. My face certainly expressed affright. I could feel it imprinted in every feature, and my heart seemed to stand still. As for Bill, there was now less of apprehension than of stolid fortitude in his expression. He seemed rather like one who, having had forebodings of some approaching fate, now knew that it was close at hand, to be met as an inevitable thing, not to be avoided. This was the face of one who had nerved himself with desperation for a hopeless contest.

"If it were not for me, Jerry, it might be they would come back and you would be safe," he said, at last. "But being with me, you see, why, of course, you too must suffer. It was meant from the first, I suppose. From the very time of it I have never been on any ship that was likely to touch here, and I thought that I never should. For thirty years I have been to England and to the Mediterranean, but never to the cape. But this time, even in New York, I felt the power behind driving me on, and I could not help it. Then I thought, perhaps we might go outside the islands and so avoid it. And when I saw the same old shore again, just as on that morning, and heard the order to heave-to, I knew as well as if I had been told that it had all been brought about for me. And, of course, I ought to be the one to suffer. But as for you, Jerry, whatever had you done?"

"And what is all that you are talking about, Bill Askins?" I exclaimed, "and what does it all amount to?"

"Nothing—nothing, Jerry. It is all a dream. Old sea dogs will talk, you know. Come, let us make ourselves comfortable, since we must remain here all night, at the least."

There was no especial present danger, indeed. As yet the nights were not so cold that we could suffer, and fuel was plenty. There were a few old broken drift logs scattered along the shore, and the long gray moss was dry and inflammable. Soon we had a bright fire, serving not only for warmth, but cheering the gloom a little, and also indicating our safety to our friends upon the vessel, if not by that time too far off. Then, dragging the boat still further out, we turned it over and propped up one gunwale so that we could be with our heads beneath the shelter, fully protected from the wind. The real misery of our situation laid in our apprehension about the future. We were utterly provisionless; and, supposing that the bad weather were to culminate in a prolonged gale which would keep our vessel away, not many days would elapse before we would starve to death. Even could the brig return before the week was out, the captain might refuse to do so, taking the chances that we might have been already rescued by some other vessel, or would have wandered inland, or, in fact, that something might have happened to render a divergence from his course unnecessary. Ship captains not uncommonly thus satisfy their consciences in favor of continuing their course, when it is only the matter of a life or two.

As for Askins, he seemed to have already made up his mind that there was no rescue for us, and his face still wore its expression of hopeless stolidity and of nerving himself for an unavoidable fate. Propped against the rounding sides of the boat, he sat for awhile gazing silently before him. Then turning, he drew a bottle from his pocket.

"We have this, though," he said, with the satisfaction of one who has prudently made good provision for the future. "Come, we will enjoy ourselves while this lasts, at least."

Where he had procured the liquor I did not ask. It was remarkable, indeed, that he could always succeed in smuggling it on board where others failed. However this might be, I felt that it was not a bad thing at present to have that bottle of brandy; and at the first sip it seemed as though the liquor not only warmed my body, but also inspired me with new courage. My only fear was that Askins might yield too completely to the temptation, thus incapacitating himself from the operations necessary for our relief. And this seemed about to happen; for, after allowing me a sip or two, he held the bottle firmly, as though jealous of further partnership in it, and took draught after draught. His eyes began to glow, his whole manner became reckless, and he soon had evidently reached the stage of his drunkenness which always preceded stupid imbecility. I expected that this would follow; but all at once he seemed to fall into troubled reflection, during which the bottle slipped from his hand, and, to my relief, emptied itself upon the sand. Then suddenly he seized me by the arm and put his face close to mine. Somehow his excitement was now greater than usual, letting me feel his keen old eyes blazing into mine like a half-suppressed fire. The brandy, the wildness of the scene, and his own manner for the moment appeared to foster delirium in myself, and the air seemed filled with shadowy forms. These disappeared almost as quickly as they had gathered, leaving only one figure—clothed in a sailor's dress, and standing against the post that supported the little cask. The other figures had been acknowledged deceptions, but this appeared so real that I turned to point it out to Askins. At this, the figure seemed to shake its head, and almost immediately faded away into thin air as the others had done. Then my hand, which had been partially raised, fell, and the vertigo, if such it was, passed off, and I recovered myself, finding Askins still clutching at my arm.

"It was thirty years ago," he commenced. "See here, Jerry! there was a minister once who told me that when one has a secret in his mind it were better to have it out. Is it so?"

"That depends upon what the secret is," I answered. "If it were a crime ——"

"Crime or no crime, what matters it?" was the somewhat angry retort. "And since we are never going to get away from here, why should I not out with it all before we starve to death?"

"But, Bill," I urged, "don't tell me anything you would afterward wish you had rather not. We may get off, after all."

"Not we, Jerry. Do you suppose the old man will come back after two forecastle hands—one a boy, at that—when he can ship as many as he pleases at the first port? Not he. But he will leave us here to eat our own fingers off, while he goes on with his good wind. So here's the story. I suppose it may ease me at the end to have told it."

Forced into queiscent assent, I listened, while he, with his grasp still upon my arm and his eye blazing into mine, went on:

"Thirty years ago, Jerry, I was not the battered old hulk I am now. I was a slim young fellow, good to look at, they said, and meant to be captain of a liner some day; and might have been, I suppose, only that the drink got the control over me, and it came from the one thing that blasted all my ——. Well, but that too, will come in course.

"And naturally, I fell in love, and I believed that little Mary Warren thought well of me, too. But I was mistaken, it seemed. I had a shipmate and she favored him. What could I do when I found it out? There was only one thing, of course. I gave it up and tried to swallow down my feelings, and we went off to sea together, did Hoskins and I, and I shook hands with her, and she said she would always be my friend, and I saw her say good-by to him with her arm about his neck, and so we sailed for the South seas.

"If there is a God who rules the world, Jerry, there is also a devil who has considerable to say in it. For if not, how did it happen that on the same voyage Hoskins and myself were sent ashore to this point with letters just as you and I have been? And when I saw him go to the cask yonder with his clear, white letter in his hand, and I nothing to send to anybody—why, then the temptation all at once came over me. I stole up behind with a stick of timber, just like those with which we have made this fire, and——"

"Bill Askins, don't tell me another word!" I here cried out, just beginning to get at the gist of the story, and, horror-stricken, I tore myself away and escaped three or four yards off. "You have told me more than enough already. As sure as you live, you will feel sorry when we get away that you have gone even so far."

"Easy, easy, Jerry," he whimpered out in a half maudlin tone. "And why shouldn't I go on? But you have guessed the rest, haven't you? And after all, if you let me go on, you would see that it didn't do me any good. For when I got home and told little Mary Warren the story I had made up about his having fallen from the rocks and been swept away, though she believed it all, yet somehow she would have nothing more to do with me than before, so that ——"

"Not another word! Not another word!" I screamed out again, holding myself ready against an attack; for I did not know how soon his mood might change, and I felt that it would be for his interest now to destroy me, also, and again bury in oblivion the story which a moment of weakness or repentance had exhibited. His mood did indeed change even at that moment, but not as yet enough to lead him to attack me.

"Why should I not go on?" he repeated, with a defiant air. "And who are you that tells an old hand like myself we shall ever get away from here. Don't I know that it is starvation for us now, and that the brig will never come back again for us? And I tell you, Jerry, that if she does ever come back, it will be as bad for you, for I will twist your neck myself rather than have you get away with that story. I have come out with it all; but do you think I was fool enough to tell it to any one who could ever live to bring it up against me?"

Again I thought he must be coming after me, so defiant was his manner; but it appeared that in his assurance of our speedy destruction, by abandonment, he deemed it useless to accelerate my fate. For his outstretched arms fell, and looking at the ground he began kicking the empty bottle to and fro again in a desultory, purposeless manner; and so, his fierce mood passing off, he sat down against the upturned boat, and so seemed gradually to fall asleep.

Maintaining my own guard, I stood for a long time with my eyes fixed upon him. Then, as I heard his deep breathing and knew that at last he was asleep—since if he were counterfeiting slumber he could not have put on those sudden starts and meaningless ejaculations which accompany uneasy rest—I suffered my vigilance to relax. Not sufficiently, however, to admit of approaching him. For the whole world, it seemed, I could not have come near the shelter of the boat and laid down beside him. But I threw myself down where I then stood, and pulling up the long moss, made a rough pillow for myself; and so, still resolving to watch my companion, soon fell into a doze.

When I awoke it was three or four o'clock in the morning. Full of the one subject, my waking thoughts endured no gradual transition from the confusion of slumber. At once I felt full perception of my situation, and glanced toward Askins. He was yet asleep, rolled over upon his back, and muttering disjointed fragments of meaningless ejaculation in the pauses of his deep, heavy breathing. So far, all was well. Then, looking about me, I saw with delight that what had threatened to ripen into a lasting tempest, had passed off in a simple squall. Already the wind was down and the sea had subsided into its old unruffled, gentle swell. The sky was clear of clouds, and right before me, bright and lustrous, gleamed the Southern Cross, seeming to look down protectingly. Then came, at the east, the light of the rising moon; and as it rose out of the water, I saw our vessel clearly defined against the bright surface—again within a few miles of land, and still slowly standing in. This cheering vision lasted only for a moment. In a few seconds, indeed, the moon had so far risen that the vessel was no longer in its line and visible to me: but those few seconds had been enough. During their passage I had recognized the battered old hulk beyond any doubt—even the queer clumsy set of the fore yard—and saw that the mainsail was set and drawing. There could be no doubt of our speedy relief.

At any other time I would have awakened my companion to share my hopeful assurances. Now, however, my sole thought was to keep him asleep until our rescue might be accomplished. Even on board again, I knew that I should not be entirely safe. I must even there be watchful against crafty surprises, which, causing my sudden disappearance, might be attributed to accident—the missing of a foot-rope or the like. But there was now the present prospect of succor, and I could scarcely be too careful not to awaken him who lay so few feet from me. Therefore I remained quiet and almost breathless, awaiting the coming of day and gazing alternately upon the Southern Cross, now paling under the light of the moon, and the smouldering fire near my feet. Gazing intently at the latter, there was a moment when I thought I saw a single figure standing at one side in a meditative posture—apparently the same figure in sailor's dress which I had previously seen beside the post. Again I rubbed my eyes—not believing in the reality of the apparition, but attributing it, as before, to my unwonted nervousness. Hardly for an instant did I connect it with the story that Askins had told me, or, it so, in some confused manner that made no real impression of the supernatural upon me. Rather did I look upon it as an evidence of again approaching dreamland, and more than ever I determined to arouse myself from that danger. But as before my tired nature gained control over me; and while I imagined that I was keeping myself awake, my senses again slipped away from me and I slept.

When for the second time I awoke, the full dawn of day had commenced. The Southern Cross had entirely faded away, and the moon was high in the heavens—not now radiant and golden-hued, but with diminished orb and lack-lustre lifelessness. The sky was cloudless, and the distant snow peaks were tinged with sunlight; the brig was not in sight. There was a thin fog upon the water, not rising high, but still deep enough to shut out the vessel, however near she might be. But I heard not far off the gentle, well-turned stroke of oars, and my heart bounded, for I knew that our friends were coming with the other quarter-boat in search of us.

I gazed around at Askins, and saw that he also was awake. He was sitting up, with his head resting upon one hand, and an air of troubled thought upon his face. Evidently he had not yet caught that regular beat of approaching oars, and I devoutly prayed that he might not. But he heard me stirring, and raised his head and gazed searchingly into my face.

"I was drunk last night, was I not Jerry?"

"Rather, Bill," I answered.

"And did I talk any nonsense, Jerry?"

"You did not talk at all, Bill. You slept like a top all night."

Still the puzzled look of inquiry, like one who has indistinct recollections of mischief, and is not half satisfied at what is being told him. Then for the first time that beat of oars struck his ears, and with it the muffled sound of outer conversation. He quickened his attention, and his power of apprehension seemed to be revived. One look at myself, in whose watchful and scared face he seemed to read everything—one gleam of revivified recollection—and then he arose and staggered toward me. Not with a quick spring to take me unaware, but rather with the delibrate pace of one who prepares a sacrifice. I knew at once by his steadfast expression what was in his mind, and he read as surely my comprehension of the situation and my instinct of defense. There was, therefore, nothing to be said by either of us. In mute determination he approached and I awaited him. Then coming near, for the first time he made his spring upon me, feeling for his knife. I gave one loud cry for succor, and with that, borne down beneath his weight, we rolled over and over in a deathly grip.

Round and round in that life and death grapple. I was the younger and more active; but on the other hand my opponent was tough as a bull—indurated for conflict by a thousand hardships. In less time than I now take to tell it, he had my arms pinioned to my side. I felt his knee upon my breast—I knew that he was once more searching for his knife. I almost gave up all hope, with his fierce glare and heavy breathing within a few inches of my face—then, suddenly, I saw a third person standing a few paces off.

One of our own crew, was my first impression; but when the form turned its head I beheld one who was not of our vessel. A strange face—youthful, well featured, though sad in expression, and not yet hardened by toil or vicious indulgence. There was a bloody bruise upon the side of the head; but all else, in person and costume, was unusually neat and proper. At once I felt it borne in upon me that this was the face of no living man, and I connected it with the fleeting shades that had already twice appeared to me. Those were seemingly evanescent and impalpable, to be sure, while this one came with all the reality of life; yet I knew that it was the same. And then it approached, not with mortal step, but with a vague motion that can scarcely be described. At first it stood at the side of the letter-post, and at that moment my opponent had his fingers around the handle of my knife. Before the knife was half drawn, however, the ghostly appearance stood behind him, having not so much approached by regular gradation, as having merely disappeared at the one place and reappeared at another. Then it seemed to lay its hand lightly upon Askins' shoulder. In the man's fierce assault upon me, it was hardly to be supposed that the clinch of strong men behind could prevail upon him to relinquish his grasp; but now, at the very light touch of this spectral shade behind him, he turned and sprung to his feet in a paroxysm of terror and dismay.

It was all over in a minute, but it left upon my brain a picture I can never forget. In the center, the ghostly shade with the bloody wound upon the side of the head—not revengeful in face, but rather sombre and sad—slowly gliding along by some unexplainable motion as it faced the murderer. He, with unutterable terror imprinted upon his face, slowly retiring before the pursuer, one hand over his eyes as though he would shut out the dreadful visitant, the other arm thrown wildly into the air—so ever receding until the limit of the little rocky peninsula was reached, and then unresistingly falling headlong into the swift current below. At the other side our men, clambering ashore from the quarter-boat, with loud and boisterous greeting. Then I fell back, and for the time knew nothing more, until awakening I found myself lying on the moss, with three or four of the men grouped about me, and at a little distance the second mate, jumping up and down on the bare rock as he had jumped upon the brig's deck, and swearing in a blue streak against everything—at the wind and tide, at the sky and the sea, at the men and the boat, and more particularly at the unlucky chance that had robbed him of a first class hand.

"And all because he couldn't keep the bottle away from him!" stormed the second mate, interding his speech with a copious vocabulary of oaths. "In course he would some day get the horrors and kill himself or some one else; but why couldn't he have waited until he got into port again? And he might better have killed you outright," continued the mate, glaring at me, "and so saved himself alive, than to have given it up at the wrong time, and walked overboard himself."

"And did—did any of you see anything else?" I said, accepting for the truth what after all was the only rational explanation of the scene that the crew would admit. "Another person—tall—with blood on the side of his head, and—"

"Why, Jerry," put in Bill Gallard, helping me upon my feet, "what is the matter with you? You haven't been taking too many nips out of the bottle yourself, have you?"

With that the conversation ceased. The men set to work launching our boat again, and I stood by to recover my as yet disordered faculties. Was it all true? Was any of it true? Was it not all a delusion of the senses? There were the men, but Bill Askins was not among them. There was Bill's knife, however, lying at my feet just where he had dropped it. There was the empty bottle on the ground, and there was the post with the iron-rusted cask, dolefully creaking in the freshening breeze. To make assurance more sure, I staggered to the post and lifted up the sheet iron cover of the cask. There lay the snow-white letters of the captain and passengers just as I had deposited them on the evening before; but directly on the top of them lay another letter—black, mildewed, and leather-stained; yet not so discolored that I could not read the address, "Mary Warren."

I did not touch it. I should not have dared, if I had wanted to, and I softly reclosed the cask, and stole away to the boat. Nor did I ever learn the fate of the mysterious letter. Was it merely a ghostly epistle, like its writer only visible to my eyes, and after a moment fading away forever? Or was it a real letter, detained in the spirit world for thirty years, and then brought back to earthly reality? If the latter, did it lie for years until the storms of the Horn had destroyed it—or did it reach its destination after a while? And did it there find awaiting it, some lonely old maid, still full of concealed sentiment for the writer—or some happy wife with plenteous children and household cares, and not a memory left for the long dead lover—or, perchance, only the white tomb of a broken-hearted girl, upon which cold stone could be laid those blackened lines? I do not know. At that time it was in my mind some day to search it out. But a long whaling cruise made me forgetful of many things, and when I again reached home, though I recollected the name, "Mary Warren," I could no longer recall the little village where the letter credited her with having lived.

THERE IS NO DEATH.

There is no death! The stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore;
And bright in Heaven's jeweled crown
They shine for evermore.

There is no death! The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain or mellow fruit,
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

The granite rocks disorganize
To feed the hungry moss they bear,
The forest leaves drink daily life
From out the viewless air.

There is no death! The leaves may fall,
The flowers may fade and pass away;
They only wait through wintry hours
The coming of the May.

There is no death! An angel form
Walks o'er the earth with silent tread;
He bears our best beloved things away,
And then we call them "dead."

He leaves our hearts all desolate,
He plucks our fairest, sweetest flowers:
Transplanted into bliss, they now
Adorn immortal bowers.

The bird-like voice, whose jo yous tones
Made glad these scenes of sin and strife,
Sings now an everlasting song
Amid the tree of life.

And where he sees a smile too bright,
Or heart too pure for taint and vice,
He bears it to that world of light,
To dwell in Paradise.

Born unto that undying life,
They leave us but to come again;
With joy we welcome them—the same,
Except in sin and pain.

And ever near us, though unseen,
The dear immortal spirits tread;
For all the boundless universe
Is life—there is no dead.

WHY WE PREACH.

A Sermon Delivered in the Church of the Messiah by the Pastor, Rev. G. H. Deere.

Buy the truth and sell it not.—Prov. 23:23.

The fundamental thought in the later ministry of the Rev. Theodore Clapp, the revered founder of this Church of the Messiah, and which to-day holds the foremost place in your faith, was the doctrine that all men will ultimately become holy and happy; or, stated in his own words, that "all mankind are brethren, equally dear in the sight of God, and will eventually be saved." This grand and hopeful view of human destiny has also characterized my own ministry of over a score of years. Of all the great truths of the Christian religion we deem this, which the Church at large for more than thirteen hundred years has rejected, as the keystone in the arch of any system of theology which will bear the pressure of the reason of the nineteenth century. I state our cardinal tenet this morning, and point you to the high place it occupies in our regard, for the purpose of noticing an objection which, more frequently than any other, has been made to it during my ministry in this city. The objection comes in the form of two questions, the first of which is:

1. If it be true that all men are to be saved, what is the use of preaching?

It may be well to remember here that this question of the use of preaching has not been urged alone against our faith, but has been pressed with no little force against the only other views of man's destiny which have prevailed in Christendom. Besides our own, which sees good somewhere in the future for all, there are two gloomy outlooks, each of which contemplate future blessedness but for a part. They are precisely alike in results, inasmuch as they both end in a division of the race into the hopeless victims of misery and the subjects of beatific redemption. But they differ in that one makes God responsible, and the other endeavors to shift the responsibility upon man. One shows a part saved by divine decree; the other, a part saved by accepting and complying in this life with offered conditions. To those who hold the first it may be said, if men are saved by divine decree, and the number of the redeemed can not be changed, what is the use of preaching? Why rack the elect with doubts of their election? Why torment the reprobates in this world with anticipations of the endless agonies from which they can not escape? And it may be said to the larger class who entertain the second view, logically you must believe that those to whom Christ has never been preached in this world (infants, idiots and the millions of heathen in all ages) are either saved or lost. If they are lost, then God dooms more than nine-tenths of the race to endless woe by giving them no chance in this world to hear and accept the terms of salvation. And if a single soul that has not heard and complied in this life with the prescribed Gospel conditions is saved on the ground that it had no opportunity, would it not have been better to have withheld opportunity from all, and so saved all? What is the use of preaching? But turning the question back is not answering it, which is the specific purpose of this discourse.

Were I to say that preaching is one of the instrumentalities by which all men are to be saved—though true, and a sufficient reason for the use of all the "means of grace"—I should not touch the difficulty existing in the mind of the sincere inquirer, for the objection grows out of an erroneous idea of the nature of salvation.

In the minds of those who can see any force in the question, salvation means deliverance from eternal misery and security in after-death felicity. To save man from everlasting perdition and get him into Heaven appears to them the central object of the Christian religion, and the only one worth working for. The end for which the church and its ministry exist, as they see things, is gone if there is no endless hell from which man is to be saved. To have such faith is Christ and such love as shall save us from sin and transform us more and more into his likeness; to follow him in the loving service of God and man; to walk with him always and everywhere in the presence and under the care of the Infinite Father and be in Heaven even while on earth, is not enough for them. All this appears to many comparatively worthless except as a means to escape from the punishment of sin and of obtaining possession of the comfortable seats which they think Christ has purchased for them in Heaven.

But we do not believe that salvation consists in deliverance from the just punishment of sin. God "will render to every man according to his deeds," and "will by no means clear the guilty." He "will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil;" and "though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished." For every sin which a man commits he will be punished, either in this world or the world to come, and there is no respect of persons, or way of escape.

Such being the uniform testimony of the sacred writings, and wholly consonant with right reason, we believe the nature of salvation to be indicated in the announcement of the angel, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Peter, in the third chapter of Acts, says, "God, having raised up his Son, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Paul writes to Titus, in the last of the second chapter of his epistle, "For the grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godlily in this present world." He says Christ "gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity." And, in the fourth chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians, as it speaking to the very point we are discussing, i. e., the object of Christian preaching and ministry, he says, "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying (or building up) of the body of Christ, till we all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Much more might be quoted from the New Testament of the same import, showing that salvation is not from deserved and righteous punishment, but from those moral and spiritual states or conditions in which our sins originate.

To be saved, then, according to our understanding of these highest Christian authorities, is to be made morally and spiritually whole; to be brought into the possession of the Christ life; to become perfect men, having "the meeasure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." And does it not seem absurd for a sane man with this scriptural idea of salvation in mind to say that if this blessedness will in the fulness of time be shared by all, there is no use in employing means that men may enter into the enjoyment of it now? Let us suppose that some one believes that in a far off other world period of existence, all of the race of man will have perfect knowledge of everything taught in schools, who would think of asking what, then, if all are ultimately to be thoroughly educated is the need of teaching? Or suppose one should say that in a future time there will be no sickness, all men will be well, would it not be absurd to ask of what use, then, are medicines, and hospitals and physicians? The kingdom of heaven comes through Christ into this world to subdue men to its benign spiritual laws, and illumine the earth with its supernal light, and bring men the "peace which passeth understanding." Jesus said to the Nazarenes before they drove him from their city and would have cast him headlong from a precipice, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears—"the spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath annointed me to preach glad tidings to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." And we may reverently say that the work which Jesus came to do is ours also, according to the measure of our ability.

But the question is sometimes put in another form, and made to relate to the doctrine of the universal extent of salvation itself. It is asked: If it be true that all are finally to be holy and happy, why preach it? For, whether we know it or not, it will be as well with us all in the end. We answer:

1. Truth has intrinsic value. "Buy the truth and sell it not," says our text. It is the glory of science to buy it at any cost of life and treasure, even though it may have but little apparent practical value. And "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," was no meaningless utterance of Him who said, on the morning of His crucifixtion, "to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." He prays that the apostles might be sanctified through the truth, and promises them the comforter, which He calls "the spirit of truth," which should guide them into all truth. We think, therefore, that if this article of our faith be Christian truth it is a sufficient reason for proclaiming it, and especially as the spirit of no other is so perfect a comforter. For—

2. If true, and clearly revealed in the Bible, as we are sure it is, when that much abused book is rightly read and interpreted, it should be preached, because it relieves the Christian religion of responsibility for the horrible dogma of endless hell torments, and return that natural offspring of heathenism to its own mother. This monstrous exaggeration of the fact that God adequately puuishes sin, if ever instrumentally serviceable in moulding human minds, must be expelled from thought at a certain stage in the growth of the soul, or be a source of untold evil. Our common human nature progresses in goodness until it knows itself to be better than any being who could create, or allow to come into existence, immortal lives for such an unthinkably awful doom. It comes at some time to have the courage to sit in judgment on any theory or scheme that makes God less good and just than man. And a religion that attempts at once to carry the thought that God is Father of men, and infinite in goodness, power and wisdom, in connection with a view of human destiny that is an eternal contradiction of that thought, must inevitably drop from the faith of those who attain enough of Christlike goodness to know what goodness is, and learn to use independently the reason God has given them. One may confess that, being finite, and unable to see what means are necessary in the production and perfection of undying, Godlike souls, man can never be judge of the divine methods. But he is competent to weigh and determine the moral qualities of the ends proposed. He may reasonably believe and put trust in the goodness of God, though looking at the multiform evils of the world, acknowledging himself too ignorant and limited in his faculties to judge whether this dark experience be necessary in the nature of things to the formation and development of ultimate, joyous and blessed manhood. But he can not, without stultifying his reason and putting out the light of his intellect, believe that a good being, having the power and wisdom to prevent, would even permit, much less originate, a scheme of creation from which evil would be developed as an end. Endless evil, especially such forms of it as the condemned soul—according to the theology descending to us from the dark ages—must hopelessly endure, could be permitted only by a being who either has not the power or wisdom to prevent it, or else whose nature is essential malignity. And if this black dogma is not separable from the Christian religion, christianity instead of being, as we honestly think it, the religion of man's highest civilization, must fall back among the things which the race thought as a child and, becoming a man, put away. But, though it may not be taken from the old systems of human theology without destroying them, we believe it forms no part of the truth as it is in Christ. And if his truth survives, we can well spare the theories born of half converted barbarian brains in by-gone ages. One of the most prolific causes of infidelity is removed, therefore, by our recognition and proclamation of the doctrine that "God will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth."

3. If true, we would preach it that man may think of human destiny and at the same time consistently be happy in this world. No one can do this, taking the prevailing views. The thoughtless and shallow may sing through life, making each day bright and musical with smile and laughter, like careless birds, and yet profess faith in the ancient creeds and treat with scorn all who are not after their own notion soundly orthodox. But deeper natures, who have minds to be stirred by the great problem of existence, feel the unutterable discord between life's joys and their professed ideas of human destiny.

I select from among many the case of Saurin, an eminent French divine, whose words