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## **The Infidel's Sermon to the Pirates.**

native of Sweden who had imbibed infidel views, had occasion to go from one port to another in the Baltic Sea. When he came to the place whence he expected to sail, the vessel was gone. On inquiring, he found a fishing boat going the same way, in which he embarked. After being for some time out to sea, the men observing that he had several trunks and chests on board, concluded he must be very rich, and therefore agreed among themselves to throw him overboard. This he heard them express, which gave him great uneasiness. However, he took occasion to open one of his trunks, which contained some books. Observing this, they remarked among themselves that it was not worth while to throw him into the sea, as they did not want any books, which they supposed were all the trunks contained. They asked him if he were a priest. Hardly knowing what reply to make them, he told them he was; and at this they seemed much pleased, and said they would have a sermon on the next day, as it was the Sabbath. This increased the anxiety and distress of his mind, for he knew himself to be as incapable of such an undertaking as it was possible for any one to be, as he knew very little of the Scriptures; neither did he believe in the inspiration of the Bible.

At great length they came to a small rocky island, perhaps a quarter of a mile in circumference, where was a company of pirates, who had chosen this little sequestered spot to deposit their treasures. He was taken to a cave, and introduced to an old woman, to whom they remarked that they were to have a sermon preached the next day. She said she was very glad of it, for she had not heard the Word of God for a great while. His was a trying case, for preach he must; still he knew nothing about preaching. If he refused, or undertook to preach and did not please, he expected it would be his death. With these thoughts he passed a sleepless night; and in the morning his mind was not settled upon anything. To call upon God, whom he believed to be inaccessible, was altogether vain. He could devise no way whereby he might be saved. He walked to and fro, still shut up in darkness striving to collect something to say to them, but could not think of even a single sentence.

When the appointed time for the service arrived, he entered the cave, where he found the men assembled. There was a seat prepared for him, and a table with a Bible on it. They sat for the space of half an hour in profound silence; and even then the anguish of his soul was as great as human nature was capable of enduring. At length these words came to his mind: "Verily, there is a reward for the righteous: verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth." He arose and delivered them; then others words presented themselves, and so on,

till his understanding became opened, and his heart enlarged in a manner astonishing to himself. He spoke upon subject suited to their condition; the reward of the righteous, the judgments of the wicked, the necessity of repentance, and the importance of a change of life. The matchless love of God to the children of men had such a powerful effect upon the minds of these wretched beings, that they were melted into tears. Nor was he less astonished at the unbounded goodness of Almighty God, in thus interposing to save his spiritual as well as his natural life; and well might he exclaim, "This is the Lord's doing and marvellous in our eyes." Under a deep sense of God's goodness, his heart became filled with thankfulness, which it was out of his power to express. What a marvellous change was thus suddenly brought about by Divine interposition! He who a little while before disbelieved in communion with God and the soul, became as humble as a little child; and they who were so lately meditating on his death, now were filled with love and goodwill towards each other, particularly towards him; manifesting affectionate kindness, and willing to render him all the assistance in their power.

The next morning they fitted out one of their vessels, and conveyed him whither he desired. From that time he became a changed man; from being a slave to the influence of infidelity, he was brought to be a sincere believer in the power and efficacy of the truth as it is in Jesus.

[How marvellous the providence of God, and the sovereignty of his grace! Who is he that has stepped beyond the range of Almighty love? or has sinned too much to be forgiven? Reader! are you an infidel? What would you do in a similar situation? What other doctrine than that of Scripture would benefit pirates? Certainly not your own. What would you like to teach your own children? Certainly not your own sentiments. You feel that you would not wish to hear your own offspring blaspheming God. Moreover, forgive us, if we declare our opinion that thou knowest that there is a God, though with thy lips thou deniest him. Think, we beseech thee, of thy Maker, and of his Son, the Saviour; and may Eternal love bring even thee to the Redeemer.—C. H. S.]

### **No. 3—The Actress.**

An actress in one of the English provincial or country theatres, was, one day, passing through the streets of the town in which she then resided, when her attention was attracted by the sound of voices, which she heard in a poor cottage before her. Curiosity prompted her to look in at an open door, when she saw a few poor people sitting together, one of whom, at the moment of her observation, was giving out the following hymn, which the others joined in singing:—

"Depth of mercy! can there be  
Mercy still reserved for me?"

The tune was sweet and simple, but she heeded it not. The words had riveted her attention, and she stood motionless, until she was invited to enter by the woman of the house, who had observed her standing at the door. She complied, and remained during a prayer which was offered up by one of the little company; and uncouth as the expressions might seem in her ears, they carried with them a conviction of sincerity on the part of the person then employed. She quitted the cottage, but the words of the hymn followed her; she could not banish them from her mind, and at last she resolved to procure the book which contained the hymn. The more she read it, the more decided her serious impressions became. She attended the ministry of the Gospel, read her hitherto neglected and despised Bible, and bowed herself in humility and contrition of heart before him whose mercy she felt she needed, whose sacrifices are those of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and who has declared that therewith he is well pleased.

Her profession she determined at once, and for ever, to renounce; and for some little time excused herself from appearing on the stage, without, however, disclosing her change of sentiments, or making known her resolution finally to leave it.

The manager of the theatre called upon her one morning, and requested her to sustain the principal character in a new play which was to be performed the next week for his benefit. She had frequently performed this character to general admiration; but she now, however, told him her resolution never to appear as an actress again, at the same time giving her reasons. At first he attempted to overcome her scruples by ridicule, but this was unavailing; he then represented the loss he should incur by her refusal, and concluded his arguments by promising, that if to oblige him she would act on this occasion, it should be the last request of the kind he would ever make. Unable to resist his solicitations, she promised to appear, and on the appointed evening went to the theatre. The character she assumed required her, on her first entrance, to sing a song; and when the curtain was drawn up, the orchestra immediately began the accompaniment; but she stood as if lost in thought and as one forgetting all around her, and her own situation. The music ceased, but she did not sing; and supposing her to be overcome by embarrassment, the band again commenced. A second time they paused for her to begin, and still she did not open her lips. A third time the air was played, and then, with clasped hands, and eyes suffused with tears, she sang, not the words of the song, but—

“Depth of mercy! can there be  
Mercy still reserved for me!”

It is almost needless to add, that the performance was suddenly ended; many ridiculed, though, some were induced from that memorable night to “consider their ways,” and to reflect on the wonderful power of that religion which could so influence the heart and change the life of one hitherto so vain, and so evidently pursuing the road which leadeth to destruction.

It would be satisfactory to the reader to know, that the change in Miss \_\_\_\_\_ was as permanent as it was singular; she walked consistently with her profession of religion for many years, and at length became the wife of a minister of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Perhaps, dear reader, you are a great transgressor, then you fear there is no forgiveness for you; let this remove your fears. You may be the vilest creature out of hell, and yet grace can make you as pure as the angels in heaven. God would be just should he damn you, but he can be just and yet save you. Do you feel that the Lord has a right over you to do as he pleases? Do you feel that you have no claim upon him? Then, rejoice, for Jesus Christ has borne *your* guilt, and carried *your* sorrows, and you shall assuredly be saved. You are a *sinner* in the true sense of that word, then remember Jesus came to save sinners, and you among the rest, if you know yourself to be a sinner.—C. H. S.]

“Lo, th’ incarnate God ascended,  
Pleads the merit of his blood:  
Venture on him, venture wholly,  
Let no other trust intrude;  
None but Jesus  
Can do helpless sinners good.”