

The tree "of knowledge of good and evil" was in the garden, but there was also "the tree of life." The tree of life was not prohibited, the other tree was prohibited. God said: Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but, etc. So having free access to the tree of life, we have no reason to doubt that they partook of its fruit, until they were driven away from it on account of sin. On account of sin they were prohibited from eating of the fruit of this tree now (not before) lest continuing to eat of it, their life of sin should be perpetuated. But now being cut off from the life-perpetuating qualities of this fruit, they begin to die. So, after a time, those bodies (before sin) the perfection of humanity, beneath the hand of time wear out, and return to the ground from which they were taken; for dust they were, and unto dust they should return—the first man was of the earth, earthy.

Some, indeed, suppose that if man had managed to partake of one morsel of the fruit of the tree of life, even after he had sinned, that he could have defied God and lived forever—believing that one morsel would have conferred immortality, as others suppose that the other fruit destroyed immortality. I am of the opinion that both are mistaken, and that, while it is not unnatural, but natural for man to die, and his eating the prohibited fruit was the occasion simply, of his death, and not the cause; the tree of life could have perpetuated, only by a perpetual use,

The foregoing is written for the purpose of lifting the minds of men from a regretful longing after the bliss of an earthly paradise such as the abiding place of our first parents is supposed to be, and to emphasize the thought that man as he was and as he is, of the earth, earthy, belongs to the earth and will remain on the earth—returning to the ground from which he was taken and at the same time to hold up before the longing desire of every son of man, our elder Brother—the seed of the woman—the Lord Jesus Christ, who has brought life and immortality to light. Who is the second man? the Lord from heaven, who has said: "I am the resurrection and the life." "I am the light of the world." "I am he who liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hades and of death." "I go to prepare a place for you . . . and will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am you may be also."

Christian, brother, friend, death is yours. It is well that it is. The words of Jesus are significant. Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; and so it is with you, death to you is a blessing, God has given it to you and me as such. Death will open the portals of the eternal home. It will free us from all the burdens, the sorrows, the temptations of the earth—life. Even Adam, in the garden of God was not free from temptations. Temptations belong to the flesh. Death will free us from them; and then safe forever in the Father's house, sorrow and pain being left behind and every tear being forever dried, we will not only bless God, through Christ, for redeeming love, but we will bless the wisdom of the power (whatever mysteries may hang around it) by which we were "made subject to vanity" in order to our being finally delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

O. B. EMERY,

Montague, P. E. I. February 16th, 1892.

WHY PEOPLE HEAR PREACHING.

Last month I wrote about "preachers preaching." This month it is about people listening. There are a good many people who attend worship that could not give a very clear reason for so doing, and the oft-repeated words of Jesus, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," have more in them than we generally think. Times, without number, people have been told that the Gospel will be the savior of

life unto life, or of death unto death, and if they do not love and obey the Saviour they cannot be saved. Still they come to hear the preacher. I wonder if it ever crosses their minds that every word will be a witness against them. Why do they come? I cannot give you all the reasons, but I will give you some. Do you see that young man sitting there? Well, he represents a large class of church-goers. Is he interested in the services? Oh! no, he scarcely hears a word the preacher says. As soon as the preaching is over he will quietly slip out and wait until a certain young lady comes along. You see why he comes? How will we get at him to do him good? Through the motive that brings him. Young sisters, be in earnest. Do you see that elderly gentleman sitting in that seat over there? His hair is gray and he has an intelligent expression that you like very much. He comes very regularly and nearly always sits in the same place. He pays money when required, and yet he is not a member. Why does he come? Well, you see his wife and some of the family have "joined," and it would not look well to stay at home. He understands every word the minister says, criticises the sermons, believes in the teaching, but —. This kind needs special treatment.

Do you see that whole family sitting there in one of the front pews? They are all members, they attend very regularly. There is a strange young lady with them to-night. She is not a Christian, she has been living somewhere out of the reach of the Gospel. To-night she is listening very attentively. The earnest tones of the preacher touch her heart as she listens to the offer of love and pardon, a feeling of her lost condition arises within her—she is very much impressed with the necessity of salvation. The service closes, she goes home in silence with the family, who are church members.

As she listens to their talk her heart grows cold and the holy light begotten from on high is extinguished. One talks about what somebody had on; another talks about some little flirtation; another offers a criticism on the sermon. Christ is not mentioned. How many persons who have been impressed have had their impressions rudely dispelled by the "member's" carelessness? Why do they come? Is it possible for the Devil to use church-members as agents to keep people from coming to Christ? I have other classes of listeners in my mind, but I have not time to give the details, as I write while conducting a protracted meeting. But some go for curiosity, some because they like the preacher, some like the singing, some go because they want to help the work along, they go to do good and get good. As you read this, let me ask, Why do you go? Are you a follower of Christ? Is your church alive? We will soon have a return of spring—a revival of nature. Do you need reviving? Does your church need it? Look about you and see how best you can promote the interests of the Gospel. Remember, we must hear and do. Are you still out of the ark of safety? Will you hear a word of exhortation? Decide for Christ now. Do not remain an inattentive listener any longer. Come to the Saviour just as you are. The spirit and the bride says, Come. All things are ready. It will be a terrible thing for you to spend eternity in woe when you have heard so much and know so well what to do. May God help you, as you read these few lines, to ponder over these things, and as the resurrection of nature is here, may we think that how we shall stand in the great resurrection is determined largely by how we hear now.

Summerside, P. E. I.

W. H. HARDING.

When God writes anything on the wall, a man had better read it as it is. Daniel did not misinterpret the handwriting on the wall. It is all foolishness to expect a minister of the gospel to preach always things that the people like or the people choose.—TALMAGE.

INFLUENCE OF EARLY TRAINING.

Some minds are much more precise than others. They will tabulate facts with such perspicuity that the dullest mind cannot fail to comprehend them. This characteristic is essential to those who have it their duty to instruct others, more especially to teachers of religion, or which will better express my meaning, preachers of the Gospel. We frequently hear preachers deplore the fact that their sermons have little effect, either intellectual or spiritual, upon their auditors. The reason of this is eagerly sought after by those who find themselves laboring in vain, but they seek it in the wrong direction, for in nine cases out of ten it lies at their own door. Their sermons may lack not only clearness, but also spiritual food. There is a system of sermonizing at the present day that is marked by the greatest obscurity. There is a certain amount of truth preached, no doubt, but in such a manner, encumbered with such an accumulation of debris, as to have no lasting impression, and only a discriminate and intelligent mind is able to extract it. Now the question naturally arises just here: How do we, or can we, account for this lack of intelligent instruction from the pulpit? It cannot be due in every case, although I grant it is in some, to the inferior natural abilities of the preacher, for almost all pulpits are tainted with the same disease, and surely we must believe the natural abilities of some teachers are sound. (I am speaking now of sectarian teachers, although it might also be applicable to many of our own teachers who may have been brought up in sectarian schools). We must look then for a cause in some other direction. Man to a great extent is a creature of circumstances. I do not mean by this that man as an intelligent being is wholly passive to his circumstances. By no means. To believe this would be a libel on all natural beings. It is the proper sphere of man—the God-given power—to rise triumphant above all circumstances. But man cannot select his parents, nor his childhood training. In the first stage of his existence man is a mere animal, in fact more helpless than an animal, for an animal has instinct to guide it, but the child follows passively the guidance of its parents. This early training becomes in time the instinct, or nature, of the bundle of human sensibilities. All through the early stages, even to manhood, or rather the age of manhood, the mind is absorbing the thoughts, the utterances of its associates. In this sense, therefore, do I mean that man is a creature of circumstances. The truth of the old adage—as the twig is bent the tree is inclined—is now readily seen. As the companions and circumstances of the child, so will be the man. If the youth be trained in error, the man will mature in error. If the youth be saturated with religious error, so will the man. It was this truth, practically acknowledged, that came to the rescue of the papacy in the sixteenth century. A broken down adventurer, named Loyola, saw with dismay the citadels of the old church yield to the power of Luther's error-destroying engines. Gathering around him spirits as wild and reckless as his own, he founded the society known in history as the "Company of Jesus," sworn to abandon all personal aims to the accomplishment of one great design—he overthrow of Protestantism and the universal establishment of the papal power. It was this society alone that rolled back the tide of Protestant advance, when the southern countries of Europe were about to throw off their allegiance to Rome. Their power was due to the stress they laid upon the education of the youth, and for nearly three centuries they were accounted the best schoolmasters in Europe. It is also to this fact, practically acknowledged, that the sects owe their success to-day. The infant in all its innocence is sprinkled into the church and carefully trained in later years to observe the validity of its inception to the Christian faith. We have conceived how