

ABOVE THE BROODING CLOUD
P.S. 121:1

R.L.G.Irving wrote a book entitled, "Romance of Mountain-
Climbing!" The first photograph in the book shows the tre-
mendous face of Mount Blanc, which is 15000 feet above sea
level. The middle part of the mountain is enveloped with
clouds but the peak towers above the clouds in the clear
air. The caption of the picture is "Clear Of The Brooding
Cloud." You may not have seen Mount Blanc, I have not, but
you have seen mountains and perhaps saw that very sight
of the peak towering above the clouds in the open sunlight.

This is a good picture of life. Perhaps all of us have our
brooding clouds above which we need to climb.

I. One cloud is despondency. Here, indeed, brooding applies
for brooding means given to meditating moodily and or
sullenly.

King Saul was addicted to such an attitude and was given
to turning his mind to things of darkness. Because of the
fact that he was subject to being overcome by his down-
cast thoughts, David was brought into the court to play
musical instruments to cheer him up. It is surprising to
see what music will do to change a person's attitude from
one of discouragement to the spirit of going on again.
Why I heard of a young minister who got in love with a
young lady in the choir because of her singing so beauti-
fully. The thing grew on him until he proposed to her
and they got married. When they retired he saw her lay off
her wig that he did not know she wore, and the paint being
washed off her face she did not look like the same per-
son. He was mightily discouraged as he looked at her. In
his despondency he exclaimed, "Wife please get up and sing"
Music has its charm. our lives should be more musical.

Instead of David's music helping Saul it made him jealous.
Saul sank lower and lower till he entered a state of melan-
cholia that he never came out of. Some body said of Scho-
penhauer "That the dark things of life were all that he
could see, and that he pictured the whole world in terms
of pessimism. He was estranged from his mother. He was dis-
appointed in life.

HE WROTE.....(OVER)

IF WE SHOULD BRING CLEARLY TO HIS SIGHT THE TERRIBLE SUFFERINGS AND MISERIES TO WHICH HIS LIFE IS CONSTANTLY EXPOSED, HE WOULD BE SEIZED WITH HORROR: AND IF WE WERE TO CONDUCT THE CONFIDENT OPTIMIST THROUGH THE HOSPITALS, INFIRMARIES, SURGICAL OPERATING ROOMS, THROUGH THE PRISONS, TORTURE CHAMBERS, SLAVE KEMMELS; OVER BATTLE FIELDS, PLACE OF EXECUTION, OPEN UP TO HIM ALL THE DARK ABODES OF MISERY WHERE IT HIDES ITSELF FROM THE GLANCE OF COLD CURIOSITY, AND FINALLY ALLOW HIM TO LOOK INTO STARVING DUNGEONS, HE TOO WOULD UNDERSTAND AT LAST THE NATURE OF THIS "BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS." TO HIM IT WAS THE WORSE OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS.

The poet Edwin Arlington Robinson has written some lines that compare favorably with Schopenhauer's despondency:

If after all that we have lived and taught
 All comes to naught
 If there be nothing after NOW
 And we be nothing any how
 And we know that why live?
 T'were sure but weaklings vain distress
 To suffer dungeons where so many doors
 Will open on the cold eternal shores
 That looksheer down
 To the dark tideless floods of nothingness
 Where all who know drown.

Persons like these who wrap themselves in a dark cloud of despondency are looking at some things which are in reality a part of this world but only a PART. And as Maeterlinck once said,

"The vast profound thought that brings with it nothing but sadness is energy burning its wings in the darkness to throw light on the walls of its prison."

II. A second brooding cloud that people wrap around them is addiction to alcoholism. At a distance this cloud looks like a rosy cloud...one that hangs over gay gatherings, one that envelops some of the sharp corners of reality in a gentler fog of unreality.

They tell me that when you fly into a cloud in an airplane, no matter how rosy the cloud looks from the outside, in the inside it is a place of dampness, of dark-

ness, and of extreme turbulence. This, according to alcoholics, is true of Alcoholism. The writer of Proverbs described it this way centuries ago:

"Your eyes will see strange things
and your mind utter perverse things
You will be like one that lies down in the midst of the sea
like one who lies on top of a mast
They struck me, you will say, but I was not hurt
they beat me, but I did not feel it
When shall I awake?
I will seek another drink."

Three million people are problem drinkers and one million or thereabout are chronic alcoholics.

III. There is the cloud of psychosomatic disease. The first cloud was mental, the second physical, and the third is a strange combination of the first two where the trend of the thoughts and the strain of the emotions have their reflections in the actual derangement of the physical organism. I AM NOT JUST PREACHING TO YOU TO DAY I BELIEVE THAT I AM TELLING YOU THE TRUTH.

✓ This thing was spoken of in Proverbs 17:22 which reads, "A downcast spirit dries up the bones".

Dr. John A. Schindler describes it this way: "When one has such a thick layer of C.D.T. (Cares, difficulties, trouble) that he can not get up into the realm of joy once in a while, he has psychosomatic illness."

According to him there are three groups of people that get these diseases:

- a. Those who are habitually crabby
- b. Those who continually worry
- c. Those who get into some kind of a mess.

is estimated that 50% of the people going to doctors to day are victims of this sort of illness.

These then are the dark clouds that people wrap around themselves..despondency, alcoholism or drugs, and the combination of the two.

PRINCIPLES OF HOPE

1. If the mind can cut channels of worry, it can also build avenues of faith. See what worry does. Worry a little, then anxiety continues through the mind until a broad channel is made. Some one remarked that "Worry is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained."

But if fear and worry uncontrolled cut deep channels in the mind the opposite may be true also. Every time a thought of faith is put in place of a thought of fear part of this avenue is built. Every time trust is placed in the mind over against a thought of worry another stone is laid in the avenue of faith...and so it goes.

2. We may formulate the principle that if our habits can work against us they can also work for us. Habits are formed by doing a thing over and over again. The proverb says that habits at first are cobwebs, at last cables."

Many of the cures Jesus made were by forgiving a man's sins, "Thy sins be forgiven thee arise and walk" Many people are sick because of the sins hurting their bodies. If they quit those and are forgiven naturally they will recover from the illness.

PRACTICES WHICH BRING VICTORY

- a. One is to believe in God. Alcoholic and his watch
- b. Do right . Sister in dispute with a sister
- c. Use the Church.
- d. Look to Jesus Christ. Look at the Cross God has burnt in the sky and kneel at it with a plea for forgiveness and we will ascend above the brooding cloud.

