

Christ's early life. How can this be explained but for the maternal plan to surround Jesus in His early years with the commonplace, to prevent the too-early maturity of the growing lad? In this, she was evidently successful, and for this she is to be commended.

What was the chief characteristic of Mary, the sister of Lazarus? Was it not the power to detect, in those she met, what was the main thing needing their sympathy. In other words, was she not a kind of thought-reader who had the ability at a special moment to put the hand upon the special want of a human soul? She could read the thoughts of Jesus. She could see that He sought the joy of human friendship, the establishment of an earthly brotherhood, and the kindling of a divine love which would result in the Communion of soul with soul. Her brother Lazarus was dead. Mary had gone to meet Jesus. She had thrown herself at His feet and cried: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died!" What abundant faith she thus expressed!

Martha loved our Lord as well as Mary. The former attended to His physical needs by giving of her best at the feast she prepared for Him. We see Mary sitting at His feet listening to His words, and Martha busying herself in getting ready the meals, both anxious for His welfare.

To the general public, Mary of Magdala, or Mary Magdalene is one of the most interesting women of the Bible, because she portrays the darkness of sin into the brilliant light of the redeemed. Being rescued from sin by Christ, Mary Magdalene, from being helped, had a desire to help others. We read in Mark 16 that she, amongst other good women, ministered sympathically where she could give nothing but her presence; she was present at the burial. Mary Magdalene had the first vision of the risen Lord. She came to the grave with great expectations to preserve His dead body. There she had a vision of Jesus and mistook Him for the gardener. When she finally recognized Him, just the word "Master!" escaped her lips. She was sent for on an apostolic mission as an apostle to the apostles to tell of a risen Saviour. The most beautiful ornament in Mary's life consisted in her tender works of mercy and pity;

and in memory of this side of her character there have been established, in various parts of the world, Magdala hospitals for the reformation of the fallen sisters of humankind. Mary took a box of the costliest ointment, broke it into fragments and poured it upon His head in gratitude. The box was shattered, but, with the shattering the fragrance began. While it was whole, its perfume was confined, but the breaking gave it wings; it filled all the house. This act of Mary's told Jesus that, though His body might be broken, though His earthly tabernacle might be shattered, His influence would never be buried. The fragrance of His life would spread far and wide. Jesus realised the power of this symbol, for He said: "Whosoever the Gospel is preached throughout the world, there shall that, which this woman hath done, be spoken of." May we all have such a record given to us! May we break the box so that the ointment of brotherly and sisterly kindness may flow in order to give sympathy and so lessen life's burdens!

When the disciples assembled in the Upper Room, after they had witnessed the Ascension of our Lord, we are told that, gathered together with them, were the Christian women, amongst whom were Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and possibly Mary Magdalene, Salome, Susanna, Joanna, Mary and Martha of Bethany.

In St. Luke's Gospel we read of a woman's faith in Christ. She had paid her all to physicians for healing, but had received none, and who, when she heard of Christ, pressed among the crowd to touch the hem of His garment, believing that, in so doing, she would be healed. Christ asked: "Who touched Me?" The woman, trembling, fell down before Him and told all. Our Saviour said, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." Thus faith gained for her the blessing.

Time will not allow me to refer to the evil influence exerted by some of the women of the New Testament. Suffice it to say that, without Christian graces, woman may become a source of temptation and of injustice.

In conclusion, I venture the thought that that which has bridged

the gulf between the man and the woman has not been altogether the recognition of woman by Christianity, nor the honoured place assigned to her in Christian service. It has really resulted from a source deeper down—namely the character of the Master.

The heroism of the Son of Man is the heroism of ideal womanhood. The virtues which he lifted to the Mount were those that shone in His own soul, precisely those virtues which the past ages had despised as feminine.

Thus, through the influence of the teaching of Christ, the qualities which were once deemed lowly have now been esteemed lofty, and the attributes of Christian service have been the badges of royalty.

May the Son of Man be blessed for ever and ever for lighting in the sky a new star, the star of emancipated womanhood.

"Woman may err, woman may give  
her mind

To evil thoughts and lose her pure  
estate;

But for one woman who affronts her  
kind

By wicked passions and remorse-  
less hate

A thousand make amends in age and  
youth

By heavenly pity, by sweet sympathy,

By patient kindness, by enduring  
truth,

By love, supremest in adversity.

Theirs is the task to succour the  
distressed,

To feed the hungry and to cheer the  
sad,

To pour the balm upon the wound-  
ed breast

And find dear pity even for the  
bad."

"In the battle, in the pulpit, in the  
conflicts of the land

On fame's high and dizzy summit,  
woman's form may never stand;

But more holy is her mission, noblest  
work that God has given,

Her's to lift, with hands so tender,  
our poor world up nearer  
Heaven."

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Bishop Thomas Nicholson, of the Methodist Church, says: "The greatest need of the hour is to get to the last citizen and voter the actual facts of the benefits of Prohibition."