

Pilgrim's Progress II - 49 – The Author's Way

The Author's Way of Sending Forth His Second Part of the Pilgrim

Go now, my little book, to every place,
Where my first PILGRIM has but shown his face.
Call at their door; if any say, "Who's there?"
Then answer thou, "CHRISTIANA is here."
And if they bid thee come in, then enter thou
With all thy boys. And then, as thou know'st how,
Tell who they are, also from whence they come.
Perhaps they'll know them by their looks, or name;
But if they should not, ask them yet again
If formerly they did not entertain
One CHRISTIAN, a pilgrim. If they say
They did, and were delighted in his way,
Then let them know that these related were
Unto him; yea, his wife and children are.
Tell them that they have left their house and home
Are turned pilgrims; seek a world to come:
That they have met with hardships in the way:
That they do meet with troubles night and day:
That they have trod on serpents, fought with devils;
Have also overcome a many evils.
Yea, tell them also of the next who have,
Of love to pilgrimage, been stout and brave
Defenders of that way; and how they still
Refuse this world to do their Father's will.
Go, tell them also of those dainty things
That pilgrimage unto the pilgrim brings.
Let them acquainted be, too, how they are
Beloved of their King, under his care;
What goodly mansions for them he provides,
Though they meet with rough winds and swelling tides;
How brave a calm they will enjoy at last—
Who to their Lord and by his ways hold fast.
Perhaps with heart and hand they will embrace
Thee, as they did my firstling; and will grace
Thee and thy fellows with such cheer and fare,
As show will they of pilgrims lovers are.

FIRST OBJECTION.

But how, if they will not believe of me
That I am truly thine? 'cause some there be
That counterfeit the pilgrim, and his name:
Seek by disguise to seem the very same;

And by that means have wrought themselves into
The hands and houses of I know not who.

ANSWER.

'Tis true, some have of late, to counterfeit
My pilgrim, to their own my title set;
Yea, others half my name and title too
Have stitched to their book, to make them do:
But yet they, by their features, do declare
Themselves not mine to be, whose-e'er they are.
If such thou meetest with, then thine only way,
Before them all, is, to say out thy say
In thine own native language, which no man
Now uses nor with ease dissemble can.
If, after all, they still of you shall doubt,
Thinking that you, like gipsies, go about,
In naughty wise the country to defile,
Or that you seek good people to beguile
With things unwarrantable—send for me,
And I will testify you pilgrims be;
Yea, I will testify that only you
My pilgrims are: and that alone will do.

SECOND OBJECTION.

But yet, perhaps, I may enquire for him
Of those that wish him damned life and limb:
What shall I do when I, at such a door,
For pilgrims ask, and they shall rage the more?

ANSWER.

Fright not thyself, my book, for such bugbears
Are nothing else but ground for groundless fears.
My pilgrim's book has travelled sea and land,
Yet could I never come to understand
That it was slighted, or turned out of door
By any kingdom, were they rich or poor.
In France and Flanders, where men kill each other,
My pilgrim is esteemed a friend, a brother.
In Holland too 't is said, as I am told,
My pilgrim is with some worth more than gold,
Highlanders and wild Irish can agree,
My pilgrim should familiar with them be.
'T is in New England under such advance—
Receives there so much loving countenance—

As to be trimmed, new-clothed, and decked with gems,
That it may show its features and its limbs;
Yet more, so comely doth my pilgrim walk
That of him thousands daily sing and talk.
If you draw nearer home, it will appear
My pilgrim knows no ground of shame or fear.
City and country will him entertain.
With "Welcome, pilgrim!" Yea, they can't refrain
From smiling if my pilgrim be but by,
Or shows his head in any company.
Brave gallants do my pilgrim hug and love;
Esteem it much; yea, value it above
Things of a greater bulk; yea, with delight,
Say my lark's leg is better than a kite.
Young ladies, and young gentlewomen too,
Do no small kindness to my pilgrim show:
Their cabinets, their bosoms, and their hearts
My pilgrim has; 'cause he to them imparts
His pretty riddles in such wholesome strains,
As yields them profit double to their pains
Of reading. Yea, I think I may be bold
To say—some prize him far above their gold.
The very children that do walk the street,
If they do but my holy pilgrim meet,
Salute him will; will wish him well and say,
"He is the only stripling of the day."
They that have never seen him, yet admire
What they have heard of him; and much desire
To have his company, and hear him tell
Those pilgrim stories which he knows so well.
Yea, some who did not love him at the first
But called him "fool" and "noddy," say they must,
Now they have seen and heard him, him commend;
And to those whom they love they do him send.
Wherefore, my second part, thou needest not be
Afraid to show thy head: none can hurt thee:
That wish but well to him that went before;
'Cause thou comest after with a second store
Of things as good, as rich, as profitable,
For young, for old, for staggering, and for stable.

THIRD OBJECTION.

But some there be that say he laughs too loud;
And some do say his head is in a cloud.
Some say, his words and stories are so dark,
They know not how by them to find his mark.

ANSWER.

One may, I think, say, "Both his laughs and cries
May well be guessed at by his watery eyes."
Some things are of that nature as to make,
One's fancy chuckle, while his heart doth ache.
When Jacob saw his Rachel with the sheep,
He did at the same time both kiss and weep.
Whereas some say a cloud is in his head:
That doth but show how wisdom's covered
With its own mantles; and to stir the mind
To a search after what it fain would find.
Things that seem to be hid in words obscure,
Do but the godly mind the more allure
To study what those sayings should contain,
That speak to us in such a cloudy strain.
I also know a dark similitude
Will on the fancy more itself intrude;
And will stick faster in the heart and head,
Than things from similes not borrowed.
Wherefore, my book, let no discouragement
Hinder thy travels. Behold, thou forth art sent
To friends, not foes; to friends that will give place,
To thee, thy pilgrims and thy words embrace.
Besides, what my first pilgrim left concealed,
Thou, my brave second pilgrim, hath revealed:
What CHRISTIAN left locked up, and went his way,
Sweet CHRISTIANA opens with her key.

FOURTH OBJECTION.

But some love not the method of your first;
"Romance" they call it; throw it away as dust,
If I should meet with such, what should I say?
Must I slight them as they slight me; or nay?

ANSWER.

My CHRISTIANA, if with such thou meet,
By all means, in all loving wise, them greet,
Render them not reviling for revile;
But if they frown, I prithee on them smile.
Perhaps 't is nature, or some ill report,
Has made them thus despise, or thus retort.
Some love no cheese; some love no fish; and some
Love not their friends, nor their own house or home:

Some start at pig; slight chicken; love not fowl
More than they love a cuckoo or an owl.
Leave such, my CHRISTIANA, to their choice;
And seek those who, to find thee, will rejoice.
By no means strive; but, in all humble wise,
Present thee to them in thy pilgrim's guise.
Go then, my little book, and show to all
That entertain, and bid thee welcome shall,
What thou shalt keep close, shut up from the rest;
And wish what thou shalt show them may be blessed
To them for good—may make them choose to be
Pilgrims better by far than thee or me.
Go then, I say, tell all men who thou art:
Say, "I am CHRISTIANA; and my part
Is now, with my four sons, to tell you what
It is for men to take a pilgrim's lot."
Go also tell them who, and what, they be
That now do go on pilgrimage with thee.
Say, "Here's my neighbour MERCY: she is one
That has long time with me a pilgrim gone;
Come, see her in her virgin face, and learn
'Twixt idle ones and pilgrims to discern.
Yea, let young damsels learn of her to prize
The 'world' which is 'to come' in any wise;
When little tripping maidens follow God,
And leave old doting sinners to his rod:
'T is like those days wherein the young ones cried
'Hosannah!' to whom old ones did deride."
Next tell them of old HONEST, who you found,
With his white hairs, treading the pilgrim's ground:
Yea, tell them how plain hearted this man was,
How after his good Lord he bare his cross.
Perhaps with some grey head this may prevail
With Christ to fall in love, and sin bewail.
Tell them also how Master FEARING went
On pilgrimage, and how the time he spent
In solitariness, with fears and cries;
And how at last he won the joyful prize.
He was a good man, though much down in spirit;
He is a good man, and doth life inherit.
Tell them of Master FEEBLE-MIND also,
Who, not before, but still behind, would go,
Show them also how he had like been slain,
And how one GREAT-HEART did his life regain.
This man was true of heart though weak in grace;
One might true godliness read in his face.
Then tell them of Master READY-TO-HALT,

A man with crutches, but much without fault;
Tell them how Master FEEBLE-MIND and he
Did love, and in opinions much agree.
And let all know, though weakness was their chance.
Yet sometimes one could sing, the other dance.
Forget not Master VALIANT-FOR-THE-TRUTH,
That man of courage, though a very youth:
Tell everyone his spirit was so stout,
No man could ever make him face about!
And how GREAT-HEART and he could not forbear,
But put down Doubting Castle, slay DESPAIR.
Overlook not Master DESPONDENCY,
Nor MUCH-AFRAID, his daughter; though they lie
Under such mantles as may make them look
(With some) as if their God had them forsook.
They softly went, but sure; and at the end
Found that the Lord of pilgrims was their friend.
When thou hast told the world of all these things,
Then turn about, my book, and touch these strings;
Which, if but touched, will such music make,
They'll make a cripple dance, a giant quake.
These riddles that lie couched within thy breast,
Freely propound, expound; and for the rest
Of thy mysterious lines, let them remain
For those whose nimble fancies shall them gain.
Now may this little book a blessing be
To those that love this little book and me;
And may its buyer have no cause to say
His money is but lost or thrown away.
Yea, may this second pilgrim yield that fruit,
As may with each good pilgrim's fancy suit;
And may it persuade some that go astray,
To turn their foot and heart to the right way—
Is the hearty prayer of

THE AUTHOR,

JOHN BUNYAN.