PASSING AWAY.

Yes, I go; I may no stay;
Strangers now are those I met
Coldly gazing on the street.
From earth's bonds I would be free;
Friendly Death, I welcome thee!

Little now for me to do,
Long the way I've struggled through;
Weary now, I sigh for rest,
By life's burdens sore distressed.
Grant me now a swift release,
End the conflict, give me peace.

I have filled my threescore years,
Strangely marked by smiles and tears;
Fearless met the battle's shock,
Stood with feet upon the Rock:
Now the sword drops from my hand,
I can only cheer the band.

I would choose to leave the field,
Borne upon my battered shield,
As the Grecian mother gave
To her son the shield and glaive;
"This, or on it," from the field,
"Fail you may, but scorn to yield!"

Trust Him who is "strong to save,"
Glad to fill the victor's grave.
Conq'ror through His kingly power,
Trust Him in the final hour;
Shout, "O death, where is thy sting?
Whence, O grave, thy triumph bring?"

On, O Christian soldier, on,
Till the final victory's won!
Soon the conflict will be o'er,
Fears disturb thy peace no more;
In His kingdom resting there,
Each His triumphs then shall share.

—[Rev. Mark Trafton, D. D., in Pittsburg Advocate.

PAUL IN ITALY.

NO. I.

During my visit, in the summer of 1892, to Naples and the historic spots around her far famed waters, I was careful to make note of the places that met the eye of the aspiraite, as the Alexandrian corn ship—the Castor and Pollux—carried him and his fellow prisoners under Julius, from Rhegium, in southern Italy, to the lovely bay at Puteoli.

When near the end of his voyage from Caesarea to Rome, in the spring of A. D. 61, after passing through the narrow straits separating the island of Sicily from the mainland, he could not have looked unmoved at the objects before him. He saw the beautiful island of Capri, on which stood the magnificent summer residences of Rome's two great emperors, Augustus and Tiberius. The ruins of these villas are still seen When I visited this classic island, I stopped at the Hotel Bristol, which stands quite near the site. The palace of Tiberius stood on a precipitous cliff 700 feet high, from which, it is said, the cruel Emperor compelled his victims to leap into the sea. On the northern side of the bay, Paul saw, on his right, old Herculaneum, where, 18 years after, Pliny the Elder, met his sad death at the eruption of Vesuvius. Nearly a dozen miles farther up the bay stood Pompeii, a wealthy city of 30,000 inhabitants, where the younger Pliny and his mother resided. It had an area within the walls of 210 acres, 70 acres of which have thus far been excavated. As I walked over the marble floors of those old palaces, inlaid in the most artistic designs, and through the paved, but now silent streets trodden by the feet of the distinguished Pliny, as I looked upon the ruins of her gorgeous temples and the thousands of treasures in the museum, I could form some idea of what the city must have been when Paul saw it prior to its overthrow.

A few miles back of these two luxurious cities, lining the shore of the beautiful bay, towered Vesuvius, clothed at that time to its peak with vines and gardens. As Paul remained seven days at Puteoli (Acts 28: 14) he must have often gazed at this lofty cone. Prof. Wm. G. Blaikie, in his "Manual of Bible History," in speaking of Paul's voyage, says the apostle "passed the smoking crater of Vesuvius, and the lovely scenery of the Bay of Naples." But Paul entered Rome—according to critical authorities—in March A. D. 61, and Vesuvius did not begin her "smoking" till the 24th and 25th of August, 79. The author of Ben Hur, chapter I, Book III, makes even a greater blunder, as he describes a traveller entering the Bay of Naples in the year of our Lord, 24, and seeing the "smoking cone." It seems strange that such authors should have allowed their pens to slip. But how much more beautiful was Vesuvius then than now. Before her top was blown off, and her homely crater made, she was taller and more symmetrical; and there were none of those immense lava beds at her base. The distance sailed from Rhegium to Puteoli was about 180 miles. Puteoli at this time was Rome's principal port south of Ostia. It was the centre of trade from Spain and Egypt and Syria. An immense wharf—if such it could be called—upheld by twenty-five piers and arches, stretched itself into the harbor, beside which the vessels anchored in discharging their freight and passengers. Thirteen of these stone piers are standing to-day, their tops above the water, which seem almost to tell the traveller that over these Paul walked as he passed from the vessel to the shore.

From Puteoli to Rome is about 140 miles. The first place of importance the apostle touched, 12 miles beyond Puteoli, was Capua. When I was there I could not help contrasting its present with its past. It once had a population of 800,000, now only about 12,000. Hannibal wintered his army there B. C. 216. It was destroyed by the Vandals, A. D. 456. At Capua the companion Way enters the Appian Way. The prisoners here turned to the left, and had a straight course northward of nearly 130 miles to Rome. The Appian Way is a celebrated road built by Appius Claudius the Censor three centuries before Christ. Its whole length from Rome to Brundusium was about 275 miles. It was substantially paved with large blocks of stone fitted together with great skill, and was sufficiently wide for two carriages to pass. Of all the roads leading into Rome, this was the finest. Pliny and Virgil and Horace speak of the rich vineyards—the vines trained on the elms, in the fertile region through which it runs; and I noticed in many of the fields about Capua grape vines were growing around the trunks of trees as of old, and then led from tree to tree by ropes and withs.

When Paul was forty miles from Rome at Appii Forum, on the Appian Way, he found a band of Christians, who had come all that distance to meet him. On the reputed site of the Forum of Appius, stands now a hotel, called Locanda di Foro Appio. Locando is the Italian word for hotel. When the apostle had gone ten miles further—thirty miles from Rome—he found awaiting him at "Three Taverns," another group of believers, whom, when he saw, he thanked God and took courage. Such a cordial reception from these Roman Christians, who were so important to see him, and ready to welcome him, must have filled the apostle's heart with thanksgiving that the gospel had won such triumphs in the great metropolis of the heathen world.

The traveller to day who visits the site of the Three Taverns passes almost under the shadow of the Volscian Hills. While at the eleventh milestone, on the Appian Way, and looking at the Alban Hills, the Sabine Mountains and the many small steep hills scattered over the broad Campagna—or rolling plain—I knew that the objects which met my eye, presented about the same appearance as they did when first seen by the Jew of Tarsus. Near the base of the Sabine mountains was the farm of Cato, born 234 B. C., and author of the phrase "Delenda est Carthago." Carthage must be destroyed. Still near the city, close to this famous road, on the right, stands to-day, as in Paul's time, the magnificent tomb of Scipio Africanus, who conquered Hannibal at the battle of Zama, 202 B. C. Among the many noted monumental tombs along the Appian Way that Rome erected in honor of her heroes, this is one of the grandest. A little nearer the city at the third milestone stands the Mausoleum of Cecilia Metella, wife of Crassus, a magnificent circular stone structure 70 feet in diameter, and about the same in height, erected a century before the Christian era. While examining these enduring structures I knew I was looking at objects that the apostle looked at when entering Rome a prisoner.

G. E. T.

Seven Blessings for the True Christian.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

The Bible is a book that both drives and draws. It drives the sinner out of his perilous places and his refuges of lies; it portends that day of judgement when God will drive away into endless punishment wilful rejectors of His grace. But the chief power of the Bible and of Christianity is its drawing power. If its righteous threatenings are terrible, its invitations into the way of life are as winsome as Divine love can make them. God holds out the most urgent arguments and attractive promises; it seems sometimes as if He went down on His knees to implore guilty men to become reconciled to Him and accept the offers of His love.

One of the most alluring group of promises to be found in the Bible is that which is contained in the closing verses of the Ninety first Psalm. It is a passage seldom preached about, and thousands of Christians may pass by this nugget of pure gold without picking it up to examine it closely. Here are the seven blessings which God promises, not to everybody, but to those who love Him and serve Him. "Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high because he hath known My name. He shall call upon Me and I shall answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him My salvation." All these precious blessings belong to those who set their hearts on God. What a wonderful paymaster God is! In return for what we give Him, He bestows things a million fold richer. Brother, just look at what your Heavenly Father sends to you as distinctly as your name were on the parcel, and surely if there were in the post-office a letter addressed to you and inclosing a check for a thousand dollars you would call quickly at the office for it.

1. The first blessing in deliverance, in all the far-reaching signification of that word. You were down in that dark hole of guilt and bondage—"sold under sin"—just as Paul describes it in the seventh chapter to the Romans. Christ struck off your fetters. The hand pierced for you on the cross led you up out of the darkness into the daylight. "There is no condemnation to them" that Christ has delivered from the tyranny and the hell deserts of sin. With this deliverance comes joy, such as the one feels who has been snatched out of a building in flames. All you did was to grasp hold of Christ by faith and He brought you out and put the new song into your mouth.

2. The second blessing is safety. God sets every forgiven, redeemed soul upon a fortified rock where neither foe nor flood can destroy him. When I entrust my soul to Jesus, He says to my soul: "I am thy salvation." There is no guesswork about the salvation of the genuine follower of Christ any more than there is about the rising of to-morrow's sun. It does not depend on my say or the say of any man. Only God can give the decisive and infallible assurance to us that we are safe for this world and for eternity. We open the ivory chamber of St. John's gospel and read these glorious words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath eternal life and cometh not into judgment."

3. The third blessing is, "He shall call upon Me and I will answer him." Don't misunderstand this, and imagine that it gives you an unlimited key to God's storehouse to help yourself to all you fancy. His promises are not unconditional. He does not promise to cash every check you see fit to draw. All he agrees to do is to "answer" you, and the answer is not to be dictated by your selfish wish, but by His wise and holy will. "Delight thyself in the Lord and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart." Then you and He are at one. He loves to bestow when we covet the best gifts. The right to decide what is for our real benefit and for His glory belongs to Him. I suppose that the richest blessings that prayer can bring is to bring us into entire submission to God and closer fellowship with God. A man stands in the bow of a boat and draws upon a line attached to the shore. His pull does not move the solid ground, but it does move his boat toward the land. Your faith cannot move the everlasting throne, but it draws you closer to it, and the more your heart gets into harmony with God the more will you receive of what your heart desires. But if you don't believe that God ever left a reasonable and unselfish prayer entirely unanswered yet, or that He ever will do so while the eternal throne stands.

4. The fourth blessing is God's presence in times of trouble. The promise of the Master is, "Lo! I am with you always"; and that means that when and where we need Him most he is sure to be with us. When the midnight tempest howls His form is on the billows, and the sight of Him keeps the heart calm and quiet. When the furnace grows hot He is beside us.

5 "I will honor him" is the fifth promise to every genuine Christian. Conversion brings us into the royal family and gives us a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. We sit at the King's table and can feed on the royal dainties. Fashion may outlaw us, or "society" snub us, or injustice defame us, but God never turns His back on a righteous man. "Them that honor Me, I will honor." There will be a wonderful overturning and changing of places in the next world when the last shall be first and the first shall be last. Christ will be the "executor" of His last will and testament, and the heirs will all come into their magnificent inheritance.

6 Then, however long or short our earthly lives may be according to the calendar, we shall be "satisfied." We live in deeds, not years, although it is actually true that keeping God's commandments has a tendency to promote health and long life. But whether the date on our tombstones mark an early or a late home-going, every child of God lives long enough to fulfill the heavenly will, and after that to depart and be with Christ is far better.

7. The seven-fold jewel cluster of promises closes with this thrilling announcement, "I will show him My salvation." The real meaning of that passage is, as I understand it, that God will show us the inexpressible glories of heaven. He shall introduce His faithful children into these looked-for splendors and these longed for joys. The only disappointment will be that heaven is infinitely beyond our most ecstatic expectations. What a seven-fold chorus of blessings are these with which that Ninety-first Psalm concludes! And if these are only a portion of the blessings which the religion of Jesus Christ can secure to us, who would not wish to be a Christian?—*Congregationalist.*

Modern Baptist Heroes.

For substantial proof that the spirit of the martyrs is not dead, we may turn to the effects of extreme religious persecution as recently applied to Baptist brethren in the faith in despotic Russia. The poor Stundist is a Christian of modern make. His heroism for the truth has received the Hall-mark, the Divine Royal Letters Patent, in the fiery furnace, whither the intolerance of a cruel state-recognized church has thrust him. Note, for example, the following pathetically noble words of one who, for the only reason that he bears the name of Protestant, has just been forcibly separated from his own family, and is now alone, an exile in his own home-land: "Take care of my wife and children. I have no more clothing, and I know not where I can find bread; but to-day I shall have the joy of baptizing seven converts." Did ever a more splendid exhibition of heroic faith in God, and of sense of duty to Him adorn the annals of martyrdom than is presented in the spirit of this one broken sentence? Well has Pastor Saillens, of Paris, declared in regard to it: "I know no language in the history of the Christian church more simply sublime. How it consoles for the cowardice, for the eclipses of faith, for the sordid and mercenary interest of so many pretended servants of God! How it shows that the spirit of renunciation and of holy passion is still at work on the earth, and that the heroic times of the church are not finally closed!"

The history of Stundism is obviously the most remarkable religious movement since the Reformation. Originated only thirty five years ago by a few godly German settlers in Southern Russia, this largely Baptist sect has continued to make such rapid progress that its adherents now number no fewer than, at the lowest computation, a quarter of a million souls. The movement gives promise, too, of revolutionizing the whole of the religious and social life of ninety millions of people; and this, notwithstanding the fact that the Stundist community has continued to be the subject of a most persistently tyrannical system of persecution, such as might bear melancholy comparison with the scourings and rackings of the Middle Ages; and even to-day thousands of faithful Stundists are living under banishment for life in remotest corners in the vast and barbaric Russian empire.

A certain peasant, Onishenko by name, was the first Stundist, who, upon his conversion at the age of thirty, at once returned from agricultural life in Germany to his native village in Southern Russia, and there commenced to evangelize his brethren. "His preaching caught on." Other lowly apostles, fired with love for New Testament teaching and relentlessly opposed to Priestism in all its insidious abominations, were raised up and went everywhere preaching the Word. "The gathering communities of Stundists bubbled over with zeal and enthusiasm, and wherever a man was found amongst them who had any gift of speech he would give all his spare time to telling to others, near and at a distance, the wonderful tidings that had brought peace to his own soul." Between 1878 and 1880 the growth of the movement was extraordinary, and of course then and since to the measure of their remarkable success have been their tortures by the ingenious activity of their tormentors. The chapter of persecutions is heart-rendering; says Dr. John Brown, of Bedford, "the brutal sufferings inflicted on the one side and the heroic constancy manifested on the other may well touch every heart amongst us."

Of Russian Baptists, as Stundists we first learn in 1865. They were the spiritual children of German Baptists—Pritzkau, Wieler, Oncken, and others. The Baptist movement was, we are assured, a distinct advantage to Stundism; it seems to have freed it from "the taint of dissimulation," and to have been instrumental in putting the stronger and sterner elements into a thoroughly orderly position. At present Baptists are estimated at one-third of the entire community. Stundist views are soundly Evangelical. They swear by a literal and practical interpretation of the New Testament. The general effect upon the Russian nation is such as to alarm both rulers and priests, who have hitherto lived to oppress, while the voices of the Stundists from prisons and places of exile in Siberia and the Caucasus, and the patient heroism of their lives amidst the cruelest persecution, have stirred other sects, "as a trumpet-call stirs a soldier." The State is, we are assured, meanwhile getting tired of acting as the drill sergeant of the Church, and we are assured there is little fear for the future if Stundism be only true to itself and to its noble ideals. We may well pray and work for these suffering fellow-believers, and for the uplifting, through their ministry, of the tyrannized and spiritually darkened Russian people.—*London Baptist.*

Avoidance of Guiltiness.

Those who have been led astray "through manifold temptations," or powerful tendencies to evil, and are convinced that thus they have erred, in not giving heed to the warning voice of conscience which would have kept them back from perilous paths, should lose no time in ceasing to do evil and learning to do well. Conscience is not only marred by beginning to depart from rectitude, but that harm is magnified and ultimately consummated in utter ruin, by continuing to go astray. He who is convinced that he has done wrong, should be ready to say, "If I have done iniquity, I will do no more." Impenitence, as manifested in unforsaken sin, is a great foe to "a conscience"; and there cannot be "a conscience void of offence," so long as the duty of repentance is neglected, and sin is neither confessed nor forsaken.

Persistence in sin, regardless of the accusations of conscience, involves the greatest violence to conscience of which there can be any conception, thereby doing the greatest possible injury to the determined transgressor. Surely, such a friend as conscience should not be thus abused. No person can afford to lose such a friend, and yet too many persons take just the course that leads to this deplorable loss. They are too well represented by the prince who is said to have had a wonderful ring which pricked his finger whenever he was doing anything wrong, and being vexed at its troublesome interference with his wishes, threw it away, to his utter ruin. He had better thrown away his sins and kept the ring; but that was not his wisdom, and he suffered the terrible penalty of his folly.

In contrast with his recklessness is the course pursued by a follower of Pythagoras, of whom it is related that having bought a pair of shoes and promised to pay the maker of them, on a certain day, upon which he went to fulfil his engagement, but finding that the man had died in the interim, returned, secretly rejoicing that he could retain the money, and get a pair of shoes for nothing; in which criminality, however, he did not long continue, having come to a better mind, for, says Seneca, "His conscience would allow him no rest till, taking up the money, he went back to the shop, and casting the money into it, said, "Go thy way; for though he is dead to all the world besides, yet he is alive to me.'" Thus Pythagoras was enabled to have "a conscience void of offence," as could not have been the case had he persisted in keeping the money.

It is only by putting away the sins of both heart and life, in true repentance, that conscience remains upon its legitimate throne, causing its friendly disquietude on account of sinfulness; but dethroned, sooner or later, it ceases from its useful though painful disturbance of the soul's guilty repose, as by the command, "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone." Mr. Spurgeon illustrates the conscience silencing effect of continuance in sin by saying, "Dr. Preston tells us of a professor who on one occasion was found drunk, and when much depressed on account of his folly, the devil said to him by way of temptation, "Do it again, do it again; for," said he, "the grief you feel about it now, you will never feel any more, if you commit the sin again." Dr. Preston says that the man yielded to the temptation, and from that time he never did feel the slightest regret at his drunkenness, and lived and died a confirmed sot, though formerly he had been a very high professor."

Reformation must not be omitted by those who would have a clear conscience. All cherished sin is hurtful to the conscience, and hence there must be what properly belongs to repentance, an essential part of which is forsaking sin. Richard Cecil truthfully says of repentance that it is "a turning away from all sin upon the settled conviction of the understanding that it is wrong—that it is opposed to the holy nature and righteous law of God." With true sorrow for sin there will be positive hatred of sin, which will allow no more indulgence in sinning. Some one has said, "Real repentance consists in the heart being broken *for* sin, and broken *from* sin." Without such repentance there cannot be what is denominated "a good conscience." Peace abides not with the impenitence which does not hate all that is sinful, so as to wholly forsake it. It is not enough to lament over the past of sinfulness, but striving for a future of holiness is indispensable to the peace to which "an evil conscience" is a stranger. J. G. Pilkington, of England, fitly says, "A godly sorrow moves the Christian to weep over the failure of the past, but his eyes are not so blurred with tears but he can look watchfully into the future, and profiting by the experience of former failures, make straight paths for his feet."

The putting away of all that is properly condemned is essential to the maintenance of a "conscience void of offence." Failing to do this, is to come short of possessing "peace as a river," which is the priceless possession of the truly penitent. Disquietude must come from not keeping up to the standard of rectitude, and the troubled in mind, on this account, can only find relief in abandoning all that for which they are self-condemned. Genuine penitence and the peace of a good conscience are inseparable.—*Walchman.*

Why Uzzah Touched the Ark, or Trifling and its Excuses.

BY REV. C. W. WILLIAMS.

Excuse No 2.

Instead of urging for Uzzah the unreasonable claim of ignorance, it may be said, "*He meant well.*" Now I am rather inclined to think that, in pride and self-sufficiency, Uzzah was too ready to show the people how free he could make with the ark, and that this motive was mixed with his solicitude for its safety. But granting that he did mean well, in that his main purpose was to keep the ark from falling, does the end justify evil means? *Never.* You are not to curse God, or murder, or steal, even to get money to help build a church or to feed hungry mouths. The right never prospers through lies. In order to progress, the car of truth must move along the shining parallel of honest thoughts and fair deeds. To try subterfuge is but to jump the track. There is a training up of the very road-bed, and a plunge to destruction. A young man would help a godless companion, and does not wish to appear too staid and solemn and particular in his presence, for fear he may offend him. So he yields a little, now laughs at this improper joke, now takes a hand in this questionable amusement. He starts some day to find his influence gone. A wife now sacrifices this religious privilege, now neglects this religious duty, thinking that by thus gratifying her husband's tastes, she will be the more likely, in the end, to win him to her views. Before long there is no religion at all in the home. He has not been won to his duty. She has forgotten her's. It is not enough to *mean well;* you must *do well.* "Do right, though the heavens fall." But they will not fall. The pillars that bear them up rest on *right.*

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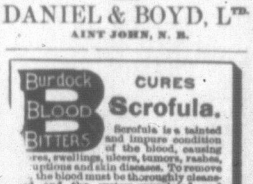

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