

"If there were such an heart in them," said God of the perverse Israelites in the wilderness. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Turn ye, why will ye die?" "He is not willing that ye should perish, but that all should come to repentance." "God would have all men to be saved." "I would, but ye would not," said Christ.

But, O, when you are living near to God,—being in close communion with him,—and are enabled fervently to pray for a person's conversion, to pray for him perseveringly, in spite of delays and repulses. When you are impressed by the Spirit of God, thus to pray, you may have a consciousness that you are praying under the guidance of the Spirit, and may attain to an assurance that your prayer shall in due time be granted.

Think how John Knox could pray,—“Give me Scotland, or I die.” When he so prayed, doubtless he knew that it was the prayer of faith, and confidently expected to receive what he asked. It was the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, and, therefore, availed much. The glorious reformation of Scotland was given him.

Think also for your direction and encouragement, of Monica, the mother of Augustine, and her friend, the holy and experienced Ambrose. Augustine, whose name is so well known in the history of the church, was not a laborer in the Lord's vineyard in the early morning of his life. He was like the prodigal son; his excesses, his sins, his impieties, were breaking the heart of a Christian mother, and to use the touching language of Scripture, were bringing down her gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. In her affliction, she opened her grief to her friend and pastor, the distinguished Ambrose. She told him all her sorrow, and anxiety, on her Augustine's account. She spoke of her prayers for him. She had prayed for him, she said, constantly and earnestly, for more than twenty years. “Enough, Monica,” said Ambrose; “the child of so many prayers cannot be lost.” Ambrose judged well, and spoke considerably. The holy man, the experienced saint, knew well the character of Monica, and her prayers. He perceived at once that her prayers were prayers of faith. Enough, Monica; it cannot be that the child of so many prayers should finally perish. Persevere, and you will live to rejoice at seeing his restoration to the way of holiness, and life everlasting.” And she *did* persevere, and she *did* live to see that son the most distinguished Christian of his age.

And here I may just observe that we may believe that Monica's prayers were in due order—she being taught of the Spirit. We may believe that her prayers, for so many years, could run in the strain of that of Abraham: “O that Ishmael might live before thee!” We may believe that she prayed not at once for Augustine's salvation, but for his conversion; but that when she saw him under conviction—when she saw him seeking and ask-

ing what he should do to be saved, then at length, her prayer would be in the strain of Knox: “Give me Augustine's or I die.” She would ask, confidently believing, that she would receive what she asked. Have faith in God, for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this, which is done to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done. “And all things whatsoever ye shall ask, in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

SANDY MORRISON.

Just at the foot of the Pentland Hills, lay years ago, an old farm-house, of the plainest kind, built of rough stone, and roofed with thatch; but shaded by venerable trees, and cheered by a “bonnie burn, wimpling” over its pebbly bed. That was the home of Sandy Morrison, an old-fashioned Presbyterian elder, whom I knew in the days of lang-syne. In exterior, Sandy was rough, tall, and ungainly. The only thing about him really attractive was his large, clear hazel eye, which lay beneath his shaggy brows, like a deep fountain among the brown hills of his native land.

Sandy belonged to a peculiar class of Scotsmen, some of whom the writer knew in his boyhood. He was perfectly natural in all his ways; honest, industrious, and shrewd; simple as a child, and yet thoughtful as a sage. He walked with God as friend with friend. When he prayed, he seemed to talk with God face to face.

Philosophers would have called him a mystic. He had never heard the word; and had it been applied to him, in his hearing, and its meaning explained, he would have said, “Hoot man, ye needna gae round about seeking the nearest to explain a thing sae simple. It's only God in the hert of a puir sinner.” Had you demurred at his explanation, he would have cut the matter short, by asking, “If ye didna believe in the mighty power o' God?”

The whole secret of the simplicity and power of Sandy's religion lay in the fact that he truly believed in God, as the life of the soul of man, as well as the life of the universe.

His favorite books were Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Boston's *Fourfold State*, Erskine's *Sermons*, Halyburton's *Remains*, *The Book of Martyrs*, and *Rutherford's Letters*, and above all the Bible. Next to the Bible, Halyburton and Rutherford exerted upon him the greatest influence. The tender and meditative Halyburton, and the ardent “Eagle of Anwoth,” had minds accordant with his own. We rather think he had read with interest “*Scougal's Life of God in the Soul of Man*,” and this might account for some of his peculiar expressions.

Sandy had a perfect trust in the Providence of God. “The Lord reigneth,” he would say: “everything is wisely ordered, and will come out right in the end.”