

The Berean.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—ACTS XVII. 11.

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THE WANDERER'S SOURCE OF CONTENT.

Oh thou, by long experience tried,
Near whom no grief can long abide,
My Lord! how full of sweet content
I pass my years of banishment.

All scenes alike engaging prove
To souls impressed with sacred love:
Where'er they dwell, they dwell in Thee,
In Heaven, in earth, or on the sea.

To me remains nor place nor time,
My country is in ev'ry clime:
I can be calm and free from care
On any shore, since God is there.

While place we seek, or place we shun,
The soul finds happiness in none;
But with my God, to guide my way,
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

Could I be cast where Thou art not,
That were indeed a dreadful lot;
But regions none remote I call,
Secure of finding God in all.

*Selected for the Berean, from the
Gleanings of a WANDERER.*

THE NEEDED PREPARATION.

"Prepare to meet thy God!" The preparation consists in two things, in a change of state, and a change of heart.

(1.) *In a change of state.* The Lord God has an awful controversy with sinners. They have broken his Law. They have cast off his yoke. They have resisted his will; and they have set up their own will, as their rule of action. In this terrible revolt, every principle, and power, and passion of the soul, has joined: so that this is our natural character—"Enemies in their minds by wicked works." But unto God vengeance belongeth; and, so to speak, he has put this sentence in the mouth of his insulted Law—"ye are guilty; ye are under the curse; ye are the children of wrath." In this state of things, who does not see the necessity of a vast change in the condition of a sinner, the necessity of his passing out of a state of destruction into a state of peace with God? My brethren, you must all see, that mercy must be received, that God must turn away from his fierce anger, that he must be fully reconciled to the transgressor. Has this immense blessing become yours? Has this part of the Lord's covenant become your portion—"Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more?" The word says, concerning Jesus—"Having made peace by the blood of his Cross." And again—"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Have we, then, so believed the record, concerning his power, his grace, and the sufficiency of his blood to cleanse from all sin, that we have actually sought him, and applied unto him, and trusted in him; and feelingly ventured every hope of our soul's salvation on his redeeming work? These are questions, which refer to an inward experience, which, if we truly possess, we shall in some measure know. In Christ, or out of Christ, determines the all important point, whether we continue the children of wrath, or have become the children of God. In one state or the other, every one present is at this moment certainly living.

But the preparation for meeting God, consists—(2.) *In a change of heart.* If we did not know the natural blindness and folly of mankind, in soul concerns, and if we were not told of the power and wiles of the devil in deceiving, we should think it impossible that any one could hope to be taken to Heaven, without a disposition, suited to the place, the society, the songs, the enjoyments. O! Yes! There must be a meekness: the lofty must be humbled, the neglecters of Christ must receive and adore Him, the carnally minded must become spiritually minded, the worldly in heart must be made heavenly in heart, and God in Christ must be enthroned in the judgment and in the affections. There is a declaration which reason itself might make, and which the Bible confirms: there is a declaration by Him, against whose decision there can be no appeal: by Him who is to pronounce upon each of us, a last and solemn sentence, which will continue in force for ever: and this is the declaration—"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." My brethren, I ask myself, I ask one and all, are we renewed in the spirit of our minds? Are we lowly in our own eyes? Do we hate evil? Do we love the Lord? Ah! what must be the situation of a soul, which has just left the body: and with every desisting principle and affection in full exercise, is appearing before God! We "must be born again?" or, "where Christ is, thither we cannot come."

This, then, is the two-fold preparation for meeting God, either at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment: a change in the state and a change in the heart. Some of you, my brethren, are prepared to meet God. What courage, and confidence, and consolation, should the thought give you! You may be suffering many a perplexity, and enduring much anguish of heart, in the course, and appointments, of divine providence. You may hear up under the darkness and the storm, through the cheering reflection, that the darkness and the storm will soon be over, and that all is ready for your meeting God. You may experience many an alarm, and many a pang, in your warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil; but surely your sighs should be mingled with Hallelujahs to God and the Lamb.—Rev. R. Housman of Lancaster.

A VISIT TO ST. BEES, CUMBERLAND.

The village of St. Bees is delightfully situated on the slope of a hill at the extremity of a richly-luxuriant valley, about four miles south of Whitehaven. The living is a perpetual curacy in the gift of the Bishop of Chester (in whose diocese the parish is situated), and the cure is held in connection with the principalship of the college.

The grammar-school was founded, in 1582, by Dr. Edmund Grindal, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, in that year, preferred a petition to Queen Elizabeth, that she would vouchsafe "to erect a free grammar-school at St. Bees's, and that provision might be made for the relief of certain poor scholars going out of that school to Cambridge and Oxford." The Queen granted this request, and appointed seven persons to be governors, in perpetual succession, of the possessions and goods of the school, of whom the provost of Queen's College, Oxford, was to be one. Power was given to these governors to make such rules and statutes as according to circumstances they might deem necessary. The Archbishop, by his will, left a yearly revenue of 30*l.* for the schoolmaster and usher, and bequeathed payment of 10*l.* for the maintenance of one fellow, and a smaller annual payment for the maintenance of two scholars at Pembroke Hall College, Cambridge—the said fellow and scholars to be chosen of such as have been brought up at the school. He also left a yearly revenue for the maintenance of a fellow and two scholars at Queen's College, Oxford, and a scholar at Magdalene College, Cambridge, who were also to be chosen out of the school. Several other benefactions have been made for the benefit of the school; and all these have, of course, increased in amount very considerably. The number of pupils receiving education has varied very much—sometimes amounting to 150, and at others dwindling down to nearly, if not less than, twenty. Three or four years since it was deemed necessary by the trustees to enlarge the building and remodel the rules and regulations; and as the funds had increased to a very large amount, no expense was spared to make the schools and masters' dwellings worthy of the high character which the institution has attained. The number of masters was increased from two to five. A very spacious house was built for the head master, capable of receiving thirty boarders. New school-rooms were erected, and the school was divided into upper and lower, with a separate school for teaching the rudiments (English, arithmetic, writing, &c.) to the natives of the village. The old school-room was converted into the dining-room, and the remainder of the ancient building into a boarding-house for sixty foundation scholars, natives of Cumberland or Westmoreland. None of the boys, strictly speaking, pay anything for education, the only charge to strangers being for their board, the foundation scholars paying less than the others. There are at present upwards of 170 boys (probably as large a number as was ever there), who are receiving as excellent a classical education as is to be obtained at any institution in the kingdom. The head master is the Rev. Miles Atkinson, M.A., fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. The buildings are now in a quadrangular form, with a neat gravelled yard facing the road, and having a capital play-ground behind. All the boys, except those whose parents live in the village, reside in the buildings connected with the school.

It appears from Strype's "Life of Archbishop Grindal," that generous man, and staunch Protestant champion at the eventful period in which he lived, was born in the parish of St. Bees, in 1519; and there are at the present time several families living in the village and parish bearing the name. His grace was successively Bishop of London, Archbishop of York, and Archbishop of Canterbury. He was, of course, the contemporary of John Fox, and enjoyed the great advantage of having the firm patronage of the blessed, but ill-fated martyr, Ridley. If the excellent archbishop could now inspect the course of education afforded at this imperishable seat of his liberality, he would, no doubt, rejoice to see his beneficent intentions so religiously observed and so ably carried out. It is, of course, impossible to form any estimate of the advantages spread far and wide by the young men who have been educated at this school, for they have been congregated there from all parts of the world.

The collegiate institution is of comparatively modern date, having been founded about a quarter of a century since by Dr. Law, the then Bishop of Chester, who appointed the Rev. William Ainger, D. D., formerly fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and prebendary of Chester, the first principal of the college. The doctor engaged, as his assistant, the Rev. R. Parkinson, who remained at St. Bees until his appointment to one of the canonicies at the collegiate church, Manchester, the duties of which the reverend gentleman discharges at present. Dr. Ainger died on the 20th October, 1840, aged fifty-five, having been perpetual curate of the parish for twenty-four years. On the death of the doctor, Bishop Sumner offered the appointments to the present principal, and perpetual curate, the Rev. R. P. Buddicom, who for so long a period officiated as incumbent of St. George's Church, Everton. Mr. Buddicom secured, as his assistant, the Rev. David Anderson, who has held the appointment ever since. Mr. Anderson was previously curate at Everton. He has also, in addition, the services of the Rev. Thomas Charles Price. At the time of Mr. Buddicom's appointment, there were twenty-five students (the number has been as small as fifteen); but there are now no less than ninety gentlemen preparing for clerical ordination—a sufficient proof of

the efficiency of Mr. Buddicom and the clergymen with whom he is connected. The students remain not less than two years, and "keep" two terms annually, having three months' vacation at Midsummer, and one month at Christmas. No student above thirty-five can be admitted.

Prior to the institution of the college, it was the custom annually to ordain a number of young gentlemen who had received no other education than that then afforded at the grammar-school. Such boys as were intended for the ministry were educated in the ordinary classes at the school until they were fifteen, when they were allowed to return home, if their parents preferred them re-dering assistance there to remaining at school. When old enough, they entered what was termed "the priests' class," in which they studied for one year, and were then ordained. This course was, however, deemed inefficient, and Dr. Law adopted the plan and regulations of the present college, which is now as distinct from the school as if they were a hundred miles apart, though the buildings are merely a few yards asunder, being separated only by the high-road.

We believe that the college was originally instituted to supply, chiefly, the deficiency of the clergy in the diocese of Chester; but now many of the bishops receive candidates for ordination from it, and we are not aware but that all their lordships so far recognize its fitness for the purposes intended as gladly to send forth, as "heralds of the cross," either at home or abroad, those who are deemed qualified to be so by the principal of the college. No charter has been obtained to perpetuate the institution, and the license under which it is carried on may be revoked at any time by the Bishop of Chester.—*Liverpool Standard, quoted by Southey's Churchman.*

MEETINGS OF CHURCH COUNCILS.

TO BE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDIFICATION.

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, (saith the Lord) there am I in the midst of them." Perhaps we are accustomed to confine the application of this precious promise too much to our coming together exclusively for prayer and the ministry of the word. But it has at least as much reference to assemblies for the administration of ecclesiastical affairs, wherein the efficiency of the Church for the promotion of true religion is concerned. Let us use it with this application, on the present occasion. Have we come together, Brethren, in the name of the Lord our strength and righteousness, in whom the Church, as the body of those who are living a life of faith, has all its being? Is it to promote the interests of our particular part of the Church because we are identified with it, that we have assembled ourselves together? or is it to promote the spiritual welfare of our beloved Zion, because it is the household of God; the prosperity of which is the glory of our Lord? I trust, Brethren, we have met in the name and for the name of Jesus; in him, as our hope and portion and joy—for him, as the Master whom above all things we desire to glorify. Then let us be sure he is in the midst of us, as he is not with the world. We have not the cloud of glory abiding upon our sanctuary, as had the Israelites of old, to give the outward and visible sign that our Lord is here; but we have an assurance quite as good, that the presence of the Lord and the presence of two or three thus assembled in his name, whether the meeting he held in the consecrated house or the open air, are inseparable. Under this banner let us unite our hearts and minds, in counsel and in prayer and in whatever our hands find to do, while our Convention lasts. The special presence of our dear Master and only Saviour; how sweet to think of it, and to believe in it! Depending on no merit of ours; conditional upon no estimate of the apparent importance of any particular measures that may come before us; unconnected with the number, whether greater or less, of those who meet, resting simply on our coming in the faith and love of Christ; for the cause and glory of Christ! May an honour and blessing so unspeakable fill our hearts with humility and reverence and love! May the thought "Thou God seekest me," repress whatever is light or unseemly, for a Convocation of the Church of Christ! Let us make a believing use of the assurance, so as to make our privilege of thus assembling ourselves, each year, the more profitable to ourselves, as well as to the Church! Especially let it animate us to more prayer! On this particular head, I feel that there is something wanting to make our Convention-seasons as profitable as they might be. We have enough time devoted to public worship and the preaching of the word. But it seems to me that we want more coming together of the clergy as clergymen, with reference to the duties, trials, burdens, and great spiritual work common to, and peculiar to, clergymen, for mutual conference or exhortation and for prayer one with another—a family meeting of brethren in the same stewardship; a very informal and therefore in a great degree a restricted meeting; and that as often as circumstances allow. We must not forget while we seek to do good to others, how much we need to be quickened, strengthened, enlightened, elevated in heart and mind ourselves. How such an object as that which I have suggested may be best compassed, I am not prepared to advise. It is always a matter of regret to me that the many demands on my time and strength which the Convention always brings with it, besides that of presiding over its sessions, so much prevent me from meeting my brethren for other than business purposes.—*From Bishop McElhiney's Address to the Ohio Convention, September 1845.*

NOVEL-READING.

It were well if the reading of novels were nothing worse than the loss of time and money, though this is bad enough; but young people will not escape so; it has generally a bad effect upon the mind, and in some instances a fatal effect upon the morals and fortune. In novels, plays, and romances (for they have all the same general object, which is amusement) good and evil are disguised by false colourings and unjust representations. The end is, to please: and how is the end to be obtained? Nothing will please loose people but intrigues and loose adventures; nothing will please the unlettered profligate but blasphemous sneers upon religion and the Holy Scriptures; nothing will please the vicious but the palliation of vice and the contempt of virtue; therefore novelists and comic writers who study popularity, either for praise or profit, mix up vice with amiable qualities to cover and recommend it, while virtue is compounded with such ingredients as to have a natural tendency to make it odious. These tricks are put upon the public every day, and they take those for their benefactors who thus impose upon them.

But novels vitiate the taste while they corrupt the manners; through a desire of captivating the imagination they fly above nature and reality; their characters are all overcharged and their incidents boil over with improbabilities and absurdities. The imagination thus fed with wind and flatulence, loses its relish for truth; and can bear nothing that is ordinary, so that the reading of novels is to the mind what dram drinking is to the body; the palate is vitiated, the stomach is squeamish, the juices are corrupted, the digestion is spoiled, and life can only be kept up by that which is supernatural and violent. The gamster who accustoms himself to violent agitations, can find no pleasure unless his passions are all kept upon the stretch, like the rigging of a ship in a storm; his amusement is in racks, tortures, and even madness itself; and such is the taste of those who habituate their imaginations to the flights and extravagances of modern romances.

It is a certain proof that a nation is become degenerate in sense, in learning, and economy, in morals and in religion when they are running thus after shadows, and neglecting all that is useful and valuable in life. The polite author of the Travels of Cyrus, describing the state of the Medes when their empire was declining, gives a lively picture of that literary corruption, which is the never-failing attendant upon luxury and a dissolution of morals: "Solid knowledge was looked upon as contrary to delicacy of manners; agreeable trifling, fine spun thoughts, and lively sallies of imagination, were the only kinds of wit admired there; no sort of writing pleased but amusing fictions; where a perpetual succession of events surprised with their variety, without improving the understanding or ennobling the heart."—*Jones, of Nynland.*

LORD'S DAY OBSERVANCE.

A number of men started together from Ohio, with droves of cattle for Philadelphia. They had often been before, and had been accustomed to drive on the Sabbath as on other days. One had now changed his views as to the propriety of travelling on a day. On Saturday he inquired for pasture. His associates wondered that so shrewd a man should think of consuming so great a portion of his profits by stopping with such a drove a whole day. He stopped, however, and kept the Sabbath. They, thinking that they could not afford to do so, went on. On Monday he started again. In the course of the week he passed them, arrived first in the market, and sold his cattle to great advantage. So impressed were the others with the benefit of thus keeping the Sabbath, that ever afterwards they followed his example.

A gentleman started from Connecticut, with his family, for Ohio. He was on the road about four weeks, and rested every Sabbath, from morning to night. Others, journeying the same way, were passing by. Before the close of the week he passed them. Those who went by, late on the Sabbath, he passed on Monday; those who went by a little earlier, he passed on Tuesday; and so on, till, before the next Sabbath, he had passed them all. His horses were no better than theirs, nor were they better fed. But having had the benefit of resting on the Sabbath, according to the command of God and the law of nature, they could out-travel those who had violated that law.

A company of men in the State of New York purchased a tract of land in Northern Illinois, and started with their families and teams, to take possession of it. A part of them rested on the Sabbath. The others continued their journey on that, as on other days: Before the next Sabbath, those who had stopped passed by the others. This they did every week, and each succeeding week a little earlier than they did the week before. Had the journey continued, they would soon have been so far ahead that the others would not be able to overtake them on the Sabbath. They were the first to arrive at their new homes, with men and teams in good order. Afterwards the others came, jaded and worn out by the violation of the law of nature and the command of God.

Great numbers have made similar experiments, and uniformly with similar results; so that it is now settled by facts, that the observance of the Sabbath is required by a natural law, and that, were man nothing more than an animal, and were his existence to be confined to this world, it would be for his interest to observe the Sabbath. Should all the business, which is not required by the appropriate duties of the Sabbath, be confined

to six days in a week, the only time which God has made, or given to man, or to which he has a right, for that purpose, both man and beast might enjoy higher health, obtain longer life, and do more work, and in a better manner, than by the secular employment of the whole seven.—*Permanent Sabbath Documents, Perkins, Boston.*

THE RELIC-IMPOSTURE

Disclosed in Henry VIII's time.

The simplest persons perceived what frauds had been practised concerning relics, when more pieces of the true cross were produced than would have made a whole one; and so many teeth of Saint Apollonia, which were distributed as amulets against tooth-ache, that they filled a tun. The abominable frauds of the Romish Church hastened its downfall now, more than they had promoted its rise. A vial was shown at Hales in Gloucestershire, as containing a portion of our blessed Saviour's blood, which suffered itself to be seen by no person in a state of mortal sin, but became visible when the penitent, by his offerings, had obtained forgiveness. It was now discovered, that this was performed by keeping blood, which was renewed every week, in a vial, one side of which was thick and opaque, the other transparent, and turning it by a secret hand as the case required. A trick of the same kind, more skilfully executed, is still annually performed at Naples. There was a Crucifix at Boxley, called the Road of Grace, which was a favourite object of pilgrimage, because the image moved its head, hands, and feet, rolled its eyes, and made many other gestures, which were represented as miraculous, and believed to be so. The mechanism whereby all this was done was now exposed to the public, and the Bishop of Rochester, after preaching a sermon upon the occasion, broke the road to pieces in their sight. Henry failed not to take advantage of the temper which such disclosures excited. Shrines and treasures, which it might otherwise have been dangerous to have invaded, were now thought fitly to be seized, when they had been procured by such gross and palpable impostures. The gold from Becket's shrine alone filled two chests, which were a load for eight strong men. Becket was unsainted, as well as unshrined, by the King, who, taking up the cause of his ancestor, ordered his name to be struck out from the Calendar, and his bones burnt. Another fraud was then discovered,—for the skull was found with the rest of his skeleton in his grave, though another had been produced, to work miracles, as his, in the Church.—*Southey's Book of the Church.*

WORSHIP IN AN UNKNOWN TONGUE.

There is something to be said in favour of those Christians who believe in the magic powers of foreign words, and who think a prayer either more acceptable to the Deity, or more suited to common edification, because the people do not generally understand it. They are not singular in this belief. Some of the Jews had the same opinion; the followers of Budha, and the Mahomedans, all cherish the same sentiment. From the seat of his holiness at Rome, and eastward through all Asia to the cave of the Jammaboos of Japan, this sentiment is espoused. The bloody Druids of ancient Europe, the naked gymnosophists of India, the Mahomedan Haid, the Hoshang (Buddhist priests) of China, the Catholic clergy, and the bonzes of Japan,—all entertain the notion that the mysteries of religion will be more revered the less they are understood, and the devotions of the people (performed by proxy) the more welcome in heaven for their being dressed in the garb of a foreign tongue. Thus the synagogue, the mosque, the pagan temple, and the Catholic church, seem all to agree in ascribing marvellous efficacy to the sounds of an unknown language; and as they have Jews, Mahomedans, and Pagans on their side, those Christians who plead for the use of an unknown tongue in the services of religion, have certainly a host, as to number, in support of their opinion. That Scripture, reason, and common sense should happen to be on the other side, is indeed a misfortune for them, but there is no help for it.—*Davis, the Chinese.*

THE CHRISTIAN'S VISION OF THE JUDGMENT DAY.

That lofty soul that bears about with it the living apprehension of its being made for an everlasting state, hath still the image before his eye of this world vanishing and passing away; of the other, with the everlasting affairs and concerns of it, even now ready to take place and fill up all the stage; and can represent to himself the vision (not from a melancholic fancy or crazed brain, but a rational faith and a sober well constructed mind) of the world dissolving, monarchies and kingdoms breaking up, thrones tumbling, crowns and sceptres lying as neglected things! He has a telescope through which he can behold the glorious appearance of the supreme Judge; the solemn state of his majestic person; the splendid pomp of his magnificent and vastly numerous retinue, the obsequious throng of glorious and celestial creatures doing homage to their Eternal King; the swift flight of his royal guards sent forth into the four winds to gather the elect, and covering the face of heaven with their spreading wings; the universal silent attention of all to that loud sounding trumpet, that shakes the pillars of the world, pierces the inmost caverns of the earth, and resounds from every part of the incircling heavens; the many myriads of joyful expectants arising, changing, putting on glory, taking and out-contending up-