

21st July 2021

Courage

**“Courage, brother, do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There’s a star to guide the humble:
Trust in God, and do the right.”**

Norman MacLeod, Trust in God

I reflected yesterday on the life of Rev Dr Norman MacLeod. I don't know whether this 19th century Scottish cleric wrote many hymns, for we only have one in common use which comes from his pen. It's *Trust in God*, a hymn quite wonderful to sing to Arthur Sullivan's great tune, *Courage, Brother*, with its rising cadences at the end of each verse.

I discovered two interesting things about this hymn. Firstly, in the *Army and Navy Hymnal* of 1920, the penultimate line of each verse is given as "Trust in God, trust in good" and not as MacLeod had written it. A trust in God and a trust in the goodness of humanity? Worth pondering ... And secondly, in the current version of the Church of Scotland's Hymnary "Courage, brother" in the final stanza is written as "Courage, sister". As a man renowned for the catholicity of his faith, Norman MacLeod would have approved of that. So, here's his hymn. Sing it out! *And* take courage!

*Courage, brother, do not stumble, though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble: trust in God and do the right!
Though the road be rough and dreary, and its end far out of sight,
Foot it bravely, strong or weary; trust in God, trust in God,
Trust in God and do the right.*

*Perish policy and cunning, perish all that fears the light!
Whether losing, whether winning, trust in God and do the right!
Some will hate thee, some will love thee, some will flatter, some will slight;
Cease from man, and look above thee; trust in God, trust in God,
Trust in God and do the right.*

*Simple rule and safest guiding, inward peace and inward might,
Star upon our path abiding, trust in God and do the right!
Courage, brother, do not stumble, though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble; trust in God, trust in God,
Trust in God and do the right!*

A prayer for today

*Lord, thank you for my sisters and brothers,
who have courage enough to trust in God and in good. Amen*