

desirable to follow. They work, in no small part at least, for the praise of men. They tend, moreover, to crowd out others and prevent them from doing what they gladly would accomplish. This was precisely Diotrophes' method. "Neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and them that would he forbid, and casteth them out of the church." Along with a love for pre-eminence, or more correctly prominence, goes an envy of others—a fear lest some measure of praise will accrue to them. The Christian who "loveth to have the pre-eminence" fails to think that the world is wide, and that there is need for every willing worker in the great field. The good report that one may have of faithful service rendered does not derogate in the slightest degree from the similar good report that may come to another.

There are born leaders in every department of human activity. They are specially endowed. Occasions open before them. There seems to be necessity laid upon them to take the advance in thought or action. The temptation in all such cases is to desire the pre-eminence. Ambition grows. Once a leader, it is hard to sink back into the ranks. Once prominent in any measure, it wrenches the feelings to fall back into obscurity. But that rightful prominence can be associated with true humility is witnessed in many cases. There are men who have moulded the thought of the age who have been as guileless as a child. There are those who have been active in affairs, shaping the policy of State or Church, who have acted from pure love of the good cause in which they were engaged, and upon whom no one would think of charging an unworthy personal ambition.

But these persons are the exceptions. The most of us need to contend against an unholy desire for pre-eminence. The most of us need to learn the lesson that Jesus taught His disciples: "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." We may worthily desire to be pre-eminent in service. Whether we are pre-eminent in receiving the applause of men need not concern us.—*Christian Weekly*.

#### PREPARATION FOR THE SUPPER.

The very best help to preparation for the communion of the Supper is in the use of the Word itself. It is a part of our creed that it is a "perfect rule of faith and practice." For the young and the illiterate we have "helps" of various kinds, but for educated Christians nothing can be compared with the inspired Word. The "helps" are truth, more or less diluted; the Word is unmixed, inspired, authoritative truth.

Would you feel and express before God true penitence, is there anything better than the penitential Psalms, such as the fifty-first? Would you hear Christ's words and seek communion with Him—would you dwell on the thoughts He would have you cherish—read the very words He spoke to the disciples in the very upper chamber of the first communion, in John's Gospel, chaps. xiv., xv., and xvi.—would you pray in the very spirit of a child—the "spirit of adoption," study John xvii.

Would you familiarize your mind with the details of the ordinance so that you may "discern the Lord's body," dwell on the gospel narratives of the institution, supplemented by Paul to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xi. 17-34.

Would you learn the practical duties to which you pledge yourself afresh, you have only to study the practical portions of the Epistles—Rom. xii., xiv.; Gal. v., vi.; Eph. iv., v., vi.; Phil. iv.; Col. iii., iv.; Heb. xii., xiii.

Many a saint, languid in prayer, has been quickened as he turned into petition for himself the words of the Psalms, such as lv., lvi., and cxvi.—*Dr. Hall*.

#### WEALTH OF THE BIBLE.

How much is your Bible worth? Scientific men are trying to show us, through the newspapers, and through philosophic papers, that our race is descended from the monkey. Get out of my way with your abominable Darwinian theories! Scientific men cannot understand the origin of this world. We open our Bibles, and we feel like the Christian Arab, who said to the sceptic when asked by him why he believed there is a God: "How do I know that it was not a man instead of a camel that went past my tent last night? Why, I know him by his tracks." Then, looking over at the setting sun, the Arab said to the

sceptic: "Look there! that is not the work of man. That is the track of a God." We have all these things revealed in God's word. Dear old book! My father loved it. It trembled in my mother's hand when she was nigh four-score years old; it has been under the pillow of three of my brothers when they died. It is a very different book from the book it once was to me. I used to take it as a splendid poem, and read it as I read John Milton. I took it up sometimes as a treatise on law, and read it as I did Blackstone. I took it as a fine history, and read it as I did Josephus. Ah! now it is not the poem; it is not the treatise on law; it is not the history. It is simply a family album that I open, and see right before me the face of God, my Father; of Christ, my Saviour; of heaven, my eternal home.

"How precious is the Book Divine,  
By inspiration given!  
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine,  
To guide our souls to heaven."

As I take up my family Bible to-night, bright with promises and redolent with boyhood memories, and mighty with principles that are to regenerate the world, I ask you, ye men who are descended from those who fought until they died in their tracks, for the defence of this book; ye sons of the Covenanters, who were hounded among the Highlands of Scotland; ye sons of men who went on ladders of fire from English soil to heaven for this grand, glorious triumph, and God-given book, "How much owest thou to my Lord?"—*Talmage*.

#### THE LIFE EVERLASTING.

Men who reject Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour cannot expect to have the eternal life which that Saviour brought to light and purchased for His people by suffering for them. It is not reasonable to expect or desire that Christian people or Christian journals will say that those who have rejected Christ, and the conditions of salvation announced by Him, have after death entered upon the blessedness promised by the Lord Jesus only to those who should believe in Him. If there is any other eternal and blessed life, it should be explicitly described, and the reasons for it given.

The matter is of supreme importance. The life to come is endless. Nearly every man believes that, to some extent, the present life is a probation and a preparation for the future. The highest degree of certainty is desirable as to the conditions upon which the attainment of unending blessedness is dependent. The evidence sustaining the glorious immortality declared in the Scriptures is well known. No man, however, has the least reason to hope for that future happiness and glory, who refuses to observe the terms on which it is offered in the Scriptures. If there is any trustworthy evidence in favour of any other blessedness hereafter, that evidence is not generally known. In these days, when that is called goodness which is not goodness according to the Word of God, the attention of men may properly be called to the scriptural description of unsaved men in these words: "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."—*Christian Intelligencer*.

WHERE the mind inclines, the feet lead. Love climbs mountains.—*Arab proverb*.

WHEN a man preaches to me, I want him to make it a personal matter.—*Daniel Webster*.

HOLINESS is not blind. Illumination is the first part of sanctification. Believers are children of light.

TWENTY Christians can fight heroically where one can suffer greatly and be strong and be still.—*Dr. Cuyler*.

INSPIRATION is contagious. One man dead in earnest gets a hundred other men on fire.—*Dr. F. A. Noble*.

THE difference between a pessimist and an optimist is that the former finds fault with nature for putting thorns on roses, while the latter thanks her for putting roses on thorns.

ONE never knows a man till he has refused him something, and studied the effects of the refusal; one never knows himself till he hath denied himself. The altar of sacrifice is the touchstone of character. The cross compels a choice for or against the Christ.—*O. P. Gifford*.

#### MISSION NOTES.

WHEN Dr. J. V. R. Talmage went to Amoy about forty years ago there were but two Christians in that great city. When he left it last year there were a dozen Christian churches, with a membership of over a thousand. A long white beard sweeps over the Doctor's breast, and the Chinese Christians call him father.

A WEALTHY oil merchant in Chhin-a-Kha, China, has lately become a Christian through a native preacher belonging to the Presbyterian Church of England Mission. He shows his sincerity by putting away his concubines, and has offered any one of his several houses for a chapel, free of rent. He has also promised to meet all other expenses if the mission will provide and pay for a preacher.

THE Bishop of Zululand says, in closing his report to the Society (Society for Propagation of the Gospel): "Opportunities for mission work are far more freely given now than at any previous time, and the heaven out of twenty years' slow and painful toil has been quietly working. If only more effort could be made—if more money and devoted men and women were forthcoming, a rich harvest might, in God's good time, be looked for among some of the finest heathen races on the face of the earth."

THE Sweden work goes on in its old revival fashion. Norkoping quarterly meeting saw twenty received on probation and twelve into full membership; Westervick, twenty-two on probation; Wesley, twenty into full membership; Wisig has received sixty since Christmas; Wisby, twenty in full membership; at Motala forty-four have joined. Altogether the Karlskrona District has had an increase of three hundred and three during the quarter. Whether here or yonder, the good work goes on among the Scandinavians, for the New York Brooklyn Swedish Mission reports the reception of forty-three probationers.

THE present year is the one hundred and fiftieth since the first Moravian missionaries went forth. The Committee desire to raise a jubilee fund to commemorate this, to be appropriated for opening new missions. In the appeal sent out they say: "In 1732 two men represented the Moravian Church among the heathen—now there are 322 missionaries in the service, and the sphere of labour embraces Esquimaux in Greenland and Labrador; Indians in North America and the Mosquito Coast of Central America; Negroes in Dutch and British Guiana and the West Indies; Hottentots and Kaffirs in South Africa; Tibetans in the Himalayan regions of Central Asia, and the Aborigines of Australia; in all nearly 75,000 souls. In what more appropriate way can we manifest our gratitude than by a strenuous effort to advance the kingdom of our blessed Lord and Saviour among the heathen?" The receipts of this society have been for the past year about \$5,000 in advance of the previous year.

MR. AMENT, of the American Board, writes from Peking, North China: "In Peking we are beginning to see some of the results of the last ten years of work. One of the most encouraging features is the fact that our neighbours, some of them, at least, begin to take a little notice of our existence in other ways than by reviling us. It was only yesterday that a young man, son of a prominent official, desired to purchase a Bible, and, with an air of genuine sincerity, requested instruction in our doctrine. Yesterday, also, a literary graduate, teacher in a neighbouring gentleman's family, came, and drawing a copy of Mark's Gospel from his sleeve, wished to have it explained. He went away, expressing a purpose to examine its contents still further. We have in our employ a colporteur whom we have been wont to regard as more desirous to draw the Bible Society's money than to sell its books. However, to the surprise of all, he returned from a country trip a short time ago, and stated that a little revival was in progress in a village where he had been preaching. We were well aware that the officials had been making efforts to stamp out a certain false religion under the ban of the Government, and we were fearful lest his enquirers were only practical criminals who desired the foreigner's protection. But this did not prove to be the case, as was shown by his bringing to light two young literary men who were willing to begin a systematic study of the Bible. They have joined our winter station class, and thus far have proved themselves worthy of confidence."