

moreover absorber will not part with a drop. He did not gather up to scatter again. Not he. He holds on. And he will not part with a drop till you squeeze him!

Now, brother, thou art a sponge. I would I could call thee a fountain pouring forth sparkling waters—a reservoir gathering only to diffuse again—a flower sending thy fragrance in all directions—a lamp beaming forth the light on every side. But, alas, Brother Sponge! I must reserve these significant and delightful applications for other disciples, or for yourself in a brighter day of your history.

Now, Brother Sponge, your power of absorption is not so much the thing that gives you so bad an eminence among your brethren, as your amazing retaining power. The shilling, on its way to your strong grasp, is a traveller to a bourne whence few return. Some of your brethren absorb you successfully, but away go again the nimble sixpences, as the young eagles: exulting in their flight, on some errand of love. Some gain only for the purpose of giving. They love to give liberty to what they have gotten. They take even more pleasure in scattering than in acquiring. Having read somewhere that it is "more blessed to give than to receive," they feel just so themselves.

But, Brother Sponge, we cannot make this record of you. We have known you too long. We cannot testify with what vigor, skill, diligence and success, you can acquire; but sad witnesses too are we of the power to retain. Getting fairly and honestly we approve, but the keeping, grasping, holding on, not letting go, this gives you a sad position among the disciples. People say, when any benevolent enterprise is afloat, "Don't call on that brother. You may knock your fingers into jelly against the door of his heart, and not get in. The warmest south wind of your appeals will not melt that rock of ice."

Now, Brother Sponge, do hear us. Relax these stiff muscles. Depletion, brother, do yield to it. It will do you good, and certainly others will get good. You do not know how much better you can pray. There is too much silver and gold upon your wings. You cannot fly.

Besides, your brethren feel sad at the chasm between you and them. Come over where they are, and bring a warm, affectionate, and giving heart, and unite with theirs. Your surrender to the practical power of the great principles of Christian benevolence will electrify some of them. They will rise higher themselves, as they see you rise.

"But my money is hard earned—it is all my own. I give when and where, and to the extent I think best, and I want no impertinent interference in this matter. I'll do as I please."

Well, Brother, you will find absorption will not always be the order of the day. If your accumulations will not find their way in some form, like the freely flowing stream, to bless the world, they will be let loose in some other way. You will get squeezed, brother, depend upon it. When the gripe is strong enough, the sponge must yield. And it is sometimes strong enough to take away every drop. Look out lest there be not left a drop!

One word more. Perhaps, Brother Sponge, you do not like the title—but it seemed, somehow, to come up at the first thought of you. But we will drop it just as soon as you will make it clear that it is no longer properly applied.—*Evam.*

INCLEMENT SABBATHS.—From a meteorological journal for ten years past, kept at Dartmouth College, the Vermont Chronicle ascertains the facts—1. That nearly one-fourth of the Sabbaths are stormy. 2. Nearly one-sixth are excessively hot or cold. 3. Considerably more than one-third are, from all causes, inclement. Except in 1845, no other year of the ten has had so many such Sabbaths as 1852. These individuals or families that excuse themselves from the house of God because of unpleasant weather—and they are not few—lose the benefits of public worship nearly half the year. And the loss is a most serious one to themselves, to community, and to the ministry. We once knew a good man, who lived more than three miles from the house of God, and was often tempted by the "signs of the sky," to stay at home with his family on the Sabbath: he sometimes yielded to the temptation, not without an occasional twinge of conscience; at length he resolved that he would never absent himself from God's house on account of the weather, unless it was so bad as to prevent his going to the village where it stood, for the addition of a dollar to his purse. "Never," said he, towards the close of his life, "never, after making this resolution, did any Sabbath occur so hot or so cold, so windy or stormy, that I could not attend

with my brethren, the public worship of God!" This man lived to be eighty years of age, had a family of thirteen, "sons and daughters"—all of them as regular attendants as himself at the village church—two of them became ministers of the Gospel; all of them gave themselves to the Lord in their early days: and their descendants are now scattered everywhere, diffusing the spirit of their parents over the communities where their lot is cast. So much for honoring God, by not forsaking the assemblies of the saints, on account of murky or inclement Sabbaths.

From the Prot. Churchman.

A SPECIMEN OF NEW YORK SYMBOLISM.—The corner-stone of the new Zion Church, at the corner of Madison Avenue and Thirtieth-street, was laid on the 6th inst., by the Rt. Rev. Provisional Bishop.—The rector, the Rev. Richard Cox, delivered an address, a portion of which was devoted to the explanation of the symbolical meaning of the nave, "the most holy place," aisles, buttresses, trifoliated windows, and traceries, heads, &c. We have not been favoured with a copy, but are led to infer from the following criticism in the Evangelical Catholic, that "much of the symbolical and mysterious is forbidden treasure except to him who has the key of knowledge to unlock its marvels." In the present case the key certainly does not fit the lock:—

SANCTISSIMUM SANCTORUM.—The explanation of the symbolism of the new Zion Church, given at the laying of the corner stone (as reported in one of the daily prints), represents "the most holy place within the chancel rails for the priest alone." This is an unfortunate bit of symbolism, unless there is to be a place in the Zion on Murray Hill, for St. Paul says, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near," &c. This is outpopping the Pope, for the High Altar in St. Peter's is without any such exclusive fence of sanctity, and in ordinary Roman churches, the boys who assist the priest at Mass, as representatives of the laity, are of course within the *sacrum*. We have always supposed that it is more for the sake of convenience, in giving a support to the communicants while receiving, than for any especial significance, that the Holy Table in our churches is surrounded by rails. They serve to protect it against injury, abuse, or rude approach, and so have the sanction of the apostle canon about decency and order, but surely are not meant for a *procul, procul este* to the faithful.—*Evang. Cath.*

INFLUENCE OF THE MINISTRY.—At the last day what a throng of witnesses will there be to the effect of John Newton's ministrations. We are now feeling this effect in the hymns of Cowper, in the writings of Buchanan, who owed his religious character to the instrumentality of Newton—writings which are said to have first awakened the missionary spirit of our own Judson; in the works of Dr. Scott, another monument of Newton's fidelity, and a spiritual guide to hundreds of preachers and thousands of laymen, in the words and deeds of Wilberforce, who ascribed a large share of his own usefulness to the example and counsels of the same father. Edmund Burke on his death-bed sent an expression of his thanks to Mr. Wilberforce for writing the Practical Christianity, a treatise which Burke spent the last two days of his life in perusing, and from which he confessed himself to have derived much profit: a treatise which has reclaimed hundreds of educated men from irreligion, but which would probably never have been what it now is, had not its author been favoured with Newton's advice and sympathy. What shall we predict as the ultimate result of Whitfield's more than eighteen thousand addresses from the pulpit, and of the impulse which he gave to the activity of the whole Church, friends and foes, in America and Britain?—His power was felt by Hume, Bolingbroke, Foote, Chesterfield, Garrack, Rittenhouse, Franklin, Erskine, and Edwards; by the miners and colliers, and fishermen of England, the paupers and slaves, and Indians of America. Had Whitfield never been at Cambuslang, Buchanan, humanly speaking, might never have been at Malabar.

THE BIBLE.—How comes it that that little volume, composed by humble men, in a rude age, when art and science were but in their childhood, has exerted more influence on the human mind, and on the social system, than all the other books put together? Whence comes it that this book has achieved such marvellous changes in the opinion of mankind—has banished idol worship, has abolished infanticide—has put down polygamy and divorce—exalted the condition of women—raised the standard of public morality—created for families that blessed thing, a Christian home—and caused its other triumphs by causing benevolent institutions, open and expansive, to spring up as the wand of enchantment?

What sort of a book is this, that even the winds and waves of human passions obey it? What other engine of social improvement has operated so long, and yet lost none of its virtue? Since it appeared, many boasted plans of amelioration have been tried and failed, many codes of jurisprudence have arisen and run their course, and expired. Empire after empire has been launched on the tide of time, and gone down, leaving no trace on the waters. But this book is still going about doing good, leaving society with its holy principles—cheering the sorrowful with its consolation—strengthening the tempted—encouraging the penitent—calming the troubled spirit—and smoothing the pillow of death. Can such a book be the offspring of human genius? Does not the vastness of its effects demonstrate the excellency of the power to be of God?

A POOR MAN'S WISH.—I asked a student what three things he most wished. He said "Give me books, health, and quiet, and I care for nothing more."

I asked a miser, and he cried, "Money—money—money!"

I asked a pauper, and he faintly said, "Bread—bread—bread!"

I asked a Drunkard, and he loudly called for strong drink. I asked the multitude around me, and they lifted up a confused cry, in which I heard the words "wealth, fame and pleasure."

I asked a poor man, who had long borne the character of an experienced Christian: he replied that all his wishes could be met in Christ. He spoke seriously, and I asked him to explain. He said, "I greatly desire these three things—first, that I may be found in Christ; secondly, that I may be like Christ; thirdly, that I may be with Christ." I have thought much of his answer, and the more I think of it the wiser it seems.

THE EVIL OF PROCRASTINATING.—It is an ill time to caulk the ship when at sea, tumbling up and down in a storm. This should have been looked to when on her seat in the harbor. And as bad it is to begin to trim a soul for heaven when tossing on a sick-bed. Things that are to be done in a hurry are seldom done well. A man called out of his bed at midnight with a dismal fire in his house top cannot stand to dress himself in order, as at another time, but runs down with one stocking half on, may be, and the other not on at all. These poor creatures I am afraid go in as ill a dress into another world who begin to provide for it when on a dying-bed. Conscience calls them up with a cry of hell-fire in their bosoms; but, alas, they must go, though they have not time to put their armor on; and so they are put to repent at leisure in hell, of their shuffling up a repentance in haste here.—*Gurnall's Christian Armor.*

THE CHINESE REBELLION.—Dr. Medhurst, an English Missionary, speaking of a proclamation which he has translated, says that whether it is genuine or not, "one thing is certain—the movement has shaken, not only the empire, but idolatry to the very base, and may be the prelude to the thorough opening of the whole country to the Messengers of the gospel. The progress of the rebellion is such that the chief cities of the empire are menaced, and the tottering dynasty has called upon the British government to interpose for its protection."

RELIGION AT HOME.—"Let them learn first," says Paul, "to show piety at home." Religion should begin in the family. The holiest sanctuary is home. The family altar is more venerable than that of the cathedral. The education of the soul for eternity should begin and be carried on at the fireside.

Mr. G. S. Faber has announced, from history and prophecy, that for the next twelve years that there will be a war in Europe such as the world has never known. Louis Napoleon and the Pope are about to perish, and by a dignified "taking off"—by means of volcanoes! The war is to end in the mountains of Judea!

A man whom Dr. Johnston reproved for following a useless and demoralizing business, said in excuse, "You know, doctor, that I must live." This brave old hater of everything mean and hateful, coolly replied that "he did not see the necessity of that."

METAPHYSICS.—A Scotch political economist being asked the meaning of metaphysics, explained as follows: "When a party who listens *dinna ken* what the party who speaks meant, and the party who speaks *dinna ken* what he meant himself—that is metaphysics."