

DUTY.

She wore her duty as a crown,
And in her passing up and down,
One came who laugh'd to see her wear
Such trifle with so grand an air.

She took it off. "One cannot be
A laughing stock for such as he."
Behold! her feet once swift to go,
Move now reluctantly and slow.

She walks a prisoner, looking down
At that which binds her limbs in pain.
Who wears not duty as a crown,
Must drag it as a chain.
—Good Housekeeping.



MUSCULAR CHRISTIANITY

By JOHN SMITH TASSIN.

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"Brethren," began the preacher, when all had been assembled, "I feel like Jacob did after he had wrestled all night with an angel for a sight of the Almighty."

"Amen!" bawled the blacksmith at the head of the congregation, and his eyes roved ceaselessly as if in quest of someone.

"Only my fight has been with the powers of darkness; and I bear about me the stains of the soot, and the scars of the fire and the brimstone of that terrible place."

"Amen!" bellowed the lusty fellow in a louder voice, and his eyes continued their fruitless search.

"Brethren, let us pray and thank the Lord for the victory He hath granted over Satan in this benighted spot."

And the blacksmith prayed with all the fervor of a convert on the mourners' bench. His voice was like the echo of thunder in the mountains, peal redoubled upon peal, and crash after crash deflected from the many hills, until the little building fairly shook with its reverberations. Meanwhile he craned his neck and almost stood up in vain endeavor to single out somebody.

"Guess yo're lookin' fo' de docto', ain't yo'?" gibed an irreverent youth behind him.

The man glared at him but did not answer.

Doctor Ben was there. He chuckled despite the sanctity of the place, and there was a mischievous twinkle in his eyes and a sly smile about the corners of his mouth. His face was as a mask, behind which all manner of droll thought held high carnival. Bill Jenkins caught sight of him, whereupon the doctor made the sage reflection that it would be best for him to have his horse shod by another blacksmith for some time to come. At this his face fell, for the prospect was not inviting. Bill Jenkins being acknowledged the best horseshoer within miles of the neighborhood.

The doctor's irresistible longing for little fun was responsible for the blacksmith's discomfiture. This is the way it came about:

"No preacher-man ain't agoin' t' preach in dis 'ere town; no, sirc, not ef I knows m'self."

The group about the anvil stood stock still, and burly Bill Jenkins straightened himself to his full height. The "help" paused with the horse's hoof still in the lap of his leathern apron.

Standing with folded arms and with his back to the table, on which were his artisan's tools, was a figure so quizzically queer that it was sure to set you laughing. It was Doctor Ben; short and thin, with red hair, red beard, and red spots on his face which some would call freckles. He was stoop-shouldered and hollow-chested,



"No preacher-man ain't agoin' to preach in dis 'ere town."

and had a cast of countenance so comical that you could think of him only as a king's jester.

The blacksmith was so angry that he fairly bit his words.

"See 'ere, doc," he cried, and his forehead sawed the air, "we ha' spliced our young uns, an' buried our dead in dese 'ere cross-roads fo' nigh on to thirty years without interfe'ence o' no pa'son-man; an' we ain't agoin' t' pay no fees now fo' w'at de good Gawd grants free."

"Ch, I dunno as to that," said the little doctor. "I hearn our pa'son 'ow that he intended holdin' a prey'r-meetin' here to-night."

"Dang yo' pa'son!" replied the other.

And he bared his arm, on which the muscles stood out like cords of steel.

The bellows heaved; the fire leaped up; the iron became a cherry red; then white scales formed upon it; the anvil rang, and a shower of sparks fell about the place.

The little doctor chuckled knowingly. It was a way he had whenever highly amused, which must have been most of the time, for his thoughts were a perennial fountain of fun, bubbling up within him.

It is not to be concealed that Doctor Ben—a recent convert, by the way,



The spectators gathered around.

and one whose motives were not always easy to fathom—had been at the parsonage that very morning.

He found his friend expatiating on the glory of such as were called upon to contend with the heathen in foreign parts, thereby securing for themselves the crown of martyrdom; while he bitterly lamented the fact that his own ministry lay in a civilized land, where nothing ever happened, and the only distinction possible was that of patience and long suffering.

"Oh, I dunno as to that," remarked the little doctor smiling blandly. "Now there is Rowden cross-roads, for instance, which, while not exactly pa'n, is about as tough a place as one would wish to run gainst. They ain't had a pa'son there inside of thirty years; not since the last one was stoned out of the settlement. It ought to be a purty good field fo' the sowing of the Gospel, seein' 's how the land has lain fallow so long."

"Enough!" cried the parson, smiling. "I shall preach there this very night."

The doctor stopped again at the parsonage on his way home, after his visit to the blacksmith shop. He found the preacher, like another Paul, working in his garden, that he might not be a burden to his charge. He leaned on his hoe and mopped his perspiring face with a colored cotton handkerchief as the doctor came up.

"Hello, pa'son! still bent on preachin' at Rowden to-night?"

"If the Lord spare me, brother, I shall most assuredly try to do His work in that part of His vineyard."

"Wa'al, it looks as if you might find opposition."

"We have to expect to wrestle with Satan sometimes, brother."

"Yes, but it looks as if Satan do be powerful strong in this instance."

"How so? Was it himself you saw in the flesh?"

"It was himself that I saw in the flesh of Bill Jenkins, the blacksmith at Rowden. He's a heap sight heavier man 'n you be, pa'son, an' he says that you'll have him to lick before you preach in Rowden to-night. So long, pa'son."

The little doctor chuckled. He knew his men and that they were game. "Goin' to be a little affair down to Rowden to-night; better be there about sundown," he shouted to more than one acquaintance as he drove past.

True to his word, Parson Jones rode into Rowden about dusk and hitched his horse at the rack near the smithy, which at that hour resembled a fiery pit. The interior was lit up by the sullen glow of the forge as with an evil eye, and without was the gathering gloom.

The preacher was long and lank, and in his clerical clothes was a sight to see. They hung about him as loosely as the limp rags flap about a scarecrow in the fields.

The blacksmith came out muttering inaudibly.

"Are you he who would dare inter-

fer with the preaching of the Word of God in this place?" asked the parson, as he calmly removed his coat.

"No preacher-man ain't agoin' t' preach in dis 'ere town," sputtered the blacksmith, drawing off his leathern apron and wiping his hands upon it. "No, sirc! not ef I—"

The preacher's hand descended upon his mouth, cutting short the sentence.

Then ensued a lively scuffle, during which the spectators hastily gathered around the two combatants. The blacksmith directed a well-aimed blow with all his force; but the wiry parson simply turned sideways, and it went past him like a blade, which unexpected result sent his heavy antagonist sprawling face foremost, in the dust. He soon had him covered and was pounding vigorously.

"I am going to preach in this town to-night."

"Not ef I—"

Again the blows hailed thick and fast.

"Let up, there! Enough! Stop, stop!"

"I am going to preach and want you to attend in the front pew and to lead in all the responses."

"I will, I will! Oh! Oh! Stop!" pleaded the blacksmith.

Somebody handed the minister his coat, and he brushed the dust from his trousers as well as possible. And straight from the field of battle all marched to the little town meeting-house, where we find them at the opening of this story.

THE FIELD OF JOURNALISM.

Puck Treats Grave Subject With an Attempt at Humor.

A tiny typographical error often causes more comment than a column editorial.

Never judge a person by the clothes he wears. The frail, wan man with dilapidated trousers and debilitated shoes may be a great financier or the editor of your local paper.

After reading of a certain man who was buried alive for a week on a wager, and of another who eats poison in a time museum for a modest stipend, we faintly would confess that we might be doing worse than running a newspaper in this town.

In a certain aquarium is a large turtle which has not eaten for more than a year, and does not seem to have suffered the slightest inconvenience from its prolonged fast. What a phenomenal success a turtle would be in the newspaper business in this region!

Once upon a time an editor found a fifty-dollar bill, gave it to its owner and seemed greatly surprised when a reward was offered him. His eccentric action was generally thought to have been prompted by the sterling honesty which we so frequently see mentioned in stories, but it may have been that he did not know what it was he found.

When Benjamin Franklin was about to establish the Pennsylvania Gazette, in 1728, his friends warned him that he might be overcrowning the field, as there were already three newspapers in the country. But, despite the fact that there are to-day nearly 3,000 dailies and about 20,000 publications of all sorts in the United States, there are still innumerable promising openings for talented young optimists with money to lose.—Puck.

Serious Quarrel Over Water.

Recently a member of the legislative assembly of South Australia said in a speech: "I am ready to take up my rifle, and it may be necessary to send a South Australian army into Victoria and New South Wales to destroy their irrigation works." This dreiful threat is due to the tapping of the waters of the Murray—the Australian Mississippi—by Victoria and New South Wales, the two states between which it forms the boundary line for the greater part of its course. The result is that when the one big river of the commonwealth enters South Australia for the final stage of its career it is not the noble and generous stream that it was before being robbed for irrigation purposes by the other two states. And the South Australians, being prevented by insurmountable natural conditions from getting the first pull at the river themselves, are angry and indignant.

A Quartet.

He—My dear Miss Smith—or may I call you Kitty?
Moon—(This promises, I fear, to be quite tame.)
She—You oughtn't, but you make it sound so pretty!
Cupid—(They're starting in as usual. Same old game.)
He—The moonlight paints with gold your fairy tresses.
Moon—(Now wouldn't that just make you faint away?)
She—Only a poet thus his thought expresses!
Cupid—(What idiotic things some people say!)
He—Dear, if I loved you, would you care to know it?
Moon—(Now that, I must admit, is rather good.)
She—O, if I cared—I'd be too shy to show it.
Cupid—(They're doing better than I thought they would!)

He—Ah—if I dared—but you're so far above me—
Moon—(Ahem! I think I'll hide behind this tree.)
She—Love levels all ranks—
He—Do you, can you, love me?
Cupid—(Well, now they have no further use for me!)
—Carolyn Wells in Life.

His Strange Ride.

From Tivishall, Norfolk, England, Mr. C. Lain, a farmer, drove the other day to Pulham Oak, a distance of several miles. On arrival there he put the cart in a shed and transacted his business. Nearing home he was astonished to find one of his own hens perched on the axle of the cart. The fowl had ridden the whole journey in this curious position. She was not disturbed and occupied her chosen perch till next morning.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS LESSON

Lesson VII, Nov. 15—David's Trial in God—Psalm 23.

Golden Text—"The Lord is My Shepherd; I shall not want"—Psalm 23:1. The Lord our Shepherd.—V. 1. "The Lord." Jehovah, the ever-living, eternal God. The Good Shepherd of John 10: 1-16 is the same Jehovah manifested and made visible in the person of Jesus Christ.

I. He Satisfies Every Want. "I shall not want." "Every real need shall be supplied; both temporal and spiritual. Every wayward desire may not be gratified. It may not be best for us that it should be. Our Shepherd is wise as well as kind. He consults for our true and lasting welfare, rather than for our immediate gratification; and he knows better what will promote the former than we can possibly do."—Prof. W. H. Green.

II. The Life of Peace and Plenty.—V. 2 First. "He maketh me to lie down." The most active life needs periods of rest, as we put hyacinth bulbs for a time in the dark if we would have the best blooms, or as crystals are formed in the stillness of the saturated solution. There are times when a man needs to lie still, like the earth under a spring rain, letting the lessons of experience and the memories of the Word of God sink down to the very roots of his life, and in the deep reservoirs of his soul. * * * They are not always lost days when his hands are not busy; they are growing days. And for this side of a man's life the Great Shepherd provides in his green pastures. * * * Now and then God makes such an one lie down. * * * Many a man has had to thank God for some such enforced season of rest, in which he first learned the sweetness of meditation on the Word, and of lying still in God's hands and waiting God's pleasure."—M. R. Vincent.

Second. "In green pastures." The good shepherd always feeds his sheep. Note that the lying down is amid green pastures, where there is abundant food for the soul. This experience becomes an oasis amid the desert sands of life. The soul needs food as really as the body. Whatever enlarges the soul, builds up the character, increases faith, hope, love, knowledge, and all the virtues, makes the conscience more tender and true, cultures the will, perfects the judgment, and enables the soul to work out a pure and holy life and fits it for heaven—whatever does these things constitutes the green pastures. The Good Shepherd leads us into the experiences and discipline which thus feed the soul. He sends the Holy Spirit, who imparts new life and vigor. By his example and personal presence he nourishes the soul. He brings the power of heaven into our daily life.

Third. "He leadeth me." "The shepherd goes before them, and they follow him, come to his call and crowd round him for safety if danger threatens. There, there is perpetual danger from sudden torrents, from wolves and robbers; there are but rare and scanty streams, and the flocks often suffer from parching thirst. The shepherd never leaves them. When night approaches, they follow him to some safe fold—a cave in the hillside. Surrounded by his watchful dogs, the guardian, 'keeping watch over his flock by night,' makes his bed in front of the cave, on a pile of twigs and brushwood, collected within a circle of stones, to protect him from the damp, and rushes heaped upon them to give warmth. When morning comes, the sheep are counted as they pass out of the cave, and then follow the shepherd to the green pasturage belonging to the village or tribe."—Canon Tristram in S. S. Times. So Christ goes before his flock. He does not ask them to go where he does not go himself. He shows them the way both by precept and example. All he asks is for them to follow him.

III. Restoring the Soul.—V. 3. "He restoreth my soul." or life, the same Hebrew word being used for both. The soul is the seat of life. The Good Shepherd restores the soul from wanderings into sin and error and mistakes as the Eastern shepherd spends much of his time in recovering straying sheep. God restores us by the promise of his forgiveness, by the gift of his Holy Spirit, by his providence, by thorns and afflictions, by the teachings of his Word. He restores it by putting a new life and a new heart in man.

IV. Divine Guidance.—The restored soul he not only brings back to the green pastures and to the fold, but "he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." That is, in the right paths in which one ought to walk, the paths which lead to the best places, the paths of duty and right living. "For his name's sake." Not because of our merits or claims. We could not have the face to ask it for our own sakes. But because he loves to guide us, because it is his nature to help us, because he would not be true to himself and his promises, unless he guided us thus. It is this thought that gives us courage to trust him. It is for his name's sake "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:7). "It is to show how his grace can make a blazing beacon out of a charred brand, a mitered priest out of a criminal (Zech. 3:2, 5)."—M. R. Vincent.

V. Protection in Times of Danger.—V. 4. "Yea, though (or when) I walk through the valley of the sha-

dow of death." Cheyne says that this may mean "the gloom like that of Hades," or "the very gloom of Hades."

It refers to times of darkness, depression, and almost despair, as when Jesus on the cross felt that his Father had forsaken him; times when there are such thick clouds of sorrow and pain that God's sun and stars are blotted from the sight, as when Elijah wished to die under the juniper tree, and John the Baptist in the Machabean dungeon. Compare Bunyan's picture of Christian in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, the pathway close by the side of hell whence came flame and smoke and hideous noises, and fiends approaching; and the way as dark as pitch, so that "when he lifted up his foot to set forward he knew not where or upon what he should set it next." This experience is well represented by the flock which often David must have seen in the gloomy ravines which penetrate the cliffs overlooking the Dead Sea, where he was caught by the setting of the sun, by sudden storms and torrents, exposed in the darkness to robbers and wild beasts. "I will fear no evil." "He does not say that no evil will ever come to him. For he knows well enough that there are many grievous things in life and hard to bear. But do we not know that infinitely more suffering is caused by needless fear than by actual disasters? . . . We may be hurt, but never harmed."—Rev. Henry Van Dyke, D. D. God did not take up the three Hebrews out of the furnace of fire, but he came down and walked with them in it. He did not remove Daniel from the den of lions; he sent his angel to close the mouths of the beasts. He did not answer the prayer of Paul to remove the thorn in the flesh, but he gave him a sufficiency of grace to sustain him. "Fou thou art with me." Thou who are stronger than all the powers of evil, thou who controllest all forces, all influences, all powers art ever near. I cannot see thee; but I hear thy voice, I feel thy presence, I recognize thy protecting love.

"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." How did the rod comfort the sheep? The rod, the shepherd's crook, was used for helping any sheep which had been caught in the rocks or torrent, or had been injured. The crook was placed around its neck or leg, and the shepherd drew it out of its difficulty. The sight of the rod in the shepherd's hands showed that he was able and willing to help in every time of need. How did the staff comfort the sheep? The staff was the weapon of defense against robbers and wild beasts. The sheep saw the shepherd with the staff over his shoulder, and knew that their defender was at hand.

"They comfort me." Comfort means much more than to console. It means also to strengthen, to invigorate, to encourage. From con, "together," and fortis, "strong."

VI. Guests of God.—V. 5. "Thou preparest (or spreadest) a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." He can sit down and eat in perfect security, though surrounded by enemies. The servant of God is more than a sheep to be fed—he is an honored guest. His enemies see that God is his friend and protector, and they cannot harm him without first overcoming God himself. The covenant of bread, of eating together as host and guest, was one of the most sacred in the East. "The master of the table is bound, so far as his jurisdiction extends, to protect every one who eats with him. If there be foes at hand, it is easy to see what a comfort it must be to a defenseless man thus to pledge for his succor one powerful to help." Compare the fate of the Templar in Scott's "Ivanhoe." "Thou countest my head with oil." An attention shown to guests. "The ancient Hebrews, like the Greeks and Romans, and most Oriental peoples, made constant use of unguents. The great perspiration and frequent bathing, drying the skin, made some such application necessary to comfort."—William Ewing.

VII. The Overflowing Cup of Life. "My cup runneth over." The cup that holds God's blessings and mercies is overflowing with them. There are more than he knows how to use. God's love and mercy are free and abundant. "He gives 'good measure, pressed down and running over.'"

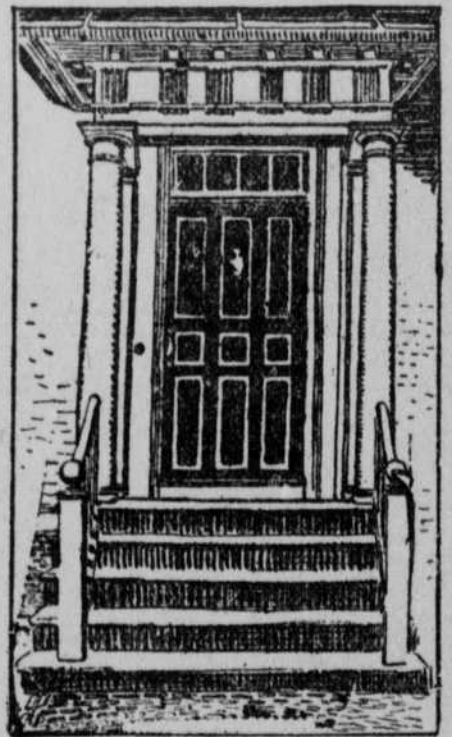
VIII. God's Blessings Are for Everlasting.—V. 6. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me." "The Hebrew word translated 'surely' more often means only; i. e., goodness and mercy only—nothing else—will follow me."—Cowles. The goodness and mercy will follow him; he need not seek anxiously for them as an illusive blessing, as the child seeks in vain for the rainbow; but they will pursue him as an overtake him, if only he is a true sheep of the Good Shepherd. God loves to give good things to his people. He is overflowing with blessings he desires to confer. And every blessing we receive is a new proof of his goodness and bears the image and superscription of his love. And we need not be troubled about the future, for the goodness and mercy shall follow "all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." The dwelling in God's house here, the abiding in his worship, is the heavenly atmosphere of his love under all the divine influences of God's house, prepares us to dwell in his heavenly home where we can "serve him day and night in his temple."

SOME OLD DOORWAYS

ALL CHARACTERISTICS OF TIME AND CUSTOMS.

In New England Towns and Villages These Relics of the Past Abound—Antique Treasures Found Behind the Closed Portals.

Stroll through some of our New England villages and make a study of their doorways. Possibly you may be disappointed at first, and, unless you have already studied the subject somewhat and are, therefore, prejudiced in its favor, you may see doorways only as doorways—as necessary parts of a whole. But plod along, and keep your eyes open, and you will soon be lost



THE WYMAN TAVERN, KEENE, N. H., BUILT 1750

In contemplation of the erstwhile commonplace.

The Longfellow house must, of course, be cited for its very interesting doorway, being modeled much after the manner of that of the Wyman Tavern; the Storey house in Salem (which belonged to Julian Storey's grand father); that of the beautiful old Bellows estate in Walpole, N. H., built during the war of 1812, and of the famous Jumel mansion in One Hundred and Sixth street, New York, which has recently come into prominence through its purchase by the Colonial Dames.

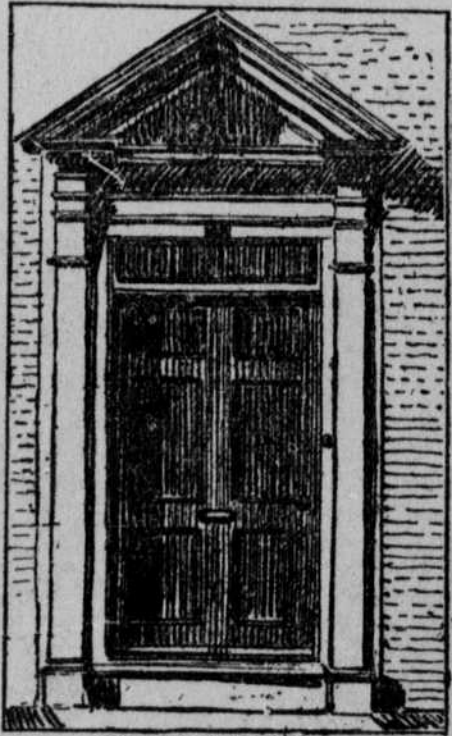
In the Wyman Tavern, in Keene, N. H., we have an example of the Norman use of polished columns. The earliest use—for later on clusters of columns came into evidence, and later still their adornment with sculpture figures.

In one of those narrow serpentine streets of Marblehead is found one particularly splendid example of an old doorway. See how ponderous and ill proportioned it looks at first glance. But a careful survey and the symmetry and purpose becomes apparent.

Portsmouth, N. H., is full of quaint and interesting old houses, whose doorways alone somehow suggest the fact that the people refuse to open to curious strangers and relic seekers.

Most of these old mansions are still occupied by direct descendants of the original owners, and lucky, indeed, is he to whom these picturesque doors are hospitably opened, for behind them are stocked priceless treasures of colonial times, which would cause the heart of a lover of antiques to beat fast with envy.

The Warner house, for instance, on Daniels street, is entirely furnished with rare old things brought from England in bygone days, and—Isn't



OLD DOORWAY, PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

that a doorway to be proud of, even barring the old brass knocker!

The Ladd house, which was built in 1760, shows an imposing entrance of the Georgian style of architecture, and 'tis then necessary adjunct, the slave pen, is also adorned with an interesting door, interesting principally on account of its inappropriateness.

In the old doorway on Court street, Portsmouth, and that of the Hazen house on Congress street, we have an illustration of the progress made toward elaboration. And so one might go on indefinitely, finding in the rudest and most crude of our old houses something of interest, and something representative of the times in its doorway. Often in the most out-of-the-way places one happens upon lines and angles and curves which show history; and Puritan theology is often half-concealed, half-revealed in wood and bricks and mortar.