



DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND AGRICULTURE.

VOLUME XVII, No. 15.

MONTREAL & NEW YORK, AUGUST 1, 1882.

SEMI-MONTHLY, 30 CTS. per An., Post-Paid.

THE BIRTHDAY MOTTO.

Isaac Bourne had a good position and high wages in a large factory; he had long since thrown off the restraints of outward piety, and had become a reviler of God's Word, a Sabbath-breaker, and, so far as he could without losing his situation, a drunkard.

One Sunday evening, as the family were seated round the tea-table, the children began showing some little text-books given them at the Sunday-school, to which their mother (not with their father's good wishes) sent them regularly. They looked for, and repeated, with delight, the texts which fell on their several birthdays. Isaac amused himself at the children's eagerness, though he could not resist uttering a sneer at every text they read.

"I've a birthday, too, sometimes," said he, with pretended gravity. "Wife, what day of the month was I born? do ye remember?"

Mrs. Bourne named the day, and her husband took the little book from Lizzie with a laugh. "We shall see how what nonsense it says to me," he cried, as the little girl timidly leaned upon his shoulder; "I don't see why I shouldn't choose a birthday motto as well as the rest of you. So here goes—twenty-fifth of March—now I have it." And he read aloud: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

As these solemn words passed the scoffer's lips, he strove hard to despise them, but in vain. They were stronger than he, simply because God the Almighty used them as His sword; and although he said nothing, poor Elizabeth began to hope—I had almost said to believe—that her husband's conscience was at last awake.

She was right. Conscience was aroused; and more than that, conviction followed. The man sat through the rest of the evening, strangely silent, beside the fire, and pondered over the words of that terrible text.

Coming downstairs very quickly, when the children were in bed, Mrs. Bourne surprised her husband with the text-book in one hand and the Word of God in the other. He had been trying to find out that there was some mistake, but it would not do. There it stood, plain and true, and forcible as right words always are—"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

"Be not deceived!" He had been that, ah, how long? Wilfully blind! And now,

at last, after all these years, when his eyes were opened, was it not too late? "God is not mocked!" He had forgotten that, too, all his days! Fool that he was, he had supposed that he could even, by his clever wit, cast ridicule upon the Most High! Was it not useless to expect pardon for such vile offences as this? Could the blood of Jesus wash away sins so great? Surely not! Did

Bourne, according to custom, prepared to read a chapter.

"Shall I read aloud, Isaac, to-night?" she asked, a few minutes later.

"As you please," was the reply; and Elizabeth, opening at the first Epistle of John, read without interruption, till she came to the words, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,

"Well, then, I who have hated God, and defied Him, and got drunk, and told lies, and sworn, and been savage to you and them"—here he pointed toward the room in which the children slept—"must reap the fruit of it!"

"Yes," replied Elizabeth, "if you will not repent, and confess your sin, and seek pardon and cleansing through Jesus Christ, it must be so. Let us read the text next to your motto, 'For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.' Do you see how the one explains the other? To confess your sins and implore pardon for Jesus' sake, is to sow to the Spirit; to seek after holiness in Jesus is to sow to the Spirit; and the fruit of this is life everlasting."

"But the past! What can blot that out, or prevent my reaping the accursed fruit of it?"

"Christ both can and will wash away your stain," urged Elizabeth. "Hear His own Word spoken by Isaiah: 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool;' and, as I read in the first Epistle of John, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'"

"Well, you're right, I suppose, but it seems too wonderful for me to understand."

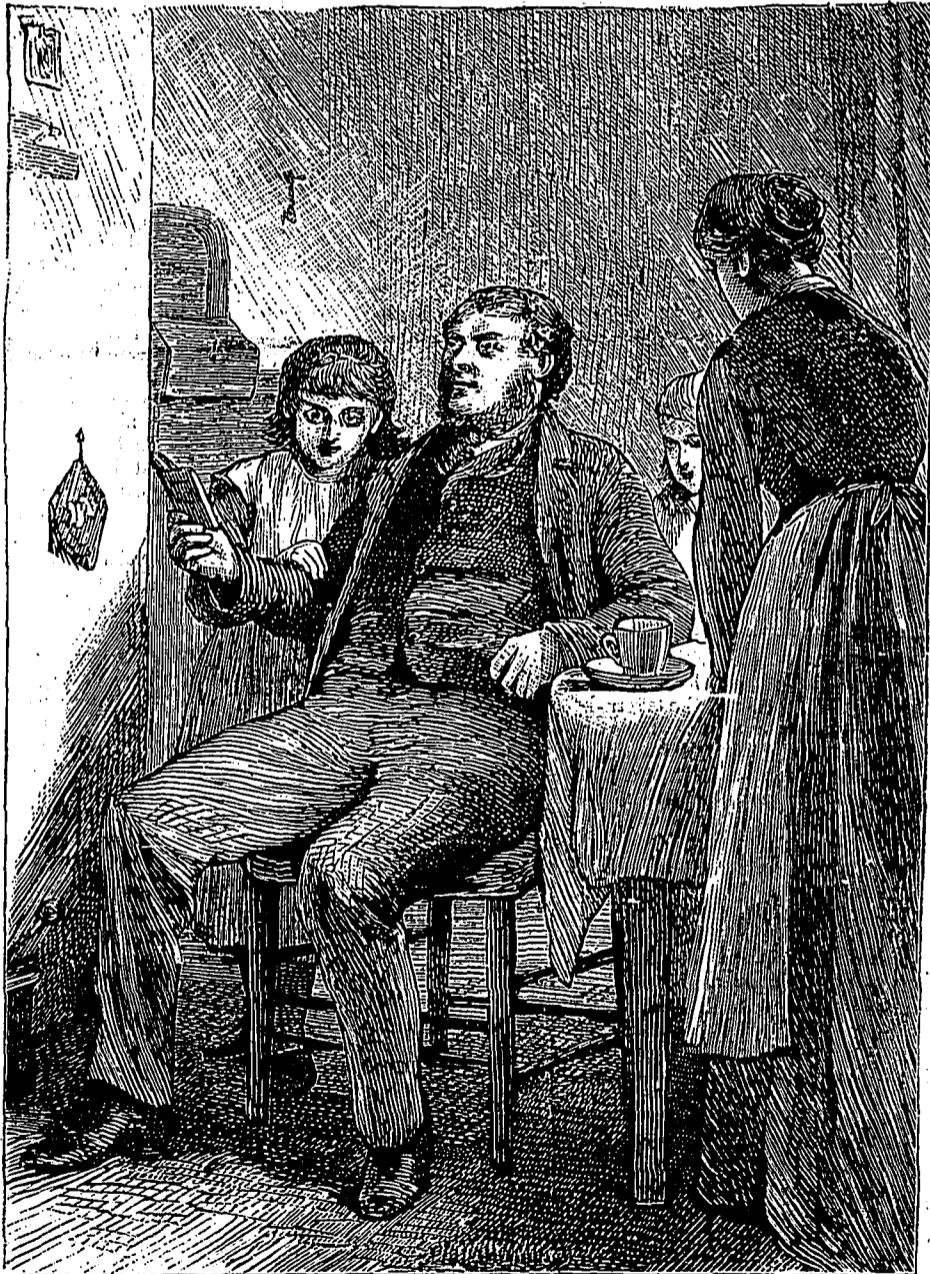
"Do not try, then, to understand it, Only believe."

"Ah, that's just what I'd like to do. I can think it's all true for you, Lizzie; for myself I cannot! You must pray for me, aloud if you like; and then leave me here by myself."

His wife obeyed. In ten minutes from that time he was alone with God, while Elizabeth, in the upper room, continued her supplications for him. Torn by doubts and fears, Isaac sat till long after midnight, with the Bible upon his knees, and an intense longing after peace with God in his once rebellious heart. What transpired in that time is known only to himself and Heaven. The year's actions stand forth as witnesses that a great and good

work was accomplished; and his now happy wife looks back to that night as the turning-point in his career.

May Isaac Bourne's experience rouse us to a prayerful consideration of the truth contained in that birthday motto, "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—*Friendly Visitor.*



not the text say, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap?"

Sitting down by her husband, Elizabeth, Bourne looked steadily into the fire, and waited. All that evening she had been praying for him—sometimes even with tears; and her heart's desire was to be made useful to him now. Hours went by, and Mrs.

and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "Is that true do you think?" asked her husband, suddenly.

"Surely, yes. It is God's own Word," replied Elizabeth, "and His Word is truth."

"But my motto—the text I read this evening—says that a man reaps what he sows," "Exactly."