

## Pastor and People.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### THE BETTER PART.

BY I. K. HENDERSON.

"And Mary hath chosen that good part." Luke x. 42

She sat her down at Jesus' feet,  
While other forms were bustling round,  
For there alone a calm retreat,  
Far from the noisy world, she found.

Oft as He came, an honoured guest,  
To greet the household to His dear,  
So oft she sought her wonted rest,  
And by His side hush'd all her fear.

Her thirsty soul drank in the words  
That gently fell like evening dew;  
The Master's hand had touch'd the chords,  
And to His touch it throbb'd anew.

Sweet was the task on Him to wait—  
With Him the homely meal to share,  
When passing down the village street,  
He entered in to tarry there.

But better far the sister's part,  
To nestle child-like in His love;  
And learn, with meek, confiding heart  
The faith that darker days should prove

Toronto.

### CONDITIONS OF MINISTERIAL SUCCESS.

BY THE REV. J. C. QUINN, M.A., EMERSON, MAN.

Success in the work to which the faithful minister is called will depend largely upon the attention he gives to the development of his own Christian life.

First. He must live in the spirit of prayer. Our blessed Lord Himself has left us an example of constant prayerfulness. We must study His life in the Gospels and drink in daily of His spirit. No one can be a successful minister without prayer. The great Apostle was a man of prayer, and one of his requests was, "Brethren, pray for us." We must be much in prayer and God will bless us abundantly.

Second: We must seek to live under an abiding sense of the truth that Christ is our Master. ("One is your Master, even Christ.") The responsibilities of the ministerial office are many and onerous, and will weigh heavily upon us. We will find the burden greatly lessened by the realization of the truth that Christ is our Master. Christ is Master, and upon Him rest wholly the responsibility of our equipment and the result of our work. Upon us rests only the responsibility of doing our work well and thoroughly and earnestly. We should begin and carry on each day's work with the question, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" We should look to Jesus for everything, and by cultivating this habit we shall find even arduous work pleasant. "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord."

We must be constant and careful students of the Word of God. "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. . . . Meditate upon these things." That which we proclaim as healing, we must ourselves use as the food of our own souls.

Being well nourished "in word and doctrine," we will be enabled to rightly divide the word of truth to those to whom we are called to minister. "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

(1) That all Scripture testifies for Christ. (2) That all Scripture is for our learning.

Let our own daily life ever exemplify the truths we preach.

Precept teaches, but example draws.

As we move about in the society in which we live we are the observed of all observers. Therefore we must be careful of all we say and do, ever remembering that on Sabbath and week day we are ministers of Christ. Let nothing in us or in our circumstances mar the proper effect of our preaching. In all we do let our people see that we value the welfare of immortal souls, that the religious life is the first thing to be attended to. Preach and live in the line of Christ's injunction, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."

We ought to work ever under the sense of Jesus' presence, and success will attend our labours. The Lord Jesus has left us the promise of His continual presence. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Those ministers have always done most efficient work for Jesus who lived in His presence daily. "At one of the field meetings for religious services in Scotland, many years ago, Rev. John Brown, of Haddington, was one of the preachers. Among the audience was a Scotch nobleman and his party who were out hunting. They stopped and listened. While a pert, proud and flippant speaker preached a discourse, one of the party asked of another: "What

do you think of that?" "I think," he replied, "that the man himself did not believe a word he said."

Thereupon John Brown took the stand, and poured forth a stream of the rich Gospel treasures which were swelling up within his heart. The noble listened with rapt attention, and was asked at the conclusion, "And what do you think of that?" "Think! I don't know what to think. Why it seemed to me as if he thought that Jesus Christ stood behind him, and every little while he would stop as if he were asking. 'Now, Lord, what shall I say next?'"

Oh, for that close, confidential relation to Christ that made John Brown's preaching so powerful! We can possess this as he did if we use the same means.

Let us so live that the "mind that was in Christ" may be found in us, and God will then use us to do His work in the Church. Let Christ Himself fill our hearts and then our mouths will show forth His praise.

"All my fresh springs are in Thee;" "From Me is thy fruit found," "Without Me, ye can do nothing." Seek to produce not only "fruit," but "much fruit," and "fruit that will remain."

### THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

BY REV JAMES M'COSH, D.D., LL.D., PRINCETON.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" etc.—St Matthew x. 29-31.

The inspired writers employed all the objects of nature with which we are familiar in order to illustrate spiritual truth. Solomon sends the slothful man to the ant; Isaiah makes the ox and the ass rebuke the ingratitude of the professing people of God; and a greater than Solomon and all the prophets sends those who distrust God's providence to the lilies of the field and the fowls of heaven. In our text He appeals to the sparrow and to the hairs of our head to illustrate the providence of God. He calls attention to a providence over all, the plant, the animal and man, and a special providence over His people.

In the first place, consider the nature and reality of the divine providence. There is a general providence, which is seen in the circumstance that all things in our world take place according to the law of cause and effect. The resultant laws are so arranged that they produce the orderly arrangement of the seasons, of the times of budding and bearing seed by plants, and of the birth, youth and maturity of animals. These laws together constitute what has been discovered and established within the last few years, the uniformity of nature—a doctrine which was anticipated in the Scriptures, where the laws of nature are called "the ordinances of heaven." The modern doctrine of the uniformity of nature is much the same as the old Scripture doctrine of the foreordination of all things by God. They are the same truth seen from two different points of view—the one from below, the other from above. It is by there being a uniformity established, whereby the future so resembles the past that we are able to anticipate what is to come, and lay our plans accordingly. There is also a special providence which watches over the individual, and which is only possible under the direction of an omnipresent and omniscient Ruler.

Secondly, consider the interpretation of providence. This is a more difficult and delicate subject. But providence is a lesson-book. It is full of instruction. Experience, the result gathered by an observing man, should always be added to our book, our school and college learning. But the safest way to interpret providence is by the God-given Word of Truth. Many things there must be in this life which we cannot explain—the untimely death of the most promising, the prosperity of the wicked. We have only to say, "Thy ways, O God, are in the deep." What we know not now we shall know hereafter. It may be one of the profitable employments of heaven to trace God's goodness in the way in which we have been led. We may then discover the meaning of many dispensations now inscrutable.

I may be allowed to mention some of the incidents of my life, not to exalt myself, but to magnify the goodness of God. When I was licensed to preach, my only ambition was to be settled in my own neighbourhood, where I would have become a country minister. However, I lost the opportunity I sought, and was greatly disappointed; but in a short time I was called to a far more important charge, where I had to take part in the Disruption of the Church of Scotland, one of the great events of the history of that country. I had no thought of settling in this country (America) when the authorities of this college called me, being prompted thereto by the editor of an influential paper, in whose company I had travelled for a day. Be diligent and faithful in the lower work allotted to you, and in due time you will be called up to higher employment in this life or the life to come. In our short-sightedness we may be constrained to cry out with Jacob: "All these things are against me;" but when at last we stand within the veil we shall be able to say with St. Paul, "All things work together for good to them that love God, and are called according to His purpose."

### THE POWER OF CALVINISM.

Despite the unpopularity of this grand system of doctrine, it has great power in the world. We do not refer merely to the intrinsic mightiness of all truth, of which this is the highest example, because it embodies so completely the divine element, but mainly to the influence which it exercises over men. There is no contradiction in affirming great power of an unpopular system. It is common for the most unpalatable truths to exert a moulding and dominating influence even over those who despise them. Sometimes hated men wield an invincible sceptre over their enemies. This strange power may be most confidently claimed for impersonal truths. A doctrine that has the stamp of truth, and especially of divine authority, while it may be denied, misrepresented, scorned and detested, has in it a force which sooner or later penetrates the clouds of ignorance and the mists of prejudice and reaches the solid foundations of convictions. There are large multitudes of people who have been taught to hate Calvinism by gross misrepresentation, by hideous caricatures, and by confessed and senseless abuse, who will yet admit each essential feature of it, one by one, when exhibited in language neither theological nor controversial. And it is no unreasonable assumption when we claim that every true Christian, who can lose sight of formulated creeds and denominational divisions, in tracing his own experience, will find in that experience the very heart and core of this so much misunderstood system of doctrine. Even while they speak against it as the badge of theologians, they bow to its power as Christians and see in it the only explanation of God's wonderful dealings with their souls. Every converted man knows that he is saved by grace alone; that he was regenerated solely by the undeserved and undesired exercise of divine power; that if God had not begun the work and made the first approaches, he never would have become a Christian. Every believer knows that he is sustained in his religious standing, and is enabled and prompted to persevere in his religious course, by the grace and faithfulness of the covenant-keeping God.

Surely there is a vast amount of power in these convictions and experiences of the whole body of believers the world over; and yet we find the large proportion of this power alongside of the unpopularity of the very doctrines which are verified and illustrated in the religious history of both this majority and their opponents. It is impossible to kill God's truth in true hearts, however it may be misconstrued or denied and ridiculed. God's truth is mighty and will prevail. It is invincible and cannot be kept under.—*Southern Presbyterian.*

### IRRELIGIOUS HOMES.

These constitute the great defect in a civilized community, and the great drawback to all efforts toward its evangelization. The homes may be elegant and tasteful in their material appointments, cultured and refined in their social aspects; but the parents do not practically acknowledge God before each other, or in the presence of their children. The existence and providence of God may not be theoretically denied, but there is no outward manifestation given either by word or act, that God is in any of their thoughts, or that they are influenced in any way by their knowledge of His being. This is the calamity that prevails in many a social circle. How can it be not only abated but absolutely removed? Simply, we think, by the sweet, persuasive influence of Christian personal effort; by the wise and earnest teaching of the pulpit, and by those, who are Christians indeed, feeling the responsibility of their position and influence, embracing every opportunity afforded for speaking kind and faithful words to these unchristian parents; by placing such books in their hands as will set their duty and danger clearly and affectionately before them, and by remembering them daily at the mercy-seat. What a power for Christ would be enlisted if the homes of our country were converted to God!—*The Pulpit Treasury.*

### THEATRES.

Were the testimony taken of the 70,000 evangelical ministers in this land as to the moral influence of the pulpit, that testimony would be unanimous and emphatic that such influence is good, and only good, and that continually. But the testimony of great numbers of actors and managers of the theatre is, that the moral influence is the reverse of good. Macready wished the ladies of his family to avoid the theatre. Fanny Kemble said that her profession was unworthy of a woman. Clive Logan said that she would not advise any woman to go on the stage, for the demoralizing influences there prevalent are daily increasing. M. Dumas said, "You would not take your daughter to see my play? You are right. Let me say once for all, that you must not take your daughter to the theatre! It is not merely the work that is immoral, it is the place!" Every dollar paid at the door of a theatre is a contribution to spread immorality.—*Evangelist.*