

# THE CHRISTIAN'S WORK

## Every Moral Teacher Stands Guard or Patrols the Wall.

Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, for the year One Thousand and Nine Hundred and One, by William Bailey of Toronto, at the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.

A despatch from Washington says—Dr. Talmage preached from the text, Isaiah xxi, 11—“Watchman, what of the night?”

When night came down on Babylon, Nineveh and Jerusalem, they needed careful watching, otherwise the infernal torch might have been thrust into the very heart of the metropolis. Splendor, or enemies marching from the hills, might have forced the gates. All night long, on top of the wall and in front of the gates, might be heard the measured step of the watchman on his solitary beat; silence hung in air, save as some passerby raised the question, “Watchman, what of the night?”

The ancients divided their night into four parts—the first watch from 6 to 9, the second from 9 to 12, the third from 12 to 3, and the fourth from 3 to 6. I speak now of the city in the third watch, or from 12 to 3 o'clock.

I never weary of looking upon the life of the city in the first watch. That is the hour when the stores are closing. The laboring men, having quitted the scaffolding and the shop, are on their way home. It rejoices me to give them my seat in the city car. They have stood and hammered away all day. Their feet are weary. They are exhausted with the tug of work. They are mostly cheerful. With smirks sharpened on the swift turner's wheel and the carpenter's whetstone they seek

### THE EVENING MEAL.

The clerks, too, have broken away from the counter and with brain weary of the long line of figures and the whims of those who go shopping seek the face of mother or wife and child. The streets are thronged with young men setting out from the great centres of bargains making. Let idlers clear the street and give the right of way to the bewestern artisans and merchants! They have turned their bread and are now on their way home to get it. The lights in full jet hang over 10,000 evening repasts—the parents at either end of the table, the children between. Thank God, “who setteth the solitary in families!”

A few hours later and all the places of amusement, good and bad, are in full tide. Lovers of art, catalogue in hand, stroll through the galleries and discuss the pictures. The ballroom is resplendent with the rich apparel of those who on either side of the white, glistening boards await the signal from the orchestra. Concert halls are lifted into enchantment with the warble of one songstress or swept out on a sea of tumultuous feeling by the blast of brazen instruments. A beautiful and overwhelming thing is the city in the first and second watches of the night.

But the clock strikes 12, and the third watch has begun. The thunder of the city has rolled out of the air. The slightest sound cuts the night with such distinctness as to attract your attention. The tinkling of the bell of the street car in the distance and the baying of the dog. The stamp of a horse in the next street. The slamming of a saloon door. The bough of the drunkard. The shrieks of the steam whistle five miles away. Oh, how suggestive, my friends, the “THIRD WATCH OF THE NIGHT”!

There are honest men passing up and down the street. Here is a city missionary, who has been carrying a scuttle of coal to that poor family in that dark place. Here is an undertaker going up the steps of a building from which there comes a bitter cry, which indicates that the destroying angel has smitten the firstborn. Here is a minister of religion who has been giving the sacrament to a dying Christian. Here is a physician, passing along in great haste. Nearly all the lights have gone out in the dwellings, for it is the third watch of the night. That light in the window is the light of the watcher, for the medicines must be administered, and the fevers must be watched, and the restless tossing off of the covered must be resisted, and the ice must be kept on the hot temples, and the perpetual prayer must go up from hearts soon to be broken.

Oh, the third watch of the night! What a stupendous thought—a whole city at rest. Weary arm preparing for to-morrow's toil. Hot brain being cooled off. Rigid muscles relaxed. Excited nerves soothed. The white hair of the octogenarian in thin drifts across the pillow, fresh fall of flakes on snow already fallen. Childhood, with its dimpled hands thrown out on the pillow, and with every breath taking in a new store of fun and frolic. Third watch of the night! God's slumberless eye will look. Let one great wave of refreshing slumber roll over the heart of the great town, submerging care and anxiety and torment and pain.

### LET MY CITY SLEEP.

But my friends, be not deceived. There will be, to-night, thousands who will not sleep till. Go up that dark alley, and be cautious where you tread lest you fall over the prostrate form of a drunkard lying on his own doorstep. Look about you, let you feel the garrotter's hug. Look through the broken window pane and see what you can see. You say, “Nothing.” Then listen. What is it? “God help us.” No footlights but tragedy and life and death than history ever. Booth ever enacted. No better, no more heroic, no more sublime, than the call of the patriot to his country. No food for twenty-four hours. Why don't they give us? They have done us nothing. They have done us everything.

over to the almshouse?” Ah, you would not ask that if you ever heard the bitter cry of a man or a child when told he must go to the almshouse. “Oh,” you say, “they are vicious poor, and therefore they do not deserve our sympathy.” Are they vicious? So much more need they your pity. The Christian poor, God helps them.

Pass on through the alleys. Open the door. “Oh,” you say, “it is locked!” Not it is not locked. It has never been locked. No burglar would be tempted to go in there to steal anything. Only a broken chair stands against the door. Shove it back. Get in. Strike a match. Now, look.

### BEASTLINESS AND RAGS.

See those glaring eyeballs. Be careful now, what you say. Do not utter any insult, do not utter any suspicion, if you value your life. What is that red mark on the wall? It is the mark of a murderer's hand! Look at those two eyes rising up out of the darkness and out from the straw in the corner, coming toward you, and as they come near your light goes out. Strike another match. Ah, this is a babe, not like those beautiful children presented in baptism. This little one never smiled. It never will smile. A dower flung on an awfully barren beach. O Heavenly Shepherd, fold around you your shawl or your coat tighter, for the cold wind sweeps through.

Strike another match. Ah, is it possible that the scarred and bruised face of that young woman ever was looked into by maternal tenderness? Utter no sound. Utter no harsh word. No ray of hope has dawned on that brow for many a year. No ray of hope ever will dawn on that brow. But the light has gone out. Do not strike another light. It would be a mockery to kindle another light in such a place as that. Pass out and pass down the street. Our cities are full of such homes and the worst time the third watch of the night.

In the third watch of the night, gambling does its worst work. What though the hours be slipping away, and though the wife be waiting in the cheerless home? Star up the fire; bring on more drinks;

### PUT UP MORE STAKES!

That commercial house that only a little while ago put on a sign of co-partnership will this winter be wrecked on a gambler's table. There will be many a money tilt that will spring a leak. In the third watch of the night pass down the streets of these cities, and you hear the click of the dice, and the sharp keen stroke of the balls on the billiard tables. At these places merchant princes dismount, and legislators tired of making laws, take a spite in breaking them. All classes of people are robbed by this crime—the import of foreign silks and the dealer in Chatham street pocket handkerchiefs. The clerks of the store take a hand after the shutters are put up, and the officers of the court while away their time while the jury is out.

In the third watch of the night also drunkenness does its worst. The drinker will be respectable at 8 o'clock in the evening, a little flushed at 9, talkative and garrulous at 10, at 11 blasphemous, at 12 the hat falls off, at 1 the man falls to the floor, asking for more drink. Strewn through the drinking saloons of the city, fathers, husbands, sons, good as you are by nature, are perhaps better. In the high circles of society it is hushed up. A merchant prince, if he gets noisy and uncontrollable, is taken by his fellow revellers, who try to get him to bed or take him home, where he falls flat in the entry. Do not wake up the children! They have had disgrace enough. Do not let them know it.

**HUSH IT UP.** But sometimes it cannot be hushed up when the rum touches the brain and the man becomes thoroughly frenzied. Such a one comes home, having been absent for some time, and during his absence his wife died, and she lay in the next room prepared for the obsequies, and he went in and dragged her by the locks and shook her out of the shroud and pitched her out of the window. Oh, when rum touches the brain you cannot hush it up!

A great deal of what is called Christian work goes for nothing, for the simple reason it is not practical. As after the battle of Antietam a man got out of an ambulance with a bag of tracts, and he went distributing the tracts, and George Stuart, one of the best Christian men in this country, said to him: “What are you distributing tracts for now? There are 3,000 bleeding to death, and they are not being treated.” He then distributed the tracts. We want more common sense in Christian work, taking the bread of this life in one hand and the bread of the next life in the other hand. No such inapt work as that done by the Christian man who went into a hospital with tract and coming to the bed of a man whose legs had been amputated, gave him a tract on the site of dancing. But there is a man who will not reform. He says, “I won't reform.” Well, then I have many a time seen there in a tragedy. I believe there is.

**FIVE ACTS IN A TRAGEDY.** Act first of the tragedy: A young man starting off from home, parents and sisters weeping to have him go, waving him over the hill, “Good-bye.” The call of the parents, “We'll stand by you, we'll support you, we'll help you, we'll never desert you.”

Act the second: The marriage at

sister's prayer and congratulation and exhortation of “How well it looks!”

Act the third: A woman waiting for her garment, the garment stuck into the broken windows, marks of bloodstains on the dress, biting of the nail of bloodless fingers, neglect and cruelty, and despair. Ring the bell and let the spirit of King Alfred see to it that we abide. His appointed time, then we shall rest and shall stand in our lot at the end of the days (Dan. viii., 18). Jacob lived 147 years; Isaac 180; Abraham 175, so that Joseph lived 100, comparatively short, but his much blessing for thousands of tens of thousands there was indeed what an amount of fellowship with Christ! If we are here for Christ, He will see to it that we abide. His appointed time, then we shall rest and shall stand in our lot at the end of the days (Dan. viii., 18).

Act the fourth: Three graves in a dark place grave of the child that died for lack of medicine, grave of the wife that died of a broken heart, grave of the man that died of dissipation. Oh, what a blasted heath with three graves! Plenty of weeds, no flowers. Ring the bell and let the curtain drop!

Act the fifth: A destroyed soul's eternity; no light, no music, blackness of darkness forever. But I can not look any longer. Woe! woe! I close my eyes to this last act of the tragedy. Quick, quick! Ring the bell and let the curtain drop. “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart rejoice in the days of thy youth, but know thou that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.” There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is death.”

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—

—