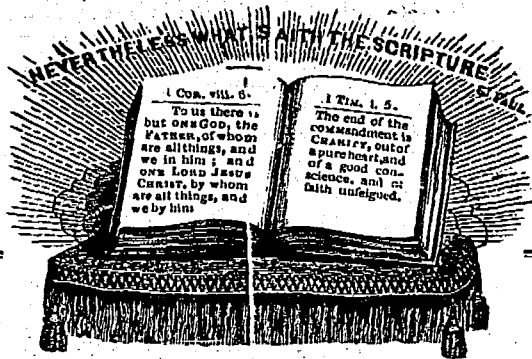


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THE LAST HOURS OF CHANNING.

(From the Memoir recently published.)

"On my return from church, he expressed pleasure that I had been there, inquired earnestly as to the appearance of interest in the congregation, and talked with animation of missionary enterprises as signs of the deepening feeling of human brotherhood. 'Is there any influence in the world,' he said, looking up in my face with kindling expression, 'like the Christian religion, any power which so insures the progress of mankind and the widest diffusion of good?'

"As these plans for carrying out his cherished convictions were described, he at once, with his usual discrimination, stated the dangers and difficulties in the way, ending with these words: 'I feel more deeply every day the close personal relations which the Heavenly Father sustains to every spirit, and the strong bond of a common spiritual nature between all human beings. But we must beware of over-excited feeling, of vague sentiment, of mingling our theoretical views or our favorite imaginations with the truth. We need to feel the reality,' with great emphasis and expressiveness,—'the REALITY of a spiritual life. In the common affections, in the usual relations, in seeming trifles, in the contingencies and events of hourly existence, we must learn to see a present Providence, an all-inspiring Goodness.' Finding himself much moved, he waved his hand, saying,— 'But I have talked enough.'

"He liked to hear the minutest details about friends, asked constantly after his relatives and acquaintances, and was much pleased with sketches of character. I told him of the —s. of their beautiful home affections, their Quaker-like simplicity of life, their sacrifices for Anti-slavery, the blended courage and peace with which they had met their trials. A beautiful smile spread over his face as he listened,—his eyes full on mine. 'Do such people grow among us?' he exclaimed, when I had finished. 'This is indeed refreshing. Tell me! have you met many such spirits?' On answering, 'They are not a few,' he replied, 'The earth, then, is very rich!' On describing another lovely family, he remarked,—'Yes! such life is very beautiful. But they do not seem to have a readiness to sacrifice all for great ends and the good of man, like the —s.' I told him of —, who left a good situation with ample support, because he would not, even by silence, seem to compromise the truth, and who, sick and weak, far advanced in life, separated by poverty from his children, and even for a time from his wife whom he most tenderly loved, yet struggled on patiently, cheerfully, till he had paid debts incurred by failure years before, although he had received the benefit of the English bankrupt act. He looked up with the words 'This is a hero, a Christian hero.' Again, I told him of —, who, dying the horrible death of cancer in the face, though naturally a stern man, grew gentler, more thoughtful, prayerful, bright, and loving, each day. 'Ah!' said he, 'this shows us a little of the meaning of sorrow and pain. How grand is the power of the spirit!' When reading to him, he would say,—'You may pass that; let me hear of men, of people, of their social relations.'

"The courtesy with which he every morning greeted the young woman who arranged his room, and his kind inquiries after all members of the household, was unvarying. As the physician left him one morning, he remarked,—'A good face that, and a most kind man!' He spoke with commendation of the great quiet of the hotel, and of the readiness to oblige exhibited by Mr. Hicks's family. He seemed deeply moved by the considerate stillness of the officers and soldiers of a military company which had held a review on the green before the house, and dined in a neighbouring room. To his attendants and watchers his thoughtful gratitude was incessant. Whenever we smoothed his bed or pillows, he would say,—'You

are really admirable bed-makers. All is as well as could possibly be desired.' His chief anxiety seemed to be lest we should be strained by lifting him, wearied with watching, or injured by confinement; and he constantly urged us to seek recreation, and to take the fresh air. His apparent indifference to outward conditions was most characteristic. Whenever we attempted to make him easier, he would say,—'O, it is of no importance,—of the least possible moment! Thank you.'

"I observed continually, that his mind seemed to be very active in sleep. Words escaped from his lips, though they were seldom distinct. But in every instance where their meaning was caught, he appeared to be engaged in acts of prayer. 'Heavenly Father' was most often intelligible. His very earnestness sometimes awakened him. Once, on thus rousing, he said,—'I have had a singularly vivid dream of being engaged in prayer for —, by which he seemed to be very deeply affected.' And after a short slumber at the close of a restless night, his first words were,—'I have had a most genial nap, and I do not know that my heart was ever so overflowed by a grateful sense of the goodness of God.' It was most characteristic, that a man, who through life had such an aversion to any thing like parade of religious feeling, should thus unconsciously exhibit his all-pervading piety. Thursday night he passed in a wholly wakeful state. In the morning he told me that his mind had been very active, that he had allowed it to work freely, and had enjoyed greatly his thoughts....

"On Friday, September 30, he said to Dr. Swift,—'I think myself less well. Week has passed after week, and, instead of improving, I seem to myself declining. I should wish, if it is the will of Providence, to be able to return home,'—adding, after a moment—'to die there.' His voice was even and firm, as he spoke, and the habitual tranquillity of his manner undisturbed. He instantly added,—'But it will all be well; it is all well.' This was the only time that he distinctly referred to his death; though he undoubtedly felt that his recovery was hopeless, he was probably unprepared, as we all were, for the very rapid change. During this day he visibly sank, and could only with the greatest exertion move at all. The effort to take nourishment distressed him. Yet, when requested to receive something, he would whisper,—'O, yes! I will take it. I desire to be true to all the relations of duty.' Once, however, he replied, with a word of endearment,—'I wish now to remain for a long time without taking any thing. I wish to be quiet'....

"On Sunday, October 2d, as he heard the bells ring, he said to us, 'Now go to church.' 'It is a part of true religion, dear Sir, to nurse the sick and aid our friends.' 'True,' he replied; 'you may stay.' He asked us to read to him from the New Testament. 'From what part?' 'From the Sermon on the Mount.' As we closed the Lord's Prayer, he looked up, with a most expressive smile, and said, 'That will do now; I find that I am too much fatigued to hear more. I take comfort, O, the greatest comfort, from these words. They are full of the divinest spirit of our religion.'

"In the afternoon he spoke very earnestly, but in a hollow whisper. I bent forward; but the only words I could distinctly hear were, 'I have received many messages from the spirit.'

"As the day declined, his countenance fell, and he grew fainter and fainter. With our aid, he turned himself towards the window, which looked over valleys and wooded summits to the east. We drew back the curtains, and the light fell upon his face. The sun had just set, and the clouds and sky

"I feel as if it were insulting the memory of my uncle to refer, even to the assertion, that on his death-bed he changed his opinions. But the urgency of many correspondents induces me here to say, once for all, that there was no foundation whatever for such a rumor. Weakness, the violence of fever, and the earnest desire for his restoration, prevented conversation on his part and ours. But every word, not, look, showed us how perfect was his peace. Every word that he is known to have spoken, indicating his own religious opinions and feelings, is recorded on the preceding pages. This distinct statement should forever put an end to the calumny referred to, among all honest men.

were bright with gold and crimson. He breathed more and more gently, and, without a struggle or a sigh, the body fell asleep.— We knew not when the spirit passed.

"Amidst the glory of autumn, at an hour hallowed by his devout associations, on the day consecrated to the memory of the risen Christ, and looking eastward, as if in the setting sun's reflected light he saw promises of a brighter morning, he was taken home."

RESPECT FOR HUMAN NATURE.

No man can with impunity despise humanity. To do so is hostile, if not fatal, both to the personal and social virtues. It lays the axe to the root of whatever is most elevated and generous in feeling, and most useful in action, depraving prudence into trickery, and sneering at disinterestedness as romantic. One of the worst features of corrupt religion is its debased and debasing exhibition of human nature. One of the brightest glories of Christianity is the display of the full moral and devotional capabilities of humanity in the example of Jesus Christ, who, while he was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, was at the same time only the first-born among his 'many brethren' of the human race. Reverence itself, comes only next to, Know thyself, in the steps of discipline by which man ascends in improvement towards perfection. It is looking abroad on the capabilities of our nature, by which this must be effected. The inordinate estimate of personal qualities and attainments is a very different thing, and as absurd as this is rational; as pernicious as this is useful. The more man reverences his nature, the more humbling must be his sense of personal failings and deficiencies. He stands abashed in the consciousness of how little he has done at best; how much his entrusted talents have been misdirected; how much neglected; how much abused. He realizes the most powerful restraint upon self-complacency, the most powerful stimulus to honorable industry. He elevates the mark at which he aims from what has been done to what may be done; and if he do not reach perfection, he is certainly the nearer for keeping it constantly in his view. It is true, man exists under many forms which seem little adapted to inspire reverence—the poor, helpless infant, the wild savage, the ignorant rustic, the depraved criminal. But there is our nature still; our nature with its capabilities, even in these; and such as some of these, nationally if not individually, were once the very beings whom we have exhibited as illustrations of these capabilities; such were those polished and patriotic Greeks; those Jews, upholders of pure monotheism in defiance of a world's idolatry; those Christians, so exalted in the purity of their manners, the benevolence of their hearts, the firmness of their martyrdom. Yes, of the same material, of such stuff as these despised ones, are made the profoundest philosophers, the purest philanthropists, the brightest specimens of man, the holiest worshippers of God. It is in the emotions excited by the highest of our race that we should learn how to regard the lowest: for that exaltation is in their capacity now; we trust in their destiny hereafter. It is of the whole human race that the Psalmist speaks, as, his feelings influenced by the one portion, he says, 'Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?' and, referring to the other, whose qualities are equally essential, he continues, 'Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and crowned him with glory and honor.' And this is the nature which it is our charge not to degrade in our own persons; not to enervate by indolence; to harden by selfishness; to sully by crime. 'Son of man,' there is no hereditary nobility to be compared with thine; none so fraught with dignity, so mighty in motive, so glorious in prospect; none, the deep sense of which so well directs, and purifies, and elevates.— He who best sustains the transmitted honor of peerage or of crown, does but little compared with him who acts up to his nature, in its Maker's design and destination, and does that, and that only, which 'may become a man.'

HISTORY OF ENGLISH VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE.

In the Report for 1847, of the American Bible Society, is given the following condensed account of the translations of the Scriptures into the English language:—

It appears that some imperfect attempts were made to translate portions of the Bible into this language as early as the seventh century. These translations, however, were but imperfect, and in Anglo-Saxon verse. Early in the succeeding century, the Psalter was translated and read in churches; and, before the close of the century, the venerable Bede had translated the Gospel of John.

Soon after this, Alfred the Great translated the ten commandments and other passages from the 21st, the 22d, and 23d of Exodus, and prefixed them to a body of laws which he had promulgated.

In the tenth century, portions of the Proverbs, several of the historical books of the Old Testament, and the four Evangelists, were translated both into Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman. But with these little more seems to have been effected in the way of translations into our tongue until the fourteenth century. This is the more strange, as there was at this period little opposition to the use of the Scriptures. General inability to read, and the want of leading spirits who appreciated the Bible, are the only assignable causes for the little progress made.

In the latter half of the fourteenth century, an important era arrived. The New Testament first, and then the entire Bible was translated by John Wiclif. And, though the translation was made from the Latin, and was long used in manuscript form (the art of printing being not yet discovered), it was this version, as one has well remarked, "which unlocked the treasures of God's word to the English nation." Though great opposition to this work was manifested by those in civil and in ecclesiastical authority, numerous copies of it were made and circulated, and much thus done to prepare the public mind for the coming reformation.

Other translations of parts of the Bible were soon made by the followers of Wiclif; and, in one instance, that of Purney, an entire version was made, less literal than that of Wiclif, but yet in the main correct, and with the English idiom preserved.

The next translation, demanding attention, is that of William Tyndale, which first appeared, the New Testament in 1526, and the entire Bible about eleven years afterwards. Tyndale was well versed in Hebrew and Greek, which he had studied for twenty years, with the purpose of making a translation from them into his own tongue. Though at first a monk, he early imbibed the spirit of the Reformation, and strove to hasten it forward.

Being unable to prosecute his work of translation in England, he fled to the Continent, where his Testament was completed and first printed. Numerous copies soon found their way back to England, where they were read with an avidity which seemed sharpened by the attempts to prohibit their use. Though collections of these Scriptures were frequently seized and burned, and those who held them imprisoned, edition after edition was published on the continent for the English Market. Two editions were published by two Dutch printers, solely for the anticipated profits of sale in England, after counting all the hazards of introduction.

The next version to be noticed is that of Miles Coverdale, a devoted friend of Tyndale, and for many years his associate in biblical labors. His translation commenced soon after the imprisonment of Tyndale in 1534, was made from the original tongues, and completed with unsurpassed labor in the course of one year. The leading motive which seems to have actuated him in making a new translation, was a belief that the public mind in England had undergone a change in regard to the Bible, and that even the king might permit a new translation, though prejudice would not allow the circu-