

the little girl. "The men was paid off to the mill yesterday, an' the rum-shops is a runnin' full blast; they bate a man wid thracts this very mornin', an' druv him off."

Leaving little Nellie to trip lightly up the adjacent court, where her mother lived, the young man hastened down the street, and groped his way up a pair of dirty stairs, amid sights, sounds, and odors of which those unacquainted with mission labor have no conception. He found Jerry alone.

"Sure, it's right good of ye to come here, an' me frettin' the life out o' ye wid me thricks," said the boy, with a look of pleasure which utterly changed the expression of his generally expressionless face. "I didn't dare sind for ye, for all that I've been wantin' ye so much. Yer mind the Sund'y ye told us of Him as they crucified, and the thafe—that he said to him?" The superintendent, kneeling by the boy's side and holding his grimy hand, called the Sunday to mind, and how much trouble Jerry had caused him on the self-same day by his apparent inattention. He nodded his head, and the boy went on. "Well, sur, I'm wuss nor the thafe was—I've stole, an' lied, an' swared sence I was a bit of a boy, an' it seems like the coward I am that I'd be axin' ye to say a prayer for me; but I've heard ye tell how patient He was."

I would not, if I could, render the prayer which was then and there put up to heaven for the dying boy.

"The bit of a song that the purty lady wid glasses sung the same time,—d'ye mind?" whispered Jerry, as his mother came in.

"Do you want me to sing it, Jerry?" asked Mr. Harris; and when the boy whispered, "Yes, if you plaze, sur," the superintendent tenderly sang—

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day,
And so may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

"So might the likes o' me; mighn't I, sur? on'y it 'ud take a deal o' washin'," whispered Jerry. "I'm no good, Lord Jesus; but ye forgiv' the thafe, forgive' me."

A very homely prayer, but I question whether it did not reach the heavenly ear full as soon as Judge Pitman's petition, which was just then being offered for the benighted heathen and the ultimate conversion of the whole world.

With Jerry's prayer came his release. "The boy's death taught me to wait God's time for harvest," said Mr. Harris afterward, and I wish that I could say that it taught him never to be discouraged at apparent non-success.—S. S. Times.

WEDDING FEES.

Many years ago, a New York minister was sitting in the office of a lawyer who was one of his members, chatting on various subjects, and as the pastor happened to speak of the hard times, and the dilatoriness of the church in paying his small salary, the lawyer remarked:

"Now I hardly agree with you, pastor, in your assertion that ministers are paid less for their work than any other class of professional men. They have a great deal given to them in one way and another, donation parties, Christmas presents, &c. Then the item of wedding fees alone, which you seldom hear them speak about, but which must amount to quite a sum, several hundred dollars in the course of the year, brings them in a good revenue."

"Do you think so?" said the clergyman. "Now to come right down to dots, what do you suppose is the average fee that I receive?"

"I should say twenty dollars was a low estimate," said the lawyer. "Here in New York I have often known persons to give one hundred dollars, and a fifty-dollar fee is quite common, but considering the fact that you marry a good many of the poor, or those who are only moderately well off, as well as the rich, I should think, as I said, that twenty dollars was a pretty low average."

"That calculation is rather large," said the minister, "but still I cannot tell exactly, as I have not reckoned up what I have received this last year."

"No, I presume not," said the lawyer. "I have noticed that ministers don't generally know how much they have received, when the sum is pretty large, but I rather think they would if it was a small one. But I will tell you what I will do. I will give you ten dollars for half your next fee, and don't believe I shall lose anything by it either. Do you accept that?"

The minister hesitated a moment and then said, "Yes, well, yes; I'll accept that—ten dollars for half the next fee."

He soon bade him good morning and went home to his dinner. While he was at the table the bell rang, and the servant came in saying a man at the door wished to see him a moment. He found a rough-looking farmer standing there, who accosted him thus:

"Good morning, Dr. A. I came in to see if you could just tie me up, this morning. Sal and I have been talking about it a good while,

and we've come to the conclusion that 'taint any use to wait no longer."

"Oh, yes," said the Doctor, "walk in, walk in. Where did you want to be married?"

"Right here," said the farmer, "if you're willin'. Sal's in the wagon and I'll bring her in."

So he brought in a blooming country maid, and the minister, who had doffed his gown and slipped on his best Sunday-go-to-meeting coat, made them one, in his most impressive style. After the ceremony and the congratulations, the farmer said:

"About the fee, pastor, we hain't much money, but I thought your children might be fond of pets, so I told Sal I would just bring one of our pups." Saying which he tipped up a small box, and out rolled a little white pup upon the piano.

The minister could scarcely contain his mirth, but thanked the bridegroom and told him the children would be glad of it, and bade him a pleasant good-morning. He finished his dinner, then, putting the pup carefully back into the box, started with it under his arm for the lawyer's office.

His friend was quite surprised to see him so soon again, but the pastor relieved his curiosity by saying:

"I had no idea when I accepted your offer this morning that I should have to come so soon to claim it, and I hardly think I should have accepted it so quickly, had I known I was to marry a couple to-day, and receive such an unusual and unexpected fee. Generally there is not so much difference in them, but this was a perfect surprise to me."

"No backing out, now," said the lawyer, "that bargain was fair and square, and you must hold to it. Here's your ten dollars; hand over the fee!"

The minister demurred a moment, told him he should beware how he made such rash promises again; but finally, unfastening the cover of the box, said: "All right, I'll stand by the bargain," tumbled out the pup upon the lawyer's desk, and with the blandest smile upon his face, waving his hand and bowing politely, he said, "Here is the fee—which half will you take?"

The blank look of amazement and disgust which overspread the countenance of the lawyer as he looked at the roll of puppiness, was amusing to see.

"You don't mean it, that you married a couple and that was your fee?"

"Indeed it was," said the minister, "and the farmer who presented it thought he was doing a handsome thing!"

Then, with a hearty laugh, the lawyer handed him the gold piece, and told him that he thought he had nothing more to say in regard to the enriching of ministers by wedding fees.—Standard.

THE DIFFERENCE.

BY C. C. TRACY.

However absurd questions may be, they must be answered, or carping, faithless persons will consider them unanswerable. Does the Christian religion develop purer morality, higher manhood than other religions? Is there anything in the fruits of this and other systems showing the one to be true and heavenly, the others of the earth earthy?

Small indeed must be the number of those who, after being reared in Christian communities, have become extensively acquainted with the condition of heathen society, and have not deeply felt the contrast, whether they would acknowledge it or not.

Let me illustrate by an example such as I have seen with my own eyes. I will try to avoid exaggeration. Let me take you to a town where Mohammedanism has had all its own way for ages. There is nothing fine in all the place except the mosques; they are costly and substantial; they are built and endowed with the legacies of devout Moslems. It is a town after the prophet's own heart; the people are as deeply imbued with his doctrines as he could wish, and as diligent in the performance of their religious duties. Where shall we expect to find the benign effects of the religion, if not in this place where it is so firmly, devoutly held? Five times daily, at the call of the muezzin, the faithful wash at the fountains according to the directions, and bow within the sacred places in whispering adoration, kissing the earth toward Mecca. Here, in days of Ramazan, where all true Mussulmans fast from sunrise till sunset during the whole month, strictness characterizes the entire observance. Here, when evening comes, the loud solemn cantillation from above each mosque announces that the sun has set, and rows of lamps hung out on high form a corona of stars around each minaret to light the revels of the whole night. When the fast is over, believers enjoy a festal occasion. They visit each other with the greeting, "May your fast be blessed."

Here, when a believer dies, his body is washed with scrupulous care, borne forth and buried with stern decorum, for no blasphemous lamentations at the accomplishment of the

divine decree must disfigure the obsequies; piety must restrain tears, bind up the emotions. The sublimest of the religion are seen here if anywhere. Whoever is ruled by the imagination may be captivated with Islam as here displayed. It is the fervid idealism of the desert which has held empire so many ages over so many millions.

Let us now observe the fruits. Come with me through the town. We will go to the market. Do you ask why the streets are so narrow and so extremely filthy? It is not easy to answer without enlarging. I may say that the narrowness is owing to the compactness of the town, there being thirty thousand people to the square mile. But why, you ask do they not spread out upon this great plain? Why be so cramped? Ah! there comes in a difficulty. The people are so fearful of the marauder and the midnight assassin, that they dare not spread their dwellings abroad. Those upon the outskirts of the city are all of the poorest classes like the gypsies. The people are thus huddled together from very fear of each other. Can this state of things be consistent with so much religiousness, say you? Ask a Moslem that question, and he will smile at your simplicity. Perhaps you have yet to learn that religiousness is one thing, religion another. As to the dirt—well, here is the market; let us examine it first. You condemn it as no better than a collection of mean stables. Do not be harsh, it is not worse than many others. True there are a good many dead cats and dogs lying about, left for the elements and the insects to dispose of; true the passages are extremely narrow, and clogged with piles of refuse which has fallen through the tumbled-down, earth-covered roof over them. Stoop, my friend, or you may thrust your head against those logs that hang, half supported, under the burden of earth upon them; perhaps the blow of your cranium might bring down the superincumbent mass and bury you—or me too—in which case I fear there would be no one to dig you out.

I was to account for the dirt. I suppose it is owing to the carelessness of the people. That is a poor answer, you think. Then I will give another which may be better; it is due to their selfishness. You think they might be taught better. I resign to you the task of teaching them, so long as their moral condition remains unchanged. I defy you, in a quarter of a century, by all your powers of persuasion, to stir up these citizens at their own expense, or by their own exertions, to renovate and purify this place. If the money were raised they would find it hard to fix upon any man or company of men to whom they could intrust its disbursement. You see there is neither public spirit nor public confidence; in other words, no self-sacrifice, and no honesty—almost none.

Were I to take you to the homes of the people, to the schools, to the inns, you would find scarcely less ruinous a condition.

Back of all this material dilapidation there is a moral rotteness and ruin, the true cause of the other. You must hunt with a lantern in the daytime, and long at that, to find the honest shopkeeper, the incorruptible judge, or the citizen whose religion purifies his life. Yet, I claim that this is a place on which the prophet would smile complacently, that here the demands of his religion are essentially satisfied. One may cheat and lie a hundred times a day in trade, and "purify it with alms," according to the Koran, that is, toss out a few paras to a passing beggar. The magistrate may "eat bribes" all his days and make atonement at the end by building a fountain or endowing a mosque; nay, he can pray at night, and wipe out all the sins of the day, then, smiling, tell Satan over his shoulder, "You have no more any hold on me."

Compare all this with an average New England town, and behold the difference! Yet let me assure you that whereas the former is fully and satisfactorily Mohammedan, the latter is by no means fully and satisfactorily Christian; its religion has, as yes, operated only partially as a salt; yet how great its power to better men's condition! Let its principles triumph completely, and what would they do!

Truly the fruit of Christianity is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," but the unevangelized must be expected to be found "without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful," with all the other evil qualities which the Scriptures ascribe to them.—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

As thy days, so shall thy strength be.

DEUT. 33: 25

THE ETERNAL HOME.

Alone! To land upon that shore!
With no one sight that we have seen before—
Things of a different hue,
And sounds all strange and new;
No forms of earth our fancies to arrange,
But to begin alone that mighty change!

Alone! To land alone upon that shore,
Knowing so well we can return no more;
No voice or face of friend,
None with us to attend
Our disembarking on that awful strand,
But to arrive alone in such a land!

Alone? No; God hath been there long before—
Eternally hath waited on that shore
For us who were to come
To our eternal home.
Oh: is He not the life-long Friend we know
More privately than any friend below?

Alone? That God we trust is on that shore,
The Faithful One, whom we have trusted more,
In trials and in woes,
Than we have trusted those
On whom we leaned most in our earthly strife.
Oh! we shall trust Him more in that new life!

So not alone we land upon that shore.
'Twill be as though we had been there before.
We shall meet more we know
Than we can meet below,
And find our rest like some returning dove—
Our home at once with the Eternal Love!
—Frederick William Faber, in N. Y. Independent.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

IX.

1. What office did our Lord fulfil in offering Himself a sacrifice for sin?
2. What expression is used concerning Christ as of the house of David?
3. In what term does St. Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians, speak of the relation of Christ to the Father.
4. What title of Christ, though given him in contempt by his enemies, was the fulfilment of a prophecy?
5. A name of our Saviour that indicates his wisdom?
6. In what prophetic language is the essential attribute of God ascribed to Christ.
7. A title by which our Lord's human descent is described?
8. Under what designation does prophecy indicate Christ as cleansing from all iniquity?
9. Name the grand office of Christ as our Divine Teacher.
10. What prophetic title of our Saviour shows Him to be both God and Man?
11. One of our Saviour's names taken from the Greek alphabet?
12. How does our Lord show Himself to be the support of that temple built up of his elect?
13. What is it that Christ's people find in Him?

From these initials you will find
The love of God to human kind.
He sent his Son from heaven on high,
For us to suffer, bleed, and die.
Oh, happy time, when He shall come
To bring us to our heavenly home—
The war, and strife, and sin shall cease,
And Jesus come to reign in peace.

A GREAT MISTAKE.—If we are not deceived many parents neglected to bring their children to Christ in very early childhood, because they did not desire their children to have such a quiet experience as most children must necessarily pass through. They regarded a striking experience as an important evidence of regeneration; and to bring a child to Christ at so early a period of its life that it could not be overwhelmed with emotion or distinctly remember the date of the spiritual conflict, seemed to them almost cruel. We speak what we know when we say this; for we have heard from more than one parent such expressions of difficulty about Christian labor with very young children. Are there not fathers and mothers even yet, who distrust the conversion of their children, because it has been so much like that of Lydia, so simple, so absolute, so little attended by struggle and resistance?—Selected.

GOD HEARS PRAYER: GOD INHABITS PRAISES.—We should not have the name of "Prayer Meeting" for all devotional meetings. "Praise and Prayer Meeting," if it were not too long, should be our name. There is a great relief to the troubled mind in pouring itself out in prayer, but for my part, I have at times found more relief in pouring out my heart in praise, and I have heard sweeter praises to God from those in affliction and pain, than I ever heard from people rich, strong, and prosperous.—Dr. Donald Fraser.