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## A GREAT GULF FIXED.

In an excellent article on "The Future Condition of the Wicked," in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* for October, one of the points made by the author, Rev. W. S. Edwards, is that the condition is "a *changesome* one; there are no remedial agencies at command; their condition, whatever it may be, is an eternal one." It is this sentiment of the article that is most rigorously assailed by the prevalent unbelief of the day. It is asserted by its opponents, with how much truth we are not able to say, that there is a growing skepticism, even in the ranks of orthodox, respecting the eternity of future punishment. If this were so it would not affect the facts of the case, while it might indicate a failure of the proper study of the question.

It is an appalling thought that any human soul at the close of its earthly career should be shut out from heaven. It has run its race and finished its probation. It has had its possibilities and opportunities of salvation; it has refused the offers of life as contained in the provisions of the Gospel; it has failed to turn to the Lord Jesus in a hearty, trusting surrender, and passed away lacking every fitness for the heavenly world—a lost soul. There is no thought more terrible, except that the condition thus entered into must continue forever.

Here men shrink and query whether there may not be some possible way of escape, some provision in the future world, some method of recovery for lost men, after, perhaps, a million of ages of untold suffering. They fancy that no good being, not even God himself, could be happy if evil should not be ultimately destroyed, omitting to explain how its duration for scores of centuries, or, indeed, its existence at all, can allow God or good men to be happy and assuming, besides, that happiness is the highest good. They say that a God so infinite and merciful must, out of compassion for such a terrible condition of things, interpose for its coming to an end. They forget that God has shrunk from this very thing, and to save men from it interposed his own Son; that he has already done all that is consistent with his own perfections to prevent their entering the world of woe at all. It is not inconsistent to expect him to interpose again in behalf of those who have persistently rejected his help and trampled on his love? But it is from the eternal suffering that men shrink. Why not also from the finite miseries of ages? Why do they not shrink for their friends from any damnation at all—enough, at least, to warn them with prayers and tears to avoid it? Why let them live and die in sin with no helping hand, and then, when they are passed beyond our reach, demand that God shall somehow revive or annul the decree of his law, or be liable to the imputation of hard injustice? And why not shrink from sin itself, as well as from its fruit and wages?

Now this is not a question of sentimentalism at all, but of a stern fact in the just government of God. He has anticipated every contingency, and met it in the Gospel. The road to heaven for sinners is open and clearly marked out. The result of walking in any other road is distinctly declared—a result so fearful that no one would expect every man to put forth his utmost endeavors to save his soul. To do without Christ is to voluntarily accept the threatened and well-known penalty of sin. Nor is there any injustice in this infliction.

Not only do the Scriptures give us no hint of any second probation for the lost, but they do not leave us in such ignorance of the future world that we can be in doubt whether or not there may be some remedial agencies at work without a surrender of the very principles of his government, which would imply a transformation of his own nature, he can save those who live with a knowledge of the Gospel, and yet die in a rejection of Christ. May the reader who shrinks from a contemplation of the fearful, changeless fate of the lost, shrink likewise from sin and the love of it that he shall be ready for the coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.—*Christian Advocate.*

Very pointed are the words of our Lord to the unbelieving Jews: "Ye shall seek me and shall die in your sins; whither I go ye cannot come;" teaching plainly that they who die in their sins will never reach the heaven where he has gone. More conclusive still is his statement that a certain sin "hath never forgiveness;" and "eternal damnation," or, adopting the reading accepted by Tregelles, Tischendorf, and Alford "eternal sin," belongs to him who commits it. Language cannot more explicitly affirm the changelessness of wicked characters in the future world.

And then, besides these plain words of decisive import, the same fearful truth is set before us in the graphic picture of the rich man and Lazarus, between whose separate abodes is a great, permanent abyss, impossible to be crossed in either direction. Character and condition are fixed, and probation is done. This is the lesson, whether we there read the parable or narrative. Still more is taught, namely, that all the resources of the invisible world competent to induce repentance are already in man's hands.

How is it after the judgment day? It is not a day to provide probation, but to administer reward. The Scriptures repeatedly describe that day as one of a public judgment proceeding with the King as Judge, sitting enthroned upon the judgment-seat. The awards are not mere notations to men of their fate, but rather judicial awards, after due public investigation. Its decisions and decrees are all judicial, and are solemnly and publicly pronounced.

The award to one class of men is "eternal life," to the others "everlasting punishment." To the one is said, "Come, ye blessed," to the other, "Depart, ye cursed." These are decrees of the Judge, and they having been pronounced, the court is dissolved; and, for the first time since sin entered the world, God stands fully and fairly vindicated before the universe. Now everybody knows that a decree of a competent court must stand until it is reversed; and in this case no reversal can be effected without a second assemblage of the great tribunal, which would be a contestation that the affairs of this world were not entirely disposed of, as was supposed, and the final judgment was no finality. For we cannot conceive that God as Sovereign will in private reverse what he has once publicly pronounced as Judge. The reasons for one public judgment would forever hold good in requiring any subsequent hearing of the cases then disposed of to be attended with equal publicity. Let us be assured there is no possibility of such a turning of the great scale into a larce. The judgment day's awards will be a terrible finality. Revocable damnation is but a delusive dream.

It is easy to look on man's side of the question, and to hope that there may be some possible chance in the future world for lost souls; but when we look on God's side we see enough of his administration to be assured that, while he is so unwilling that any should perish that every man is afforded ample means of salvation, without a surrender of the very principles of his government, which would imply a transformation of his own nature, he can save those who live with a knowledge of the Gospel, and yet die in a rejection of Christ. May the reader who shrinks from a contemplation of the fearful, changeless fate of the lost, shrink likewise from sin and the love of it that he shall be ready for the coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.—*Christian Advocate.*

We take no pleasure in this argument except for the truth's sake. It is terrible to think about, terrible to write about; it will be terrible to them who suffer forever, and doubly terrible from the fact that they are lost in spite of all that the infinite God has done in his tender compassion to save them. But we do not see without a surrender of the very principles of his government, which would imply a transformation of his own nature, he can save those who live with a knowledge of the Gospel, and yet die in a rejection of Christ. May the reader who shrinks from a contemplation of the fearful, changeless fate of the lost, shrink likewise from sin and the love of it that he shall be ready for the coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.—*Christian Advocate.*

Has it never occurred to the doubter on this point that a precedent is afforded in the case of the angels which kept not their first estate? When under what circumstances their rebellion occurred we know not. They sinned, and the period came when angelic probation closed. No remedial help seems to have been offered; no new probation was inaugurated. They fixed their own character, and with that character they live during the long ages intervening "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." For man in his fallen state a Saviour is provided, affording him opportunities which angels never had; and if this gracious help be rejected, are we not bound to infer that men dying unsaved are in like manner "reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished." If there is no mercy for fallen angels from the close of their probation to that great day, what door can be open after the decrees of retribution are pronounced? And if fallen angels can never be saved, how is evil to be destroyed from the universe?

As to man, there are two periods in which to consider his future: first, that between death and the resurrection; and second, that commencing with the judgment. Is there a possible deliverance for lost men after death and prior to the resurrection? May the sinner who has gone into eternity unprepared and knowing his doom, in some way wash himself before the judgment day to escape the sentence "Depart," and receive instead the welcome "Come, ye blessed?" The question is almost his own answer. Certainly the reasons for such an award, as summed up by our Saviour, cannot hold in his case, for his life was taken to them all. On the contrary, we find the Scriptures everywhere connecting the present life with the coming of Christ to judge the world, making the hour of our death practically equivalent to the hour of his coming. We are cautioned to be ready and to watch against thoughts that belong only to this life and not a future state, in order that we may be ready, and to take heed that the day come not on us unawares. We are told that the things which will enter into the account of the judgment, and upon which its issues will be based, are the deeds of this life—the deeds done in the body—and this excludes every thing subsequent to death. The impression left upon the mind as we read is that what preparation we would make at all for the future world must be made here.

What! none to save? Sent by my Lord  
A gentle form appears;  
With loving looks and pitying word  
She soothes my trembling fears.

Uplifts my burdened soul from where  
The scathing storm had hurled.  
Then moved with earnest faith and prayer  
The "Power that moves the world."

Appeals for me ascend to heaven,  
And, touching the Divine,  
Thro' back and thrills again the human,  
And quick relief was mine.

"Lord of the talents," bend and see  
That these have doubled their;  
"May they be 'Well done,' my Master,  
For in the coming year."

—*Christian Woman.*

## TAKING A RECKONING.

Let it be a morning duty. Take a little time in the freshness of the first hours of the day, when the mind is bright and clear, the judgment fresh, and before the cares or disappointments of the day have jaded it, and when neither weariness nor satiety tend to pervert its instincts.

Let it begin with a forward look. What am I going to do to-day? into what temptations shall I be likely to come? What is there before me which is likely to try me? Where am I weak and vulnerable?

Let it be, then, very faithful as to the past. In going yesterday through the same routine that is before me to-day, how did I err? What are the secret springs of passion, or of vanity, or selfishness of pride, or indifference and indolence, or levity, or of appetite, which have reproduced again and again the same disheartening errors, or the same weary conflicts? Seek that mercy which gives peace to the sin conscious soul, that all its powers may be aroused in preparation for the labors and the divine victories of the day. Thus shall penitence prepare for the future through the sweet sense of forgiveness of the past.

Let this examination be practical in every detail, that the whole being may be stimulated and schooled, and enter upon the duties and difficulties of the day forward and armed at every point, and with that serene vigor that only the consciousness of preparation can give. Occasionally let a season be given to looking forward farther and more systematically, so that not the day only, but the month and the year may have its preparation. Let these seasons be so distinct and marked, and so happy in their tone, that they may come to mind now and then through the day, so that no temptation can present itself without calling up its own antidote.

Do not think that there are those happy Christians whose lives move on in so serene a way that they feel no need of such forecast. Many others have found their self-examination in penitence twilight of evening, a source of dejection and discouragement, instead of an access of pardon, peace and strength. It will sit down with their face toward the future instead of upon the past, and with the coming day in mind, ask the Master, "What wilt thou have me to do?" and compare self with what was an unhappy day transformed into a joyful privilege.—*Christian Weekly.*

## THE CHURCH FATHERS.

In a lecture on the above subject, the Rev. Francis J. Starr has the following:—In many respects we may take the Fathers for our examples. They were not perfect. It is as weak to idealize them, as it is wicked to despise them. Doubtless they had many faults. There was hardly one of them sound in the faith. They were some of them miserable interpreters of the Word. Their notions of inspiration were very lax. They misrepresented the sacraments, and magnified above all warrant the virtues of fasting and celibacy. They indulged in dangerous fancies, offered prayers for the dead, had strange preferences for monery, and insisted too little upon the cardinal truths of our holy religion. The Atonement is too often buried amid heaps of rubbish. Yet with all this they were very sincere. Their virtues were their own; their faults often belonged rather to their age. Their toils were almost superhuman. Their lives were pure. Their liberality to the poor, their redemption of captives, their hatred of the corruption of heathenism, their ardor in suffering for Christ, and their readiness to die for Him, are abundant evidences of the exalted character of their religion. It is not fair to compare them with the men of our times. They must not literally be imitated, they cannot be reproduced. Let us be as true to our privileges and duty as they were. Let us carry forward the work they so gloriously began. The kingdom of heaven is progressive. Let us see to it that our "path be like that of the light, which shineth more and more to the perfect day," so that just as the sun rising in the morning behind the hills, shrouded in clouds and mantled in fog, continues to ascend the firmament step, till neither mist nor vapours can abide his presence, so, climbing up to the high noon of our religious heaven, may shine down upon the world with all the splendor and lustre of the christian's character, without a single particle of mist to bedim our glory.

## A BEAUTIFUL POEM.

The following beautiful thoughts were written recently by a lady whose faith has been severely tested. She is a widow. Her husband, who was suddenly killed by accident not long ago, left her with eight children to support, most of whom were small. Like a true, brave, Christian mother, she toiled on faithfully day after day, and night after night. But there came a time of trial—a time when no work could be obtained, and for three days there was no bread in the house. But her faith did not waver or shrink. She said to her children, as she gathered them about her daily for prayers, as they cried for bread, "God will not fail us. He has promised bread, and his promise is sure."

But God works through human instrumentalities. There were multitudes all around her, doubtless, who bore the name of Jesus who were living in luxury and had "bread enough and to spare, but they were careless of the condition of their neighbor," and passed by on the other side. The Master has but a few careful, willing workers. One of these he sent to relieve the pressing necessities of the widow and her fatherless children; she came to this home of woe like an angel of light, and filled it with joy and thanksgiving. Soon afterward a gentleman well known for his liberality, being informed of her condition, sent her fifty dollars.

CAUGHT BY AN EXPERIENCE.  
Caught by life's storm, my foundering bark  
Struck on the rock of time;  
Above, the heaven with clouds were dark,  
Beneath was foaming brine.

The seething waters stripped my soul  
Of all that life holds dear,  
And swept me helpless to the goal  
Of deep and dumb despair.

The future, spread a realm of doubt,  
And I, my faith o'erthrown,  
With sad, prophetic eye looked out  
Into the far unknown;

And spectral forms of dread and fear  
Advanced on every wave,  
Lurping horrors ran and near,  
And none, no, none to save.

But, Jesus, on Thy face!  
My all is Thy providing;  
Thy love can never grow cold;  
In Thee, My Refuge, hiding,  
No good with Thou withhold.

Why should I droop in sorrow?  
Thou'lt ever by my side!  
Why, trembling, dread the morrow?  
What ill can e'er betide?

If I my cross have taken,  
Thy but to follow Thee;  
If scorned, despised, forsaken,  
Thought severest Thee from me;

O worldly pomp and glory!  
Your charms are spent in vain!  
I've heard a sweeter story!  
I've found a truer gain!

Where Christ a loved preceptor,  
There shall I place my abode;  
There shall I gaze on Jesus!  
There shall I dwell with God!

For every tribulation,  
For every sore distress,  
In Christ I've full salvation,  
Sure help and quiet rest.

Nor fear of foes prevailing  
I've, O Jesus, Friend unfailing!  
How dear art Thou to me!  
—*Berlin Gesambuch.*

## REMINISCENCE OF FATHER TAYLOR.

An "ex-Jack Tar" writes to the *Detroit Tribune* the following incident in the life of Father Taylor. One Sunday afternoon, in 1848, five sailors, including myself, were the sole occupants of the forecastle of the schooner *Operry*, of Boston, which then lay at the long wharf in that city—locally well known to those who "go down to the sea in ships." The weather was exceedingly unpleasant. The wind was blowing from the north-east, and was keen and cutting, accompanied by a drizzling rain. To pass away the time that hung monotonously upon our hands we chatted, told stories, grieved, argued, and in fact did pretty much anything except think it was Sunday. Finally, I perceived myself upon the side of my berth, and drawing out a dilapidated pair of trousers, and procuring from a bag, which was tucked under my feet, a needle and thread commenced inserting a patch where one was sadly needed.

My fellow-sailors with one accord proposed to play euchre, and one of the number took from his berth a pack of cards which, in spite of his greasy and worn appearance, gave unmistakable evidence of having been in use before. When I had partially concluded the "necessary" job that I had undertaken, and my companions had played a "horse," we were aroused by a strange thrill voice at the entrance to the forecastle. [I omit story, as it is too long to make my story better understood.] Looking up, I saw an aged but pleasant-looking gentleman, who, perceiving that I was aware of his presence, sang out, "Hallo, boys, enjoying yourselves, ain't you?" "Yes, old horse," ejaculated the dealer, "you come down and take a hand?" "Well, boys, seeing that it is very uncomfortable, I don't care if I do come down and warm myself," said the stranger, and he descended and seated himself by my side.

"Here, old fellow you take my place; I have had enough of euchre to-day, and [swearing] as I am used to sleep, I guess 'TU' turn in." This remark, as the readers will readily perceive, was addressed to the new-comer, and the latter replied that he never played cards, but he offered to sing, and intimated that he could entertain us in that way. The cards were forthwith "bunched" and deposited upon one corner of the table, and the stranger drew from an inside coat pocket a small black covered book, which, like the pack of cards, presented evidence of much use. "I guess 'TU' turn in," said one of the men; "we ain't much on the regular sing, but I guess we can join in the chorus." And he did give it to us strong with a voice full of melody, and strong in tone he sang.

God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.

At the conclusion of each verse he said, "Repeat," and five sailors not only joined in the chorus, but also in the repetition, and with a will. The effect was electrical. My dilapidated trousers disappeared into the back of my berth in a jiffy, and needle and thread with them, and when the singing had been concluded my companions made a concerted move to leave the table upon which a few moments before they had been gambling the cards. But they were interrupted by the old man's pleasant voice in a solemn and impressive manner that could not be misunderstood, "Let us pray!" He knelt down on one side of the table while we all bowed our heads, and he offered up one of the most impressive prayers that I ever heard. During its delivery one of the men seized the pack of cards and in a quiet manner put them in his pocket.

The movement was discerned by the stranger, and when he had concluded his exhortation he arose to his feet, and, scanning the countenances of the quintette before him, he said, "Now boys, if any one of you will say that he wants to play a game of euchre with me I will take a hand." "No," said we all in chorus; "we ain't up to shakin' hands with the man, but he couldn't accommodate more than two of us at a time, and with tears of joy streaming down our cheeks we inquired his name. His reply was, "My name? Why, I am pretty well known in Boston. God bless you! They call me *Father Taylor*."

## HINTS FOR THE PRAYER MEETING.

"Lord, teach us how to pray," was the portion of the disciples; and the Lord gave them a model, which shows the propriety of having method in our prayers.

1. If you propose to pray or speak in the meeting, where it is left to the brethren, you need not wait for others because you are younger, or esteem yourself less qualified. It will not be considered any want of modesty in you if you should be first. This is one of the occasions when the least may be first, and the older and more experienced may properly wait.

2. Let your prayer be short, especially if there be a number to take a part.

3. And definite. You do not come to pray for everything at this time. "If two of you shall agree as touching any thing, it shall be done." Observe the singleness of that prayer of the disciples: "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show which of these thou hast chosen."

4. Worship has its natural order. If you pray first, you will naturally seek the promised presence of the Lord Jesus; and the closing prayer is somewhat summary. Both of these may be short. Do not indulge in much repetition.

5. It is not necessary that either of the prayers should be brought to a close with any considerable flourish, referring to the finishing of our work on earth, the close of life, the ends of the world, and the eternal future.

6. Do not pray for yourselves principally. The Spirit of grace and supplication is poured out on those who pray for others. It may be that the presence of prayer at the Fulton-street prayer-meeting is due to their praying thus definitely for others rather than for themselves.

7. You may direct your prayers often to the Lord Jesus. His sympathy will warm your heart. And he said of the Comforter, "I will send Him unto you."

8. Let the voice be natural, except that the tone of it will be modified by solemn and tender emotion.

9. Remember that the great qualification for the service of the prayer-meeting is the gift of the Holy Spirit, which you will do well to seek before you go to the meeting.

## DUTY TOWARDS GOD THE SINGLE ELEMENT OF ALL TRUE RELIGION.

Had it been possible for mankind to sustain themselves upon the single principle, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for that is the whole duty of man," without disguising its simplicity, their history would have been marked in far other colors than those which have so long chequered its surface. This, however, has not been given to us; and, perhaps, it never will be given. As the soul is clothed in flesh, and only thus is able to perform its functions in this earth, where it is sent to live; as the thought must find a word before it can pass from mind to mind; so every great truth seeks some body, some outward form in which to exhibit its powers. It appears in the world, and men lay hold of it, and represent it to themselves, in history, in forms of words, in sacramental symbols; and these things, which in their proper nature are but illustrations, stiffen into essential fact, and become part of the reality.

So arises, in era after era, an outward and moral expression of the inward immortal life; and at once the old struggle begins to repeat itself between the flesh and the spirit, the form and the reality. For while the lower tendencies are held in check; the meaning of the symbolism is remembered; and truth is a living language, program and suggestive. By and by, as the mind passes into other phases, the meaning is forgotten; the language becomes a dead language; and the living robe of life becomes a winding sheet of corruption. The form is represented as everything, the spirit as nothing; obedience is dispensed with; and religion arrange a compromise; and outward observances, or technical inward emotions, are converted into jugglers' tricks, by which men are enabled to enjoy their pleasures and escape the penalties of wrong. Then such religion becomes no religion, but a falsehood; and honorable men turn away from it, and fall back in haste upon the naked element of life.—*Gleanings from Proude's History of England.*

## PULPIT POWER.

The virtue of an electric wire is not in the wire, but in its connection with the voltaic battery. The power of the minister is not in the polish of his style, the picturesqueness of his illustrations, the fervor of his manner, the order and arrangement of his discourse, but in his living connection with God, and his capacity to act as a connecting link between God and the human soul. It is God in the soul which is the secret of true pulpit power. There is no other characteristic which successful ministers have in common, and there is no permanently successful minister who has lacked this element. Mr. Beecher is an actor and orator by nature; Mr. Payson used few and simple gestures; Whitefield abounded in illustrations; Edwards rarely employed any; Spurgeon is a pulpit conversationalist, argues rarely, but speaks with authority; President Finney treats his audience as a lawyer treats a bench of judges, and with little or no appeal to sentiment or emotion; Dr. Hall speaks with a rhetoric which is at once pure, simple, and faultless in its perfect and seemingly unstudied grace; Mr. Talmore is endowed by nature with a rhetoric brilliant, scintillating, pungent, fragmentary; yet all of these men are striking examples of genuine pulpit power, for all of them, though in widely different ways, habitual, impress their audience with a sense of divine presence and divine power.—*Christian Weekly.*

## SECRET COMMUNION.

Nothing can supply the place of secret communion—deeper realized intercourse with the Friend of sinners, the King of saints. Saint yourself with this privilege. Neither teaching, nor preaching, nor works—neither books of devotion nor the communion of saints—can supply the loss of this. No commentary on his holy word can bring you the fresh glory of the light which he gives direct from himself. It is the bread broken and given by his own hand for your daily sustenance. He has promised to manifest himself to us as he doth unto the world. Shall we not take God at his word, and believe in him who has said, "Lo! I am with you always."

## From the Christian Advocate.

### "RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION."

Our Lord Jesus Christ was, probably, during his sojourn on earth, the most solitary of human beings, and yet how abundant were his ministrations to the multitudes, and how free his communications with his disciples! He talked with them, but they did not understand him; he was impelled by designs of which they had no adequate conceptions; and though they admired and loved him, they were, in the highest sense, socially strangers to him, and incapable of sympathizing with him. Every reader of the *Life of Wesley*, whose thoughts penetrate beneath the surface of the mere details of facts, must be aware of his life-long mental and spiritual loneliness; and yet who else has ever so largely loved others' hearts in matters of personal religion? It is a remarkable fact, too, that neither in his preaching, nor in his recorded conversations, nor in his journals—into which last his most confidential utterances might be looked for—does he often say anything of his own personal religious state. In his letters to a few cherished friends, chiefly women, there is much more freedom of utterance, for with them he evidently felt that he might speak as he could not to others. In this he differed from his friend and fellow-laborer, Fletcher of Madeley, whose heart, like an open fountain, sent forth a perennial stream of praise. The difference in this particular between these two equally godly men is remarkable and highly instructive; and who shall say that Wesley's comparative reticence was less wisely ordered or valuable in its results than Fletcher's openness of profession?

Honest and ingenuous minds have an instinctive dislike of cant, and, therefore, they often prefer silence to the liability of falling into the detested practice. But though the cause of their reserve may be creditable to them, it fails to justify their conduct. Religious contention is a duty at once to God, to ourselves, and to others. As lights kindled by his converting grace, it is our high privilege and bounden duty to glorify him before men. The candle is not to be put under the bushel, and the non-confessing lepers, are all unmitigable lessons upon this subject. God calls us to glorify him by offering praise. It is his due, and in this we most fully secure and advance our own religious well-being. The images that illustrate to us the nature of the religious life in the soul teach us also its treatment and the methods of its culture. It is a fire not to be covered up, but to be allowed to flame out, to which it warms and illuminates all about it, too may burn more intensely, and increase by its diffusion. It is a plant in immature growth, requiring to be set forth in the clear light of day, that it may mature and become strong, and produce its appropriate fruit. It is a talent to be "occupied" in its public use, so that it may increase thereby. Having Christ's promises in respect to them that confess him before men, we can have no doubt as to what is both our duty and our highest advantage in the matter. And still further, we should ever remember that the grace given us in conversion, as it is not our own procuring, so it is not for our sole benefit. It is a sacred deposit designed both for the individual and for others.

When the art converted, strengthened, and language program and suggestive. By and by, as the mind passes into other phases, the meaning is forgotten; the language becomes a dead language; and the living robe of life becomes a winding sheet of corruption. The form is represented as everything, the spirit as nothing; obedience is dispensed with; and religion arrange a compromise; and outward observances, or technical inward emotions, are converted into jugglers' tricks, by which men are enabled to enjoy their pleasures and escape the penalties of wrong. Then such religion becomes no religion, but a falsehood; and honorable men turn away from it, and fall back in haste upon the naked element of life.—*Gleanings from Proude's History of England.*

## THE REFORMATION IN MEXICO.

BY THE REV. H. H. FAIRALL, A. M.

The remarkable success of Protestantism in the land of the Montezumas is attracting universal attention. It is being discussed, not only by Christians, but also by philanthropists and statesmen. All classes are astonished at the grand results of missionary effort in that Papal country. When the character of the reformation is considered, and the brief period devoted to the work are considered, this religious reformation may be regarded as the most wonderful of modern times.

For more than three hundred years, Mexico had been cursed with Romish despotism and Spanish rule, and hence the ignorance, superstition and crime that have prevailed. It has been the darkest and most degraded of all Papal lands, and though on this continent, and so near our enlightened nation, yet it was, until recently, closed against Protestantism and true Christian civilization. During the war in 1846 a door was opened, and many of our pious soldiers carried Bibles into Mexico, and from that small beginning, the sacred Scriptures in the Spanish language have been slowly finding their way to the homes of the benighted people. About the close of the war in 1847, Miss Melinda Rankin then residing in Mississippi, ascertained from the returned soldiers the miserable condition of the Mexicans, and she resolved to go as a missionary. It was not, however, until 1852 that she could commence operations. The laws of the country forbidding the introduction of Protestant Christianity, she settled at Brownsville, Texas, on the Rio Grande river, opposite Matamoros, Mexico, where a large number of Mexicans resided. She soon gathered the children into a school and gave them daily instructions in the Bible.

While engaged in this noble work, she learned that seven Jesuit priests and fifteen sons from France had reached Brownsville, and intended to erect a convent. Hence, in order to compete with this strong force, she determined that her small school should become a seminary. Early in 1853 she came to the United States, visiting the principal cities, and endeavoring to secure aid. After a laborious effort of fourteen months, she returned in April, 1854, with the small sum of two thousand five hundred dollars. In November of the same year the seminary was opened, and continued in successful operation until 1862. During that time, two hundred girls of Mexican, and one hundred of American parentage, were instructed, and through many of these pupils and their friends, hundreds of Bibles and Testaments were carried into Mexico.

In 1855, shortly after the erection of the seminary at Brownsville, Miss Rankin became connected with the American and Foreign Christian Union, and is still in its employ. Her educational work was interrupted in 1862 by the civil war in the United States, she not being in sympathy with the Confederacy, and the school property was confiscated. In 1865 she went to Monterey and organized another seminary, but was compelled to visit the United States and solicit funds. She obtained fourteen thousand dollars, and erected a fine building.

As converts from Romanism began to multiply, Miss Rankin, through the aid of the American and Foreign Christian Union, sent out seven native coadjutors to labor among their countrymen. In 1868, a large number of Mexicans were converted at Villahermosa, a town in the State of Yucatan, and since then the membership of the society has increased to one hundred and seventy. A commodious edifice has been built, and a regular pastor supplies the pulpit. There are flourishing churches in Monterey, Caderita, and many other places in Northern Mexico.

In January, 1869, the American and Foreign Christian Union sent the Rev. H. C. Riley to the city of Mexico to organize a Protestant mission there. He was peculiarly qualified for the work, having been born in Chili, and being familiar with the Spanish language. On reaching his destination, he found about thirty native Evangelical Christians, who had been holding regular meetings for worship and the study of the Bible. This small flock had received the instructions of a Roman Catholic preacher, named Aguilar, who was converted to Christ through the reading of the Holy Scriptures. He was extremely poor, suffered cruel persecutions, and finally died from the debility brought on by his poverty.

The success of Dr. Riley is unprecedented in the history of modern missions. The latest report shows at least fifty organized congregations with thirty-five persons in charge. In the city of Mexico several prominent priests have been converted, and are now preaching the doctrines of Protestant Christianity. Manuel Aguiar was one of the most earnest, talented and influential priests in Mexico. Hence his re-education of Romanism created an intense excitement among the Papists of that country. The Archbishop excommunicated him, and, in return, Aguiar wrote a lengthy letter, reviewing the doctrines and usages of the Romish system. It is a very able production, and has been published in the *Christian World*, the organ of the American and Foreign Christian Union. Palacios, another converted priest, is attracting multitudes by his evangelical preaching, and others, now in the field, might be named.

There are two fine churches in the city of Mexico, owned and occupied by Protestants. The ex-convert of San Francisco, is a magnificent edifice, and will accommodate an immense audience. Aguiar is in charge of the congregation worshipping there. Besides this, another large ex-converted church, that of *San Jose de Gracia*, affords ample room for at least twelve hundred persons. The other congregations in the city meet in hired halls and private houses. In December last, four hundred converted Romanists assembled in one of these spacious edifices, and partook of the sacrament, which was administered by Dr. Riley and four ex-converts of San Francisco. It is a magnificent edifice, and will accommodate an immense audience. Aguiar is in charge of the congregation worshipping there. Besides this, another large ex-converted church, that of *San Jose de Gracia*, affords ample room for at least twelve hundred persons. The other congregations in the city meet in hired halls and private houses. In December last, four hundred converted Romanists assembled in one of these spacious edifices, and partook of the sacrament, which was administered by Dr. Riley and four ex-converts of San Francisco. It is a magnificent edifice, and will accommodate an immense audience. Aguiar is in charge of the congregation worshipping there. Besides this, another large ex-converted church, that of *San Jose de Gracia*, affords ample room for at least twelve hundred persons. The other congregations in the city meet in hired halls and private houses.

It is not surprising that such a work in a neighboring republic, containing nearly ten millions of Romanists, should excite a deep interest. The proximity of Mexico, and the probability of its annexation to our country, render its intellectual, political and religious condition a matter of great importance. The introduction of such a powerful, dangerous element into our population would be disastrous. Romanism is sufficiently strong among us without annexing multitudes of the Latin race. Patriotism and philanthropy demand that the Mexicans should be enlightened and evangelized. We must give them an open Bible, free schools, and pure churches. The glorious triumphs of the Gospel in the past few years indicate what can be done in the future. The danger now is that the work will be arrested, and Mexico will be a matter of great importance. The introduction of such a powerful, dangerous element into our population would be disastrous. Romanism is sufficiently strong among us without annexing multitudes of the Latin race. Patriotism and philanthropy demand that the Mexicans should be enlightened and evangelized. We must give them an open Bible, free schools, and pure churches. The glorious triumphs of the Gospel in the past few years indicate what can be done in the future. The danger now is that the work will be arrested, and Mexico will be a matter of great importance. The introduction of such a powerful, dangerous element into our population would be disastrous. Romanism is sufficiently strong among us without annexing multitudes of the Latin race. Patriotism and philanthropy demand that the Mexicans should be enlightened and evangelized. We must give them an open Bible, free schools, and pure churches. The glorious triumphs of the Gospel in the past few years indicate what can be done in the future. The danger now is that the work will be arrested, and Mexico will be a matter of great importance. The introduction of such a powerful, dangerous element into our population would be disastrous. Romanism is sufficiently strong among us without annexing multitudes of the Latin race. Patriotism and philanthropy demand that the Mexicans should be enlightened and evangelized. We must give them an open Bible, free schools, and pure churches. The glorious triumphs of the Gospel in the past few years indicate what can be done in the future. The danger now is that the work will be arrested, and Mexico will be a matter of great importance. The introduction of such a powerful, dangerous element into our population would be disastrous. Romanism is sufficiently strong among us without annexing multitudes of the Latin race. Patriotism and philanthropy demand that the Mexicans should be enlightened and evangelized. We must give them an open Bible, free schools, and pure churches. The glorious triumphs of the Gospel in the past few years indicate what can be done in the future. The danger now is that the work will be arrested, and Mexico will be a matter of great importance. The introduction of such a powerful, dangerous element into our population would be disastrous. Romanism is sufficiently strong among us without annexing multitudes of the Latin race. Patriotism and philanthropy demand that the Mexicans should be enlightened and evangelized. We must give them an open Bible, free schools, and pure churches. The glorious triumphs of the Gospel in the past few years indicate what can be done in the future. The danger now is that the work will be arrested, and Mexico will be a matter of great importance. The introduction of such a powerful, dangerous element into our population would be disastrous. Romanism is sufficiently strong among us without annexing multitudes of the Latin race. Patriotism and philanthropy demand that the Mexicans should be enlightened and evangelized. We must give them an open Bible, free schools, and pure churches. The glorious triumphs of the Gospel in the past few years indicate what can be done in the future. The danger now is that the work will be arrested, and Mexico will be a matter of