



The Story of My Creed

Members often ask how MY CREED came to be written. This story is by H. MacNeil Saunders, Caboolture and was printed on page 8 of the Queensland Countrywoman Journal November 1936. We reprint it for the information of new members and those who do not know.

HOWARD ARNOLD WALTERS was born in Hartford, the capital of the State of Connecticut, U.S.A. At an early age, he began to show evidence of his intense devotion to high ideals and as he grew towards manhood developed into a courageous Christian character. Abounding in those elements that make for fellowship, humour, cordiality and warm-heartedness, he was with all this an outstanding student in school, the university, and the seminary. Deprived of the robust physique that is the gift of many, he strove, through many a sacrifice, for the health he had. But the Mission Board of his Church (Presbyterian), to which he applied, felt that they should refuse him. Nothing daunted him, he applied to the International Y.M.C.A., who accepted him as student Secretary for India.

In this land of mystery and widespread misery he found the inspiration which brought the lines of the Creed into being. Walters had felt something of the subtle charm of the Orient – its glamour and its insidious appeal to mental, spiritual and even physical relation and the unholy fascination of its ancient philosophies.

The challenge which these influences threw upon him were not evaded, and Walters passed through the ordeal, not only unscathed, but with a still more confident faith. He wished about this time, to send a special New Year message to his mother, of whom he was very fond, but greeting cards were unobtainable. Instead, he wrote a letter in which he expressed his conviction that she would be glad to know that in the midst of all the faiths of India, his faith in Christ was abiding. On the anvil of service, he had hammered out a practical theology which he wrote into a poem entitled "MY CREED".

"I WOULD BE TRUE, FOR THERE ARE THOSE WHO TRUST ME,
I WOULD BE PURE, FOR THERE ARE THOSE WHO CARE.
I WOULD BE STRONG, FOR THERE IS MUCH TO SUFFER;
I WOULD BE BRAVE, FOR THERE IS MUCH TO DARE.
I WOULD BE GIVING, AND FORGET THE GIFT;
I WOULD BE HUMBLE, FOR I KNOW MY WEAKNESS,
I WOULD LOOK UP, AND LAUGH, AND LOVE, AND LIFT."



The story is nearly told. Walters lived his Creed, which could be perhaps condensed into a single phrase, "Self-sacrifice", and living this, he could not live. During the war, he laboured with all his energy, and in the dreaded influenza epidemic, quite exhausted, in the service of others, he passed to his well-earned rest.

I may add that Hartford Theological Seminary has enrolled him as a Christian Martyr, while his verses are included in almost all American and Canadian hymnals, being sung to a tune called "Peek". It is destined to win new fields wherever it goes, and could not be more nobly used than by the women of the C.W.A in Queensland.