

# THE LUTHERAN VISITOR.

Revs. Rude & Miller, Editors.

"ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM"—EPHESIANS IV:5.

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## Selections.

### Faith in Religious Literature.

To help a darkened or a bewildered mind to a proper understanding of any subject, it is lawful to "suppose a case." And the case supposed may never have had an actual existence, yet nobody is deceived. It is not material whether the like ever occurred. It is not received as a statement of facts, but only as an illustration. The parables of the Scriptures are presented as cases supposed, without the modern formula, "Let us suppose a case," for their introduction. But while this mode of introduction fills well its appropriate place, there is another mode, the recital of facts, equally important. The providences of God, great and small, as we are apt to esteem them, are full of instruction. Says the Psalmist: "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." The minds of old people who have been intelligent and reflecting observers while making life's journey, are full of such matter. It is instructive as well as entertaining to sit at their feet, and to hear them in their artless conversational manner "praise Jehovah for His goodness and His wonderful works to the children of men." Many things, so related, would bear to be published for the reading of the million. Some of them, well stretched, have been published and read with interest and profit by many. But it is painfully evident that in the large mass of religious literature now afloat, there is much passing under the guise of providential recitals, that never had an existence anywhere except in the silly regulated imagination of the writer.

### Christian Assurance.

At the beginning of a journey, two things are necessary in order to preserve the traveler's ease of mind: He must feel that his place of destination is a pleasant one and desirable to reach, and also that he knows the road there. If the way be long, and beset with many dangers, he will require, not only a book of directions, but a trusty guide. He must be persuaded that his guide is faithful and true, and able to save him when he incautiously steps on slippery places, or gropes his way along in the darkness, among pitfalls and over steep rocks. This perfect confidence in his guide's qualifications will keep him from anxieties in respect to his journey, or the circumstances attending it.

### Faith in Providence.

I have known a timid traveler whose route lay across the highest Alps, on a path that, no broader than a mule's foothold, skirted a dizzy precipice, where we saw the foaming river far below ministered to a silver thread, did it safest to shut her eyes, nor attempt to guide the course, or touch the bridle where a touch were fatal, throwing steed and rider over to bound from shelf to shelf and be dashed to pieces in the valley below. And there are times and circumstances when, to be saved from falling into awful doubts, and even into blank despair, the believer must, if we may say so, shut his eyes; and committing his way to God, let the bridle on the neck of providence, and walk not by sight but faith. God—however things may look—has not forgotten to be gracious, nor is His mercy clean gone forever; and when we are walking in darkness and have no light, there is nothing for it but to trust in the Lord, to "stay ourselves on God."

### He Leadeth Me.

It is the privilege of God's people to be under the guidance of the Almighty at all times. While the children of Israel were in the wilderness they had God's visible guidance. The cloudy pillar by day, and the fiery pillar by night were their constant guide. God led them through all their wanderings so that they never needed to be at a loss which road to take. The sign of his presence taught them when to move, and when to pitch their tents. That divine presence could take them safely through the Red Sea, and shield them from their enemies. David said, "We tested me." It is the privilege of every Christian to adopt this language, and to feel its import. We need not fear being led out of the way, or being led into dangers. While the Lord leads us we know that he is near us.

### He Leadeth Me.

He leadeth me into prosperity. Like Abraham and Job, I have an abundance of worldly goods. I have the means whereby I may make the hearts of the poor to rejoice—whereby I may feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and help support the gospel at home, and help send the bread of life to the perishing nations of the earth. Am I truly thankful for prosperity?

### He Leadeth Me.

He leadeth me into the enjoyment of health, myself and family. This is one of the greatest earthly comforts. Do I render to Him according to blessings received?

### Golden Thoughts.

When new enemies join old foes, and former friends are found among them, then we should search carefully for the cause of this hostility.

### Universalism in a Nutshell.

"I am a Universalist," said G. K., boastingly; "and you orthodox are not fair in saying that our system is inconsistent with reason." "I will prove the irrationality of your system," said his friend. "You believe that Christ died to save all men?" "Yes, I do." "And you don't believe there is a hell?" "No, I don't." "You don't believe there is any punishment hereafter?" "No, I don't; men are punished for their sins in this life."

### How to Study the Bible.

The telescope, we know, brings within the sphere of our own vision much that would be undiscernible by the naked eye; but we must not the less enjoy our eyes in making use of it, and we must watch and calculate the motions and reason on the appearances of the heavenly bodies, which are visible only through the telescope, with the same care we employ in respect to those seen by the naked eye. And an analogous procedure is requisite if we would derive the intended benefit from the pages of inspiration, which were designed not to save us the trouble of inquiring and reflecting, but to enable us on some points to inquire and reflect to better purposes; not to supersede the use of our reason, but to supply its deficiencies.—Archbishop Whately.

### Family Worship.

A traveler says: "One of the most beautiful images that ever rose upon my imagination was suggested to me by a chance delay for two days among the lakes and mountains of the Trochach Glen. I happened to make the inquiry what became of villagers who suddenly disappearing at nightfall from the streets, and a sandy-haired Scotchman replied: 'Most of them would be at prayers about this time.' And I looked up into the far blue sky, and thought how fine a thing it would be to have a resting-place, high enough just to hear the murmur of voices as they read a verse about, and sung one of the old Psalms, before the impressive hour in which the father offered prayer. How grand would be the swell of sound when a whole village was going on its knees before God!"

### Flying for Refuge.

Th was once a little bird chased by a hawk, and in its extremity took refuge in the bosom of a tender-hearted man. There it lay, its wings and feathers quivering with fear, and its little heart throbbing against the bosom of the good man, whilst the hawk kept hovering overhead, as if saying, "Deliver up that bird, that I may devour it." Now, will that gentle, kind-hearted man take the poor little creature, that puts its trust in him, out of his bosom, and deliver it up to the hawk? What think ye? Would you do it? No, never. Well then, if you flee for refuge into the bosom of Jesus, who came to seek and save the lost, do you think He will deliver you up to your deadly foe? Never! never! never!—Duncan Matheson.

### Prayer.

Who will pray, must know and understand that prayer is an earnest and familiar talking with God, to whom we declare our mercies, whose support and help we implore and desire in our adversities, and whom we laud and praise for our benefits received. So that prayer earnestly the exposition of our troubles, the desire of God's defense, and the praising of his magnificent name, as the Psalms of David do clearly teach.—John Anon.

It is seldom done in mind that without constant reformation, that is, without a constant return to its fountain-head, every religion, even the most perfect, nay, the most perfect, on account of its very perfection more even than others, suffers from its contact with the world, as the purest air suffers from the mere fact of its being breathed.—Jes. Muller.

Of this class of writings we were reminded a few evenings ago by a story of a sea captain, who had cut a bell from a rock where it had been suspended, that it might be rung by the rising waves as a warning to mariners. Years afterwards, (so went the story), his own ship was wrecked upon that same rock, and all aboard perished. All this may have occurred. But the writer's zealous soul was so intent upon doing good by writing fiction, that he forgot to spare even one who could say, "I only am left alone to tell thee." Yet, after drowning all, he artlessly enough told what the wicked captain said just before he perished!

### The Good Old Bible.

A Virginia banker, who was the chairman of an infidel club, was once traveling through Kentucky, having with him bank bills to the amount of \$26,000. When he came to a lonely forest, where robberies and murders were said to be frequent, he was soon lost through riding in the wrong road. The darkness of the night came quickly over him, and how to escape from the threatening danger he knew not. In his alarm he espied at a distance a dim light, and urging his horse onward he at length came to a wretched looking cabin. He knocked; the door was opened by a woman, who said her husband was out hunting but would soon return, and she was sure he would cheerfully give him shelter for the night. The gentleman put up his horse and entered the cabin, but with feelings that can better be imagined than described. Here he was with a large sum of money, perhaps in the house of a robber whose name was a terror to the country.

Had he done so, he had not been so utterly distracted and crushed by the loss of Joseph; nor, as he clung to Benjamin, had he turned on his other sons, like a bear on the hunters come to bereave her of her whelps, while this doleful, angry cry, "Me have ye bereaved of my children; Joseph is not, and Simeon is not; and will ye also take Benjamin away?"—all these things are against him. Had he done so, he had borne himself more erect before the king of Egypt, a venerable and noble witness for God in a heathen palace, instead of wailing out this pitiful complaint, few and evil have been the days of my pilgrimage on earth! He lived to unsay that, and regret that he had walked so much by sight, and not by faith; living to see, as all God's people shall in another world, if not in this, that all things—the bitter and the sweet together, losses as well as gains, cuffs as much as cradles—were not against, but for him. One of whom it might be said that "nothing in his life became him so much as his leaving it," see him dying!—his faith breaking out in full and bright effulgence, like the sun at the close of a cloudy day. Propped up on pillows, with one hand on Ephraim's and the other on Manasse's head, he raises his sightless orbs to heaven to breathe out this grand confession and prayer—the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads! With that history, and many such before them, never let God's dear children yield—no, not in life's darkest hour—to the thought that all things are against them. Even when deep answereth unto deep at the noise of his water-spouts, and all God's billows and waves go over them, and their bark, with tails torn to ribbons and bulwarks gone by the board, is staggering through a sea of troubles, never let them fancy that they are the sport of winds and waves. Your Father is at the helm! The Lord reigneth, let his enemies tremble; the Lord reigneth, let his people rejoice: He will make all things work together for good to them who love him, and are called according to his purpose.—Dr. Guthrie.

If thy labor is useful to thyself alone, the service that thou pretendest to render unto God is a lie.—Luther.

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