

The Foolish Pride and Self-Sufficiency of the Natural Man

Before his death, Timothy McVeigh defiantly chose as his last words the famous poem by William Henley, entitled *Invictus* (unconquerable). It ends, “**I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul.**”

Dorothea Day, a believer, wrote a parallel poem which answers the poem of Henley line for line. The conclusion of this poem is quite different. Both poems are given below side by side:

INVICTUS William Ernest Henley <i>(Humanist)</i>	MY CAPTAIN Dorothea Day <i>(Christian)</i>
<p>Out of the night that covers me Black as the Pit from pole to pole, I thank whatever gods may be For my unconquerable soul.</p> <p>In the fell clutch of circumstance I have not winced nor cried aloud. Under the bludgeonings of chance My head is bloody, but unbowed.</p> <p>Beyond this place of wrath and tears Looms but the Horror of the shade, And yet the menace of the years Finds and shall find me unafraid.</p> <p>It matters not how strait the gate, How charged with punishments the scroll, I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul.</p>	<p>Out of the night that dazzles me, Bright as the sun from pole to pole, I thank the God I know to be For Christ the conqueror of my soul.</p> <p>Since His the sway of circumstance, I would not wince nor cry aloud. Under that rule which men call chance My head with joy is humbly bowed.</p> <p>Beyond this place of sin and tears That life with Him! And His the aid, Despite the menace of the years, Keeps, and shall keep me, unafraid..</p> <p>I have no fear, though strait the gate, He cleared from punishment the scroll, Christ is the Master of my fate, Christ is the Captain of my soul.</p>

THE CONTRAST

INFIDELITY AND ITS ANSWER

DRAWN BY E. L. PACE



Aye, aye sir!

Out of the night that covers me
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud;
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade;
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishment the scroll;
I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

Wm. Henley's "Invictus"

Out of the light that dazzles me,
Bright as the sun from pole to pole,
I thank the God I know to be
For Christ the conqueror of my soul.

Since His the sway of circumstance
I would not wince nor cry aloud.
Under that rule which men call chance
My head with joy is humbly bowed.

Beyond this place of sin and tears—
That life with Him! and His the aid,
That, spite the menace of the years,
Keeps, and shall keep me unafraid.

I have no fear though strait the gate,
He cleared from punishments the scroll;
Christ is the Master of my fate,
Christ is the Captain of my soul.

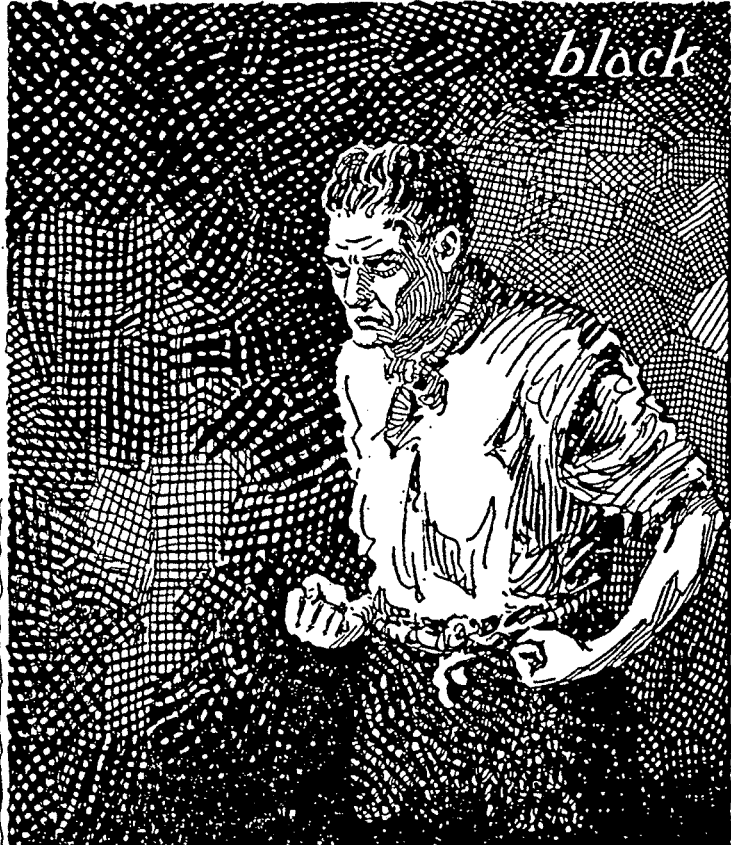
"My Captain" by Dorothea Day

Blind unbelief

A Study in

Seeing faith

black and white



*Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.*

*In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud;
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed*

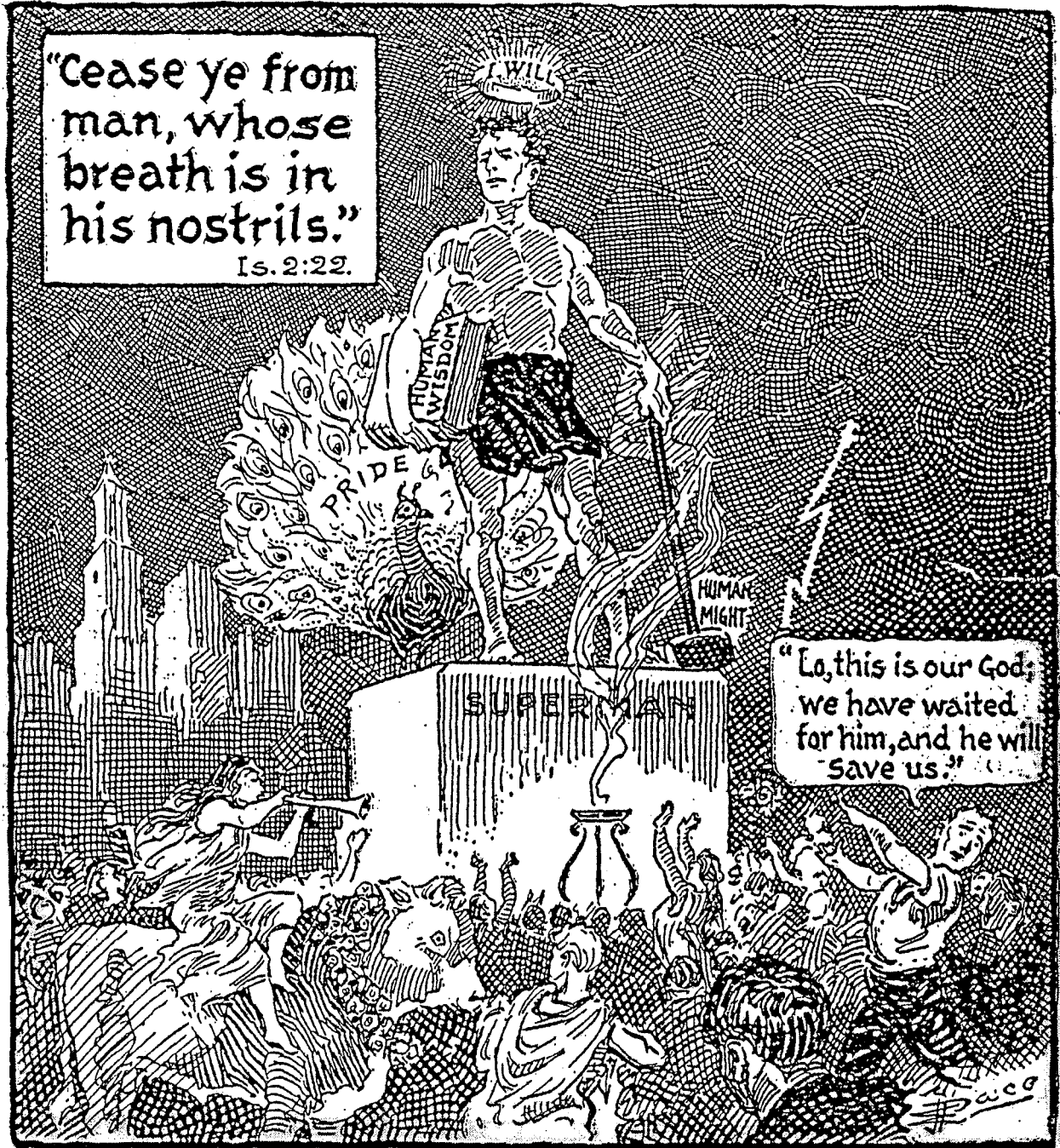
*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishment the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.*

Wm. E. Henley

*Make me a captive, Lord,
And then shall I be free.
Force me to render up my sword,
And I shall a conqueror be.
I sink in life's alarms
When by myself I stand:
Imprison me within Thine arms,
And strong shall be my hand.*

*My will is not mine own
Till Thou hast made it Thine;
If it would reach a monarch's throne,
It must its crown resign.
It only stands unbent
Amid the clashing strife
When on Thy bosom it has leant,
And found in Thee its life.*

Geo. Matheson



The Middletown Bible Church

349 East Street
Middletown, CT 06457
(860) 346-0907

A Complete Literature List is Available Upon Request
www.middletownbiblechurch.org