

Gospel freeman; they were calculated to lead the Church back again to Popery, and therefore such bridgeways to apostacy should be broken down; and, above all, among the people accustomed to ascribe to them a magical virtue, and regard them with superstitious reverence, they were opposed to the progress of his mission—to wit, the diffusion of spiritual holiness—and must therefore be destroyed. From the same motive he successively assailed, and, for a time, overthrew the Prelacy of the Church, and the Arminianism of her pulpits. He knew from history that godliness flourishes not under the baneful shadow of the one; and he knew from his own heart that the creature merit and uncertainty of the other, blights the bloom and beauty of holiness in the soul.

But, besides this he had another object, which we may express in the words of the memorable inscription borne on the banner of William of Orange—"The Protestant Religion and the Liberties of England." During the dynasty of the Stuarts, the Puritans came promptly into the political world. The policy of these princes was ever directed to the establishment of civil despotism and the restoration of Popery. The latter was the object dreaded by the Puritan. With James the contest was waged by Parliament, then decidedly Puritanic, refusing supplies for the exigencies of government, without assurances that the constitution would be observed. With the reign of Charles I. came the crisis; and to the Long Parliament was entrusted the guardianship of their country's constitutional freedom. We would love to linger awhile with that high priesthood of British liberty, but our space permits us merely to look in upon them, and pass on. There is Selden, to whom, on account of his learning, the literati of Europe have given the title "England's glory;" there is Hampden, who, when the nation sighed in captivity of her freedom, was the first to dispute the tyranny of the despot, and won the glorious cognomen, "Father of his country;" and there is Cromwell, the farmer of Huntingdonshire, in whose great heart, love for his country is only surpassed by love for his God, intellect is shining on his brow, and genius glancing from his eye.

Space does not permit us to dwell on the lessons which even our passing glance at this noble people is calculated to impart. We love not that sickly sentimentalism which delights in wandering among the graves of history, only to inscribe on the tombstone of the past the lament, "Ichabod, thy glory is departed"—which visits a ruined temple only to muse on the magnificence of its olden grandeur, and wall among the broken music of its shattered columns. The motto of the Church is—"Ever upward, ever onward;" and if we would bring her to meditate on the past, it is only that she may catch from it an inspiration for the present hour; if we would lead her down to the sepulchres of the great, it is only that, like the dead man cast into the prophet's tomb, she may come forth with new life. The cycle of events has placed us in circumstances somewhat similar to those of the Puritanic age. Popery is boldly raising its hydra front in our land. It is seating itself on the benches of Parliament, and under the shadow of Prelacy, is undermining the pillars of our country's Protestantism. Without, the Autocrat of Russia, uniting in his person a civil and ecclesiastical tyranny, and Popery, allied with the despotic powers of Spain, Austria, and France, are marching on the Protestantism and liberties of Europe. That the Church, under such circumstances, may be enabled to lift the standard of a noble testimony, let her copy the Puritan, and live in closer communion with her Divine Head—let her cultivate a loftier holiness among her membership, and light up her temples with a brighter spirituality—let her stir the homesteads and councils of the kingdom with her shout against the Man of Sin; in a word, let her gird herself in the might of the Puritan's faith, and then her banner shall float triumphant in the breeze of the coming battle, under the smile of the Puritan's God.

FAMILY DEVOTIONS OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

The several members of a Christian family were accustomed to rise very early in the morning, and address their thoughts to God by silent ejaculations, by calling to mind familiar passages of Scriptures, and by secret prayer. Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 188, was accustomed, when he awoke, to call to mind the words of Christ; and often anticipated the dawning of the day in these devout exercises. "One must arise," says Basil the Great, "before the twilight of the morning, to greet with prayer the coming day." "Let the sun at his rising find us with the word of God in hand." "Let the day begin with prayer." "Soon as the day returns, and before leaving his chamber, the Christian should address his prayer to his Saviour; and before resuming his daily labour begin the work of righteousness." "Let the child be accustomed, early in the morning, to offer prayer and praise to God; and at evening again, when the day is past and gone, let him end his labour by bringing his evening offering to the Lord."

After their private devotions, the family met for united prayer, which was accompanied with the reading of the Scriptures. The recital of such doctrinal and practical sentiments as might best fortify them against the prevailing scandals and heresies of the times, constituted also, as it would seem, part of their devotional exercises. In the family, as in all their devotions, the primitive Christians delighted to sing their sacred songs.

At the table they reverently sought the blessing of God. Several of these examples of prayer before meals are given at length in the fathers. Here also they rehearsed some portions of Scripture, and sang praises to God; a custom which Clement of Alexandria and Chrysostom earnestly recommend. The meal being ended, they concluded with prayer, giving thanks for the blessing received, and supplicating a continuance of the

Divine mercy. "As the body requires daily sustenance," says Chrysostom, "so the soul needs to be refreshed with spiritual food that it may be strengthened for its warfare against the flesh."

The day was closed by devotions, renewed in much the same manner as the morning. Such was the pious care with which these Christians ordered their households in the fear of the Lord. Chrysostom made it the first duty of the master of the house "to seek so to speak, and so to act, that the spiritual good of the whole household might be promoted; and of the masters of the family, while she oversees her domestic affairs, especially to see that all act in the fear of God, and with reference to the kingdom of heaven."

There is extant a representation of one of these sacred scenes of domestic worship in the families of the primitive Christians; a view of which may fitly conclude our remarks on this subject. It is a large sarcophagus, which Munter, with the approbation also of Dörner, refers to the middle of the second century, on which is exhibited the religious worship of a Christian family. On one side of this sarcophagus are three women standing round a younger female who is playing on a lyre; on the right side stand four men with apparent rolls of music in hand, from which they are singing. This interesting monument indicates not only the existence at that early period of a collection of sacred music, but the use of that delightful portion of religious worship, sacred psalmody, in the devotions of the family.—*Dr. Coleman.*

TIRED OF GIVING.

"I cannot do it," said Mr. A. when he was invited to give for a certain good object, "I have always had to give for these things. I have to keep giving, giving, all the time, and I cannot do so much." And yet Mr. A. was a good man, a more than commonly good man, a man that you would love if you knew him as I do. It was true that he had always had to give, that he had thus far kept giving, and had given willingly too. But now he felt poor. Perhaps he had met with some loss that day.—Perhaps business perplexed him. Perhaps he had just been thinking how prices had risen, while wages—for he was a man on wages—had not risen in proportion. For a moment a shade fell on him, as on Jonah, and he was almost ready to say, I do well to be—stingy. But it did not last long. He put down his name and the figures, and then when the time came to pay, he paid more than he had promised to. I knew he would. It was just like him. Grace has soon gotten the better of nature.

My brother, do you feel as Mr. A. did? So many calls, and you have to give to them all, and have to keep giving and giving till you are almost tired of giving, and almost afraid you shall wrong yourself and your family by giving? You do not feel so always; but sometimes, just for a moment, the dark shadow falls upon your face and your heart, and just for a moment you are loth to give, and you lose the comfort and the joy of giving.

But, my brother, is this demand for constant giving peculiar to Christ's cause? Do you not have to keep giving for yourself and your household? I do for mine. Little mouths opening every day to be fed. The wardrobe as well as the table to be supplied; books to be purchased; things for family use and for individual advantage every day called for. Giving, giving, all the time. And yet I hope you are not tired of giving! You do not mean to let your children go hungry to-day, because you fed them yesterday? You do not mean to deny yourself all the comforts of life in time to come, because you have bestowed so many on yourself in past time! You mean to keep giving, giving to yourself and your children, I hope, as long as you live. Do so by the Lord's cause.

Moreover, what else can you expect but to keep giving? You would not have missionary operations stop, would you? When every other power on earth is spreading itself, you would not have Christ's kingdom shrink? Say, which school would you have disbanded, which station broken up, which church scattered, which missionary called home, which fit young man discouraged from entering on the work? Not one, I am sure. You would have the stream that has begun to flow, flow on wider and wider, deeper and deeper, and the light which now gilds the mountain tops, rise higher and higher, till the landscape shall be flooded with its beams. You mean to keep giving till heaven receives you.

Indeed, what hardship is it and what evil, that you must keep giving? An evil? Why, it is the greatest good that could happen to you. God means by it to develop your Christian principle and Christian affection, to train you to a character which he can approve, and to a preparation for the joy of your Lord; the joy that comes of self-denial and benevolent achievement, with all their happy results. Accordingly, he makes one appeal to you on this side, and another on that, sends you one object of charity to-day, and two to-morrow, and keeps throwing the necessitous multitudes in your way, and asking you, for his sake, to help them. He wants you to keep giving, and giving all the time, till you shall know how good it is to give; till you will do anything, and submit to anything rather than not give; till selfishness shall die out, and a Christlike benevolence shall gain full possession of your soul.

You have to keep giving, it is true, but there is one other thing you have to do. You have to keep receiving. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" Rock on up for yourself—I need not for you—the things which you have received, are receiving, and hope to receive. How many! how various! how rich! "FREELY ye have received, FREELY give." God keeps giving. Did he not begin with giving his