

doctrinal theology; by telling men roundly of Christ's vicarious death and sacrifice; by shewing them Christ's substitution on the cross and His precious blood; by teaching them justification by faith, and bidding them believe on a crucified Saviour; by preaching ruin by sin, redemption by Christ, regeneration by the Spirit; by lifting up the brazen serpent; by telling men to look and live—to believe, repent, and be converted. This—this is the only teaching which for eighteen centuries God has honoured with success, and is honouring at the present day both at home and abroad. Let the clever advocates of a broad and undogmatic theology—the preachers of the gospel of earnestness and sincerity and cold morality—let them, I say, shew us at this day any English village or parish, or city, or town, or district, which has been evangelized without 'dogma' by their principles. They cannot do it, and they never will. Christianity without distinct doctrine is a powerless thing. It may be beautiful to some minds, but it is childless and barren. There is no getting over facts. The good that is done in the earth may be comparatively small. Evil may abound, and ignorant impatience may murmur, and cry out that Christianity has failed. But, depend on it, if we want to 'do good' and shake the world, we must fight with the old apostolic weapons, and stick to 'dogma.' No dogma, no fruits! No positive evangelical doctrine, no evangelization!"

#### THE POWER OF SONG.

In one of the hospitals of Edinburgh, lay a wounded Scottish soldier. The surgeons had done all they could for him. He had been told that he must die. He had a contempt for death, and prided himself on his fearlessness in facing it.

A rough and wicked life, with none but evil associates, had blunted his sensibilities, and made profanity and scorn his second nature. To hear him speak one would have thought he had no piously-nurtured childhood to remember, and that he had never looked upon religion but to despise it. But it was not so.

A noble and gentle-hearted man came to see the dying soldier. He addressed him with kind inquiries, talked to him tenderly of the life beyond death, and offered spiritual counsel. But the sick man paid him no attention or respect. He bluntly told him that he did not want any religious conversation.

"You will let me pray with you, will you not?" said the man at length.

"No; I know how to die without the help of religion." And he turned his face to the wall.

Further conversation could do no good, and the man did not attempt it. But he was not discouraged. After a moment's silence, he began to sing the old hymn, so familiar and so dear to every congregation in Scotland:

"O, mother dear, Jerusalem,  
When shall I come to thee?"

He had a pleasant voice, and the words and melody were sweet and touching as he sung them. Pretty soon the soldier turned his face again. But its hardened expression was all gone.

"Who taught you that?" he asked, when the hymn was done.

"My mother."

"So did mine. I learned it of her when I was a child, and I used to sing it with her." And there were tears in the man's eyes.

The ice was thawed away. It was easy to talk with him now. The words of Jesus entered in where the hymn had opened the door. Weeping, and with a hungry heart, he listened to the Christian's thoughts of death, and in his last moments to his mother's God and the sinner's Friend.—*Witness.*

#### OBLIGATIONS OF CHURCH MEMBERS.

Every person who deliberately chooses to become enrolled as a church member, engages by that act to serve the Church. He places himself and all he has at the disposal of his Master, saying, "What wilt thou have me to do?" He enlists as a soldier in a regiment, and must take his place in the ranks. He en-

gages as a labourer in the vineyard, and must do the work assigned him. That place and the work are pointed out in different ways. He may feel specially qualified for some department of church work, and, therefore, specially called to it. Or he may be thrust into a place of labour and responsibility by the voice of his brethren against his will, but with such urgency on their part, and such clear indications of Providence that he cannot lawfully resist the call. A faithful soldier must be ready for picket duty, for the perils of the "forlorn hope," or for the battle where victory and glory are sure to be won. But it often happens when the time comes for the election of elders and deacons, that the brethren arm themselves with all sorts of excuses. One has no time, another no inclination for office, another shrinks from prominence and responsibility, and a chorus of voices is heard singing, "I pray thee have me excused." Now if all are brethren, and to bear one another's burdens is to fulfil the law of Christ, then His disciples should be willing to take their share of labour and of sacrifice, instead of leaving a few willing ones to do all the work. Every young man who has the respect and confidence of the Church, and is called to fill an office, should respond at once. He should not think that his willingness to serve the Church without begging to be excused is any indication of a desire for office. The idea of ambition in office-seeking in the Church should be banished at once. There is little danger of being suspected of this, where no worldly emoluments are to be received. There ought to be as little ground to suspect that these offices are refused on account of the labour and self-denial which they impose. The old proverb that "many hands make light work" is true in the Church. It is by the "effectual working in the measure of every part," the "whole body being fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth," that the Church grows up and edifies itself in love. By sharing the responsibilities and duties of office, everyone enlarges his sphere of usefulness, becomes stronger for labour, learns to sympathize with his brethren, and feels less disposed to find fault with those who are at the helm, for he knows by experience how difficult it is to steer clear of all danger. Thus a manly piety is developed in the Church, and if a trusted pilot should be stricken down at his post, even in mid stream, there is no danger or need of panic, for there are others already disciplined and ready to take his place.

#### THE CHARM OF TRUE MARRIAGE.

Our advanced theories of divorce and free love, making the matrimonial relation merely a partnership to be dissolved at pleasure, whatever else may be said in their favour, strike a deadly blow at an element in it which was meant perhaps to be supreme above all others. What is the sweetest charm of all true marriage, what the greatest advantage, what the most priceless happiness, take life through, which it brings to the human heart? Not the flush and splendour of its early love; not the richer development which it brings to the character; not even the children who are gathered around its shrine. No, but the intimacy and reliability of its companionship; the fact that it gives those who enter into it, each in the other, and through all scenes and changes, a near and blessed standby. Marriage in some of its aspects is doubtless the source of an immense amount of unhappiness, crime, injustice, blight and down-dragging, one of the most perplexing institutions society has to deal with; only the blindest sentimentalist will deny that. On the other hand, however—and this is not mere sentiment, but sober fact—of all the evidences of God's goodness to be found in this lower world, all the proofs that He cares for us, not only with the wisdom of a Creator, but with the interest and love of a Father, there is none quite equal to His sending human beings into the arena of life, not to fight its battles, win its victories and endure its sorrows alone, but giving them, as they go forth out of their childhood's home, a relation in which each two of them are bound together with the closest of all ties, live together under the same roof, have their labours, their property, their interests, their parental affections, all

in common, and are moved to stand by each other, hand to hand and heart to heart, in every sorrow, misfortune, trial, and stormy day, that earth can bring. It is an ideal, it not always realized in full, which is tasted even now, and all that is said about marriage miseries, more widely perhaps than any other happiness.—*Sunday Afternoon.*

#### TRUST.

I cannot see, with my small human sight,  
Why God should lead this way or that for me;  
I only know he said, "Chil', follow me."  
But I can trust.

I know not why my path should be at times  
So straitly hedged, so strangely barred before;  
I only know that God could wide the door.  
But I can trust.

I find no answer, often, when beset  
With questions fierce and subtle on my way,  
And often have but strength to faintly pray.  
But I can trust.

I often wonder, as with trembling hand  
I cast the seed along the furrowed ground,  
If ripened fruit for God will there be found,  
But I can trust.

I cannot know why suddenly the storm  
Should rage so fiercely round me in its wrath;  
But this I know, God watches all my path—  
And I can trust.

I may not draw aside the mystic veil  
That hides the unknown future from my sight;  
Nor know if for me waits the dark or light;  
But I can trust.

I have no power to look across the tide,  
To see while here, the land beyond the river;  
But this I know, I shall be God's forever;  
So I can trust.

#### SHORT RULES FOR LONG COMFORT AT HOME.

Put self last.  
Be prompt at every meal.  
Take little annoyances out of the way.  
When any good happens to any one, rejoice.  
When others are suffering, drop a word of sympathy.  
Tell of your own faults rather than those of others.  
A place for everything and everything in its place.  
Hide your own little troubles, but watch to help others in theirs.  
Take hold of the knob and shut every door behind you without slamming it.  
Never interrupt any conversation, but wait patiently your turn to speak.  
Look for beauty in everything and take a cheerful view of every event.  
Carefully clean the mud and snow from your boots before entering the house.  
If from any cause you feel irritable, try the harder to do little pleasant things.  
Do not keep your good manners for company, but be equally polite at home and abroad.  
When inclined to give an angry answer, press your lips together and say the alphabet.  
Always speak politely and kindly to your help, if you would have them to do the same to you.  
When pained by an unkind word or act, ask ourselves "Have I not often done as badly and desired forgiveness?"

#### CHRISTIAN "GIVING UP."

It is a pitiful thing to see a young disciple going about and asking everybody how much he must "give up" in order to be a Christian. Unfortunately, many of those who take it upon themselves to instruct him give him the same impression of Christian discipleship—that it consists chiefly of giving up things that one likes and finds pleasure in. But a man in solitary confinement might as well talk about what he must "give up" if he is pardoned out of prison, or a patient in consumption about what he must "give up" in order to get well. The prisoner must give up his fetters, and the invalid his pains and his weaknesses—these are the main things to be sacrificed. It is true that the one has the privilege of living without work, and the other the privilege of lying in bed all day; these are privileges that must be relinquished, no doubt. And so there are certain sacrifices to be made by him who enters upon the Christian life, but they are "not worthy to be compared" with the liberty and dignity and joy into which the Christian life introduces us; and to put the emphasis upon this negative side of the Christian experience, as so many are inclined to do, is a great mistake.—*Sunday Afternoon.*

PRINCIPAL CAIRN'S long promised work, "An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion," is now so far advanced that Mr. Maclehoze, the publisher to the University of Glasgow, expects to have it ready before the end of this month.