

## Pastor and People.

### THE DEATH OF MOSES.

The following is by Dr. McGregor, of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh :

There is a natural tendency in the human mind to attach a great deal of importance to events such as the birth and death of an illustrious man, and sometimes this is carried to excess. In the case of Moses, God has taken the temptation of making a shrine of his grave out of the way. "No man knoweth his sepulchre unto this day," yet the neighbourhood is well known. Standing on the shores of the Dead Sea where the turbid waters of the Jordan pour into it, we find ourselves on as barren a spot as earth can show. Around us is the desolation and stillness of death, the vast leaden lake stretching away from our feet, with Sodom and Gomorrah lying many fathoms below ; to the west lie the slopes of Palestine ; to the north is the plain through which Jordan cuts its course, while away to the east are the long, lofty, straight lines of the hills of Moab, with their bare, precipitous sides. On one of these summits stood Balaam ; on another, Moses looked his last on Canaan, and through one of its gorges the Israelites effected an entrance into the Promised Land. Elijah mounted his fire-chariot from the plain below. Moses ascended from the heights above.

To one mighty heart, Canaan promised rest after oppressions night and day for forty years, and nothing would gladden him more than to see his people safely settled among its hills and glens. But the sin of Meribah, a sin of temper and only for a moment, stepped in between him and his hopes. For it Aaron died on Hor, and Moses among the ravines of Abarim. With all their faults, the stubborn and stiff-necked Israelites loved their leader, and there were no dry eyes in the camp that day as he poured out his last prayer. Then, with no guide and no companion but God, he turned his steps to that mysterious journey, and they saw him no more. There is no more beautifully descriptive passage in all literature than this. Moses had not been alone for forty years, the weight, woe and guilt of the people had been laid on him till the burden grew so great that he asked God to take him away. Yet the solitude is not strange to him as he climbs from ledge to ledge with practised feet, nor the scattered herbage, nor the broken shadows of the cliffs indented far across the uninhabited ravines. God has given him one day of solitude at last, when all that has embittered his life is being loosed in the mist of dying blue, all sins and wanderings soon to be forgotten for ever. The Dead Sea lies far below like a mirror, and the hills of Canaan in the purple evening light fade away in the distance. With such a scene meeting his undimmed glance, he lies down among the rocks, and so dies.

A few simple lessons may be drawn from this story. Here is a trivial sin meeting with a terrible punishment, teaching us plainly that there are no little sins in God's sight, and though punishment may be delayed it is by no means averted. Our old little sins come back—in what strange shapes they sometimes come!—and worry, cross and vex us. Yet in the case of believers, these lapses may be turned to blessings, and may be the harbingers of greater joy. Our dearest hopes are blasted that greater ones may come, and our Promised Land may be denied us for one of softer verdure and far more exceeding loveliness. This life may be made a scene of weeping, and desolation, and woe, that our spirits may be borne upwards to the sky where there is rich solace for every mortal ill. The wilderness is a fit emblem of a believer's life, and from Pisgah he may look back on the road he has travelled and forward to the fair country beyond, in which stands the New Jerusalem glittering in the rays of the sun which never sets. Time touches eternity and earth touches heaven ; though in youth, and sometimes in middle age, we contrive to introduce a chasm between.

A strange life is this and strangely closed—a foundling floating on the bosom of a great river and picked up by a king's daughter, a courtier in the greatest court of the world ; a Bedouin shepherd, sharing the simple joys and sorrows of the Arabs around him, a great and victorious leader, a saint, honoured to be the instrument of giving God's laws to His people. The last scene of a life is very often in

keeping with its history. Solitude is necessary in view of that last awful solitude, when friends and companions cannot break the silence, when neither father nor mother, wife nor child, can go with us further. We need our quiet moments, our Pisgah peaks, lest the dross of the world choke up our finer passages.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### GEHAZI.

BY T. K. HENDERSON, TORONTO.

And he went out from his presence, a leper as white as snow.—2 Kings v. 27.

Out from his presence, out,  
The prophet bade him go,  
Out from his presence, out,  
A leper white as snow !

He shrank before the eye  
That read into his soul,  
And saw the cursed greed  
His heart could not control.

That eye his path pursued  
When Naaman turned again,  
And stayed his chariot wheel  
And checked his bridle rein.

The lie was on his lips,  
The brand was on his brow ;  
To him and his the curse  
Shall cleave forever now.

He felt its withering blight  
Run swift through every vein,  
And bowed his guilty head  
And cried aloud, "Unclean."

Far from the haunts of men,  
A blighted, blasted one—  
As scorned and scouted thing,  
He bears that curse alone !

Out from his presence, out,  
The prophet bade him go ;  
Out from his presence, out,  
A leper white as snow !

### GOSPEL WORK.

A TRUE INCIDENT IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
WEEK OF PRAYER FOR YOUNG WOMEN.

Some years ago, in God's providence, I was left alone during the winter months in a large house. Being a regular reader of the *Christian*, and seeing there was to be a Week of Prayer for Women, I felt a strong desire to join with other Christians, but as the house was quite in the country, and the weather severe, I could not attempt to go out.

Having two lady friends about two miles distant, I wrote asking them to come and join me in prayer, explaining that the first week in February was set apart as a Week of Prayer for Women. Their reply was that, much as they would like to come, they were quite unable on account of their health. It then occurred to me to assemble the servants of the house—one of them being a bright Christian—to join me in praying for women everywhere, explaining to them what was going on in other parts. They gladly consented, and though none of them prayed audibly, I knew their hearts went with my words. Very precious days they were, the Lord being in our midst.

One morning I was led to ask Him to "let us see some answer in our neighbourhood, that our faith might be strengthened." Now, notice God's power to work upon the heart. In the course of the day our Bible-woman wished to see me. When I entered the room she exclaimed, "Oh, Miss —, there is that girl Jane —, who gave us so much trouble in the village, asking for you. She has walked eight miles without a bonnet, and declares she has had a letter from you, saying you would be her friend at any time, if she wished to change her life. I told her not to tell me any more falsehoods, as I was sure you had not written to her, or you would have told me. However, I have brought her to see you, as she persisted in her statement, and have left her in the kitchen. Would you like to see her?"

I shall not forget Miss G —'s surprise when I said I had written to her, some months previously.

It must now be told that this poor girl had given our missionary and Bible-woman great concern. She was the eldest of a large family in our neighbourhood, all of them quite indifferent to religion, but J — had seemed rather impressed during a season of re-

vival services in our church, and joined a number of the young people under me to lead the singing of Sankey's hymns—not so well known then as now.

An aunt, who was said to keep anything but a respectable house, induced this girl to go and live with her. We were anxious to get J — into a "Home." Our missionary and Bible-woman went to the aunt's to try to persuade her to come, but in vain. She seemed most hardened, and would not listen to a word they said. I was much grieved on reading this in the missionary's journal, and pleaded with the Lord on her behalf. As the aunt's address was given in the journal, a thought struck me to write J — a letter, telling her that, though I did not know her, yet I understood she was amongst those who joined the young people in singing praises to Jesus, and how sad for her to be shut out from singing them above, etc.; adding that, if at any time she wished to change her life, I would be her friend. When sealing the letter, a thought crossed my mind, the aunt may keep this from her, and I breathed a prayer that *He who could would see that she got it.*

I told no one of this, and must say the incident had almost passed from my mind. It seems that J — had gone with the stream, not at all troubled in mind till this Week of Prayer for Women, when she felt so wretched, that she could not bear to hear the swearing, etc., in her aunt's house. Just at this time her aunt sent her to look for something in a drawer, when, to her surprise, she came upon my letter. So God had not permitted the aunt to destroy it, though she had not given it to her. J — resolved at once to run away and ask for me; hence her appearance without any bonnet.

Oh, how changed was her manner now—willing to do anything we wished! We first had to provide her with suitable clothing, and our missionary wrote to know if she could be received into a "Home." The answer was favourable, and J — gladly accompanied the missionary, though so averse to it before. She remained there some months, and her conduct was most satisfactory. She then came to live with her parents, and testified by her life that she was a new creature in Christ Jesus.

I told her she had now to be a missionary at home. Her father did make a profession, and was admitted a member of the Church. J — died a few years ago, and is now, I trust, in glory.

Surely this is an encouragement to us to plead with our Heavenly Father on behalf of our sisters, however they may be situated, knowing that He knows all about them, and can bring them out from any evil surroundings, and enable them to live to His glory.—*S. A. B., in the Christian.*

### THE BEST.

Domestic worship is a pleasant duty, and one that appeals to the tenderest sentiments of our lives; it certainly should have a favoured place. But has it? Perhaps the best hour for it is not chosen. It is not approached in the best way. It is late at night, when all are dull and sleepy, or is left to such a time in the morning that hurry and bustle kill it with their distractions. And what about our gifts of money? Good they are, indeed, as money, but do they represent such a percentage of our incomes and expenditures that they are the fittest for their purposes? After we have brought all we need for ourselves, we give so much to the Saviour; but is that giving our best? We have taken a trip, treated ourselves to a luxury, made happy investments, then with the loose change that is left over, we come forward to perform our duty of beneficence. And we do it sincerely, as if it was the right thing to do, instead of being a mockery of the holy service it claims to be—a mockery, indeed, of God Himself.

In many other ways we may forget, or neglect, the claims that it should be our first thought to recognize. We drain for our own pleasure the cup the Lord gives us, then present the dregs as the expression of our thanksgiving. We choose for religious purposes the sickly from our flocks and the blighted sheaves from the fields. The good is for the market, the round sums of money for the bonds and mortgages, but the disabled and the fractions go to the service of Christ. This is not always so, but there are too many examples of it, while the temptation to it is presented to every one of us. Let it be resisted. It is an awful sin to rob God.—*United Presbyterian.*