

The Home Mission Journal.

A record of Missionary, Sunday-School and Colportage work. Published semi-monthly by the Committee of the Home Mission Board of New Brunswick.

All communications, except money remittances, are to be addressed to

THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL,
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Notice.

We have enclosed envelopes in the last issue of THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL in papers sent to those who have heretofore subscribed for it and have not paid for the paper, and hope it will be convenient for them to enclose the five ten cent pieces before the end of the present calendar year. Those to whom we have been sending the paper as a sample copy will also enclose five ten cent pieces if they want the paper continued. They will then get it until the end of the year 1900 for the one subscription price. This is a good offer and we hope all who have been getting it as a sample copy will avail themselves of this arrangement. Enclose the five ten cent pieces in the holes in the envelope, and be sure to sign your name, and give your post office address. Some have sent in without name or address will these please send their names and addresses by post card, so that we may know to whom to credit remittance. Any who do not wish the paper will please notify us by card. Anyone subscribing now will get the paper until the close of the year 1900.

Work

The Master worked-- and so should I,
Why do I idle stand?

The plough and sickle rusting lie,
And fallow lies the land.

Why longer wait? Is it not time
To sow, or plant, or build?

Shall thorns or nettles higher climb
On lands that should be tilled?

Where should I work? The world is wide,
And open everywhere;

If God to far-off lands may guide,
With willing heart go there.

If to the city He may lead,
The alley, cellar, slum;

To some poor soul or heart in need,
Go, if the Lord says, "Come!"

What should I do? Sow seeds of truth,
Or point some soul to God;

Turn streams of love upon some youth,
And blossom make his sod;

Some erring soul that goes away
From God, to live in sin,

Arrest; thy hand upon him lay,
And gently homewards win.

When should I work? The time is now,
The flying moment catch;

The door of chance right open throw,
Be quick to lift the latch.

At morn, at noon, or eve of day,
Work on, nor idly wait;

For soon you will be called away,
And night will close the gate.

Tongwynlas,

WM. PARRY.

The absence of a child from school in Switzerland, unless in case of illness, is punishable by a fine, the amount of which is daily increased. If it is suspected that the child's illness is shammed, a doctor is sent by the school authorities, and, when he is convinced that the suspicion is correct, the parents have to pay his fee.

The Bible as Literature and Much More.

ROBERT STUART MACARTHUR.

XII

(Continued from last issue)

The Peculiar Authority of the Bible.

It would seem from the record in the last verse of the seventh chapter of Matthew that the dominant impression produced upon the people by the discourse of our Lord, known as the "Sermon on the Mount," was its peculiar authority. The people never before heard the law defined as on this occasion. They never before observed the great standard of practical morality which now was erected for their observance; and at the same time they never before heard a discourse so simple in thought and so spiritual in purpose. But the conviction which forced itself upon them as the ruling impression of the occasion was the unique authority of this sublime discourse. They experienced the commanding power of our Lord's doctrine; they recognized the perspicuity of his statements; the persuasiveness of his exhortations; and especially they realized that his arguments were not only reasonable, but also irresistible. They could not but discover the wide difference between his discourse and the locutions of the Scribes and Pharisees. These latter dealt with frivolous cases of casuistry; they made puerile distinctions; they were often engaged in ridiculous splitting of controversial hairs and they also quoted now one authority and now another. In opposition to this method of public instruction, our Lord dealt in great, profound, holy and sublime principles. And yet his words were so amazingly simple that even a child could apprehend their essential meanings.

What is true of this discourse is in a measure true of the entire Bible. It deals at times, in careful argumentation and concise reasoning, and occasionally in syllogistic ratiocination; but it must still be affirmed that the Bible as a whole is declarative rather than argumentative. It strikes out a new path for all subsequent thinkers and writers. There were no human models as guides for its inspired writers. It occupies a position that is peculiar and solitary. It imitates no other volume; it is independent of all other books; it scarcely ever alludes to any volume or writer while it pursues its own lofty path under divine guidance. It rises above the great field of ordinary literature as does the Himalaya range from the plains of India; indeed it lifts itself in its symmetrical and supreme beauty above all other literature, as Mount Tabor rises in its singularity and sublimity above the plains of Esdraelon. Gillfillan has compared the Bible in this respect to Mont Blanc, which does not measure itself with Jura, does not name the other mountain "save when in thunder it talks to her of God," and then does she

"Answer from her misty throne
Back to the joyous Alps."

He reminds us that John never speaks of Plato, nor Paul of Demosthenes, nor Jesus of any writer save Moses and the prophets. This characteristic of the Bible cannot fail to attract the attention and evoke the admiration of every true student. There is on its pages a degree of originality not found in any other volume. Every reader of exegetical and theological writers has often been impressed with the fact that each is greatly indebted to all his predecessors for the thoughts he utters, and often also for some of the expressions which he employs. It is a startling how few really original or even greatly suggestive ideas are found in any volume written by an uninspired man. Few of these volumes are of sufficient interest to justify a second reading; it would be difficult to name a dozen volumes which are worthy of three readings. Even those pages which we have marked upon our first reading as especially worthy of our consideration a second time, we have all found upon a second examination not to be so valuable as at the first blush we had supposed. Probably there is no actor living who could week after week for fifty, thirty, twenty, or even ten years hold an audience, especially without the accessories of a theatre, in

any part of the world by his expositions of the dramas of Shakespeare, or any other dramatist however great. But a good preacher will hold congregations during all these years, with growing interest on their part, and increasing power on his own part. The Bible has never been exhausted; it is absolutely inexhaustible. It has given rise to thousands of libraries, and it will call into being thousands more in the ages to come. The men who read it most constantly and prayerfully, are of all others the men who are most profoundly impressed with the wonders it contains and the manifold blessings it imparts.

The Authority of God.

The authority of God is clearly revealed in both the Old Testament and the New. "Thus saith the Lord," is the highest authority for human conduct. Many lose much to-day as the result of mistaken methods of criticism, in that they have so largely silenced the voice of the personal Jehovah as the highest authority for creed and conduct. Instead of hearing the voice of God, many now too often hear only the voice of some unknown redactor of some unknown writings on many comparatively unknown subjects; the result is an unauthoritative redaction of this unknown redactor. The prophet of old stood in the immediate presence of God. With uncovered head and obedient heart, he listened to the voice of the Eternal. This voice, with its divine authority over his conduct, the obedient prophet never for a moment questioned. Occasionally there was a disobedient prophet, as was Jonah, who was for a time determined to lay aside his commission. This is probably what is meant when it is said that he went out "from the presence of the Lord." He knew quite too much of God's omnipresence to suppose that he could literally escape from the presence of the Almighty; he implied by this language that he gave up his standing in God's presence as his servant and minister. He was, however, obliged afterward to go and preach the preaching which God had commanded. Only as God's prophets engage in his work in an obedient spirit, can they really be influential with men. Obedience towards God gives power towards men.

What is true of God's prophets, was, in its adaptation and measure, true also of God's poets. They were taught in no school of poetry or philosophy. They stood in the immediate presence of God. He gave them their theme, as they gave him the homage of their hearts and lives. They sang the song taught them by the great God, as they joyously and reverently stood in his presence waiting for his inspiration.

(To be Continued)

Many people never seem to learn the important lesson that the soul requires food as much as the body does, if it is to live and grow and thrive. It needs the most nourishing food for the best development. All around us are starved and stunted and stunted souls, dwarfed and pygmy because lacking the Bread of Life that cometh down from heaven.

Just as people try all kinds of diets to find the most nourishing food, or to escape the pangs of dyspepsia, so many treat their souls, trying diets of human invention, all sorts of isms and popular fads and quack nostrums, such as faith cures and Christian Science and Spiritualism and Theosophy—all of them dyspeptic and starvation diet, elusive and delusive. Jesus offers that true bread which never fails to feed and sustain the soul, build it up in strength, and develop its powers for service.

As the body must be constantly nourished, so must the soul. Some who eat three meals a day regularly, act as though they thought their souls could live for months or years on a single spiritual feast. Others rely for spiritual nourishment on a single Sunday service a week, and could not tell you text or theme either. He who knows not the quiet hour, the meditation upon truth, and the communion of prayer, is soul-starved, whether conscious of it or not.

The strongest and sweetest souls are those that feed most on the Bread of Life.

"Give us this day our daily bread" means spiritual as well as material good.