The St. Mary Banner.

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THE CHORISTERS.

There's a little band of singers
Every evening comes and lingers
'Neath the window of my cottage in
the trees;
And with dark they raise their voices,
While the gathering night rejoices,
And the leaves join in the chorus with
the breeze.
Then the twinkling stars come out
To enjoy the merry rout,
And the squirrels range themselves
upon a log;
And the [illegible]roflies furnish light,
[illegible] they their notes aright—
[illegible]katyd[illegible] cricket and the frog.

[illegible] them

[illegible] day where they were and
[illegible] they were well.

"And you will look after mother. Alice, won't you?"

As he spoke two young ladies turned and looked at him—his sister and a younger woman, about 22. She turned involuntarily, and the pretty blush that covered her cheek showed that her name was Alice, too.

Robert Duncan glanced at her, and was struck with her beauty. But she saw his look and turned away and busied herself with her baggage. His mother and sister both noticed the coincidence also, and smiled.

"So we will have two Alices along," said his mother. "I hope we shall become acquainted with the young lady. She looks very pleasant and very nice."

Just then the porter shouted "All aboard!" and Robert jumped from the train. As the car passed him he looked in vain for the faces of his mother and sister. But he did see the face of the other Alice, looking at him with some curiosity.

Then he returned to his office. He was the junior partner in a prominent law firm in Boston, and had a hard afternoon of work before him. There was a brief in a case that puzzled both himself and his partner. But try as he would to concentrate his mind on the work, he could see nothing but the beautiful face at the car window and hear nothing but the droning of the car wheels.

At last he became so nervous that he threw down his pen, and telling the boy he would not be back until morning, he walked across the common and the public garden to his home.

The evening at the theatre did not help him, and he was rather horror-struck to find himself no better in the morning. This was a new experience for him. No woman had ever before come between him and his work. This was folly. He never saw the girl before and he never would see her again, of course. He must have dyspepsia. On his way to his office he made a call on his old college chum, now a practicing young physician. He did not tell the doctor what the most prominent symptom was, but was sure he needed medicine for dyspepsia. Accordingly, he felt rather foolish when he was obliged to say no to all the doctor's questions as to whether he had any symptoms inseparable from stomach trouble.

The doctor laughed and gave him some harmless powder, and he went to the office strong in the resolve to finish the brief. He made fairly good headway, but still the image of the beautiful young girl would come back to him, and as the day wore on more distinctly. Later in the afternoon he got a telegram saying that the party was at Chicago and signed "Alice." And that started it all over again.

Then he became alarmed and feared that his mind was going. For he was not a believer in "love at first sight," or hardly in the grand passion itself.

Then he found himself with an almost resistless longing to take the first train and follow his folks. Of course, he did not admit to himself that he [illegible]d to see the other Alice.

[illegible] afternoon one of the firm's best [illegible] came in. He said he contem[illegible] purchasing some thousand acres [illegible]xico, with the view of establish[illegible] coffee plantation there. He was [illegible]tisfied with the title to the land, [illegible]elt that some one ought to go there and look into the matter closely. He could not spare the [illegible] and came to them, thinking that [illegible] of their young men might have [illegible]h knowledge of Spanish to make [illegible]ip.

[illegible]bert Duncan regarded him as an [illegible], and said that as the office was [illegible]ery busy just then, he thought he [illegible]d like to make the trip himself. [illegible] was better than the client expect[illegible] the matter was soon fixed up.

"[illegible]rhaps you will meet your folks there," said the senior partner.

"[illegible]hy, perhaps I will," said Duncan, [illegible] he had just thought of it. But [illegible]old his partner that it was hard[illegible]robable, as he was going down on [illegible]ower table lands near the coast [illegible] the excursions usually kept pretty [illegible] upon the higher plateaus.

[illegible]at night before he started he got [illegible]tter from his mother, and in she [illegible] "Alice Chambers is lovely, and [illegible]njoy her very much." So that [illegible] her name—Chambers.

II.

[illegible]e next morning he started. His [illegible]ney was a tiresome one, and after [illegible]ral days spent on the train he [illegible]d himself one glorious afternoon [illegible]bing a little mountain path on the [illegible] of a burro. Duncan had told [illegible] folks by wire of his intended trip, [illegible] found by looking over their itiner[illegible] that they had passed quite near [illegible] he now was.

[illegible] had left the train at a little town [illegible]gh which they passed some days [illegible]ously, and was making his way in[illegible] country to interview an old In[illegible] whom he expected to find the next [illegible]ing. The title to Mexican lands [illegible] depends on information only ob[illegible]ble from the kindly Indians.

[illegible]t night he slept on his blanket [illegible] the stars, and early the next [illegible]ng was pushing on, the path [illegible]ng still wilder and more beautiful. At last, about 9 o'clock, he came over the spur of the mountain and looked down on a lovely valley. His guide and interpreter told him that in the little village which he could see was the old Indian.

About noon they arrived, the matter of the title was soon fixed up and arrangements were made to leave the next morning on the return trip. But that evening something happened that altered the plans.

A small party of the villagers who had been up on the mountain cutting wood had found a burro wandering alone. They did not recognize it as one of the village burros. It had a side saddle on it and tucked under one of the straps was a little glove. They knew that a young American or European woman must have ridden the burro, and they began a hunt to find her.

Some miles back they found her unconscious by the road, and putting her on the burro which they had led back, they brought her into camp. As they brought her up Duncan walked up the little village street to see what the matter was. He was astounded to see Alice Chambers on the back of the little mule.

She was still unconscious. One of the old women of the village took her into the little open shelter and in a very few minutes she revived, and, opening her eyes, smiled a wan smile. When her eyes caught that of Duncan she started, and he stepped up and said:

"I am Robert Duncan, Miss Chambers, and my mother and sister have been traveling with you. I am here on business, and will be happy to help you in any way possible. When you are stronger we shall be glad to hear your story."

She regaineth her vigor quickly under the ministrations of the old Indian woman, and soon told them that she had started out with a party from the little town on the railroad to make an excursion to some famous caves. In some way she had become separated from the others, and had tried to find her way back. She became confused, and, meeting several natives, they had tried to understand each other, with the result that she became more and more at sea.

She had eaten only what some kindly Indians had given her. At last she went so long without food that she felt a faintness coming over her, and she knew no more until she woke and found herself in the little village.

In a few days she was strong enough to travel, and Duncan made himself a demi-god in the village by leaving a sum of money that to the Indians was fabulous. They calculated that the excursion party must be at the city of Mexico, and when they reached the railroad they telegraphed the party. An answer came back which they got at a station farther on. It said: "Thank God, she is found."

They were met at the station by an enthusiastic crowd made up of the excursion party, the American minister and a great mob of Mexicans, who cheered the couple to the echo. In some way the story had gotten into the papers.

Duncan decided to stay for some days, and telegraphed his partner to that effect, who wired back congratulations, and Duncan found himself a hero. He drove with them and went to see the sights.

One afternoon he asked Alice if she would drive with him to the grove of Chapultapec. They dismissed the coachman at the entrance and told him they would meet him there in a couple of hours. Then they wandered through that majestic grove, where it is always twilight, even at midday. They had been talking over their strange experience. "Alice," said Duncan, "you, of course, know that everybody thinks you are my sweetheart, and was before we left home?"

She blushed and owned that she had heard something to that effect.

"Well," said he, "why not make it true? Alice, I have loved you from the first day I saw you in the train in Boston."

She looked up at him and said, archly: "Well, Robert, it was quite mutual, I assure you. Oh, there are some people coming. You mustn't.

From which I infer that he understood her to say "yes."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Like a New Gibralt.

According to a man who has just returned from a winter's sojourn in the Bermudas, the people of this continent have little idea of the magnitude of the plans being perfected by the British government at these islands. The fortifications, barracks and dockyards bid fair to make the islands the Gibraltar of the Atlantic.

The imperial government has built an iron balance dock, shaped like the letter V, and 400 feet in length. The bottom is round, so that it can be careened over when the bottom becomes foul, thus allowing it to be scraped and painted down to the center line. The dock can be sunk thirty feet. Between the inner and outer skins is a space of twenty feet in depth. This great chamber is divided into thirty-two compartments by fifteen transverse bulkheads and a longitudinal one running along the keel line. These are pumped out by sixteen individual engines on each side of the dock. The imperial authorities, however, are not satisfied with this provision, for a new dock is being built, in sections, in England, which will be 800 feet long and capable of accommodating the largest vessels.

The island barracks are exceptionally fine, and the fortifications are very strong and extensive. It is said there are 365, or one for every day in the year, but many of them are mere pinnacles of rock. The government is gradually acquiring additional lands for fortifications, dockyards, barracks and similar works. There is no doubt that the intention is to make it a place of immense military strength and equipped with the fullest facilities for the repair of naval and merchant ships.

Japanese Food Abominable.

B. A. Lawton, of Boston, who has recently returned from Japan, was describing that country to a party of friends at the Waldorf-Astoria, and in the course of his remarks said: "All that has been written of the physical beauty of Japan is really inadequate. But while Japanese life, Japanese houses and Japanese scenery are replete with interest and beauty, Japanese food is an abomination to the civilized stomach, and as such to be absolutely eschewed. Take the raw fish, for instance, they serve. The first time I tasted it I was forcibly reminded of the man who invented the 'flapjack' which, when cooked on one side, automatically turned over and cooked the other side as well. The scheme worked out to perfection and fortune seemed to loom large in the near future for the inventor, when a drawback to the scheme was discovered—the 'flapjack,' once swallowed, kept on turning. That is what happens when you eat the raw fish of Japan."—New York Tribune.

A Description of Wampum.

Wampum was the name applied to shells or strings of shells used by the North American Indians as money. Besides their use as money they were united to form a broad belt, which was worn as an ornament. In the language of the Massachusetts Indians the word signified white, the color which generally prevailed in wampum belts.

TALMAGE SERMON.

SUNDAY'S DISCOURSE BY THE ABLE DIVINE.

Subject: Life's Stormy Way—It is Rough Sailing Without Christ in the Ship—He Smooths the Pathway For Those Who Trust in Him.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.—Dr. Talmage, who is now in Europe preaching to immense congregations in the great cities, sends this sermon, in which he describes the rough places of life and indicates the best means of getting over them and shows how many people fail to understand their best blessings; text, Mark iv, 39, "And He arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still."

Here in Capernaum, the seashore village, was the temporary home of that Christ who for the most of His life was homeless. On the site of this village, now in ruins, and all around this lake what scenes of kindness and power and glory and pathos when our Lord lived here! I can understand the feeling of the immortal Scotchman, Robert McCheyne, when, sitting on the banks of this lake, he wrote:

It is not that the wild gazelle
Comes down to drink thy tide,
But He that was pierced to save from hell
Oft wandered by thy side.

Graceful around thee the mountains meet,
Thou calm, reposing sea,
But, ah, far more the beautiful feet
Of Jesus walked o'er thee.

I can easily understand from the contour of the country that bounds this lake that storms were easily tempted to make these waters their playground. This lake in Christ's time lay in a scene of great luxuriance; the surrounding hills, terraced, sloped, groved; so many hanging gardens of beauty. On the shore were castles, armed towers, Roman baths, everything attractive and beautiful—all styles of vegetation in smaller space than in almost any other space in the world, from the palm tree of the forest to the trees of rigorous climate. It seemed as if the Lord had launched one wave of beauty on all the scene and it hung and swung from rock and hill and oleander. Roman gentlemen in pleasure boats sailing this lake, and countrymen in fishing smacks coming down to drop their nets pass each other with nod and shout and laughter or swinging idly at their moorings. Oh, what a beautiful scene!

It seems as if we shall have a quiet night. Not a leaf quivered in the air, not a ripple disturbed the face of Gennesaret. But there seems to be a little excitement up the beach, and we hasten to see what it is, and we find it an embarkation. From the western shore a flotilla pushing out; not a squadron of deadly armament, nor clipper with valuable merchandise, nor piratic vessels ready to destroy everything they could seize, but a flotilla, bearing messengers of light and life and peace. Christ is in the stern of the boat. His disciples are in the bow and amidships. Jesus, weary with much speaking to large multitudes, is put into somnolence by the rocking of the waves. If there was any motion at all, the ship was easily righted; if the wind passed from starboard to larboard, the boat would rock and, by the gentleness of the motion, putting the Master asleep. And they extemporized a pillow made out of a fisherman's coat. I think no sooner is Christ prostrate and His head touched the pillow than He is sound asleep. The breezes of the lake run their fingers through the locks of the worn sleeper, and the boat rises and falls like a sleeping child on the bosom of a sleeping mother.

Calm night, starry night, beautiful night! Run up all the sails, ply all the oars, and let the large boat and the small boat glide over gentle Gennesaret. But the sailors say there is going to be a change of weather. And even the passengers can hear the moaning of the storm as it comes on with great stride and all the terrors of hurricane and darkness. The large boat trembles like a deer at bay among the clangor of the hounds; great patches of foam are flung into the air; the sails of the vessel loosen and in the strong wind crack like pistols; the smaller boats, like petrels, poise on the cliffs of the waves and then plunge. Overboard go cargo, tackling and masts, and the drenched disciples rush into the back part of the boat and lay hold of Christ and say unto Him, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" That great personage lifts His head from the pillow of the fisherman's coat, walks to the front of the vessel and looks out into the storm. All around Him are the smaller boats, driven in the tempest, and through it comes the cry of drowning men. By the flash of the lightning I see the calm brow of Christ as the spray dropped from His beard. He has one word for the sky and another for the waves. Looking upward, He cries, "Peace!" Looking downward, He says, "Be still!" The waves fall flat on their faces, the foam melts, the extinguished stars relight their torches. The tempest falls dead, and Christ stands with His foot on the neck of the storm. And while the sailors are baling out the boats and while they are trying to untangle the cordage the disciples stand in amazement, now looking into the calm sea, then into the calm sky, then into the calm Saviour's countenance, and they cry out, "What manner of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

The subject, in the first place, impresses me with the fact that it is very important to have Christ in the ship, for all those boats would have gone to the bottom of Gennesaret if Christ had not been present. Oh, what a lesson for you and for me to learn! Whatever voyage we undertake, into whatever enterprise we start, let us always have Christ in the ship. All you can do with utmost tension of body, mind and soul you are bound to do, but, oh, have Christ in every enterprise!

There are men who ask God's help at the beginning of great enterprises. He has been with them in the past; no trouble can overthrow them; the storms might come down from the top of Mount Hermon and lash Gennesaret into foam and into agony, but it could not hurt them. But here is another man who starts out in worldly enterprise, and he depends upon the uncertainties of this life. He has no God to help him. After awhile the storm comes, tosses off the masts of the ship; he puts out his lifeboat and the longboat; the sheriff and the auctioneer try to help him off; they can't help him off; he must go down; no Christ in the ship. Your life will be made up of sunshine and shadows. There may be in it arctic blasts or tropical tornadoes; I know not what is before you, but I know if you have Christ with you all shall be well. You may seem to get along without the religion of Christ while everything goes smoothly, but after awhile, when sorrow hovers over the soul, when the waves of trial dash clear over the hurricane deck, and the decks are crowded with piratical disasters—oh, what would you do then without Christ in the ship? Take God for your portion, God for your guide, God for your help; then all is well; all is well for a time; all shall be well forever. Blessed is that man who puts in the Lord his trust. He shall never be confounded.

But my subject also impresses me with the fact that when people start to follow Christ they must not expect smooth sailing. These disciples got into the small boats, and I have no doubt they said, "What a beautiful day this is! How delightful is sailing in this boat! And as for the waves under the keel of the boat, why, they only make the motion of our little boat the more delightful." But when the winds swept down and the sea was tossed into wrath, then they found that following Christ was not smooth sailing. So you have found it; so I have found it.

Did you ever notice the end of the life of the apostles of Jesus Christ? You would say if ever men ought to have had a smooth life, a smooth departure, then those men, the disciples of Jesus Christ, ought to have had such a departure and such a life. St. James lost his head. St. Philip was hung to death on a pillar. St. Matthew had his life dashed out with a halberd. St. Mark was dragged to death through the streets. St. James the Less was beaten to death with a fuller's club. St. Thomas was struck through with a spear. They did not find following Christ smooth sailing. Oh, how they were all tossed in the tempest! John Huss in a fire; Hugh McKail in the hour of martyrdom; the Albigenses, the Waldenses, the Scotch Covenanters—did they find it smooth sailing? But why go into history when we can draw from our own memory illustrations of the truth of what I say? A young man in a store trying to serve God, while his employer sniffs at Christianity; the young men in the same store, antagonistic to the Christian religion, teasing him, tormenting him about his religion, trying to get him mad. They succeed in getting him mad and say, "You're a pretty Christian!" Does that young man find it smooth sailing when he tries to follow Christ? Or you remember a Christian girl. Her father despises the Christian religion; her mother despises the Christian religion; her brothers and sisters scoff at the Christian religion; she can hardly find a quiet place in which to say her prayers. Did she find it smooth sailing when she tried to follow Jesus Christ? Oh, no! All who would live the life of the Christian religion must suffer persecution. If you do not find it in one way you will get it in another way. But be not disheartened! Take courage. You are in a glorious companionship. God will see you through all trials, and He will deliver you.

My subject also impresses me with the fact that good people sometimes get frightened. In the tones of these disciples as they rushed into the back part of the boat I find they are frightened almost to death. They say, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" They had no reason to be frightened, for Christ was in the boat. I suppose if we had been there we would have been just as much affrighted. Perhaps more. In all ages very good people get very much affrighted. It is often so in our day, and men say: "Why, look at the bad lectures. Look at the various errors going over the church of God. We are going to founder. The church is going to perish. She is going down." Oh, how many good people are affrighted by iniquity in our day and think the church of Jesus Christ is going to be overthrown, and are just as much affrighted as were the disciples of my text! Don't worry, don't fret, as though iniquity were going to triumph over righteousness. A lion goes into a cavern to sleep. He lies down with his shaggy mane covering the paws. Meanwhile the spiders spin a web across the mouth of the cavern and say, "We have captured him." Gossamer thread after gossamer thread until the whole front of the cavern is covered with the spider's web, and the spiders say, "The lion is done; the lion is fast." After awhile the lion has got through sleeping. He rouses himself, he shakes his mane, he walks out into the sunlight. He does not even know the spider's web is spun, and with his roar he shakes the mountain. So men come spinning their sophistries and skepticism about Jesus Christ. He seems to be sleeping. They say: "We have captured the Lord. He will never come forth again upon the nation. Christ is overcome forever. His religion will never make any conquest among men." But after awhile the Lion of the tribe of Judah will rouse Himself and come forth to shake mightily the nations. What's a spider's web to the aroused lion? Give truth and error a fair grapple, and truth will come off victor.

Do not be afraid of a great revival. Oh, that such gales from heaven might sweep through all our churches! Oh, for such days as Richard Baxter saw in England and Robert McCheyne saw in Dundee! Oh, for such days as Jonathan Edwards saw in Northampton! I have often heard my father tell of the fact that in the early part of this century there broke out a revival at Somerville, N. J., and some people were very much agitated about it. They said: "You are going to bring too many people into the church at once," and they sent down to New Brunswick to get John Livingston to stop the revival. Well, there was no better soul in all the world than John Livingston. He went and looked at the revival. They wanted him to stop it. He stood in the pulpit on the Lord's day and looked over the solemn auditory and he said: "This, brethren, is in reality the work of God. Beware how you stop it." And he was an old man, leaning heavily on his staff—a very old man. And he lifted that staff and took hold of the small end of the staff and began to let it fall slowly through between the finger and the thumb, and he said: "Oh, thou impenitent, thou art falling now—falling from life, falling away from peace and heaven, falling as certainly as that cane is falling through my hand—falling certainly, though perhaps falling slowly!" And the cane kept on falling through John Livingston's hand. The religious emotion in the audience was overpowering, and men saw a type of their doom as the cane kept falling and falling, until the knob of the cane struck Mr. Livingston's hand; and he clasped it stoutly and said: "But the grace of God can stop you as I stopped that cane," and then there was gladness all through the house at the fact of pardon and peace and salvation. "Well," said the people after the service, "I guess you had better send Livingston home. He is making the revival worse." Oh, for gales from heaven to sweep all the continents! The danger of the church of God is not in revivals.

I learn once more from this subject that Christ can hush a tempest. It did seem as if everything must go to ruin. The disciples had given up the idea of managing the ship; the crew were entirely demoralized; yet Christ rises, and the storm crouches at His feet. Oh, yes, Christ can hush the tempest! You have had trouble. Perhaps it was the little child taken away from you—the sweetest child of the household, the one who asked the most curious questions, and stood around you with the greatest fondness, and the spade cut down through your bleeding heart. Perhaps it was an only son, and your heart has ever since been like a desolated castle, the owls of the night hooting among the fallen arches and the crumbling stairways. Or all your property swept away, you said: "I had so much bank stock; I had so many Government securities; I had so many houses; I had so many farms—all gone. Why, sir, all the storms that ever trampled with their thunders, all the shipwrecks, have not been worse than this to you. Yet you have not been completely overthrown. Why? Christ says: "I have that little one in My keeping. I can care for him as well as you can, better than you can, O bereaved mother!" Hushing the tempest. When your property went away away, God said, "There are treasures in heaven in banks that never break." Jesus hushing the tempest.

There is one storm into which we will all have to run. The moment when we let go of this world, and try to take hold of the next we will want all the grace possible. Yonder I see a Christian soul rocking on the surges of death. All the powers of darkness seem let out against that soul—the swirling wave, the thunder of the sky, the shriek of the wind, all seem to unite together. But that soul is not troubled. There is no sighing, there are no tears; plenty of tears in the room at the departure, but he weeps no tears—calm, satisfied and peaceful; all is well. By the flash of the storm you see the harbor just ahead, and you are making for that harbor. All shall be well, Jesus being our pilot.

Into the harbor of heaven now we glide;
We're home at last, home at last.
Softly we drift on the bright, silvery tide;
We're home at last.
Glory to God, all our dangers are o'er;
We stand secure on the glorified shore!
Glory to God, we will shout evermore,
We're home at last.

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