

Pastor and People.

Compounding Felonies.

It seems that in the Chancery of Rome the compounding of felonies is arranged for on the payment of stipulated sums of money. A Papal Bull, called the "Bull of Composition," proscribes the manner in which this is to be done, and the conditions on which the faithful may avail themselves of the privileges thus extended. It is in full force in Sicily, and is there reproduced annually, and affixed to the gates of all the churches. It is sold to the people, who seem to regard it as a sort of amulet or talisman, and it is found in Sicily in almost every home.

A deputy in the Parliament of Italy not long ago announced the existence of such a Bull, and declared that by it confessors are authorized to compound with their penitents for the nets of theft which the latter may have committed, on the condition that the said penitents provide themselves with the authorization of the Papal Bull, and pay the sum therein required. The Papal organ in Rome challenged the deputy to produce a copy of any such document. The next evening it was published in one of the secular journals of Rome. The copy published is dated October 18, 1865.

After a somewhat long introduction, professing to furnish the rationale of the Bull, and the prices to be paid for the privileges conceded by the same, we have in nineteen clauses the cases in which compounding is permitted, and in which, in virtue of this Bull, those persons may compound who shall have provided the sums aforesaid, which the confessors are enjoined to apply to charitable purposes.

"1. Compounding is allowed for evil gains obtained and acquired illicitly, or by usury, when the persons who have been injured, and to whom restitution would be due, cannot be stated.

"2. Compounding is allowed in the interest of ecclesiastical benefices and rents, when such debt has incurred through the neglect of rectifying the canonical hours.

"3. Compounding is allowed in the case of legacies of which the amount is retained by trustees who are unable to find the legatees.

"4. Compounding is allowed to judges, or police magistrates, or assessors, who have received money for the purpose of giving an unjust sentence, or for the purpose of delaying a trial, or for the damage of others, or who have done something else which they ought not to have done, the said judge compounding to the amount of the money which they may have received from one of the parties, but holding themselves bound to indemnify the person wronged.

"5. Compounding is allowed to advocates who have betrayed their trusts to their clients for money, the said money to be paid to the Church, with the obligation to indemnify the parties wronged.

"6. Compounding is allowed to false witnesses and false informers, or to those who have neglected to inform when it was their duty.

"7. Compounding is allowed to all officers of the law courts, with the same condition.

"8. Compounding is allowed to all judges, both lay and ecclesiastical, in temporal causes, who, even though they have given a just sentence, have accepted money for so doing.

"9. Compounding is allowed to all attorneys, notaries public, and law officers, who are in the habit of taking exorbitant fees, but have forgotten the persons from whom they have taken them.

"10. Compounding is allowed to those who set at liberty criminals, and who receive money for so doing, paying to the Church the sums they received, and otherwise seeking to make amends.

"11. Compounding is allowed for sums obtained for unfair gambling.

"12. Compounding is allowed in the case of those who assume false characters.

"13. Compounding is allowed where property has been found, and the requisite diligence has not been used to find the owner.

"14. Compounding is allowed in the case of persons who have many articles belonging to others in their possession, and have difficulty in determining the owners.

"15. Compounding is allowed for damage done to the grain, flocks or herds, pastures, vineyards, or other property.

"16. Compounding is allowed to immoral women who are not public prostitutes, when they have received money or jewels for immoral purposes, and the same thing applies to men similarly situated.

"17. Compounding is allowed to the vendors of adulterated wine with false measures, in the case where the dealer in wines cannot recollect the parties to whom he had sold it.

"18. Compounding is allowed on all kinds of illicit business, or evil gains, whether usury or unjust rewards, or in any other business or traffic, in cases where the parties compounding have forgotten the names of the parties wronged.

"The nineteenth clause is the declaration of the apostolic commissary, that no other form of the Bull, except that regularly authenticated as above, shall have the due validity."

To the Uttermost.

Yes, desponding believer, it reads just so—"He is able to save to the uttermost."

To the uttermost of your guilt! for "He was wounded for your transgressions; He was bruised for your iniquities—the chastisement of your peace was upon Him, and with His stripes you are healed." "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He sank down to the bottom of the curse, and therefore to the uttermost of your guilt.

To the uttermost of your sin! How ever deep or dark its stain, "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "Christ also loved the Church,

and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white—for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." To the uttermost of thy sin His grace will reach when, at the last, He shall "take away thy filthy garments, and set a fair mitre upon thy head."

To the uttermost of your temptation! "For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted"—and "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Is He not able, therefore, to pray for us, as well as for Peter, "that our faith fail not?" Nay, rather, hath He not "bruised Satan under His feet?" so that at length, when he cometh, He shall have nothing in us also.

To the uttermost of your weakness! "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." The two go together, and the one is as perfect as the other. "His strength is made perfect in our weakness;" so that when we are weak then we are strong." Wonderful paradox! but easily understood, when we remember that it is a divine strength that underprops our weakness, even to the uttermost; and the feeblest of all God's children can say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

To the uttermost of your sorrow! "For He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." He that went down into the depth of human sin, went down also into depths of human woe. He knows sorrow, as we can but faintly know it, in its immediate and necessary connection with the sin of which it is born. Knowing it thus in its absolute essence, "He is the man of sorrows, who can stretch His sympathy and His aid to the uttermost of your grief.

To the uttermost of your joy! "For the joy that is in Him is communicated to us, and when, in its fulness in us, we come to experience what it is to be joint-heirs with Christ?"

To the uttermost of your love! "When the discipline of earth is accomplished, and only the last enemy to be destroyed, down to the last stretch of time He is able to save." "Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for Thou art with me—Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me—and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

To the uttermost of eternity! "Through all the ages upon ages into which our finite thought is obliged to break up the vast eternity, He will save." "Because I live, ye shall live also." "Forever with the Lord!" "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

To the uttermost of our fainting soul! It is the motto engraved upon the Seal of Grace, that it may be stamped upon every promise.—*South Western Pres.*

The Minimum Christian.

The minimum Christian! And who is he? The Christian who is going to heaven at the cheapest rate possible. The Christian who intends to get all of the world he can, and not meet the world's doom. The Christian who aims to have as little religion as he may without lacking it altogether.

The minimum Christian goes to church in the morning; and in the afternoon also, unless it rains, or is too warm, or too cold, or he is sleepy, or has a headache from eating too much dinner. He listens most respectfully to the preacher, and joins in prayer and praise. He applies the truth very judiciously, sometimes to himself, oftener to his neighbors.

The minimum Christian is very friendly to all good works. He wishes them well, but it is not in his power to do much for them. The Sabbath-school he looks upon as an admirable institution, especially for the neglected and ignorant. It is not convenient, however, for him to take a class. His business engagements are so pressing during the week that he needs the Sabbath as a day of rest; nor does he think himself qualified to act as a teacher. There are so many persons better prepared for this important duty, that he must beg to be excused. He is very friendly to home and foreign missions and chapel work, and gives his mite. He thinks there are "too many appeals;" but he gives, if not enough to save his reputation, pretty near it; at all events he aims at it.

The minimum Christian is not clear on a number of points. The opera and dancing, the theatre and card playing, and large fashionable parties give him much trouble. He cannot see the harm in this, or that, or the other popular amusement. There is nothing in the Bible against it. He does not see but that a man may be a Christian, and dance or go to the opera. He knows several excellent persons who do. Why should not he? He stands so close to the dividing line between the people of God and the people of the world, that it is hard to say on which side of it he is actually to be found.

Al, my brother, are you making this at tempt? Beware, lest you find at last that in trying to get to heaven with a little religion, you miss it altogether, just without gaining the whole world, you lose your own soul.—*Presbyterian at Work.*

You can know no more of grace in salvation than you know of justice in condemnation. You cannot be graciously saved unless you are righteously condemned.

Particularity in Prayer.

There is apt to be a cold, unmeaning generalization in our petition at the throne of grace, as if there was no desire uppermost in the soul, and no one want more urgent than any other. If the question were asked of a number of persons by one who had all gifts at his command, "What will you have? Here are wealth, and honors, and jewels, and lands, and books," all the answers made would not be the same. So our hearts' experience and our desires vary. One is pressed sorely by pride, another by covetousness. Or the besetment of one day differs from that of another. One is thinking of some recent sin, another of some neglected opportunity of noble service. How natural that the prevailing thought should give shape and urgency to prayer!

Thus it was when Elisha prayed for the son of the Shunamite woman, and restored him, alive and well, to his mother. There was great particularity in that prayer—a wonderful concentration of the power by which it prevails. The sympathy of the man of God for the weeping parents represented for the time every other feeling, and he went to the Mercy-Seat burdened with one desire. So when Jesus pleaded with His Father on behalf of His disciples, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil." He seemed to forget all else in the fervor of His anxiety for that one end, and the answer came in the bestowment of a "hopeful patience" upon these disciples, by which they were fortified amid all their trials, and in the gift of a vigilance that deflected temptation, and kept their names unsullied.

A sermon of a Scotch preacher, John Livingston, was the means of the conversion of five hundred persons in one day. But the outer fact to be mentioned in connection with this is that many Christians had devoted the whole of the preceding night to prayer for this very object.

John Newton, the friend of Cowper, and the author, with that poet, of the "Olney Hymns," had a godly mother, whose prayers on his behalf in the nursery he remembered when, as slave dealer, he had become so debased in character as to be despised and cast out by the degraded negro savages of Africa; and as he lay upon the sands, seeking repose for the night, the earnest prayers of his mother were answered; and the prodigal man became an eminent preacher and writer, whose works are valued by all the friends of evangelical religion.

Rescued by prayer, earnest and special—earnest because special—prayer that went up from the little room in London, and brought the song of joy in the night to the soul that had wandered so long and so far from God, amid the sands of Africa! Is there not in one example like this, even if it stood alone, encouragement for those who come burdened with one desire; or who, if they have more than one, still come burdened, whenever they make their requests known to God?—*at Work.*

What the Advanced Thinkers cannot do.

During the latter part of his protracted and serious illness, Dr. Guthrie, of Edinburgh, spent much of his time in prayer, both when alone and with his family and near friends. Often, in the midst of conversation, he would break out in ejaculatory prayer. His love for Christ and his love for his friends, and sense of constant need of help from above, kept him very near the throne in both prayer and presence. One day, reference having been made to the godless theories of Tyndall and the unbelieving scientists as to the "physical prayer test," his Doctor, in his strongest way, expressed his dissent from them as "inscrupulous and presumptuous," and then said, with deep fervor: "Hail these advanced thinkers! they have not robbed me of my comfort!" In the same devout spirit, when still nearer his dearest, he wished for the soft sweet strains of holy music, and said:—"Just give me a barn's hymn!" At his grave, two hundred and thirty children of the Original Ragged Schools, which he founded, sang, "There is a happy land, far, far away;" and a little rescued boy and girl "laid a wreath upon the green sod" that covered the once stately form of their great, good friend.

These are the experiences and the scenes for which prayerless philosophy makes, and can make no provision. Thank God, they cannot take away the comfort of prayer, and of "the barns' hymns" from the least of God's dear children!—*Chris. Intel.*

Afflictions Sanctified.

As lilies grow best in the valley, so some Christians grow in grace and thrive best in the valley of humiliation. Some are weak, and, if planted on the mountain top, with the sun of prosperity shining on them, it may be too much for their strength, and cause weakness and languor. In times of health and prosperity we are apt to grow self-confident, and forget our entire dependence on God. We sometimes turn our backs to the narrow path which leadeth to life, and get entangled in and tangled in the by-path meadows of sin and the world; but every step we take we are learning by sad experience that the world is a hard master, and does not give us just returns for the service we render, but like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord watches over us, and will not leave us open to perish in the wilderness. He watches over us and brings us back in His own way. He knoweth our frame and what we need. He is brought into the furnace of affliction. A loving father is sitting by as the refiner, molting the heat, watching the process. In time, the pure metal is brought to light, the dross consumed, the gold refined, the soul is saved; and now the Father says, Behold! I have refined thee, but not with silver. I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. Oh, the blessing of sanctified affliction when we can see Jesus as our physician giving the bitter cup, and assuring us there is a needful for all our suffering. Not one pain too many. Not a stroke too heavy. Some

have experienced the sympathies of Jesus most when the heat of the furnace is greatest; but why this heat—it is the dross to consume; the gold to refine. How bright the pure gold comes out. And some of God's children after afflictions, they shine forth when the dross of worldliness is consumed. In the valley of humiliation, they thrive and grow in grace. How many can say with David, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept thy word." Why, then, should we murmur at the chastening of our Father's hand when it is for our soul's good and God's glory?—*Selected.*

What Shall I Render to God.

And now, my soul, I must ask thee again and again, *What shall we render to the Lord our God for the innumerable benefits He hath done unto us!* Which way soever I go, Thy grace prevents and follows me; and many times, when I have given myself for lost, Thou hast by some sudden and surprising turn of mercy delivered me from my calamities and my fears. When I went wrong, Thou hast brought me back and guided me in the right way; when I offended, Thou hast reproved and chastened me; when I was in heaviness, Thou hast supported my spirits; when I fell, Thou hast set me up again; when I stood, Thou upholdest me. Thou didst enable me to know Thine own truth, to believe in Thee more steadfastly, to love Thee more ardently, to follow Thee more eagerly. And now, O Lord my God, the joy of my life, the light of my eyes, what requital shall I make Thee for all Thy inestimable mercies? Thou commandest me to love Thee, but how can I ever love Thee enough?—*St. Augustine.*

Mimicking a Preacher.

In the days of Whitefield, when hundreds were converted by his preaching, "low men of the baser sort" loved to indulge in ridicule of religion, making sport of the earnest preacher. A merry band of carousers gathered, one evening, in an inn in Yorkshire, and cracked many a joke over their cups. At length one of them, to add to their merriment, proposed to take off Whitefield's preaching. He was a famous mimic, and could reproduce to perfection the gestures and tones, and even the words of the preacher.

A Bible was brought, he mounted the table for a pulpit, and turned the leaves of the holy book for a text. His eyes fell on the words, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

The company laughed and applauded his wondrous imitation of the tones and manner of the great preacher; but soon their laughter ceased. They looked up in surprise and terror, for the speaker seemed terribly in earnest. His words were solemn, and took hold of their consciences, and his appeals startled their fears. A profound silence spread over the bar-room. The Spirit of God was too strong for the mimic, John Thorpe. The mock sermon was the means of his conversion, and he went away from the scene of merriment to begin a new life.

Guthrie and Romanism.

A leading secular journal closes a review of the Guthrie case, which has caused so much excitement in Canada, with the remark:—"After all, it is not the Catholic Church, but Bishop Bourget who is making this tremendous row about the final disposition of Guthrie's bones."

This sentence is hardly creditable to either the taste or the intelligence of the writer. This "row" is the work of the Romish Church, inasmuch as it is just such work as Romanism has been doing in every land and in every age. Romanism kept five remains of Henry IV., of Germany, five years from burial in "consecrated" ground. Romanism dug up the remains of Wyckliffe, after they had been buried forty years, and burned them, and flung the ashes into the Swift. The tomb at Zermatt gazes sadly on the graves of Dido, Hudson, and Douglas, who were dashed to pieces in that fearful fall from the sides of the Matterhorn, and their shattered remains returned outside the railings around the cemetery, because Romanism refused them a place within. And now at Montreal, the remains of a man distinguished by Romanists are kept six years from burial, and when at last the attempt is made to inter them, in execution of the laws of the land, a howling mob of Romanists forbid. What these Romanists decemper et ubique is done by Romanism.

Again, such the compact unity of the Romish Church, since the Vatican Council, that any great movement in the Church is the work of the whole Church. Whatever act is undertaken and is not disowned, has the consent of the whole Church as represented by her authorities. The seizure of Mexico and Sinaloa was the act of our Government until our Government disowned it. And the bustling proceedings of the Montreal mob, forbidden by the priests, and the prohibition by the Bishop, and the Bishop rebuked by the Pope, are the work of the Pope, and through him, of the Church he represents.

An ex cathedra telegram from the autocrat of the Vatican would terminate the scandal in an hour. Why does he not send the telegram? Is he poor to pay for it? Why, money enough to pay for forty such telegrams has been made by the sale of straw in the palace, which the poor prisoner has been compelled to buy by the excommunicated Victor Emmanuel. But the Catholic Church does not forbid, and therefore it approves, and the whole of the Montreal scandal is the work of the Romish Church.

The courts have decreed, and the Privy Council have sustained the court, that the law of the land requires the interment of those who remain in the Cemetery of the Neiges, and the Catholic Church, of Brazil and Germany, and elsewhere, are setting up in traitorous opposition to the law of the land. It is this old, century-long scandal. The Church the master of the States.—*Rev. DR. BREAD, in Philadelphia Presbyterian.*

Random Readings.

SATAN laughs at all self-power. WHERE God has no voice, I have no words; and a larger portion of our care than we are prone to think.

CONSCIENCE is that one talent which sinners bury in the ground. If the Lord commands! Oh, to be no truce with consequences!

LET it not be forgotten by us, that every act of sin we prefer our will to God's. Let the intellect of the natural man, what it may, it is incapable of receiving one spiritual idea.

I BELIEVE that God will make us see the truth of His precepts in the experience of our own lives.

THE court of conscience is a small court. I can carry publicity into any other court, but I cannot carry it into this court. How deeply rooted must unbelief be in our hearts when we are surprised to see our prayers answered.

It is our mercy to know that God demands our all, accepts our least, when it is offered in simplicity, in the name of Jesus.

TRUE preaching has its life in the power of prayer. The preacher should feel the presence, as well as the presence of hearers.

WHAT! do you think that God will acknowledge the cup of cold water, and acknowledge the act of forgiveness towards an offending brother?

SELF is mighty, the world is mighty, is mighty, death is mighty; but God is mightier, infinitely mightier than any them or all of them combined.

THE believer has but one remedy; world talks of its many remedies, I know of one. The believer's only refuge is in the God of grace, the God of salvation.

"Thou wrotest bitter things"—when He says, "Thou art all fair, love; there is no spot in thee!" The Lover writes bitter things against His people! (Job xiii. 26.)

I KNOW not why we should quarrel with the word "duty." Some persons say, should call them privileges—I should respect those persons to be under the influence of a legal spirit; as if there were a duty which was not a privilege.

REMEMBER this, we that have scores of Gospel sermons. There may be more progress towards eternal life made in the hearing of one sermon, despoising it, than in all the other acts of your life.

THE Lord God Almighty is first always in all His dealings with His church and people. First in eternity, before He laid the foundations of the Church. The first steps is always on God's part.

I THINK that on my dying pillow, there was one truth that I should especially wish to think upon, it would be unpardonable love of God. Such is the love of God that nothing, not even the blood of Christ, could purchase it.

THE family is the foundation and basis of the Church, as of the State. The constitution of a new family is a civil contract; but the sanctions of religion shall ever be given to it; for it is God who settles the solitary in families.

IN FORTUNATE prayer is the appointed medium by which the Lord conveys acceptable blessings. I do not forget that prayer is the work of God the Holy One—He begins it—He sustains it; yet I think but one evidence out of numbers that which is the immediate fruit and gift of the Spirit is our commanded duty.

A PROMINENT minister confesses that there was one strange omission in his training as a preacher. He was urged over and over again in a variety of terms, and with every degree of forcible urgency, to be orthodox, to be scrupulous, to be simple, to be practical, to be personal, but nobody ever enjoined him to be interesting.

IT matters not how rough the way is, even though it seems as if we could never get through, our Heavenly Father is leading and aiding all. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him and He shall bring it to pass." When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path."

He has conquered for you that He might conquer in you, and that He might make you more than conquerors! What, then, is the position of the Christian soldier? Leaving upon the arm of his Beloved, taking his foes to his Beloved—and, as it were, in the exercise of faith putting his Beloved upon conquering them, and thus conquering in the strength of his Beloved.

THOUGH the mariner sees not the polestar, yet the needle of the compass that points to it tells him which way he shall steer. Thus the heart that is touched with the loads of one of Divine love, trembling with godly fear, and yet still looking towards God by fixed believing, points at the love of election, and tells the soul that its course is heavenward, towards the haven of eternal rest. He that loves may be sure that he was loved first; and he that chooses God for his delight and portion, may conclude confidently that God hath chosen him to be one of those that shall enjoy Him and be happy in Him for ever; for that our love and election of Him is the return and re-peculiarization of the beams of His love shining upon us.—*Lighton.*

DID you ever see a man fording a river on foot? Taking his staff, he goes down into the water, feeling his way as he goes. When he comes to a deep place, he puts down the staff first, in order to find the bottom, and having felt it, he takes the step with confidence, and so passes safely through. Christian! if you are called to wade through deep waters of affliction, wherein you fear to sink, put down the staff of Prayers promises; you shall feel the Rock of Ages beneath you, and so cross safely over. When the waves of the Red Sea rolled at the feet of Moses, did he part with the rod of God, smite them and part the sea under? So with the rod of faith we can part even the waters of Jordan and go over dry-shod.—*Cheerful Words.*