

## The Christian Helper.

A BAPTIST MONTHLY JOURNAL.

"Not for that we have doubted ever your faith, but are helpers of your joy." II. Cor. 1: 11.

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The present issue completes Vol. II of THE CHRISTIAN HELPER. While acknowledging with gratitude the Divine favour and blessing upon our enterprise, and rejoicing in the service we have been permitted to do our fellow-labourers in the Master's vineyard, we can assure our subscribers that in the future no effort will be spared to make the HELPER worthy of their continued and cordial support.

Arrangements for the forthcoming volume are in contemplation, which if carried out promise to largely increase the usefulness of this Journal. We hope to be able to announce their completion, and to publish particulars in our next issue.

### HOME PIETY.

Home is a sweet word when it describes a reality and not a shadow. But, alas! there is many a splendid mansion in which there is no home; and just for this reason, that home depends much more on mental and moral qualities, than on outward and adventitious circumstances. We have seen an earthly paradise, where there was no home; but in the log house of the humble backwoodsman we have found a home of contentment and peace, upon which angels might have gazed with delight. We will not say that there is no home without piety; for there are sweet congenialities of nature still to be met with in this fallen world. But this we will say, that the highest happiness of home can never be realized where the influence of piety is not felt. And yet strange to say, there are some families professing piety that are anything but happy. They dwell together, but they have no home.

Too many people in these days are pious everywhere but at home. They have an excellent out-of-door piety, which they lay aside the moment they cross their own thresholds. They are "saints abroad, but devils at home." Their piety is luxuriant on the open stage of public observation; but it withers, and even dies, in the domestic circle. They can work on committees, speak at public meetings, teach in Sunday-

schools, be prominent and active in the church, engage in all sorts of religious and benevolent activity; but their home life, so far as piety is concerned, is a blank, and worse than a blank. They have played their part in public, and at home they throw aside their official dress, and appear in their own native garb—unlovely, morose, irritable, unkind; having no home for themselves, and permitting none to those around them. Such professors are stumbling-blocks to others, and can be anything but really useful in the world. They lose sight of the true order of things, which is, to quote the words of the apostle, "first to show piety at home," and then to widen its circle, till it embraces the whole family of man.

We have doubtless all of us to perform a public part; and we should seek, as Christians, to perform it well; but this can never exonerate us from the still more pressing obligation of performing our part in private, and seeing to it that our own little garden is not overrun with noxious weeds while we are cultivating the fields of others around us. Like charity, piety must begin at home; and though it is not to stop there, it will ever be seen to greatest advantage where it is subject to the closest inspection. Piety is not a splendid hypocrisy, a gilded deceit, making clean the outside of the cup and platter, but the moment it retires from public gaze relaxing into indifference, or breaking into strife. Such piety may comport with the "form of godliness" but not with its "power;" it may gain the applause of men, but it cannot secure the approbation of God. Piety not distinctly seen at home is little worth; indeed it is worth nothing—yes, and less than nothing. It is all the worse for its holiday dress; by which it deceives the church, vaunts itself as a somewhat superior article, and all the while sheds mildew and blight around the domestic hearth.

Nothing in religion can be safely or consistently substituted for home piety. Home virtues are the parent of all other virtues. Home is the soil in which all true religion must find its seed-bed and its nursery. It is the lack of piety at home that makes the current of public piety flow on with such sluggishness. Raise the tone of private and family religion, and all Zion's interests will instantly be refreshed and invigorated. Get more Bible knowledge—more prayer—more union—more zeal for God—more conformity to Christ, "AT HOME," and Christian intelligence, devotion, harmony, activity and holiness will spread apace in the church. Nothing retards the success of the ministry so much as the defective piety at home. We believe, with the devoted Baxter, that when family religion shall rise to its proper elevation, con-

version will be more frequently the result of home influences, than of the public teaching of the church.

### EXPERIENCED CHRISTIANS AND THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

We should be glad to know by what fiction of benevolence it has come to pass that the entire destiny of our Sunday-schools has been so largely committed to the hands of the young and inexperienced. We delight to see the young engaging with the ardor and enthusiasm peculiar to early life, in one of the most honorable and useful of all employments; but we must seriously demur to that arrangement of the churches which so generally entrusts the Sunday-school to the almost absolute care of those who, of necessity, stand in need of the counsels and example of those of riper years and experience than themselves. The evils of this system are clearly pointed out by the Rev. A. Rowland in the *Sunday-school Chronicle*—

"Too often mere children in Christian experience are persuaded to become teachers when they are painfully conscious of ignorance, and are longing to continue learners still. From that moment a demand is made for one lesson weekly,—sometimes for two,—from those whose time of serious thought and religious experience may be reckoned by months; and the result is, either the flimsiest class teaching, or an impoverishing drain upon mental and spiritual life. Meanwhile the Bible class, from which they were probably taken, is denuded of its most intelligent and thoughtful element, just when it was beginning to assert its power. The young Christian being gone from it, the leaving influence which made discussion profitable, and attention reverent, is taken away and the teacher is discouraged by seeing the results of his toil removed, when they would have proved a blessing to him and to those he tries to lead to decision for Christ. He is grieved just as a farmer would be if he saw his corn cut down that might be used as seed before it was really ripe, because some onlooker had seen its golden promise. In fine the too early removal of young Christians from the Bible class deprives the remaining members of a wholesome influence they specially want; it takes them away from an assistant service which might be well done, to attempt a more official work, which may for a time be ill done; it robs their teacher of his best help towards the preparation and delivery of the higher lessons he is willing to give, and it ultimately deprives the church of those who might by longer training have become leaders in the defence of the faith.

"But," urges some earnest superintendent, "what are we to do? If we give up the practice you reprobate, classes must go untaught, for we can find no other teachers than those who are in the Bible classes." It is painfully, shamefully true; but if the older teachers would not so lightly give up their service, and if the older members of our churches were faithful to their Lord, the