WASHINGTON REFUSING A DICTATORSHIP.

A Ballad.

Little folks, come marching forth,
Little feet, keep time,
In the east and west and north
And the southern clime.
Lay your lesson-books away,
Leave your sums undone,
We must celebrate today
Brave George Washington.
Little yet you understand,
All his worth and truth,
Only know he saved the land,
Faithful from his youth.

CAPTAIN NATHAN HALE

GENERAL WASHINGTON wanted a man. It was in September, 1776, at the city of New York, a few days after the battle of Long Island. The swift and deep East River flowed between the two hostile armies, and General Washington had as yet no system established for getting information of the enemy's movements and intentions. He never needed such information so much as at that crisis.

What would General Howe do next? If he crossed at Hell Gate, the American army, too small in numbers, and defeated the week before, might be caught on Manhattan Island as in a trap, and the issue of the contest might be made to depend upon a single battle; for in such circumstances defeat would involve the capture of the whole army. And yet General Washington was compelled to confess:

"We can not learn, nor have we been able to procure the least information of late."

Therefore he wanted a man. He wanted an intelligent man, cool-headed, skillful, brave, to cross the East River to Long Island, enter the enemy's camp, and get information as to his strength and intentions. He soon reached a conclusion. He was of the very flower of the young men of New England, and one of the best of the younger soldiers of the patriot army. He had been educated for the ministry, and his motive for adopting for a time the profession of arms was purely patriotic. This we know from the familiar records of his life at the time when the call to arms was first heard.

In addition to his other gifts and graces, he was handsome, vigorous and athletic, all in an extraordinary degree. If he had lived in our day he might have pulled the stroke oar at New London, or pitched for the college nine.

I AM READY TO FIGHT.

The officers were conversing in a group. No one had as yet spoken the decisive word. Colonel Knowlton appealed to a French sergeant, an old soldier of former wars, and asked him to volunteer.

"No, no," said he. "I am ready to fight the British at any place and time, but I do not feel willing to go among them to be hung up like a dog."

Captain Hale joined the group of officers. He said to Colonel Knowlton:

"I will undertake it."

Some of his best friends remonstrated. One of them, afterwards the famous Gen. William Hull, then a captain in Washington's army, has recorded Hale's reply to his own attempt to dissuade him:

"I think," said Hale, "I owe to my country the accomplishment of an object so important. I am fully sensible of the consequences of discovery and capture in such a situation. But for a year I have been attached to the army, and have not rendered any material service, while receiving compensation for which I make no return. I wish to be useful, and every kind of service necessary for the public good becomes honorable by being necessary."

He spoke, as General Hull remembered with earnestness and decision, as one who had considered the matter well, and had made up his mind.

Having received his instructions, he traveled fifty miles along the Sound as far as Norwalk, in Connecticut. One who saw him there made a very wise remark upon him, to the effect that he was "too good looking" to go as a spy. He could not deceive. "Some scrub by fellow ought to have gone." At Norwalk he assumed the disguise of a Dutch schoolmaster, putting on a suit of plain brown clothes and a round broad brimmed hat. He had no difficulty in crossing the Sound, since he bore an order from General Washington which placed at his disposal all the vessels belonging to congress. For several days everything appears to have gone well with him, and there is reason to believe that he passed through the entire British army without detection or even exciting suspicion.

Finding the British had crossed to New York, he followed them. He made his way back to Long Island, and nearly reached the point opposite Norwalk, where he had originally landed. Rendered, perhaps, too bold by success, he went into a well known and popular tavern, entered into conversation with the guests, and made himself very agreeable. The tradition is that he made himself too agreeable. A man present, suspecting or knowing that he was not the character he had assumed, quietly left the room, communicated his suspicions to the captain of a British boat anchored near, who dispatched a boat's crew to capture and bring on board the agreeable stranger. His true character was immediately revealed. Drawings of some of the British works, with notes in Latin, were found hidden in the soles of his shoes. Nor did he attempt to deceive his captors, and the English captain, humiliating as he said, that "so fine a fellow had fallen into his power," sent him to New York in one of his boats, and with him the fatal proofs that he was a spy.

"I ONLY REGRET THAT I HAVE ONE LIFE TO LOSE."

September 21st was the day on which he reached New York—the day of the great fire which laid one-third of the little city in ashes. From the time of his departure from General Washington's camp to that of his return to New York was about fourteen days. He was taken to General Howe's headquarters at the Beekman mansion, on the East River, near the corner of the present Fifty-first street and First avenue. It is a strange coincidence that this house to which he was brought to be tried as a spy was the very one from which Major Andre departed when he went to West Point. Tradition says that Captain Hale was examined in a greenhouse which then stood in the garden of the Beekman mansion.

Short was his trial, for he avowed at once his true character. The British general signed an order to his provost marshal directing him to receive into his custody the prisoner convicted as a spy, and to see him hanged by the neck "tomorrow morning at daybreak."

Terrible things are reported of the manner in which this noble prisoner, this admirable gentleman and hero, was treated by his jailor and executioner. There are savages in every large army, and it is possible that this provost marshal was one of them. It is said that he refused him writing materials, and afterwards, when Captain Hale had been furnished them by others, destroyed before his face his last letters to his mother and to the young lady to whom he was engaged to be married. As those letters were never received, this statement may be true. The other alleged horrors of the execution it is safe to disregard, because we know that it was conducted in the usual form and in the presence of many spectators and a considerable body of troops. One fact shines out from the distracting confusion of that morning, which will be cherished to the latest posterity as a precious ingot of the moral treasures of the American people. When asked if he had anything to say, Captain Hale replied:

"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country!"

The scene of his execution was probably an old graveyard in Chambers street, which was then called Barrack street. General Howe formally notified General Washington of the execution. In recent years, through the industry of investigators, the pathos and sublimity of these events have been in part revealed.

A few months ago a bronze statue of the young hero was unveiled in the New York City Hall Park. It is greatly to be regretted that our knowledge of this noble martyr is so slight; but we know enough to be sure that he merits the veneration of his countrymen.

TWO BIRTHDAYS.

It was little Hilda's birthday; it came on the twenty-second of February, which, as all you children know, is George Washington's birthday also.

Little Hilda often said that she felt very proud to have her birthday come on the same day as George Washington's, and this year she had begged her mamma to let her do something to celebrate the two birthdays, and she invited her schoolmates, twenty-five in all, to spend the afternoon of that day with her.

"Oh, see the big flag!" cried one little boy, and he and several of the others saluted the beautiful "stars and stripes" hung over the front door of Hilda's house.

Hilda's little brother Fred met the guests at the door; he wore a little suit made just like the uniform that Washington used to wear.

He carried in his hand a real cocked hat that had been worn during the revolution. It was a great deal too big for his little head, but no one minded that, as he did not put it on.

The hall and stairway were trimmed with flags and hunting, and when the children reached the parlor they were much pleased and surprised to be greeted by Hilda's mother, her Aunt Annie and Hilda herself, dressed like the ladies of Washington's time. The children thought Hilda's mother made a perfect Martha Washington.

The parlor was also trimmed with flags, and there were several fine paintings and engravings of Washington and his family, and pictures of and relics from his old home at Mount Vernon.

The ladies talked to the children a little while about "The Father of his Country," and read them a few short, amusing and interesting anecdotes about Washington and his time. Aunt Annie sang and played some patriotic music, and very soon it was time for the early tea, and the children marched out to the dining room two by two, keeping time to music, as they had been taught to do at school.

Here the greatest surprise of all awaited the children. In the center of the prettily decorated table stood a cherry-tree about half a yard tall. It was in a handsome pot, and the tree was loaded with fine red cherries. The children exclaimed with surprise, and although they soon saw that the cherries were artificial ones, and fastened on with pins, they were still greatly pleased; around the flower-pot, upon the table, were cherries as though fallen from the tree, and a very shining toy hatchet lay close beside, but no child wished to imitate little George Washington by trying to cut down this fine cherry-tree.

The dining room, like the others, was gay with red, white and blue, and a large portrait of our beloved George Washington looked down upon the happy children.

At each child's place was a tiny flag, or tri-colored rosette, to pin on dress or jacket, so the children soon looked very patriotic.

I will not try to tell you of all the good things they had to eat. There were sticks of bread tied with tri-colored ribbons at each plate; plenty of candied and also preserved cherries for all; a salad trimmed with beets cut in fancy shapes and surrounded with fresh violets to make as nearly as possible the national colors; some Washington pies, of course; and many crisp cookies cut in perfect hatchet shapes.

Some of the plates used were very old pewter ones, polished to look like silver. There were several ancient pewter tankards also on the table, but more for ornament than for use, and two Washington plates.

"LOOK AT THE FLAGS."

George Washington's health was drunk many times by the children in water, milk or cocoa. Various riddles, some original, were asked. One boy, a great punster, asked: "Why will the cherries never tell a lie?" Answer: "Because they are so candied."

After supper the children went again to the parlor and spent a short time in talking and playing games.

Then all joined in singing "America" with vigor and enthusiasm and went home much pleased with the celebrating of two birthdays.

ELIZABETH ROBINSON.

TALMAGE'S SERMON

"CHEERS FOR THE UNKNOWN" SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

From the Text, Romans xvi. 14 and 15 as Follows: Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, Philologus and Julia.

MATTHEW Henry, Albert Barnes, Adam Clark, Thomas Scott, and all the commentators pass by these verses without any especial remark, The other twenty people, mentioned in the chapter were distinguished for something and were therefore discussed by the illustrious expositors; but nothing is said about Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, Philologus and Julia. Where were they born? No one knows. When did they die? There is no record of their decease. For what were they distinguished? Absolutely nothing, or the trait of character would have been brought out by the apostle. If they had been very intrepid; or opulent, or brilliant, or musical, or cadetic, or crass of style, or in any wise anomalous, that feature would have been caught by the apostolic camera. But they were good people, because Paul sends to them his high Christian regards. They were ordinary people moving in ordinary sphere, attending to ordinary duty and meeting ordinary responsibilities.

What the world wants is a religion for ordinary people. If there be in the United States 70,000,000 people, there are certainly not more than 1,000,000 extraordinary; and then there are 69,000,000 ordinary, and we do well to turn our backs for a little while upon the distinguished and conspicuous people of the Bible and consider in our text the seven ordinary. We spend too much of our time in twisting garlands for remarkables and building thrones for magnates and sculpturing warriors and apotheosizing philanthropists. The rank and file of the Lord's soldiery need especial help.

The vast majority of people will never lead an army; will never write a state constitution, will never electrify a senate, will never make an important invention, will never introduce a philosophy, will never decide the fate of a nation. You do not expect to; you do not want to. You will not be a Moses to lead a nation out of bondage. You will not be a Joshua to prolong the daylight until you can shut five kings into a cave. You will not be a St. John to unroll an Apocalypse. You will not be a Paul to preside over an apostolic college. You will not be a Mary to mother a Christ. You will more probably be Asyncritus or Phlegon, or Hermas, or Patrobas, or Hermes, or Philologus, or Julia.

Many of you are women at the head of households. Every morning you plan for the day. The culinary department of the household is in your dominion. You decide all questions of diet. All the sanitary regulations of your house are under your supervision. To regulate the food and the apparel and the habits, and decide the thousand questions of home life is a tax upon brain and nerve and general health absolutely appalling, if there be no divine alleviation.

It does not help you much to be told that Elizabeth Fry did wonderful things amid the crimes of Newgate. It does not help you much to be told that Mrs. Judson was very brave among the Bornesian cannibals. It does not help you very much to be told that Florence Nightingale was very kind to the wounded in the Crimea. It would be better for me to tell you that the divine friend of Mary and Martha is your friend, and that he sees all the annoyances and disappointments and abrasions, and exasperations of an ordinary housekeeper from morn till night, and from the first day of the year until the last day of the year, and at your call he is ready with help and reinforcement.

They who provide the food of the world decide the health of the world. You have only to go on some errand amid the taverns and the hotels of the United States and Great Britain to appreciate the fact that a vast multitude of the human race are slaughtered by incompetent cookery. Though a young woman may have taken lessons in music, and may have taken lessons in painting, and lessons in astronomy, she is not well educated unless she has taken lessons in dough! They who decide the apparel of the world, and the food of the world, decide the endurance of the world.

An unthinking man may consider it a matter of little importance—the care of the household and the economies of domestic life—but I tell you the earth is strewn with the martyrs of kitchen and nursery. The health-shattered womanhood of America cries out for a God who can help ordinary women in the ordinary duties of housekeeping. The weaving, spindle, unappreciated work goes on, but the same Christ who stood on the bank of Galilee in the early morning and kindled the fire and had the fish already cleaned and broiling when the sportsmen stepped ashore, chilled and hungry, will help every woman to prepare breakfast, whether by her own hand, or the hand of her hired help. The God who made indestructible eulogy of Hannah, who made a coat for Samuel, her son, and carried it to the temple every year, will help every woman in preparing the family wardrobe. The God who opens the Bible with the story of Abraham's entertainment by the three angels on the plains of Mamre, will help every woman to provide hospitality, however rare and embarrassing. It is high time that some of the attention we have been giving to the remarkable women of the Bible—remarkable for their virtue, or their want of it, or remarkable for their deeds—Deborah and Jezebel, and Herodias and Athalia, and Dorcas and the Marys, excellent and abandoned—it is high time some of the attention we have been giving to these conspicuous women of the Bible be given to Julia, an ordinary woman, amid ordinary circumstances, attending to ordinary duties, and meeting ordinary responsibilities.

Now, what is wanted is grace—divine grace for ordinary business men, men who are harnessed from morn till night and all the days of their life—harnessed in business. Not grace to lose a hundred thousand, but grace to lose ten dollars. Not grace to surprise two hundred and fifty employes in a factory, but grace to supervise the bookkeeper and two salesmen, and the small boy that sweeps out the store. Grace to invest not the eighty thousand dollars of net profit, but the twenty-five hundred of clear gain. Grace not to endure the loss of a whole shipload of spices from the Indies, but grace to endure the loss of a paper of collars from the leakage of a displaced shingle on a poor roof. Grace not to endure the tardiness of the American Congress in passing a necessary law, but grace to endure the tardiness of an errand boy stopping to play marbles when he ought to deliver the goods. Such a grace as thousands of business men have today—keeping them tranquil, whether goods sell or do not sell, whether customers pay or do not pay, whether tariff is up or tariff is down, whether the crops are luxuriant or a dead failure—calm in all circumstances and amid all vicissitudes. That is the kind of grace we want.

Millions of men want it, and they may have it for the asking. Some hero or heroine comes to town, and as the procession passes through the streets the business men come out, stand on tiptoe on their store steps and look at some one who in Arctic clime, or in ocean storm, or in the day of battle, or in hospital agonies, did the world a blessing, not realizing that they, the enthusiastic spectators, have gone through trials in business life that are just as great before God. There are men who have gone through freezing Arctics and burning torrids, and amid Mareng oes of experience without moving five miles from their doorstep.

Now, what ordinary business men need is to realize that they have the friendship of that Christ who looked after the religious interests of Matthew, the custom house clerk, and helped Lydia, of Thyatira, to sell the dry goods, and who opened a bakery and fish market in the wilderness of Asia Minor to feed the seven thousand who had come out on a religious picnic, and who counts the hairs on your head with as much particularity as though they were the plumes of a coronation, and who took the trouble to stoop down with his finger writing on the ground, although the first shuffle of feet obliterated the divine calligraphy, and who knows just how many locusts there were in the Egyptian plague, and knew just how many ravens were necessary to supply Elijah's pantry by the brook Cherith, and who, as floral commander, leads forth all the regiments of primroses, foxgloves, daffodils, hyacinths, and lilies, which pitch their tents of beauty and kindle their campfires of color all around the hemisphere—that that Christ and that God knows the most minute affairs of your business life and however inconsiderable, understanding all the affairs of that woman who keeps a thread and needle store as well as all the affairs of a Rothschild and a Baring.

Then there are all the ordinary farmers. We talk about agricultural life, and we immediately shoot off to talk about Cincinnatus, the patrician, who went from the plow to a high position, and after he got through the dictatorship, in twenty-one days, went back again to the plow. What encouragement is that to ordinary farmers? The vast majority of them—none of them will be patricians. Perhaps none of them will be senators. If any of them have dictatorships, it will be over forty, or fifty, or one hundred acres of the old homestead. What these men want is grace, to keep their patience while plowing the hilly ones, and to keep cheerful amid the drouth that destroys the corn crop, and that enables them to restore the garden the day after the neighbor's cattle have broken in and trampled out the strawberry-bed, and gone through the lima bean patch, and eaten up the sweet corn in such large quantities that they must be kept from the water lest they swell up and die.

Grace in catching weather that enables them, without imprecation, to spread out the hay the third time, although again, and again, and again, it has been almost ready for the mow. Grace to doctor the cow with a hollow horn, and the sheep with the foot rot, and the horse with the distemper, and to compel the unwilling acres to yield a livelihood for the family, and schooling for the children and little extras to help the older boy in business, and something for the daughter's wedding outfit, and a little surplus for the time when the ankles will get stiff with age, and the breath will be a little short, and the swinging of the cradle through the hot harvest field will bring on the old man's vertigo. Better close up about Cincinnatus. I know five hundred farmers just as noble as he was. What they want is to know that they have the friendship of that Christ who often drew his similes from the farmer's life, as when he said, "A sower went forth to sow," as when he built his best parable out of the scene of a farmer boy coming back from his wanderings, and the old farm house look that night with rural jubilee, and who compared himself to a lamb in the pasture field, and who said that the eternal God is a farmer, declaring, "My father is the husbandman."

Those stone masons do not want to hear about Christopher Wren, the architect, who built St. Paul's Cathedral. It would be better to tell them how to carry the hod of brick up the ladder without slipping, and how on a cold morning, with the trowel to smooth off the mortar and keep cheerful, and how to be thankful to God for the plain food taken from the pail by the roadside. Carpenters, standing amid the adze, and the bit, and the plane, and the broad axe, need to be told that Christ was a carpenter, with his own hand wielding saw and hammer. Oh, this is a tired world, and it is an overworked world, and it is an under fed world, and it is a wrung out world, and men and women need to know that there is rest and recuperation in God and in that religion which was not so much intended for extraordinary people as for ordinary people, because there are more of them.

* * *

At an anniversary of a deaf and dumb asylum, one of the children wrote upon the blackboard words as sublime as the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the "Divina Commedia" all compressed in one paragraph. The examiner, in the signs of the mute language, asked her, "Who made the world?". The deaf and dumb girl wrote upon the blackboard, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The examiner asked her, "For what purpose did Christ come into the world?" The deaf and dumb girl wrote upon the blackboard, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The examiner said to her, "Why were you born deaf and dumb, while I hear and speak?" She wrote upon the blackboard, "Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight." Oh, that we might be baptized with a contented spirit. The spider draws poison out of a flower, the bee gets honey out of a thistle, but happiness is a heavenly elixir, and the contented spirit extracts it, not from the rhododendron of the hills, but from the lily of the valley.

MERRY WARFARE.

When Two Society Women Hate Each Other Cordially.

"You can't appreciate what may be embodied in that term bitter-sweet," sighed Limpton to the Detroit Free Press' man, "till you hear two society women in conversation, each hating the other fervently, and smiling, laughing and looking angelic while they are stabbing each other as cruelly and vigorously as though it were a duel to the death. This is between us, but I just came away from a little scene confirming my view of the case. Binckley's wife had called on Mrs. Blinkley, Mrs. Blinkley had said somewhere that Mrs. Limpton looked prematurely old, and that she dressed in execrable taste, considering her appearance. Of course, some good friend told Mrs. Limpton. I expected blue blazes when the two sportive stories of love and adventure, addressed as above and mention this paper. Stamps taken.

Isn't it strange that so many men think they can do most for the Lord where the pay is best.

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Clean blood means a clear skin. No beauty without it. Cascarets, Candy Cathartic cleanse your blood and keep it clean, by stirring up the liver and driving all impurities from the body. Begin today for banish pimples, boils, blotches, blackheads, and that sickly sallow complexion by taking Cascarets—beauty for ten cents. All druggists satisfaction guaranteed, 10c, 25c, 50c.

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Hood's Pills cure sick headache, 25c.

According to Jewish statutes it was unlawful to muzzle the ox engaged in treading out the corn, the animal being allowed to eat his fill.

PRES. M'KINLEY VS. FREE SILVER.

A battle of giants is going to take place this summer on 30,000 farms in America, not in talk or words, but in yields. Salzer's two new potato marvels are named as above, and he offers a price for the biggest potato yield, also $400 in gold for suitable names for his corn (17 inches long) and oat prodigies. Only seedsmen in America growing grasses, clovers and farm seeds and selling potatoes at $1.00 a barrel. The editor urges you to try Salzer's Northern Grown Seeds, and to

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