



A Millionaire and a Caterpillar

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Ontario Canada M1X 1S3
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LIKE many another man, Titus Salt, a factory boy in England, began life poor. A hard worker with an inventive mind, he developed a process for using coarse Russian wool, and became one of the wealthiest woolen manufacturers. After he invented "alpaca," he became a multi-millionaire. A man of many interests, he built a model town, called Saltaire, for his workers. Later he was elected to Parliament and, because his progressive ideas had benefited the whole industrial life of England, Queen Victoria made him a baron.

Was Sir Titus Salt satisfied? He was not. As wise King Solomon had said long before, "*The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing*" (Eccl. 1:8). All that Sir Titus Salt had heard, seen, and possessed had not given and could not bring him satisfaction.

One Sunday Sir Titus heard a preacher tell about how, while sitting in his garden, he had watched a caterpillar climb a painted stick which had been stuck into the ground as a decoration. The caterpillar slowly climbed to the top of the stick, then reared itself, feeling this way and that for some juicy twig on which to feed, or for some way of further progress. But the caterpillar was disappointed. Groping about, it found nothing. Slowly it returned to the ground, crawled along until it reached another painted stick, and did the same thing all over again. This happened several times.

"There are many painted sticks in the world," said the preacher. "There are the painted sticks of pleasure, of wealth, of power, of fame. All these call to men, and say, 'Climb me, and you will find the desire of your heart. Climb me and you will fulfill the purpose of your existence. Climb me and taste the fruits of success. Climb me and find satisfaction.' "But," continued the preacher, "they are only painted sticks."

The very next day the preacher had a visitor. It was the wealthy Baron, who said, "Sir, I was in your congregation last night, and heard what you said about the painted sticks. I want to tell you that I have been climbing them, and today I am a weary man. Tell me, is there rest for a weary millionaire?"

The preacher had the great joy of pointing that sin-burdened soul to Him who said, "*COME UNTO ME, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I WILL GIVE YOU REST*" (Matt. 11:28). And Sir Titus, who long had sought satisfaction from this world and had never found it, laid his heavy burden at the feet of the Lord Jesus, receiving Him as his personal Saviour, and was able to sing joyfully (as so many of us can),

*"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad;
I found in Him a resting place,
And He has made me glad."*

Friend, are you, too, climbing the painted sticks of this world, in the vain pursuit of pleasure, wealth, power, or fame—living your whole life away from God? The Scripture says,

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment." (Ecclesiastes 11:9)

Are you not burdened about your sins? Turn now, like Titus Salt, to the only Saviour, and there at His feet, confess that you are a sinner and that you want to be saved. In Him you will find pardon, peace, and joy forever. His precious blood cleanses from all sin (1 John 1:9). "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psalm 107:9).