The Provincial Wesleyan.

Devoted to Religion, Literature, Science, Education, Temperance, Agriculture, and General Intelligence.

Volume VII. No. 34. HALIFAX, N. S., THURSDAY, AUGUST 23, 1855. Whole No. 319.

Sabbath Morning.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Dear is the hallowed morn to me,
When village bells awake the day;
And, by their sacred minstrelsy,
Call me from earthly cares away.

And dear to me the winged hour,
Spent in thy hallowed courts, O Lord!
To feel devotion's soothing power,
And catch the manna of thy word.

And dear to me the loud Amen,
Which echoes through the blest abode,
Which swells and sinks, and swells again,
Dies on the walls, but lives to God.

And dear the rustic harmony,
Sung with the pomp of village art;
That holy, heavenly melody,
The music of a thankful heart.

In secret I have often prayed,
And still the anxious tear would fall;
But on thy sacred altar laid,
The fire descends, and dries them all.

Oft when the world, with iron bands,
Has bound in its six-days' chain,
This bursts them, like the strong man's band;
And lets my spirit loose again.

Then dear to me the Sabbath morn;
The village bells, the shepherd's voice;
These oft have found my heart forlorn,
And always bid that heart rejoice.

Go, man of pleasure, strike thy lyre,
Of broken Sabbaths sing the charms;
Ours be the prophet's car of fire,
That bears us to a Father's arms.

The British Conference.

OPENING AND ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

Yesterday morning, (says the *Watchman* of July 26th,) the One Hundred and Twelfth Annual Assembly of the Wesleyan Ministers was formally opened in the Brunswick Chapel, Leeds, Yorkshire.

The first business of the Conference, after the devotional services, is to fill the vacancies in the Legal Hundred, which may have occurred during the year, from deaths or superannuation. The vacancies were this year supplied as follows:—

ELECTIONS FOR THE LEGAL HUNDRED.

JOSEPH RAYNAR,	in the place of	James Bate.
JOHN WILSON, 1st,	" "	Dr. Beaumont.
JOS. STINSON,	" "	Wm. Bird.
A. FREEMAN,	" "	John Coates.
ROBT. NEWSTEAD,	" "	John Cullen.
ROBT. SHERWELL,	" "	Wm. Delby.
G. B. MACDONALD,	" "	Thos. Eastwood.
JOHN MCOWAN,	" "	J. B. Holroyd.
W. J. SHREWSBURY,	" "	Ben. Hudson.
THOS. MOSS,	" "	Henry Rauson.
RICHARD BAY,	" "	Joseph Wilson.
JOHN HILL,	" "	Wm. Crookes.

The appointment of the newly-chosen Members of the Legal Hundred having been duly announced from the Chair, and acknowledged by the Parties, the Conference next proceeded to the election of its principal officers—the President and Secretary. The votes, omitting units, were—

FOR PRESIDENT.

The Rev. ISAAC KEELING,	209
John Bowers,	49
Robert Young,	40
F. A. West,	20
W. Naylor,	7
S. D. Waddy,	7
J. P. Haswell,	3
Joseph Cushworth,	2

The choice was unanimously confirmed by the Legal Hundred.

The Election for the Secretary took place at a later hour of the day. The votes were—

FOR SECRETARY.

The Rev. Dr. HANNAH,	153
S. D. Waddy,	35
F. A. West,	31
John Farrar,	19
George Osborn,	6
Jonathan Crowther,	3

This election also received unanimous confirmation from the Legal Hundred.

THE FIRST DAY OF CONFERENCE.

[From the Watchman's Correspondent.]

Brunswick Chapel, Wednesday Evening, July 25, 1855.

I presume the particulars relating to the election of Ministers into the legal Conference, and to that of our President and Secretary, have already reached you from another source. The usual noon Prayer-meeting, conducted by our newly-elected President, was well-attended, and too much cannot be said of its deep religious feeling. Rarely have we observed greater devotion on such an occasion. The Revs. J. Methley, R. Young, P. M'Owan, and George Osborn, let our devotions. Methodists of the right stamp know what is meant by power in prayer, and the devotional services of our Conferences have always been characterised by this element, and scarcely ever, perhaps, more so than whilst the Rev. Geo. Osborn was pleading, with great importunity, in behalf of the Ministers and Societies of Methodism. Our Conference Chapel was indeed a "Bethel."

I wish I could adequately characterise the opening address of our esteemed President. It embodied some weighty sentiments appropriate to the circumstances of the Connexion and calculated greatly to encourage us after a period of unequalled trial. With much quiet power he gave utterance to words of wisdom such as the following:—"I never despaired of a sure future for those who held fast by truth and righteousnes."—It was most pleasing to mark the spirit of humble piety breathed in the President's remarks.

One of his predecessors in office had stated, on retiring from his post of responsibility and honour, that his duties had been to him a "means of grace." Another during the course of the Conference had stated in his hearing that he "walked in the light of God's countenance and was full of immortal hope." His own ambition was that such should be his experience. The vote of the Conference which placed Mr. Keeling in the Chair was an expresion of brotherly confidence which warrants him to expect that constant remembrance of him at the throne of grace which he so gracefully solicited.

It must have been highly gratifying to the late President, the Rev. John Farrar, to receive from his brethren their warm and well deserved thanks for his invaluable services during his Presidential year. Mr. Jackson testified to his eminent ability in conducting the business of the Conference itself, and Dr. Bunting to his exemplary attention to the affairs of the Connexion during the year. The thanks of the Conference were acknowledged by the Ex-President with his characteristic modesty and kindness.

Just as I write, the Secretary is reading the Address of the Irish Conference, its Representatives having been previously introduced. Let me cite from it a sentence worthy the sons of Wesley in the sister country,—"Methodism rears no monuments where it saves no souls."

The Conference promises to be one of great harmony. The good people of Leeds are exercising their famed hospitality, and appear to be greatly enjoying the company of their Ministers.

Sabbath next will be a high day in this town. Closely connected as it is, by various iron roads, with neighbouring places, the trains of Saturday will bring to it numbers of our friends to attend the services of the Sunday and those of two or three succeeding days. I send off this brief outline, as the Canadian Address is being read to the Conference. It was hoped that Dr. Beecham might himself have presented it. His duties, as the representative of the British Conference, have detained him for a longer period than was expected. The brethren, however, anticipate the pleasure of receiving from his lips, ere the close of our sittings, his views in relation to the prospects of Methodism in the Canadian Connexion.

Conference Chapel,
Saturday Evening, July 28.

My former communication stated, at its close, that the Secretary was just then reading the Address of the Canadian Conference. The leading points in that Address and some very encouraging statistics relating to the work in that country, will very probably be presented to your readers in another form. Mr. Osborn, as representing the Missionary Society, gave a glowing account of the state and prospects of Methodism in that important section of the British Empire. To those esteemed Ministers in England and Canada who a few years ago so successfully laboured to bring about the reunion of what were for a few years, unhappily, separated and somewhat unfriendly Methodist churches, the present prosperous state of things must be in the highest degree gratifying. Methodism has taken hold of the neighbouring "States" as no other form of Christianity has done; and in Canada itself we are strongly inclined to think a similar progress awaits it. "Labourers not loiterers" in the vineyard of the Lord, our brethren there are constantly entering into new doors of usefulness and prosecuting all aggressive warfare against surrounding ignorance and sin—and the best of all is, God is with them, "confirming the word with signs following."

Thursday, July 26.—After the customary devotional services, the Ex-president, at the commencement of our morning sittings, announced that Benjamin Agar, Esq., of York, had placed in his hand the handsome gift of £50, to be applied at his discretion, to the relief of Ministers who had been subjected to considerable privation during the year in some parts of the Connexion; and the thanks of the Conference were presented to the executors of the late Rev. John Reynolds, of Penzance, especially to Richard Hoskins, Esq., by whom the legacy of Mr. Reynolds had been paid to the Conference. The legacy amounts, I believe, to upwards of £4000, and is to be employed for Connexional purposes, as the Conference shall judge fit. A few more such practical expressions of attachment to the cause of Christ would greatly strengthen our several institutions, and tend to the advancement of the work.

Our next preliminary business related to the Lord's day. The ever watchful Secretary of the Sabbath Committee called the attention of the Conference to the notice which had been given of a motion to be brought forward in the House of Commons for the opening of the Crystal Palace and the British Museum on the Sunday. The Committee deemed it necessary that a Petition should be prepared to be presented to the House deprecating such a desecration of the Lord's day. Mr. Osborn suggested that to this should be added an expression of earnest hope, on the part of the Conference, that Parliament would not interfere with the existing Beer Bill, by making it less stringent. The recent restrictions on the Public Houses had worked very beneficially, and any removal of these restrictions should be stoutly opposed.

The Conference then proceeded to its ordinary course of business. In answer to the question, what Ministers are recommended to be received into full connexion? the Chairmen of Districts furnished to the Secretary the names of those Preachers who had been recommended to the Conference by the District Meetings for ordination. Most of these have passed through a course of preparatory theological and literary training at Richmond or Didsbury, and all have occupied the position of Probationers in Circuits. Ample opportunities have thus been furnished to their fathers and brethren, for judging of their suitability for a place in the Wesleyan Ministry. An examination in private on Saturday evening will be followed by further and rigid inquiries before the entire Conference, previously to their admission into full connexion and their solemn ordination to the office of Pastors in our Church. To these young men the present Conference is of deep and solemn interest. May He who has counted them faithful hitherto, graciously aid them!

The list of Candidates for Ordination being completed, and the names of Preachers yet remaining "on trial," having been supplied from the several Districts, and placed on record by the Secretary, the Conference proceeded to the enquiry, always deeply affecting, "What Ministers have died during the year?" It is the custom of the Conference to enter upon this question by singing some hymn appropriate to the occasion. In this instance, the brethren with much feeling sang the hymn commencing "Come let us join our friends above." This year the Conference record of mortality will include the names of Kershaw and Clendinnen, men venerable for years and honored for their usefulness. Mr. Kershaw was the spiritual father of Dr. Newton, and had endured the hardships and persecutions of a somewhat early Methodism. Clendinnen had listened to the Gospel from the lips of Wesley, and in his own country, Ireland, had laboured with great zeal and success. In this affecting list we have, too, the name of Dr. Beaumont, the eloquent Preacher, and the instrument in the hands of the Holy Spirit, of the conversion of one of the greatest and most devoted of modern Missionaries, Robert Moffat. Carvosso, also, the son of the Cornish fisherman, whose memoir, from the pen of the departed, has justly become so favourite a biography amongst our best people, has passed from amongst us. He commenced his career as a Missionary to Australia, where his name is yet precious. It was stated in the Conference that much of the past prosperity of Methodism in that part of the world is to be traced to Mr. Carvosso's zealous and successful labours.

Friday, July 27.—The names of the Memorial Committee were read, and the time of meeting appointed. This Committee will give every attention to the documents with which it has to deal, and then send up a report. The question of "character" came next. Methodist Ministers exercise over each other an oversight kind and fraternal, yet faithful, such as is unknown in any other community. Our system of itinerancy, indeed, renders such oversight specially necessary. Our Societies receive Ministers among them who are entire strangers; they nevertheless regard them with perfect confidence, knowing that each year they are subjected to brotherly examinations, as well in relation to moral and religious character as to pulpit qualification. This examination of ministerial character was conducted with all fidelity. But one serious case was reported as having occurred at home, and none on the foreign stations. One Minister had tendered his resignation to the President during the year, designing to seek admission into the ministry of the Establishment, finding his physical strength unequal to the labours of our Itinerancy. Two other brethren had desired certificates of ministerial status among us, with a view of entering into the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. In the case of a fourth there had been a refusal to take the appointment he received from the last Conference, and he had thus separated himself from his brethren.

Some Ministers resign; others there are like one of whom Mr. Wesley writes, "Good soldiers of Christ, fairly worn out in their Master's service," who stay at their post and wear the harness until their strength fails, and they are compelled to seek an honorable absolution from the toils and responsibilities of the active Ministry.

Among the venerable men who have requested to be allowed to retire into the quiet of a Supernumerary's life, we find the Rev. Samuel Jackson, who greatly endeared himself to his brethren by a long life of ministerial service. To Mr. Jackson Methodism owes a debt of gratitude for having excited amongst our people a large amount of interest in the youth of the Connexion. Mr. Jackson, as your readers well know, has been the originator of the Catechumen movement. He quits the ranks of the Ministers in full work, followed by the best wishes and prayers of the Conference.

Dr. Andrews too, for several years past sustaining the offices of Chairman and Representative, becomes, at his own request, a Supernumerary,—feeling at length the infirmities of age and impaired health. Also, the Rev. John Rigg, now wholly incapacitated for public service by the failure of his strength. A letter addressed by this truly excellent and esteemed Minister to the ex-President, was read to the Conference.—This communication, in keeping with Mr. Rigg's well known intelligence and piety and thorough devotedness to Methodism, expressed his entire submission to the will of God and his unshaken confidence in the great religious principles he has for many years sought to diffuse. It was directed that a letter of sympathy should be addressed to Mr. Rigg, on the part of the Conference, in reply to his communication. These, with the other beloved brethren, retiring into comparatiue obscurity, will, we doubt not, be a blessing to the Circuits in which they may reside.

The proceedings of to-day (Saturday) I will furnish in my next. I have just returned from one of the Saturday evening band-meetings. It has been a season of grace and power. Several Ministers as well as members related their experience. I went expecting to be both interested and profited, and was not disappointed. Earnest prayers are being offered in behalf of God's servants who shall minister on the morrow, and they will not be in vain. We have already tokens for good. The Conference prayer meeting will not soon be forgotten. Several of the morning services have been "times of refreshing." We do not ask, "Is the Lord in Zion, is her King in her?"

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS FROM SATURDAY TO MONDAY.

Brunswick Chapel,
Monday Evening, July 30.

The enquiry relating to Supernumeraries, commenced on Friday, was disposed of during the forenoon of Saturday. In a few instances, where application was made to the Conference for permission to retire on the Supernumerary List, it was thought that the brethren applying were equal to the duties of the less laborious Circuits, and it was determined that easy stations should be sought for those excellent Ministers who are somewhat physically enfeebled. In any other religious community than one adopting the plan of itineracy and village preaching, they could not have had the most distant thought of retiring from public life.—Many a Supernumerary, unequal to the toilsome labours of our "Circuits," would be quite competent to the discharge of the duties of a parish with its one church, or to those devolving on the Pastor of a single independent congregation. This fact claims the kindest consideration of our people, and should induce a cheerful readiness to support that Connexional Fund on which the men are cast who, at the bidding of conscience, had devoted themselves to a Ministry involving so serious a disadvantage in comparison with one non-itinerant. In the case, however, of others, it was felt that the Conference could not do otherwise than comply with their request. It is hoped that two or three brethren, after a year's rest, may find themselves so much improved in health as to be able to resume their work.

Before entering on the next matter of ordinary business, the Memorial Committee presented its Report. That Committee had carefully examined the several documents which, under the title of Memorials, had been addressed to the Conference. Their number was small, and several even of this small number were of such a nature as not to be regarded "Memorials" in the sense in which the Conference understands that term. Two of them related simply to the residence of the second Minister on the Circuit. Another conveyed the thanks of the Louth Quarterly Meeting for the kindness shown to it by the Conference, and asked the continuance of the fourth Minister at the expense of the Contingent Fund. It was gratifying to learn that not one of these documents contained any thing hostile to the constitutional principles of the Connexion. The Committee recommends to the consideration of the Conference several of the valuable suggestions of Memorialists, especially those relating to the publication of a "Manual of Connexional laws and regulations," the provision of suitable books in greater variety for the use of our Sunday-schools, both subjects for which Committees have already been formed. I understand that the Report of this Committee will be forwarded to you for publication.

Passing to the questions—"What Circuit proposes to reduce the number of its Ministers?" and, "What Circuit asks the re-appointment of an additional one?" a long and serious conversation took place on the subject of maintaining in every Circuit its staff of Ministers, unless that were really found to be quite impracticable. During the last two or three years, it was remarked, there had been instances in which, from deficiency of funds, a Minister had been taken away from a Circuit for the purpose of relieving its embarrassments, and where it was now found about as difficult to sustain the reduced number as it had been to support the former staff. Besides this, the Circuits had been very inadequately supplied with ministerial services, and had, consequently, suffered in their religious state. In a case which occupied, for a long time, the attention of the Conference, the Circuit proposed giving up a married Minister unless some £20 more could be granted from the Contingent or Home Mission Fund. Such additional aid that Fund could not possibly furnish, except at the expense of Circuits still more needy. A slight effort on the part of the Connexion generally would double the annual income of our Home Missions, and would be of incalculable service to many feeble Circuits. But that which is yet more important, is the general increase in the amount contributed in the Classes and to the Quarterly Collections. In some of the Circuits there is a much larger average of contribution than in others where the circumstances of our people are about the same. The returns made in the schedules supplied to the dependent Circuits by the Finance Committee, greatly aid the Conference in coming to right conclusions on these matters.

The session of Saturday was concluded before the whole of these cases had been considered, and the enquiry will be resumed when the examinations of Candidates for the full Ministry and their Ordination shall have taken place. While I am writing, the Conference Chapel is crowded, and our friends of Leeds and many miles round are listening to their statements of Christian experience and ministerial call. Your readers will be furnished with their addresses, as also with a report of the Ex-President's sermon of this morning. It embodied solemn and stirring truths. Its appeals were most powerful, and on several occasions the congregation, including nearly 500 Ministers, was deeply affected. Our Conference services seem to myself to be characterised by special power. Many could, I am sure, unite with me in testifying that such was the case on Sabbath morning, as we engaged in the devotional services of the Hanover-street Chapel, and listened to the admirable and eloquent discourse of Mr. Arthur,—a sermon in which the rewardableness of the works of Christian faith and love was most clearly and solemnly presented to a crowded and deeply attentive audience. Many of us, I believe, will never forget the emotions which were kindled by some of the Preacher's thrilling descriptions and earnest appeals. I could not otherwise than thank God that such men were being continually raised up among us, so powerfully to minister the ever enduring word.

The sermon of the President, in the Conference Chapel, has been reported to me as characteristic of the Preacher, and very appropriate to the occasion.

The afternoon service in the same noble sanctuary appears to have been one of great attraction, Numbers, eager to hear Mr. Punshon, could not gain admission, and a second service was held on the premises, conducted by the Rev. Theophilus Pugh.—Of Mr. Punshon's sermon I have heard only the text, and that it fully sustained the reputation of this popular young Minister.

In the evening it was my privilege to listen to a richly evangelical exposition of Ephesians i. 13, 14. The sealing of believers by the Holy Spirit, on their believing, and as the consequence of their believing,—their sealing unto the praise of the divine grace,—was the preacher's theme, and one which he ably and profitably handled. The singing was such as it has rarely been my lot to hear. The impression of the entire service, distinguished by much religious power, could not fail to be of the best character. "May God, even our own God, bless us."

THE CANDIDATES FOR ORDINATION.

Brunswick Chapel, Leeds,
Tuesday Evening, July 31.

My last brought down the Report of Conference proceedings to the public examination of the twenty-two young men who have completed their probation, and who, being approved, are to be received into full connection with the Conference.

This morning the inquiry was resumed as to proposed alterations in the arrangements of Circuits,—requests for additional Ministers,—and the intended giving up of Preachers where it was found the provision for their support was quite insufficient unless supplemented by a large grant from the Home Mission Fund. Two or three cases of this sort were decided, and then, as is usual in the forenoon of the first Tuesday of our meeting, the Conference proceeded to the Theological examination of the candidates for ordination. This examination has been conducted of late years by the Rev. Thomas Jackson, but at Mr. Jackson's earnest request it has devolved, in this instance, upon Dr. Hannah. I need hardly say that the venerable Tutor of Didsbury discharges this duty with fatherly kindness and thorough ability. The replies of the young men, who take their stand during examination in the front pews of the gallery, evince an intimate acquaintance with Theology as a science. In most cases the candidates have passed through the classes of Richmond and Didsbury, and appear to have profited by their advantages. Their clear views of divine truth joined with earnest piety and preaching talent, will fit them to be "able Ministers of the New Testament." At half-past twelve o'clock, on the motion of the Rev. Dr. Hannah, seconded by Mr. Jackson, and supported by the venerable George Marsden, they were received into full connection with the Conference, by an unanimous and hearty vote, after which they were briefly addressed by the President.

Some necessary arrangements having been made for the Ordination Service of to-morrow, the Conference returned to the previous question relating to Circuits, but was unable to proceed through the whole of the Districts before the hour of adjournment had arrived.

WEDNESDAY'S CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS.

Brunswick Chapel,
Wednesday Evening, Aug. 1.

The public examination of Probationers, adjourned from Monday to Tuesday evening, must have given great satisfaction to our friends, who were present in such large numbers. The brethren who were called upon to address the congregation gave clear and beautiful testimony to the saving grace of God, and their divine call to the Christian Ministry. Several, as they gratefully acknowledged, were the children of pious parents, and happily blessed with a Christian training. Two were the sons of Wesleyan Ministers. One had been brought up in the Presbyterianism of Scotland, but, removing to England, he had gone, from curiosity, to a Wesleyan Chapel in Cheshire. He was impressed by what he heard there, and at length became the subject of personal conversion. This was not until his 24th year. Since his engagement with the Ministry, he had seen a number of souls brought to God through his instrumentality. Deeply affecting was his reference to a special service he had held in one of his Circuits during the period of Connexional agitation, now happily passed away. While preaching, the power of God came down on the congregation. Many after the sermon were seeking in earnest prayer the mercy of God. From this service some of the officers of the Society were absent, having been attracted to a meeting of agitators, at which Methodism and its Ministers were held up to public contempt and scorn. One of these officers, at the close of the gathering of the men scattering "fire-brands, arrows, and death," called in at the Chapel. The sight of sinners crying for mercy there deeply affected him. He joined heartily in the good work, exclaiming, "This is Methodism—this place is like heaven, that from which I came is like hell. I wash my hands of that affair."

The impression of the brethren with whom I have conversed on the matter is, that rarely, if ever, have we had more promising young men ordained in our Ministry. The charge delivered to them this morning, in the extensively crowded Chapel, Oxford-place, was appropriate and most impressive. It does the newly-ordained Ministers great credit that they united to request from the Ex-President the publication of his Charge. The Conference has voted this evening very heartily, its thanks to the President for his Official Sermon before the Conference on Sunday morning; also to the Ex-President, for his admirable discourse on Monday morning. This Sermon was marked by great ability, very seasonable, and full of heart-stirring passages. Both the President and the Secretary are requested to publish their discourses, and I understand they consent to do so.

The Conference is continuing its rigid inquiry into the proposals from the several Districts in relation to Circuit arrangements for next year. It is deeply to be regretted that several of the country Circuits have proposed the giving up of Ministers, because they can receive from the Connexional Fund either no grant at all or what they deem an inadequate amount. In several of these cases, were the average contribution of the members to reach that which our rules prescribe, there would be no necessity to adopt so disastrous a course as the reduction of their Ministerial Staff. The question will be resumed to-morrow morning.

THE CONFERENCE SUNDAY.

THE PRESIDENT'S SERMON.

On Sunday morning, the President, the Rev. Isaac Keeling, preached in Brunswick Chapel. The following is an outline of his discourse:—

MARK iv., 25.

"For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath."

The Old Testament showed (observed the Rev. Gentleman) there was a divinely appointed method for the salvation of a lost race. The Old and New Testaments, taken together, showed, that whoever would be saved under the Gospel dispensation, must look to the Father, as the primary source of all good,—from whom came down "every good and perfect gift,"—must look to the Son as the only way of access to the Father; and he must look for, and depend upon, the grace of the Holy Ghost. The cases of persons who had been blessed while manifesting this spirit of dependence, though, in many instances, greatly dissimilar, were not accidental, but wisely and divinely appointed. God gave and dispensed his various blessings on a comprehensive principle of wisdom and righteousness. . . . . (The Rev. Gentleman then enumerated various passages of Scripture which were parallel to the words of the text) . . . . In the words which preceded the text, the same principle was expressed, though in other terms. And, in other parts of Scripture, this principle was closely connected with the doctrine of divine retribution.

No doubt they were all agreed, that, when a doctrine was once so plainly stated in Scripture that it could not be misunderstood, it ought to be received reverentially as God's teaching. And no doubt they were equally agreed, that when a doctrine or precept was repeated or reiterated in various parts of Scripture, that doctrine must be considered, not only as a revealed truth, but as a truth which the Revealer presented, with a special seal of importance, and recommended as such.

In the passage before them, there were three matters for consideration—Precepts, Principles, and Motives, closely connected with each other.

The expressions of the text struck the common English ear as somewhat strange; but it did not appear that they so struck the ears of the disciples; otherwise they would, as on other occasions, have inquired their meaning. Probably, had our Lord been addressing us in our language, with our habits of thought, he might have expressed the same thing somewhat differently. It was only an example of what was very frequent among the ancients—an intentional play upon words, in order to give vivacity to the language employed. This habit, and their great condensation, had rendered the Proverbs what were called "dark sayings," though not by any means unfathomable to those who gave attention to them; and the difficulties which might at first arise, were easily overcome by the patient inquirer. Similar expressions were—"Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth,"—"Let the dead bury their dead."—"He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it."

By "him that hath," should be understood, *he who hath to good purpose;* and by "him that hath not," and has taken away from him that which he hath, *he who has what he possesses, without use or improvement.* . . . . . So with regard to "life." A man might have life in one sense, though not in another: and there was no contradiction in such sayings. The general meaning was, that he who had any gift of God, and made a right use of it, to him more should be given of that or some other gift. And he who made a bad use of any gift, should have taken from him that which he possessed.

Many things in daily life would serve to illustrate the same principle. To those who were thoughtful and prudent, even the most common things—health and strength—were increased and invigorated by proper discipline; whereas they were diminished and lost by indolence and inactivity. Wealth was generally subject to a similar law. If it were not used, or were misused, it would "take to itself wings and flee away;" whilst judiciously employed, it was well known that money got money; and was often the means of procuring more precious gifts.—Honour, authority and renown, used selfishly, would not be retained; but if used with a devout sense of gratitude to God, would be largely increased. The same might be said of presence of mind, judgment, prudence, caution—all were increased by exercise and development. Opportunities of various kinds always presented themselves to the resolute and diligent, while to those in whom such qualities were wanting, there was an apparent absence of opportunity. A great writer had truly said of the irresolute—"They let their own opportunities pass by, and see them when they are past."

The same principles operated in the kingdom of grace as in nature and providence. The case of Esau and Jacob exemplified this. Esau had the birth-right; but in another sense he had it not—he did not value it. Jacob, who had it not, but had a sense of its value, obtained it. Jeroboam was another instance. He had great ability, and was promised many things, provided he served the Lord faithfully. But he feared not the Lord; and he was accursed; so that he was marked out in history as "Jeroboam who made Israel to sin." So with Herod. He made use of his talents and information only to endeavour to slay the Messiah; whereas the wise men, with much fewer opportunities, fearing the Lord, were miraculously guided, so that they saw the infant Saviour. Herod had the advantage of the Ministry of John the Baptist; but he had no willingness to obey the divine teaching; and thus "that which he had" was "taken away from him," so that he was not benefitted by the teaching of the apostle.

And when the Apostles commenced their Ministry, the instances in which they were successful were those where there was a predisposition to learn. For example, in the cases of the centurion, Cornelius, the eunuch, the jailer at Philippi, there had been a preparation of heart. But in the case of the "son of perdition," (referred to in the second lesson of the morning's service,) the reverse was the fact. He had, no doubt, remarkable qualities for his office; but, because he employed them to no good purpose, but used them according to his own earthly views, he lost what he had.

The same law prevailed as to spiritual gifts. Take, for instance, the cases of Saul and David. While Saul was obedient to holy influences, his reign was prosperous, and his people happy. But when he began to be self-willed, and trusted only to his own devices, the spirit was taken away from him, and he fell from his high position.—David made a good use of the opportunities which he had of doing good, so that, notwithstanding his great faults, he was held up as an example in history to future generations.

With regard to inward and spiritual grace, to him who had been awakened to sin, and desired to turn from it, God would give grace to repent. But he who stifled conviction was too likely to lose the grace of an awakened conscience. He who walked by faith was about to become strong in faith; whereas he who was always doubting, would be in danger of becoming a backslider. If they had the faith to set the Lord always before them, he would be ever at their right hand, to guide and support them, and they would receive the additional blessing of "perfect peace."

Did not these considerations then, of the blessings which they might secure, open up to them the motives by which they should be actuated? It was no argument against a precept that there were difficulties in it. Most things were difficult till they were understood, but, when understood, the difficulties vanished. Mineralogy and geology were once greater mysteries than they are at present. A great deal of the mystery was fast passing away, and the sciences becoming more generally understood. A miner in these days would not begin to work without bringing to bear such a knowledge of geology as would lead him to right conclusions as to the formation of the strata, and so on. And he who cultivated a farm must act according to the laws of agriculture; so that, as the result of his labour, he may reap a plentiful harvest.

Knowing, then, from the considerations which he had advanced, God's mode of dealing with them,—was it not a motive, and an all-powerful motive, to diligence? Diligence in God's service was never unrewarded, however it might, apparently, seem to be so. Children of religious parents, who built on the good foundation which had been laid, became the more eminent as instruments to work out God's plans. Those, on the contrary, who neglected the training which they had had in youth, stood in great danger of losing that which they had. If young Ministers, with talents and opportunities, were content with laying the foundation, without building upon it, much that they had would be taken away. If, on the contrary, they cultivated their talents, and rightly used their opportunities, they would become more and more a blessing to their day and generation, and have a career of happiness, usefulness, and love.

In order to derive full benefit from the Gospel of Christ, it must be felt to be a system admitting no compromise—that its requirements must be fulfilled. But, if people stopped at the almost-being-persuaded, the good which they had would be taken away. And that God dealt with churches and nations upon this principle, none could doubt who studied with any attention the history of Jerusalem. Let them take care, both as a church and a nation, how they dealt with God! Surely, they ought to take these things into their serious consideration, and derive from the consideration motives to conscientious diligence in the service of God. He hoped they would so act as to go on from strength to strength, and thus be the means of leading multitudes, in all lands, to bless the Lord for his mercy, and to praise him for his goodness.

When Excitement is not Mischievous.

Action was the rhetorical test of an effective orator; *action* is also the test of the aroused Christian. Quinctilian tells us that the difference between Demosthenes and his great Roman rival was this, that when the one was finished, the exclamation was "What a splendid oration," but with the other, "Let us go to fight Philip." And yet with a war to fight as much transcending that against the Greek invader as does the infinite exceed the finite, we think that we, the crusaders actually enlisted in that great campaign against the powers of darkness, are justified in discountenancing anything from the pulpit that would awake us from a polite calm. If a storm be aroused, woe to the preacher and to the system.—One significant sign of danger to our own communion in these times is the scornfulness with which we permit ourselves to speak of those manifestations of real feeling which mark the worship of those classes of society whose susceptibilities have not as yet become entirely ossified. And yet would not the suppression of such outbursts be more unnatural than their indulgence? Take, for instance, the moment when in the sailors' chapel in Boston, the great modern preacher to seamen was appealing to his sailor congregation to accept Christ as the sole means of safety. "He began," we are told by a late acute and by no means over-evangelical observer, "with an eloquent description of a terrific storm at sea, rising to fury through all its gradations; then, amid the waves, a vessel is seen laboring in distress and driving on a lee shore. The masts bend and break, and go overboard; the sails are rent, the helm unshipped, they spring a leak! The vessel begins to fill, the water gains on them; she sinks deeper, deeper, *deeper*, DEEPER! He bent over the pulpit repeating the last words again and again; his voice became loud and hollow. The faces of the sailors, as they gazed at him with their mouths wide open and their eyes fixed, I shall never forget. Suddenly stopping, and looking to the farthest end of the chapel, as into space, he exclaimed, with a piercing cry of exultation, "A life boat! a life boat!" Then looking down upon his congregation, most of whom had sprung to their feet in an agony of suspense, he said in a deep, impressive tone, and extending his arms, "CHRIST IS THAT LIFE BOAT!" "But," we hear an objector say, "what was the use of so much excitement? Would it not have been a great deal more conducive to sober religion for Mr. Taylor to have delivered a calm and reasonable discourse, without producing all this disorder?" Certainly it would be, we answer, if religion was a mere pharmaceutical agency to be used by lulling the heart into satisfaction with its idolatry of SELF. But when, on the other hand, a lost soul is to be awakened from its slumbers, are we to shrink back if sometimes that soul trembles when it first hears the voice of the Lord?—*Epis. Rec.*

GOODNESS.—To be constantly in the presence of a good person, of one whose words and acts tend to purity and elevate—how pleasant and useful it is! We have no disposition to speak an impure word, to perform a wrong act, or even to think of evil. The presence of the good is a guardian angel to keep and preserve us from the sins and temptations by which we are surrounded.—Suppose that being who moves about to bless, should be the companion of our bosoms—the one to whom we can make known our joys and sorrows—what a powerful influence for good it would have over our lives! We would rejoice daily in feeling how blessed goodness is, and be so elevated in our thoughts, that it would become a difficult task for us to sin! Woman! can you not exercise such an influence over your erring husband? If he loves the company of the idle and partakes of the inebriating glass, can not you draw him by love and kindness away from sure destruction? Let the atmosphere around you be that of goodness and truth, and you will surely be ministering angels to save the lost.