

out that defileth him." If we fall we are the authors of our own destruction, for if we cling by simple faith to the promises of God and get them deeply rooted into our natures as the sole foundation upon which our loftiest aspirations are based, then the winds of adversity, the waves of sorrow, and the temptations of Satan will beat against us in vain, and we, like Job, shall stand firm on the rock of God's everlasting love.

The Best News.

BY CANON KINGSLEY.

The apostle Paul says, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Here is good news! Indeed, I know no better news for the ears of mortal man—good news for every one who wishes to be good. Every one, I say, who wishes to be good. I did not say merely every one who wishes to look good, or even every one who wishes to do good. I said more. To be good—good at heart—is better than merely seeming good; better, even, than merely doing good.

For suppose a man were thinking over his own life and examining himself, and suppose he said to himself, "I do right tolerably, I know; but why do I do it? I do not steal; well, but if I did steal the law would punish me. I do not lead an openly profligate life; well, but if I did, respectable people would not speak to me. I do not cheat any one; well, but I have money enough to get all I want without cheating. I am uncivil to no one, and use no bad language; well, but it is not the fashion; people never do swear now in decent society, such as I live in. I do not spite and injure those who have offended me; well, but I have not the chance of doing so, and if I had it would not look well—it would get me a bad name."

Then, perhaps, if the man is an honest and earnest man, a thought crosses him which makes him serious. "What!" he says, "am I kept right only by fear of the law, fear of my neighbors, fear of hurting my pocket or my character? If I were in a foreign country, where people are not as strict as here, how should I behave then? People who cross over into foreign parts often do things which they would be ashamed to do at home. Should I be like them? or should I keep the fear and shame of God before my eyes when the fear and shame of man were

off? I am afraid I am kept steady very much by the fear of God," says the man to himself.

My friends, we are all more less like a horse in harness, bitted and held in by the laws and rules of society and the opinion of our neighbors, and, like the horse in harness, we must go straight. But if we were out of harness, free from bit and whip, able to do just what we liked, what should we do then? Should we break out and run wild? God knows! I am afraid it would be a terrible temptation if we were left to do what we liked.

Then the right-hearted man would say to himself, "I cannot be content to go on in this way—to like what is wrong at heart, and to do what is right only because I dare not do wrong." That is very like hypocrisy; that is not being honest—to keep up a show of respectability while one's heart is not respectable. It is better than nothing, of course, but it is not enough. It cannot make a right-minded man satisfied with himself. "Who will make me really love what is right and hate what is wrong? who will make me an honest man?" he will ask. "Who will make me not merely seem good, or do good outwardly, but will make me be good? Who will give me a clean heart, which loves what is clean, pure and noble? Who will give me a right spirit, to love what is right, and fair, and true?"

To which the text answers, God will. Be not afraid. If you are not content with mere outside respectability—if you are not content with seeming to be good—if you really wish to be good at heart—then you wish what God wishes, and will what God wills. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." In plain English, if you wish to be good, God will make you good.

Yes, this is good news indeed. I know no better news. This is part, and the very highest part, of the gospel of good news. We feel we are not good at heart. And when we try to be good we go through some such trouble of mind as St. Paul went through when he said words like these: "I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Beware of evil tempters.

Bible Readings.

BY D. W. LITTLE

1st. How prepared:

Select some doctrine or exhortation as to Christian living, practical in the application, and exalting Christ. Among such subjects will readily occur Grace, Love, Faith, Redemption, Sanctification, the Blood, Prayer, the Two Natures, the New Birth, Work, Warfare, and so on. Take the concordance and read, with prayer, all the passages bearing upon the topic selected. Get full yourself of the truth taught. Praise God by yourself and for yourself for its preciousness. Then, divide your topic into heads, according to its natural and logical divisions. This is the key to the preparation of an interesting profitable, and instructive reading. The bringing together of passages in a jumble, selecting them because they all contain the same word, cannot interest or profit. There must be order and a development of thought in the exhortation of doctrine for the mind to receive and profit by it.

The reading below is presented as suggesting this plan, not as the best execution of it.

My first bible reading on Faith contained some sixty Scripture references. Before they were all read the audience were tired, and it was a source of anxiety and difficulty for me to interest them. That same bible reading prepared for one meeting has now developed into seven, given as a course, at seven successive meetings, with seeming interest and appreciation on the part of the people, and pleasure to myself.

I have used for this reading, and for others, as a matter of convenience, the Scripture suggestion of the number seven, in making up the heads of the topics. For instance, upon Faith the order of the readings and their divisions is as follows:

- 1st. Seven reasons for reasonableness of Faith (all Scripture texts).
- 2nd. Seven directions as to how Faith is received.
- 3rd. Seven things possessed by faith.
- 4th. Seven fruits of Faith.
- 5th. Seven trials of Faith.
- 6th. Seven things said of those without Faith.
- 7th. Seven triumphs of Faith.

Two or three Scripture references are used under each head, making each reading consist of between twenty and twenty-five texts.