

Pastor and People.

The Border Land

An article in Appleton's Journal relates a number of surprising and beautiful incidents at the hour of death. I quote the first. "A family in the village where the writer lives recently lost two daughters. The eldest, named Clara, died in the winter, or spring. The younger, named Anna, died in the summer. Anna was spending her last moments in talking about her teachers and companions, when, suddenly looking upward, with an expression of joy and surprise, she exclaimed, "Clara! Clara! Clara!" and after a few moments of silence, in which she seemed to behold her departed sister, she died."

Among my memoranda as a pastor, several instances of a similar character are recorded. In a family of my congregation, two sons died—the younger in the morning, the older in the evening of the same day. A short time before his departure, looking intently toward a corner of the room, he said, "I see Willie." He was a child of four years, and had not been told of his brother's death. His father "always believed he saw his brother."

In a family connected with my church a little girl of seven years, an only child, died. Her mother, worse than widowed, had returned to her parents. They were oppressed with infirmities and toils. The only bright and joyous thing in the house was the grandchild; and their hearts were almost broken by her death. Some time after the mother was seized with fatal sickness at the house of her married and only sister, a few miles away. A short time before the end, an expression of indescribable intelligence and rapture came upon her face, her lips moved, and the nurse bending over, was confident she pronounced the name of Elsie, her lost darling. Her mother was unable to see her during her sickness, or in her shroud, but after the funeral service I was present when the surviving daughter entered her room, rushed into her arms, weeping for a moment, then suddenly raising herself, she exclaimed, "But mother, don't cry for Cornelia, I said when I saw that look, I never weep for you, my sister." The scene was affecting to the extreme.

A pious gentleman related to me the following concerning his own brother, who died about eight years of age. Two days before his end he raised his eyes to the ceiling, as if seeing something which strongly interested him. After contemplating it awhile, he said: "How beautiful you are! then stretching out his arms: "Come and take me!"

Recently a lady, a member of the church in my care, gave me the following account: Some years ago her brother, Russell C—, an active business man and a Christian, was killed in a railroad disaster. Their aged mother, living in another State, was in such a low and feeble state of body and mind, that it was not thought best to inform her of the decease of her son. After some weeks the time of her departure drew near, preceded by two or three days of mental restoration and activity. During these days, at one time having apparently perfect use of her faculties on all subjects, the daughter named above being present, she suddenly said; "Russell is here!" "Why, no, he is not," replied the daughter. "But he is," she persisted, and expressed her pleasure at seeing him.

The article in Appleton closes with the beautiful experience which heralded the death of Eberhard Stilling, grandfather of the author, Jung Stilling. Concisely stated, it is as follows: He went one day with his children into a wood. Leaving them he passed on. Soon a light brighter than the sun appeared before him. A plain extended beyond his vision, white with the light. There were brooks and gardens, and silvery castles. Near him rose a glorious mansion, and from the door came a beautiful angel; but when close by him he saw it was his beloved departed daughter, Dora. "Father," she said, "yonder is our eternal habitation; you will come to us soon." From that hour he seemed as one enchanted and serene and happy, soon passed away from earth.

There are some points of resemblance to this in the narrative given to me by the grandparents of two little girls who died. A lady who watched with the younger the last night of her life, said she should always believe the child saw angels. On the Sabbath morning following the funeral, the older sister went into her grandmother's room, and said: "I have been dreaming, I want you to tell me what it means." "What did you dream, my child?" "I thought I was walking in a wood, and my little sister met me and said, "Come with me, and I will show you where I live now." So she led me along till we came to a gate, and beyond the gate was the most beautiful place I ever saw. There was a great many people there, and little children, and all perfectly happy."

The grandmother told her that thinking much about her little sister had caused her to dream; but when the girl left the room she said to her daughter: "That child will die." Before the second Sabbath following she was seized with the same malady, a prevailing epidemic, which had been fatal to the first. From the beginning she told her parents she should die; she was going to be with her sister, and live in that beautiful place. They should not mourn for her, but prepare to meet her there. In that happy expectation she continued to her last moment. She was nine years of age; the younger was six.

My store of incidents is not exhausted, but let me turn to another direction. The writer in Appleton asks: "Were these visions the effect of a delirious mind—*visions somnia vera* or were they realities? Is there some expansion of the faculties at the hour of death, that enables the spiritual eye to discover the celestial world and its mysteries? Is their truth as well as poetry in Waller's famous stanza?"

"The soul's dark cottage barred and decayed, Lets in new light through chinks that time hath made; stronger by weakness wiser men become As they draw near to their eternal home. Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view Who stand on the threshold of the new"

It is easy to raise these questions; it is impossible to answer them. But it is pos-

sible, if not to answer them to contemplate them in relations of great interest. First, incidents of the character of those related above constitute a numerous class. Let five or six persons meet casually and converse frankly on such subjects, it will probably be found that one or two of them at least knew of similar occurrences in the circle of their own relatives or intimate friends. If but one in a hundred years was alleged, it would stand alone, a strange story; but a continual succession, it would seem, must have a ground, or law, worthy of attention.

Secondly, The testimony concerning such incidents is of the high character. It is given by persons of intelligence and piety, who have no interest in publicity or hand, but speak of what they have known with reserve and awe. The case is worldwide from the "modern spiritualism," so called. It has nothing to do with the necromancy and imposture of those who seek by their own volitions and art to call forth "Manifestations" of spirits. It is entirely in another realm. It is observation of facts which are presented to us in the course of nature and Providence.

Thirdly, For Christians there is presumptive evidence of reality in such incidents. On other grounds we believe there is a spiritual world to which our souls are kindred, and in which we soon shall be constituent members. It is then a philosophical possibility, or even probability, that peculiar phenomena shall occur along the line where two worlds meet, that in occasional, stimulated, exalted states, our faculties may discern gleamings of spiritual realities; or, in other words, such realities may come within the range of our perceptions in their keenest condition. Such phenomena would be supernatural in reference to this limited nature with which we are familiar, being above our ordinary experience; but also natural in reference to that broader nature which is comprehended in the Creation and government of God. Do they not, as truly as any thing in physics and metaphysics, open a field for legitimate observation, and perhaps induction?

Fourthly, Incidents of the class we have contemplated have a very interesting relation to Biblical narratives. Many wonderful events of sacred history, such as the appearance of angels, the vision of Stephen, and others, may have a normal as well as supernatural character. They may not be altogether exceptional, but typical facts of a succession intended for the instruction and comfort of believers. It is a fair question whether much of our modern Christianity has not been quite too Sadducean, believing neither in angel nor spirit; that is to say, anxious to avoid materialism and superstition in religion, and so going to an extreme which leaves little or no spiritual substance on which the soul can lay hold with definiteness of thought and joy of anticipation. This may partly account for some of the isms of the times. If it sees not the true, human nature will yearn for a false spiritualism. A little more of the Pharisee's faith, or rather Christ's vindication of it, would help us. The logical effect of such incidents as have been cited, regarded on due evidence as having a foundation in reality, would be to confirm the Scriptural testimonies of a future life; and that effect has been experienced.

Further, that effect is consolation in sorrow. It adds richness, definiteness, and if I may so say, a spiritual solidity to the Apostle's delightful conception of the family of God in heaven and earth, named after Christ; and Paul, it will be remembered, had seen "visions." It brings closer to our hearts, it seems to unfold in some degree, Christ's precious and wonderful words: "Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."—S. W. Presbyterianian.

Church Quarrels.

Religion unites. That is not religion which drives Christians apart and sets them to building wall against wall, in-trenchment against in-trenchment. But we are more apt to think of this truth with reference to churches than with reference to individual conduct—and it is the last which is of most importance. The discussions of churches are usually inspired by the breath of personal ill-will; one or two men's private quarrel is the seed of the church war, or is transformed into the bitterness of two societies.

No good man wishes his dislikes to become those of a whole church, or to be the occasion of a church conflict. He would prefer, if he is really a good man, to keep the dislike in his own bosom. But, unfortunately, hate is half brother of dislike, and he who keeps the last will have the other for a guest. Before he is aware the host has spoken hot words, or done discourteous deeds, or told his sorrow to a sympathizing friend. The dislike has spread beyond into the society and parties are forming.

There is only one safe thing to do—get rid of the dislike. Fatalists, masked as Christians, will tell you, and prove it by the testimony of the devil, that love and hate, liking and disliking, are beyond our control. We are the slaves of our hearts if we are the slaves of anything—that we grant. Nowhere is the dominion of self over self so nearly perfect as in the domain of the affections. Love is mighty; and the real love will be the real master of the man. But it is a difficult thing to say that every attitude of the affectional nature is a hopeless and unchangeable despotism. Loves and hates expel each other; and whatever steadfastness men have in their affections comes rather from moral control—from fixed principles—than from magnetic, or other attractions.

The man with a dangerous dislike of his brother professes to love God. If he is a really good man, this love is too master emotion, and will expel the other if the light is fair. A story tells how a minister once encountering a ruffian at a camp-meeting, laid by his coat, saying, "Let religion lie there, while I whip this sinner." Just that is what we do in keeping a dislike. We lay aside our love for God in order to indulge our temper against a man who cherishes a dislike, loses his relish for religious exercises and thoughts.

Your dislike of your brother is a dangerous temptation, a proper way of escape

lies at your right hand. Seek increase of love to God. Make the Father of us all the sole confidant of your trouble of affection, and the dislike will lose its edge, and a bitter quarrel be saved. The supremacy of the affectional life is a reason for loving God. Our affections often kill us for want of regulation. A supreme affection for God will always keep the lesser loves for God in subjection. There would be no church quarrel: if good men did not forget that a dislike must be cured by increased devotion. In the beginning of your distaste, before it has overborne your judgment, sub-ject your coldness toward your brother to those spiritual laws which God kindled in believing hearts. All church quarrels will be cured in this way—by being prevented.—The Methodist.

Bible Readings

Having found Bible readings of great profit, and acceptable and instructive, and having access to "Hitchcock's Analysis of the Bible"—the "Teachers' edition of the Bible"—and other valuable assistants in getting them up, I have determined, at the solicitation of numerous Christian friends throughout the country, to publish a series of readings in your paper for their benefit. In communities where they do not have services on every Sabbath, some person can conduct these exercises, with as much profit to the congregation as a sermon.

The plan is to develop from the Scripture some subject in a logical form, and make the Scriptures interpret the Scriptures. Explanation: The person who conducts the reading will cut off the numbers and references on the right side of the column, and give one number with a Scripture reference to each reader—of course, the congregation must have their Bibles or Testaments. Apportion, as far as possible, the longer passages to the best readers. Where you have not enough Bibles, two or three persons may read from one Bible; and where readers are scarce, one person may have several of these coupons.

Let the conductor retain the left hand column, without separating the passages from one another. The Nos. and Scriptures in both columns correspond. Having distributed all the Nos. and references on the right column to the readers, explain to the audience. "When I call No. 1, Gen. xlii. 11, 12, whoever holds up that No. will stand up and read promptly and distinctly. So, No. 2, etc., until I have called all the numbers; find the reference; look at your number, and be ready to read promptly. Where a dash occurs between the figures, read inclusively, e.g., No. 9, Acts xxiii. 6-10, means read the 6th to the 10th verse, including both. Where a comma occurs between two figures, read only the two verses, e.g., John xi. 25, 40, mean to read only the 25th and 40th verses, not the intervening verses."

After this sing and pray. Announce the subject—THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

Table with 2 columns of Bible references for the Resurrection of the Dead. Includes verses like 1 Cor. xv. 12-20, 1 Cor. xv. 22, 1 Cor. xv. 23, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 1 Cor. xv. 26, 1 Cor. xv. 27, 1 Cor. xv. 28, 1 Cor. xv. 29, 1 Cor. xv. 30, 1 Cor. xv. 31, 1 Cor. xv. 32, 1 Cor. xv. 33, 1 Cor. xv. 34, 1 Cor. xv. 35, 1 Cor. xv. 36, 1 Cor. xv. 37, 1 Cor. xv. 38, 1 Cor. xv. 39, 1 Cor. xv. 40, 1 Cor. xv. 41, 1 Cor. xv. 42, 1 Cor. xv. 43, 1 Cor. xv. 44, 1 Cor. xv. 45, 1 Cor. xv. 46, 1 Cor. xv. 47, 1 Cor. xv. 48, 1 Cor. xv. 49, 1 Cor. xv. 50, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 1 Cor. xv. 52, 1 Cor. xv. 53, 1 Cor. xv. 54, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 1 Cor. xv. 56, 1 Cor. xv. 57, 1 Cor. xv. 58, 1 Cor. xv. 59, 1 Cor. xv. 60, 1 Cor. xv. 61, 1 Cor. xv. 62, 1 Cor. xv. 63, 1 Cor. xv. 64, 1 Cor. xv. 65, 1 Cor. xv. 66, 1 Cor. xv. 67, 1 Cor. xv. 68, 1 Cor. xv. 69, 1 Cor. xv. 70, 1 Cor. xv. 71, 1 Cor. xv. 72, 1 Cor. xv. 73, 1 Cor. xv. 74, 1 Cor. xv. 75, 1 Cor. xv. 76, 1 Cor. xv. 77, 1 Cor. xv. 78, 1 Cor. xv. 79, 1 Cor. xv. 80, 1 Cor. xv. 81, 1 Cor. xv. 82, 1 Cor. xv. 83, 1 Cor. xv. 84, 1 Cor. xv. 85, 1 Cor. xv. 86, 1 Cor. xv. 87, 1 Cor. xv. 88, 1 Cor. xv. 89, 1 Cor. xv. 90, 1 Cor. xv. 91, 1 Cor. xv. 92, 1 Cor. xv. 93, 1 Cor. xv. 94, 1 Cor. xv. 95, 1 Cor. xv. 96, 1 Cor. xv. 97, 1 Cor. xv. 98, 1 Cor. xv. 99, 1 Cor. xv. 100.

(Sing "Over There.")

It is said that when Archbishop Leighton once rebuked his sister for over-anxiety, she replied, by saying that it was easy for him to possess a devout frame of mind, because he had no children and no cares. "Nay," said he, "it is possible to have care and calmness too; for it is written, "Enoch walked with God and begat sons and daughters."

Simplicity is always beautiful. Its impressions, too, are lasting, and the results which they produce are of that sedate, tranquil kind which assist in giving poise and equilibrium to the life. But true simplicity is not tameness, dullness, rigidity. It may be rich, exuberant, earnest, impassioned; appealing to every sense of the most susceptible nature, and awakening the enthusiasm of every soul.

SIN is to be overcome, not so much by maintaining a direct opposition to it, as by cultivating opposite principles. Would you kill the weeds in your garden, plant it with good seed; if the ground be well occupied there will be less need of the labor of the hoe. If a man wished to quench fire, he might fight it with his hands till he was burnt to death; his only way is to apply opposite elements.

A Dream.

I was wearied with temptations, and sore beset with sin. The day brought grief and sorrow, and all was dark within, As twilight shadows deepened, and midnight hour drew nigh, My thoughts in fancy bore me to realms beyond the sky.

I dreamed I saw a river, broad and deep, and tall, As on its eddies I wandered my heart with joy and thrill, For as the eddies turned, two islands rose to view, And host of angels sang to me as I floated there.

They seemed so close, and a breath might have blown them away, They seemed so close, and a breath might have blown them away, They seemed so close, and a breath might have blown them away, They seemed so close, and a breath might have blown them away.

To me the frozen river, for soon they'd come to rest, To bear me over with them to yonder shining shore.

The land of fairest measure, the land of peace and joy, The land beyond the river, where sin can not destroy.

I started from my slumber, my heart with joy and glow, I looked upon the vision as coming from the God, That soon the shining angels would bear me over the stream.

The cold and icy river I gazed on in my dream, I praised my Lord for giving this token of His love, To cheer me in my sorrows, and draw my soul above.

And now I wait His coming, may He not tarry long, When He calls me, I be a link to join you on angel through.

The Baptized Pocket Book.

A man who was to be immersed was advised to remove his pocket-book before submitting to the ordinance. "No, no," was his reply, "I want everything I have baptized—pocket-book and all."

A whole-hearted service is what God wants. When a man feels that all he receives is but a deposit in trust to be used for the relief of God's poor, and in the extension of His kingdom, nothing is easier than to dispense with a liberal hand; but when his feelings with reference to what the Lord gives him is, "This is mine," he can never get enough, the whole world would not satisfy him.

More than half a century ago, Nathaniel Cobb sat down in his counting-house in Boston, and wrote the following covenant:—

"By the grace of God I will never be worth more than \$50,000. By the grace of God I will give one fourth of the net profits of my business to charitable and religious uses. If I am ever worth \$20,000 I will give one half of my net profits; if I am ever worth \$30,000 I will give three-fourths, and the whole after \$50,000. So help me God, or give to a more faithful steward, and set me aside."

The covenant he subscribed, and adhered to it as long as he lived. On his death bed he said to a friend, "By the grace of God, nothing else, I have been enabled, under the influence of those resolutions, to give away more than \$40,000. How good the Lord has been to me!" There was a baptized pocket-book. We cannot all expect to be Nathaniel Cobbs, but we can have what he so largely possessed, that is the spirit of consecration. "Give till you feel it—till it involves some self-denial, some stinting of comfort or luxury, for the sake of Christ and His cause." And how sweet to do something for one who has done so much for us. "The piety of principle" is what some one calls the religion which bases itself on active consecration, and includes soul and body, week day and Sabbath, Bible and pocket-book. This is a grace of character which we all need most sedulously to cultivate. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth with respect to a certain trait of character after allowing their excellence in other good qualities: "See that ye abound in this grace also."

Giving is a mode of worship; just as much as prayer, song and sermon. Prayers and alms should go up together before God, as in the case of Cornelius. Then shall we offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy, and our gifts and supplications shall "go up as a memorial before God." And it is the practical way, also to answer our own prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Primitive Christianity is not yet dead. In this country we have had illustrious examples of men who carried with them baptized pocket-books—Peabody, Lenox, Pardee, Baird, the Stuarts, and hosts of others. The poor people of Glasgow, Scotland, used to say that David Dale gave his money by shovel-fuls, and God shovelled it back again. God rolls upon the responsibility of saving this land for Christ; of rescuing it from infidelity and crime; of out-vieing Rome in planting churches, schools and asylums for the needy on the frontier. How could all this and more be accomplished unless Christians consecrate their wealth more wholly to the Lord? It will pay to plant Sabbath-schools, and scatter good books; to place the country materially and spiritually, in large dividends; pay the liberal giver both in this life and in the life to come.—The Citizen.

The glory of heaven will be in seeing Jesus. "A little while, and ye shall see Me, because I go unto my Father." "Where I am, ye shall be also." When we return home after a long absence, it is not the house, or the furniture, or friends that awaken our joy. It is meeting the loved ones. If they have gone, every forsaken room or empty chair is in an agony. So in our Father's house it will not be the pearly gate or the streets of gold that will make us happy. O how transcendently glad will we be when we see our Lord! If we ever weep in heaven, it will be tears of joy at meeting Jesus. Perhaps in that "upper room" also He may show unto us His hands and His sides, and we may cry out with happy Thomas:—"My Lord and my God!"—Dr. T. L. Cuyler.

Random Readings.

This promise of God is not to the pot, but to the habit of prayer.—Payson.

It is not one look, but the constant looking at Jesus, that sanctifies and comforts.

Some people cannot drive to happiness with four horses, and others can reach the goal on foot.—Thackeray.

An exchange says that, amid the general reduction of wages, there is one thing whose wages is not reduced, and that is sin.

Every moderate drinker could abandon the intoxicating cup if he would; every oblate would if he could.—John B. Gough.

TEMPTATION rarely comes in working hours. It is in their leisure time that men are made or marred.—Dr. W. A. Taylor.

SCIENCE is a good piece of furniture for a man to have in an upper chamber, provided he has common sense on the ground floor.—D. Hobbs.

THERE is a gift that is almost a blow, and there is a kind word that is munificence, so much is there in the way of doing things.—A. W. H. P.

PHYSICAL health is the harmonious action of every member according to its natural law; and religion is the true health of our whole being—the sanctification of body, soul, and spirit.

"SIR," said a coachman, "my horses know when I swear." "Ah, my friend," replied the passenger, who was urging the coachman never to swear, "and God knows it too, and He has forbidden it."

STERN says, in his Koran, "I never drink—I cannot do it on equal terms with others. It costs them only one day, but me three; the first in stinging, the second in suffering, and the third in repenting."

Mr. Spurgeon is strong on the Bulgarian atrocities. He says:—"If I could speak thunderbolts and glance lightnings, I would exercise my fullest powers of oratory against the monsters who made Bulgaria a pandemonium."

I HAVE nothing but what Thou givest me; can do nothing but as Thou enjoinest me; can succeed in nothing but as Thou prosperest me; and hope for nothing but what Thou hast promised me. I would have all things in God, and God in all things to me.

GENERALLY speaking, the sunshine of too much worldly favor weakens and relaxes our spiritual nerves, as weather too intensely hot relaxes those of the body. A degree of seasonable opposition like a fine dry frost, strengthens and invigorates and braces up.—Toplady.

I HEARD of a very old man like myself, who was asked what his age was. He answered:—"The right side of eighty." "I thought you were more than eighty," said the inquirer. "Yes, I am beyond it," he replied, "and that is the right side, for I am nearer to my eternal rest."—Rowland Hill.

Look at Jehovah in his infinite love, omnipotent power, unsearchable riches, universal dominion, unsmiled holiness, eternal veracity and unspeakable glory; and then you may say, "This God is my God forever and ever, and all that He has is mine; why then am I cast down?"

A PERFECT contempt for the world, a fervent desire to go forward in virtue, the love of discipline, the painfulness of repentance, the readiness of obedience, the denying of ourselves, and the bearing of any affliction for the love of Christ patiently, will give great confidence—we shall die happy.—Thomas a Kempis.

HE who can find no time to consult the Bible will find one day that he has time to be sick; he who has no time to pray must have time to die; he who can find no time to reflect is most likely to find time to sin; he who can not find time for repentance will find an eternity in which repentance will be of no avail.—Hannah More.

If we could only hold ourselves, restrain ourselves, and give ourselves, in thought as in deed, unto God, we should change the complexion of the generation. There my friends, lies the root of the whole evil; there is the most discouraging problem in modern religious life, this question of purity. And, if we have kept ourselves pure in heart and deed, we shall have done a great deal towards attaining to the kingdom of God.

AM I in the constant habit of tracing all things to God? Do I recognize his providence in all events, seek his guidance in every duty, see his hand in every joy, and acknowledge it in every sorrow? Does it make trouble easier to bear that it comes from Him? Is joy sweeter because He sends, and duty because He commands it? In all my ways do I so acknowledge Him that I can claim the promise that He will direct my steps?

He always wins who sides with God, To him no chance is lost; God's will is sweetest to him when It triumphs at his cost.

Ill that He blesses is our good, And unblessed good is ill, And all is right that seems most wrong, If it be His sweet will.—Faber

By Him are all things, and in Him do all things consist. Every object in nature is impressed with his footsteps, and every day repeats the wonders of creation. There is not an object, be it pebble or pearl, weed or rose, the flower-spangled sword beneath, or the star-spangled sky above, not a worm or an angel, a drop of water or a boundless ocean, in which intelligence may not discern and piety adore the providence of Him who took our nature that He might save our souls.—Guthrie.

To be rich, to be famous! Do these profit a year hence, when other names sound louder than yours, when you lie hidden away under the ground, along with the idle title engraven on your coffin? But only true love lives after you, follows your memory with secret blessings, or prays for you, and intercedes for you. Non omnis moriar, if dying, I yet live in a tender heart or two; nor am I lost or hopeless, living, if a sainted departed soul still loves and prays for me.—Thackeray.