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Selections.

Luther and the Two Students.

The following account of an evening spent with Luther by two poor students is to be found in a work of the celebrated Freytag, one of the most interesting writers of Germany.

As we traveled toward Wittenberg to study the Holy Scriptures, we passed ourselves at Jena, in Thuringia. God knows in what a fearful manner we were caught, and after having many inquiries in the town for the inn where we might rest for the night, we could not find any one. Everywhere lodging was denied to us, and we were going out of the town again to continue our journey in the hopes of reaching some village where they would take us in for the night. Then, under the gateway, a respectable man met us, spoke in a friendly manner to us, and asked where we were going away so late. "Could we not, somewhat sooner, find any house or inn where we could be received before dark night should come on?" Moreover," he said, "the inn is one easy to miss; therefore, I would counsel us to remain where we were."

We answered, "Dear father, we have been at all the inns that we have been told of in this place, but we have been sent away from all of them, and have been denied admission. Thus we are obliged to proceed further."

He asked us whether we had any inquiry at the inn with the sign of the Black Bear.

We replied, "Dear sir, we have not met with any such inn. Tell us where we shall find it."

Whereupon he pointed it out to us, a little way from the town. And as we came and saw the Black Bear, he told us, though all the other innkeepers had refused to shelter us, that the landlord of the Black Bear came out and received us, declaring himself quite willing to give us shelter, and he led us into the inn.

There we found a man sitting alone at the table, and before him a book was lying. He greeted us kindly, bade us come nearer, and set ourselves near to him at the table. But our shoes were, if we may say so, so muddy and filthy, that from shame we did not like to enter the room; and we seated ourselves by the door on a little bench. Then he invited us to drink, which we could not refuse. Indeed, as we recognized his friendliness and kindness, we sat ourselves near him, as he asked us to do, at his table. Then we called for a measure of wine, with which we in our turn bade him to honor us by drinking with us. We had no other idea but that he was a trooper, who, according to the custom of the country, sat there with a red leather hose and doublet, without a sword by his side, his right hand upon the pomel of his sword, and the other holding the table. His eyes were black and deep set, shining and sparkling like stars, so that you could not well look at them.

When he began to ask us where we were born. Then he gave himself the answer, "You are Swiss. From what part of Switzerland do you come?"

We answered, "From St. Gall."

Then he said, "If you go from here, as I understand you are going, to Wittenberg, you will find there good fellow-countrymen of yours—namely, Dr. Hieronimus Schurf and his brother, Dr. Augustine."

We said, "We have letters to them," and then we asked him, "Good sir, can you inform us whether Martin Luther is now at Wittenberg, or at what other place?"

We answered, "I have certain knowledge that Luther is not now at Wittenberg; he will, however, soon come there. But Philip Melancthon is here, and teaches the Greek language, and there are others also who know Hebrew. In truth I would advise you to study both languages, for they are necessary in order to understand the Holy Scriptures."

Then we answered, "God be praised, if God should spare our lives, we will not desert till we see and hear the man; for on his account it is that we have undertaken this journey. For we heard that he would overthrow the priesthood and the law as an unwarranted service to man. Now, we from our youth have been brought up by our elders to be

come priests; therefore we would willingly hear what kind of instructions he would give us, and he would prove his proposition."

After this he asked, "Where have you hitherto studied?" (Answer) "At Basle." Then said he, "How goes it at Basle? Is Erasmus of Rotterdam still himself, and what is he doing?"

"Sir," we answered, "we know nothing more but that he is well; Erasmus is there, but what he is doing is hidden and not known to any man, for he keeps himself very quiet and secret."

Talk of this kind seemed to us very strange as coming from a trooper, that he should speak about the two Schurfs, of Philip Melancthon and Erasmus. Also about the necessity of learning the Greek and Hebrew tongues. He had also occasionally uttered some Latin words, so that we could not but think that he must be a different person from a common trooper.

"My friends," he said to us, "what do they hold in Switzerland about Luther?"

"Good sir, there are there, as everywhere, various opinions about him. Many can not sufficiently exalt him, and thank God for God's truth made manifest through him, and that he has caused errors to be known. But many curse him as a profligate heretic, and especially the clergy do so."

Then he said, "I can well believe it; those are the persons."

In the course of this conversation he had become quite familiar with us, so that my companion ventured to take up the book which was before him and open it. It was a Hebrew psalter. Then he laid it quickly down, and the trooper drew it to himself. My companion then said, "I would give a finger from this hand to understand that language." The trooper answered, "You would soon learn it if you would be diligent; I too desire to have some knowledge of it, and I exercise myself daily therein."

Meanwhile the day declined, and it became very dark, when the landlord came to the table. As he had heard our desire and longing to see Martin Luther, he said, "Dear comrades, had you been here two days before your desire would have been gratified, for he sat at the table and—here he pointed with his finger—"in that place."

This vexed us greatly, and we were angry with ourselves that we had tarried; but we were chiefly angry with the miry and wretched road which had hindered us. They we said, "Still we are glad that we are in the house and sit at the table where he sat." Thereupon the landlord could not help laughing, and he went out to the door.

After a little while the landlord called me; I must come to him outside the door. I was frightened, and thought to myself what I had done that was improper, or what innocent cause had I given for anger.

Then the landlord said to me, "Because I know that you have a strong desire to hear and see Luther—he it is who sits beside you."

These words I took as a joke, and said, "You have pleasure in turning me into ridicule, and would satisfy my desire by a counterfeit Luther."

His answer was, "He it is, indeed; but take care and do nothing to show that you recognize him."

I agreed to this, but I could not believe that it was Luther. I went back into the room, sat myself down again at the table, and longed to tell my companion what the landlord had disclosed to me. At last I turned to him and whispered secretly, "The landlord has told me that he is Luther." But my companion also, like myself, would not believe it, and said, "He perhaps said it is Hutten, and you have misunderstood him." And I, since the guise and gestures of a trooper reminded me more of Hutten than of Luther, a monk, let myself be persuaded that the landlord had said, "It is Hutten," for the first syllable of both names sounds very much alike.

What, therefore, I afterwards said, I said as if I were addressing Herr Ulrich Von Hutten, the knight.

Meanwhile there came in two traveling merchants who also wished to stay for the night at the inn; and after they had unclenched themselves and taken off their spurs, one of them laid upon the table an unbound book. Thereupon the trooper asked what kind of a book that was. The merchant answered, "It is Dr. Luther's exposition of some of the Gospels and Epistles, just lately

printed and published; have you seen it?" The trooper said, "It will come to me."

Then the landlord said, "Now seat yourselves at the table; we must have our supper." But we begged the landlord that he would have forbearance with us, and give us something separate. Then the landlord said, "My dear companions, seat yourselves at the table with the gentlemen. I will deal with you very reasonably." When the trooper heard this, he said, "Come here; I will see to the settlement with the landlord."

During the meal he spoke many pious, friendly words, so that the merchants and we were astonished at his words than to all the good things of the supper. And amidst these sayings he bestowed with a sigh how the lords and princes were assembled at the imperial diet at Nuremberg on account of God's Word to consider these imminent affairs and the burdens of the German nation; but were to nothing more inclined than to waste the good time in costly tournaments, sledgings, courtly pomp, and wickedness of all kinds, which would be much better devoted to the fear of God and christian prayer to God. "But these are our christian princes!" Furthermore, he said that he was in hopes that the evangelical truth would bring forth more fruit in our children and descendants who were not poisoned by papistical error, but were already planted upon pure truth and God's Word, than it could do with the older ones in whom errors were so introed that with difficulty they could be drooted.

Thereupon the merchants also gave their opinions, and the elder one said, "I am a simple, plain layman; I understand nothing especially about this business; but I must say, now I look at the thing, Luther most either be an angel from heaven or a devil from hell. I would with pleasure give him ten gulden if I might confess to him, for I believe he could and would enlighten my conscience."

Just then the landlord came to us and whispered, "Martin has paid for the supper for you."

That gladdened us much, not on account of the money and the enjoyment, but because this man had made us guest free.

After the supper the merchants rose up and went into the stables to look after their horses. Meanwhile Martin remained with us alone in the chamber, and we thanked him for the honor he had done us, and the cost he had been at for us, and we said that we had taken him for Herr Ulrich Von Hutten; but he replied, "I am not."

Thereupon came in the landlord, and Martin said, "I have become tonight a nobleman, for these Swiss take me for Herr Ulrich Von Hutten."

The host said, "You are not that, but Martin Luther."

Then he laughed so merrily!

"They," he said, "take me for Hutten, for you Luther—soon I shall be Markolfus!"

[Markolfus was a comical figure that delighted the common people—a sort of German Punch.]

After talk of this kind he lifted up a beer glass and said, according to the custom of the country, "Swiss, drink to me a friendly drink for a blessing." And as I was about to take the glass from him he changed it and asked for a glass with wine, saying, "Beer is not a home drink of yours; you are unaccustomed to it; drink the wine." Then he stood up, threw his trooper's cloak on his shoulder, and took leave. As he did so he offered us his hand and said, "When you get to Wittenberg, greet me Dr. Hieronimus Schurf." We said, "We will willingly do so, but we must give your name, that he may know who it is greets him." He replied, "Say nothing more than 'He who is coming greets you.' He will at once understand the words."—Then he left us to go to his chamber.

Afterwards the merchants came back into the room and called the landlord to bring them a drink, during which they had much discourse about the guest, who indeed he could be. Whereupon the landlord let them know that he took him for Luther. Then the merchants talked over the matter, and vexed themselves greatly that they had spoken in so unseemly a manner before him. And they said they would get up early in the morning before he took his departure, and would beg him not to be angry with them, and not to take it ill that they did not recog-

nize his person. This they did, and they found him in the morning in the stable; but Martin answered them, "Last night at supper you said that you would give ten gulden to Luther to confess to him. When you do confess to him you will see and know whether I am Martin Luther." Farther he did not allow himself to be recognized, but rose up and went to Wittenberg.

On the same day we set off for Naumburg, and we came to a village (it is situated on a hill, and I think the hill is Orlamunde, and the village Naumburg), and through it there ran a road, which had broken forth by reason of the great rains, and it had partly carried away a part of the bridge, so that no one could pass over it on horseback. We returned to the village, and chanced to find the two merchants in the inn, who also, for Luther's sake, paid our reckoning.

On the next Sunday, the day before the first Sunday in Lent, we paid a visit to Dr. Hieronimus Schurf, to deliver our letter of recommendation. As we were called into the room, behold, we found the trooper Martin, just as he was at Jena. With him were Philip Melancthon, Justus Jodocus, Jonas Nicholas, Armadorf, and Dr. Augustine Schurf. They were telling him what had happened at Wittenberg during his absence. He greets us and laughs, points with his finger, and says, "This is the Philip Melancthon of whom I spoke to you."

Thus ends this interesting narrative. The remark of Gustave Freytag upon it is: "In the true hearted representation of Kessler, nothing is more worthy of notice than the serene peacefulness of the strong man who is riding through Thuringia under the ban of the empire, with passionate care at his heart in respect of the great danger which threatened his teaching from the fanaticism of his own people."

I would venture to add that nothing is more remarkable in this true-hearted narrative than the exceeding kindness, and even politeness, which the great man showed to those poor students, even manifested in such a little thing as providing for them their accustomed beverage, wine, when they drank together the cup of benediction on parting for the evening.—*Littell's*.

The Burial.

One thing alone is wanting that the manner of the Jews in burying may be observed—a bier to lay the body on to bear it to the sepulchre. There has been no time to get one, or it is felt that the distance is so short that it is not needed. That body has, however, the hands of true affection to lift it up and carry it across to the new tomb which awaits to receive it. The feet let us assign to Joseph, the body to Nicodemus, and that regal head, with those closed eyes, over which the shadows of the resurrection are already fitting, let us lay on the breast of the beloved disciple. The brief path from the cross to the sepulchre is soon traversed. In silence and in deep sorrow they bear their sacred burden, and lay it gently down upon its clean rocky bed. The last look of the dead is taken. The buriers reverently withdraw, the stone is rolled to the mouth of the sepulchre; separated from the living, Jesus rests with the dead. The burial is over now, and we might depart; but let us linger a little longer, and bestow a parting look upon the burying ground. "In the place where he was crucified was a garden, and in that garden a sepulchre." Plant yourself before that sepulchre and look about you. This is no place for graves; here rise around you no memorials of the dead, you see but a single sepulchre, and that sepulchre in a garden. Strange mingling of this of opposites, the garden of life and growth and beauty circling the sepulchre of death, corruption and decay. Miniature of the strange world we live in. What garden of it has not its own grave! Your path may, for a time, be through flowers and fragrance; follow it far enough, it leads even to a grave. But this sepulchre in this garden suggests other and happier thoughts. It was in a garden once of old—in Eden—that death had his first summons given, to find there his first prey; it is in a garden here at Calvary that the last enemy of mankind has the death-blow given to him—that the great conqueror is in his turn overcome. Upon that stone which they rolled to the mouth of

The Christian Man of Business.

It would be a great safeguard to young men engaged in business if they would resolve that, however trade may prosper and wealth pour in, these shall not absorb the whole attention; that reading and intellectual pleasures shall have their own place; that a book shall not be a burden in their hands, nor time considered lost which improves the mind, though it appear not in the balance-sheet. It speaks well for any one largely and successfully engaged in business when his appetites and habits remain simple to the last; when his parlors exhibit something better than showy furniture; when his family pleasures are found not in gross, worldly amusements, not in the crowded party, with its excesses; not in lavishing display, but in the cultivation of refined and intellectual tastes—in music, in the instructive and scientific lecture, and in philanthropic and christian labors. All these last tend to break the slavery of Mammon, and to keep one free from the evil of the world's business.

But the great safeguard lies in watchful attention to all religious duties. Many, harassed with business, say that they have no time for visiting the sick and needy, none for the religious instruction of their household, none for family devotion, and scarcely any for private prayer; and that they have to devote such upon others, or neglect them. What a sad confession! No time to imitate that Lord who went about doing good; no time to save their children from damnation, and their own souls from woe unutterable; no time to worship God; time only to make money, which, so made, has no blessing in it; time only to gain the world and to lose the soul. By and by God may say, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then, whose shall those things be that thou hast provided?"

Let us picture the christian man of business. He has, as the foundation of all, a supreme love to God, and a deep conviction that religion is the principal thing, the oxygen which is let down into the mine ere the miner descends to dig in it, rendering it safe for him to work; he resolves that it is necessary for him to be religious, though it is not to be rich; he makes time on his busiest days for family and private devotions; he lives with his household as its head, not as its slave, tolling for its support. He will himself know something personally of the luxury of doing good; he will seek a blessing on every day's transactions, give thanks for success, be content with honest gains, and not cast down by losses; he will not obtrude his christianity upon others, as a model; he will honor God and bless his fellow-men with offerings laid aside as God hath prospered him; and this he will do from the conviction that he is kept from the evil that is in the world. Ah! how many a toil-worn worldling and worldly christian will look wistfully at such a standard and wish he could attain it! What more pitiable object is there than the man who reverses all this; who toils for wealth as if it were the principal thing; who is absorbed in money-making until his head aches, and sometimes until his brain softens, leaving him a drivelling idiot; who is a stranger almost to his home; who eats his meals at unwholesome hours, and makes up for the privation by luxury and excess; neglects his children, has few intellectual pleasures, little time for religious duties, and dies with schemes half accomplished, or but just completed, to go, and stand before his Judge! If God had put such a lot on man, it would have been deemed cruelty. Man chooses it for himself, though God pleads with him to spare himself and accept a happier lot.

"THAT ONE VERSE."—An old negro in the West Indies was very anxious to learn to read the Bible. He lived a long way from the missionary's house, and yet he would come to learn a lesson whenever he had time. It was such hard work, and he made such little progress that the missionary got tired, and told him one day that he had better give it up. "No, massa," said he, with great earnestness, "me nebbber give it up till me die." And pointing with his finger to the beautiful words he had just spelled out in John iii: 16, "God so loved the world," etc., he said with tears in his eyes, "It's worth all the trouble, massa, to read dat one verse!"

The Work Ceased.

"Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased."—Ezra iv: 24.

Sad words! Many are the sorrows of the righteous, but perhaps they know of none greater than that of being caused to cease in the work of building up the house of the Lord. Engaged in some labor which we think will redound to the glory of God—some undertaking which we suppose is the work the Master has given us to do—suddenly the hand is arrested. Various are the ways in which this may be done; either we are laid low on the couch of pain, or some mountain seems to rise suddenly and obstruct the path, or the hand may be palsied through the indifference of those for whom our energies had been aroused.

Whatever the cause, the work seems at an end, and in despair we gaze upon the old wastes of many generations that we had fondly hoped to aid in re-building—the former desolations that we had vainly sought to raise up. But all this is denied us—there lie the walls of Jerusalem in heaps—its cities and its temple, desolate as overthrown by strangers—painless suspension of activity! But shall we be idle? No! Now ascends the voice of prayer: In our trouble we call upon our God. In our affliction we seek him early. Perhaps when engaged in our work we had neglected to seek with sufficient earnestness that help without which nothing can be done: with our trowels in our hands and our swords upon our thighs we had not sought to refresh our souls "in the places of drawing water." We had not gone to "the fountain of living waters flowing from under the throne," and had begun probably to faint and be weary. So God arrests us. It is he who has permitted the work to cease. But does it cease altogether? Ah, no; only "unto," blessed word, "unto," in this case the reign of Darius—"unto," some time specified by the great Builder, some period appointed in the purposes of the Most High, perhaps until he has accomplished his work, for the manifestation of which he may have caused ours to cease.

What now takes place? "The prophets prophesied!" doubtless the people had prayed, or the voices of the prophets would not have been heard. (Blessed lesson for the little remnant now engaged in helping on the work of the Lord.) "Then rose up Zerubbabel and Joshua and began to build, the prophets helping them." Precious words! Ah, now the work will proceed—ah, now the work may be completed! But when do Zerubbabel and Joshua rise up and build, and when do the prophets help them? No! until after the people have prayed: most instructive sequence of incidents!

God stops our work that we may learn to lift up our eyes to him alone, then wait with patience his time for carrying it on; meanwhile praying earnestly to the Lord of the harvest, to send forth more laborers into his harvest; the prayer is heard, the prophets prophesy, teachers are awakened, then the great Builder, Christ, our great High Priest, (of whom Zerubbabel and Joshua are here most interesting types,) puts forth his mighty power and strengthens the hands of his workmen, helps them to begin again to build that house which "even until now hath been in building, and yet it is not finished." So the work goes on, and our portion is completed. Blessed be God for almighty mercies! Take courage, builders of the house of God; call upon him who alone is able to help, so shall your work and his work, for "we are co-workers with God," go on and prosper.—*Southern Presbyterian*.

DELICIOUS IN BUSINESS.—A man industrious in his calling, if without the fear of God, becomes a drudge to worldly ends; vexed when disappointed, overjoyed in success. Mingle the fear of God with business, it will not abate a man's industry, but sweeten it; if he prosper, he is thankful to God that gives him power to get wealth; if he miscarry, he is patient under the will and dispensation of the God he fears. It turns the very employment of his calling to a kind of religious duty and exercise of his religion, without damage or detriment to it.

Even in justifiable zeal we are easily led to take too much upon ourselves, unless we keep within the bounds prescribed by God's Spirit and word.

No Success.

He that covereth his sins will not prosper.—Prov. xxviii: 13.

He shall have no success. He shall not prosper or succeed in his endeavors to cover his sins, he shall not succeed in hiding them. He can not cover them from human view, many of them at least, and he can cover none of them from the view of God. His sins will find him out, if not in this world, in the next. Of ten in this world they find him out. His sins come to light and make him known; and it is not unrequently the case that his very attempts to cover and hide his transgressions betray him to the world. Instances are not rare in which efforts to avoid suspicion and detection, have fixed suspicion and hastened detection. And some sins can not be concealed, at least for any length of time. They will make themselves known. So true is it that, even as it regards this world, he that covereth his sins shall not prosper; he shall not succeed in his attempts. But even should he succeed in hiding his sins from men, there is one who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins. One who sees and knows all things. One who can neither be deceived nor mocked; and from him none can escape. He will deal with all according to their deserts; and it is vain for any to hope to prosper or succeed in their endeavors to cover their sins from him. Before Him every act and every word appears in its true light, and shall have its just recompense of reward; it may be of infamy in this world, and a reward of perdition in the next, unless the sinner flee from the dreadful consequences of his own guilt by timely repentance and faith unfeigned in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; while pursuing this course he shall not be forgiven. In this respect also he shall not prosper; he shall not, while so doing, obtain forgiveness. To cover sin is not the way to procure its pardon; to conceal sin, or excuse it is inconsistent with the very idea of forgiveness, as it is with the prayer, God be merciful to me a sinner.

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, shall not obtain peace of conscience, shall not succeed even in quieting his conscience. As he shall not in this way obtain forgiveness, so neither shall he thus obtain peace of conscience. His object—one object at least—in covering his sins is to secure the good opinion of his fellow-men and escape their censure; another is to silence the upbraidings of his own conscience. As to the first, he may succeed for a little while, only however to fall at last under the man indignant frown of his fellows. As to the latter, silencing the voice of conscience, it is more difficult, and seldom successful. Conscience can not be pacified in this way. It can neither be bribed nor blinded. It will now and then speak out, it will ery quietly in the transgressor's ears, and rob him of his peace. True peace, enduring peace, he can not have, for there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. They are like the troubled sea which can not rest, whose waters, in their constant ebb and flow, cast up mire and dirt. They can not rest, they have no peace; and can have none till they come to Christ confessing their sins, and laying hold upon him by faith. He is our peace. He has made peace, by the blood of his cross. His blood cleanseth from all sin, receive Him and be at rest.

"Garden and peace through Him abound; He can the richest blessing give; Salvation in His name is found, He bids the dying sinner live."—*Memphis Presbyterian*.