

TEMPTATION AND SIN.

Temptation is not sin. Wherein, then, lies the difference between temptation and sin? There must be a point where temptation ceases and sin begins. When the Lord Jesus, after receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, was led of the Spirit to be tempted of the devil, He was in all points tempted like as we are. When the devil said to Him, "Command that these stones be made bread," Jesus, no doubt, looked upon the stones. He, no doubt, thought of His omnipotent power. But, if looking at the stones or thinking of His power was sin, then did Jesus sin, but, we are expressly told that He was tempted, yet without sin. Did Jesus by going upon a pinnacle of the temple, and, looking at the distance the devil desired He should cast Himself down, sin? Of course, not. When he was shown all the kingdoms from the exceedingly high mountain, did He sin? When the devil asked Him to fall down and worship him, promising Him these kingdoms, He would certainly understand and think the thoughts presented. Then in what did the temptation consist? Where does temptation cease and sin begin? Jesus in laying down the higher law of adultery did not say that he that looketh upon a woman sinneth; but He did say that he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her in his heart. Can the eye rest upon the object and the thought take form in the heart and yet there be no sin? He that looketh doth not sin, but he that looketh to lust sinneth. It must be that here is where temptation and sin separate. Elsewhere it is put "Each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust, then the lust when it hath conceived beareth sin."

When the devil tempted Jesus did He think the thoughts presented to Him? Can man be tempted without thinking? Is thinking the thoughts presented to us by the devil, sin? Obviously not, else did the Lord Jesus sin. We refer to "thoughts" here, because one of the creeds, viz.: the Westminster Confession of Faith has it that no mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but

doth daily break them in thought, word and deed. "Thought" comes first here, and it is with "thoughts" that most trouble comes. But when we allowed the blessed Holy Ghost who came at Pentecost, and of whose going away we have no record, to step in and control our thoughts, He never allows them to pass to the sin side of the lust point. He brings into captivity every thought and casts down every imagination. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Let the Holy Ghost both will and do His pleasure in the matter of thoughts. H. DICKENSON.

REST.

Two gentlemen were looking at a painting of a corn-field in France, a typical French corn-field, in which poppies shone out here and there among the corn. "It reminds me," said one, "of something Ralph Waldo Emerson said to me when I was a young man.

"I had told him that I was tired out, and was going away for a long rest; told him how I intended to occupy my leisure; spoke enthusiastically of my prospective travels and out-of-door sports. I could enjoy a lifetime of such plans.

"He had listened with sympathetic interest, but at my last remark something in his face prompted me to ask, 'You do not think these things a waste of time, Mr. Emerson?'

"No," he replied, 'oh, no; but the poppy should always grow in the corn-field.'

In that exquisitely poetical phrase the philosopher-poet and preacher fixed the truth that work is the complement, the fit and best accompaniment of recreation; the truth that inspired another poet to write:

"Rest is not quitting the busy career;
Rest is the fitting of self to its sphere."

—*Youth's Companion.*

The sentiment contained in the last couplet is the very kernel of the truth concerning rest. But how to accomplish this desired result is the problem of problems. Fitting self to one's sphere does not preclude the necessity or desirability of taking a sea-side or lake-side outing, but it does preclude the necessity of an outing to secure perfect rest of soul.