

Pastor and People.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

HOW MUCH OWEST THOU THY LORD?

This question is one which comes home with peculiar force to the Christian. To the worldly and indifferent it *ought* to come; their debt is not small and it can never be lessened by being ignored. But to the Christian, to whom the Father of all is not only the Creator and Preserver, but the Redeemer and Friend, it addresses itself with a deeper meaning and should be no unwelcome intruder. How much owest thou to thy Lord? What have been His gifts to you? Life, health, friends, talents, time, these in greater or less measure have been given you in common with the man who denies His existence or treats Him with contempt. But to you He has given the life eternal, the health of soul that springs from a new birth and a new heart. A Friend undying, who sticketh closer than a brother, and who, loving His own, loves them to the end. He has given you time and talents as a sacred trust to be used for Him. And more than all He has given Himself first as an atoning sacrifice and then as an eternal portion. Is it surprising that He should assert the ownership over His redeemed—should say to them, "ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God," or that the apostle, who was himself so bright an example of the consecration he desired in others, should write, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. If this view of the relation between God and His people be a true one (and who, believing the Bible can doubt that it is so) what shall be said of those professing His name to whom Christ appears simply a refuge from divine wrath, or a comforter in sorrow, but who seem never to have entertained the idea that He is their Master, tender and loving it is true, but still their Master, who has a right to demand their all? who have time in abundance for worldly business or pleasure, but no time to care for the ignorant and the degraded, or to give a cup of cold water to a thirsty disciple; who have money in plenty to adorn the bodies which should be temples of the Holy Ghost, but who "cannot afford" to give more than the merest pittance for their Master's work who devote the well-filled pocket-book to personal ends and give "change" to Christ. What impression do they make on the careless world around them? what on the thoughtful non-Christian part of it who yet seem "not far from the Kingdom of God?"

Some years ago, a young lady known to the writer, was appointed a missionary collector in a church of which her friends and family connections were members. To oblige her pastor, who made the appointment, and who was a warm, personal friend she consented, and entered on her duties. She was strongly Christian in sympathy; her outward life was blameless, and many wondered why she did not connect herself with the church, but years passed and she was still outside. Her pastor tried in vain to learn what kept her from Christ. On all relating to her inner religious life, she was impenetrable as the grave, and only years afterwards when faith had triumphed, did he learn that she had been fighting the demon of doubt, a doubt largely inspired by the worldly and self-seeking lives of the professedly Christian people around her. Again and again she had gone home from the collecting rounds asking herself, "what is Christ to these people?" and again and again the answer would come, "He is nothing." The chief end of man with the great majority seemed to be to make money, to seek ease, to seek pleasure, to live for self in some form; and the glory of God as the aim of life seemed never to have crossed their minds. I believe that lady's estimate was in some cases at least a mistaken one, in many more I fear it was only too true. To how many more souls was the life of that Church or the want of it a stumbling block, and what account will they render to the Master when He calleth His servants and reckoneth with them?

It is not for a moment asserted that the time or money alone is consecrated to God which is directly given to religious purposes. The most trivial everyday duties, the most common place lawful business, may be as truly engaged in for the glory of God as any direct act of worship. Indeed, we would be strongly inclined to doubt if we did not altogether deny, the sincerity of any worship which left the worshipper indifferent to the spirit in which he discharged everyday duties. "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," is the rule by which our life is to be governed, and whatever in that life is *duty*, is God's will for us, the doing of which in the name of Christ is consecrating our life to Him.

Is a life thus lived one of painful self-denial and galling servitude? Is Christ a hard master? Ask those who have served Him most faithfully, who have consecrated themselves most fully to Him. Ask Paul, for whom to live was Christ. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dross that I may win

Christ." Ask the most devoted of His servants now. Their answer will be the same. Not a narrow calculation of what they must do to escape censure, but the glad gift of all they *can* do, and in doing to realize the truth of the promise: "There is no man that hath left all" that man holds dear (Luke xviii. 30) "for the Kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."

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THE DAY-SPRING.

BY C. C. A. F., ST. ELMO.

Jesus, Redeemer, Light of life—
Let Thy most blessed sway
Dispel the darkness, sin and strife—
Rule in the perfect day.

Upon Eternity's expanse
Before the birth of years,
In glory and in majesty
Thy wondrous love appears.

On time's horizon, 'mid the doom
Of sorrow, guilt and death,
Thy light is seen athwart the gloom,
The dawn of hope and faith.

Ascending on the arch of time,
Thy future glory veiled,
Thou hold'st Thy course o'er Judah's clime
By Thine own loved ones hailed.

Lo, bright and brighter now expands
Thy form of grace divine,
The child of hope to many lands,
The King of David's line.

Thy footsteps sought life's lowly path,
Thou sanctified the grave,
Unsealed the mystery of death,
And rose with power to save.

Great Son of God, and didst Thou tread
This vale for such as I:
To wrath and sorrow bow Thy head,
To bear the curse and die?

O mighty Healer, by Thy grace,
So boundless, sure and strong,
May we rejoice before Thy face,
A robed and ransomed throng!

THE UNITY OF THE NINETEENTH PSALM.

The perversity of much of the modern criticism of the Scriptures is scarcely anywhere seen so clearly as in the treatment given to this well-known psalm. Such eminent scholars as Ewald and Hupfield insist that it consists of two parts composed at different times by different authors and afterwards artificially conjoined. Not a particle of external evidence for this conjecture is or can be produced. The psalm is found in the Hebrew and in all the ancient versions just as it stands in the English Bible without even a hint or suggestion of a divided authorship.

But it is insisted that the structure and contents of the poem compel one to give up its unity. The first part (vs. 1-7) is a psalm of nature, while the remainder treats only of a written revelation. The first part is also incomplete, for while it is said that both day and night declare God's glory, what follows speaks only of the revelation made by day, whence it follows that the lines treating of what the night reveals have fallen out and been lost! Moreover, there is a difference in tone and rhythm. The first part is simple and powerful, while the second is constrained and artificial and prosaic. And besides, there is no graceful transition from one to the other, but merely a bold and unpleasing juxtaposition of two strains so unlike. Whence we are to conclude either that two fragments floating around separately were accidentally joined together, or that the first one having been composed by David, there arose ages afterwards a writer who, by means of the advanced thought of his time, was able to add the verses which show the glory of God in the Law to those which set forth His glory in nature.

The whole argument is baseless and absurd. The combination of the two matters treated in this psalm is one which by the nature of the case must have been easy to any one who possessed the Pentateuch and was familiar with its delineations of God as the author of nature and the giver of His Word to His people. Besides, in the twenty-ninth psalm and the ninety-third psalm we have precisely the same passage from nature to revelation, in each case the one being an introduction to the other. Was each of these a pericometal composition? And as for the lack of transition clauses, the same abruptness in proceeding from one to the other is seen in Psalm xxxvi. 6, where the poet avails himself of the traces of the divine goodness in nature to express the protecting care with which God guards His people from their foes.

Moreover, as the first part of the psalm speaks of the heavens as an utterance of God's glory, how easy was it to pass to His law as an utterance of the same thing, especially when a poet is at work! In truth,

the destructive criticism here is a much at war with taste and feeling as it is with good sense and the use of the Psalter. The noble conception that nature is an eloquent witness for the glory of its Creator, but the Law one still more complete and glowing, or rather that the revelation of God in the Heavens is only an introduction to the revelation of Himself in His Word, is one which none but a devout poet could form and express in such a striking way. It is not to an accident or an afterthought that we owe this lofty and inspiring lyric, but to a sweet singer of Israel whom the Holy Ghost moved and enabled to set forth with brilliancy and fire the truth that He who reared the whole frame of nature is also the giver of a law, and that that law is sweeter than honey and more precious than much fine gold.—*Talbot W. Chambers, D.D.*

DEEPENED REVELATION FOR THE SCRIPTURES.

If we are not mistaken, notwithstanding the great increase that has been given to the reading of the Bible by means of the International Sunday School Lessons, there is a very widespread and it may be, growing disregard for the Scriptures as the Word of God. This, we think, arises from various causes. One is the use of mere extracts from the Bible prevalent in the Sunday school; another, the Sunday newspapers that find their way into many church-going families and are so largely read by their members and others, taking the place of religious books and even of the Bible; another, the influence that the lectures of blatant infidels have exercised over those who were ready, perhaps, to adopt any pretext for their indulgence in secret sin or their neglect of known duty; and still another, the disbelief that has been generated by perusing the books of some Christian scientists, even who hastily argue from a theory to a fact, thus raising at least a mist around the truthfulness of some portions of God's Word, and the flippancy or positiveness with which some theological professors propound their hermeneutical crudities before their students. If we are to get back again to the sweet and reverent use of the Bible as God's Word, we must "enquire for the old paths and walk therein;" we must avoid that which has been robbing man of his true dignity, as one to whom God has condescended to reveal Himself in the person of the God-man, as one to whom God has communicated His mind in His written Word, and as one upon whom God is ready to shed more light and blessing through His Word and whom He would have to be a co-worker with Himself in eradicating sin, establishing righteousness and causing the earth to bloom again like Eden. As "God has magnified His Word above, all His name," let us magnify it also. Then we shall have fewer defalcations in business circles, less corruption in politics, greater stability and sanctity in the marriage relation, a large number of happy homes and an ever deepening, ever-widening and an abiding revival of religion.—*Pulpit Treasury.*

FAMILY LOVE.

If there be anything which makes life worth the living, it is to be one of an affectionate family. Strange to say, however, most people could count up the really nice families they know the families that is, in which there is not only a tender care for each other, but an unselfish deportment and a kindly interest always manifested by every member of the home circle toward every other fellow-member. The daughters will always fetch their mother anything she may want, and brush their brothers' topcoats and hats for them ere the male members of the house start off for work in the morning. The lads, too, will often take their sisters for a walk, or pay them little attentions which cost nothing and mean a great deal. This is the household into which a young man who wants a good wife will do well and wisely to marry. There may not be much show about the girls, but he will find that they are affectionate, and their dispositions stand the test of wear. It is easy enough to fall in love with a girl when she is arrayed for a party, and feels the flush and pleasure of the fun. When life deepens and darkens, however, and little family worries come in, a man wants something more than a pretty drawing-room ornament for a wife; he needs a real, good-hearted, honest, womanly soul and helpmate.

A SENSIBLE OLD DIVINE.

Francis writing of Dr. Gardiner Spring in the *New York Observer*, says: "In the year 1849, when he had been pastor nearly forty years, he came to my study, and in great confidence made known to me his desire and purpose to find a colleague, to bear with him the burdens of his pastoral charge. I said to him, 'You certainly do not require it on account of infirmities, for you still have the vigour of early days.' Then he made this memorable answer: 'True, very true. I am now sixty-four years old, and do not feel the need of a colleague, but the time will come when I shall need one, and then I shall think I do not.'