

Pastor and People.

BEYOND.

Beyond the shadows which surround
Our troubled mortal life,
There lies a land where never wakes
The sound of toil or strife:
Where sickness never pales the cheek,
Where starts no cry of pain,
Where gladness settles on the soul,
And never life again.

No billows break along its shore,
No tempests sweep the sky;
The beauty of the Lord our God
On all things there doth lie;
Eternal calm, unending peace,
Reign in that blissful land:
O happy they who reach its rest,
And stand at God's right hand!

There all the pure in heart are found,
Their very thoughts are praise;
They sing the endless death of sin,
Christ's trumpet song they raise;
Before the pierced feet which led
Their spirits up to light,
They yield the homage of their love,
Arrayed in robes of white.

No more they weep, no more they watch,
No more the Tempter dreads;
The dark perplexities of old
Are ever from them fled;
Saved by the all-redeeming blood
They breathe the balm of bliss,
They know that Christ is theirs for aye,
They know that they are His.

Our Father-God, we long to reach,
Their fellowship of rest,
To see the glory of our Lord,
And be forever blest;
Guide us through smooth and silent seas,
And o'er the stormy foam,
Until we strike the sunlit shore,
And hear Thy welcome home.

—Walter J. Mathams.

GOLDEN GRAIN BIBLE READING.

REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D., PH.D., GALT, ONT.

WHAT IT IS THE PRIVILEGE OF THE CHRISTIAN TO KNOW.

- Power of knowledge, 1 John ii. 20; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22; 1 Cor. ii. 12; 1 Cor. vi. 19.
Privileges.—1. No good thing in the flesh. Rom. vii. 18.
2. Planted in the likeness of Christ's death. Rom. vi. 5; Gal. ii. 20, 21.
3. Christ's ability to keep the soul. 2 Tim. i. 12.
4. No condemnation. Rom. viii. 1.
5. Reciprocal knowledge of Christ and the believer. John x. 14.
6. All things work together for good. Rom. viii. 28.
7. John's "knows," ii. 3, 13, 14; iii. 2, 5, 14, 24; iv. 16; v. 2, 18, 20.
8. Spiritual body. 2 Cor. v. 1.
9. An Epistle written to give assurance. 1 John iii. 2.

THE GODLESS LIFE A DREAM.

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN KER, D.D.

As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when Thou awakest
Thou shalt despise their image.—Psalm lxxiii. 20

This Psalm contains the picture of a godless life, and we shall see the figure more clearly if we read the words as we believe they should be rendered: "As a dream when one awaketh (*i.e.*, in awaking), so, O Lord, when Thou awakest them, Thou shalt despise their vision." And when it is said that "God will despise their vision," it is meant that God will show their vision or idea of life to be a thing to be despised. The subject, then, which we have to illustrate is, a godless life as compared to a dream.

1. A godless life is a dream because it is filled with inconsistencies. You know how, in a dream, judgment gives up the reins to fancy, and lets it mix things in the strangest confusion. The properties of the ordinary waking world are distorted or reversed, qualities are changed to their opposites, space and time are set at defiance, and persons and places the most remote are brought close together. All the laws of experience and reason are forgotten, immense efforts are made, and nothing is gained by them; and the grandest hopes are cherished in the midst of the idliest inaction. Men in dreams are overwhelmed with agonizing fears from what would not cause them a moment's uneasiness if awake, and they are lifted to raptures of joy by the merest trifles. And all the while the mind looks on and accepts this world of fancy as one of unquestioned consistency. The conviction of the naturalness of things which we have in dreams strikes us as strange when we awake—so strange that we look with a kind of ridicule on ourselves to think that we have been so befooled. "When we awake we despise the vision."

And yet, looked at from the great consistent world of truth, such a thing as this is a godless life. Let us speak here to those who profess to believe in a living God, and an immortal soul, and a judgment to come, and who yet are passing their life practically without God—putting Him and the great true world outside their habitual thought and action, and forming a world inside their own heart accord-

ing to its fancies. Is not such a life filled with all the inconsistencies of a dream? Think of it. You take things that are very uncertain—the time of your stay on earth and your hold of its possessions—and you deal with them as if they were the only sure things that should demand all your efforts; and those things that are the most certain—death and judgment—you treat as if they were the most contingent and remote. You invert the true qualities of things, and with the perverted appetite that comes of dreams you call bitter sweet and sweet bitter. The only true, soul-satisfying things you treat with indifference, or reject with distaste; and those that have gall and wormwood in their heart you take as a sweet morsel. The attributes that belong only to heaven, the deep and permanent and imperishable, you give to the objects of earth; glorify corruption—it maybe clasp sensual pleasure to your heart as if it would never cloy; and you take the fleeting qualities of earthly things, and cast their shadowy dimness over eternal realities. You care for, love and cherish the body as if it were the immortal spirit, and treat the immortal spirit as if it had no higher need than things earthly and fleshly, and no end but in the dust. Are not these the follies of a dream?

Or let us think of the approved laws of experience and reason. And here we may speak not merely to professing Christians, but to those who are willing to be guided by any think like thoughtful reflection. As to experience nothing is more certain than this, that there is a moral law governing human life, and that even in this world it is being executed surely though not fully—that is to say, a man will be visited inevitably with some of the consequences of his sin, though not with all of them. As a man sows he shall also reap. If he sows to the flesh, he shall of the flesh reap corruption. He may not always receive the visible punishment that belongs to sin and selfishness—although in certain forms of transgression, and in a prolonged life, this will very frequently come; but that word corruption marks a punishment that is very certain. There will be no stings of conscience that will lead to a conscience seared,—and it is a very terrible thing when a man escapes the sting only through the hardening: there will be the decay of what is highest and best in the man, and the growth of what is lowest and worst—the miserable feeling, if the man does not cease to feel, that the weeds of self and earthliness are rising and choking all the sense of what he once felt to be pure and beautiful; and with all this, the inability to turn his eye to a divine stay and a heavenly Friend. If the man thinks he can live the sinful, godless life and escape these consequences, it is to set all experience at defiance, to hope to gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles. And if he thinks that even with these consequences he can be happy, that there is any short-lived pleasure or outward success that can make up for the want of a clear conscience and a right heart, he is dreaming the worst things of his own nature, and feeding his soul on ashes; for true reason as well as experience may assure the man that, from the very nature of the soul, it cannot be filled with the finite, much less find abiding rest in what is impure. It was made by God for Himself, and less than God cannot give it lasting satisfaction. All the morbid cravings for sensation, the weary satiety of earthly pleasure that alternates to restless passion, are but the tokens of the heart-hunger that comes of forsaking the soul's true bread.

2. A godless life is a dream because it is based on unreality. That which is real in the most absolute sense has universal truth. Its value goes out and is acknowledged everywhere. It may indeed be denied in some places for a season, but when it is tested it is owned, and the more it is tested the more it is owned. The real is like true gold as opposed to counterfeit—like truth itself. It marches everywhere confidently, and proves its accordance with things as they are, in all places. A dream, as you know, is the reverse. It goes for real only in the head of the man that dreams it. Outside it is vapour and nothingness. An ancient Greek (Heraclitus) has said that "awake we are in the universal world, dreaming, each man has his own." The dream may be called the false particular, the waking life the true universal. Apply this to the godless life. You may have it meanwhile, indeed, not in one head, but in many, as dreams are said sometimes, by a curious sympathy, to touch each other in separate minds and put on the same form. But by however many the godless life may be fancied meantime to be a reality, it can never be made the universal true. There are things which our deepest conviction tells us must be the same through all God's universe—truth and goodness, purity and self-denial. They will bear all climates, they will visit with the confidence of changelessness all planets, they will mount to the highest heavens before the face of God, and they could enter the abysses of perdition with the sense of reality. This comes from their being of God's own nature, who is the foundation of all that is true and real in the universe. But take the godless man's view of life—the supreme value of the world's wealth or power, of human reputation or sensual pleasure—and try it in your thought by this rule. These things not merely abandon their worshippers, but their worshippers abandon their estimate of them. A change of mood to another folly will make a man despise the folly he has left. How much less can any one take the present estimate of these things and carry them with assurance to a higher world, or into the light of God! As we try to take them up there they melt like clouds in the sunlight. We feel, even now, that they want every mark of the universal true—they have the narrowness and unreality of dreams.

That which is real, in an absolute sense, has another property—permanence. It can stand the test, not only of all space, but of all time. How little a dream can show of this you know. A man may have the wealth of Cræsus in his sleep, the laurels of the Cæsars, but in the morning he cannot produce a coin or a leaf. So little can he bring forth that he can seldom give an impression of his dream. It is so wildly at variance with the true world round him that words and ideas break down when he tries to narrate it. There are such lives written in large letters on the pages of the world's history. If we cast our eye back, only for this century, upon Europe, there are instances of men who have risen like meteors, dazzling the sight of their fellows as they climbed to power and fame, and grasped crowns and gathered plaudits from millions. And before they died it had all passed; and from their lone rock or obscure exile they must have looked back on their life like a wild dream—something that took the form of unreality as they reflected on it. There are many quiet, sober-living men who speak of this in wise tones as folly, and thank their prudence that they have chosen a better way to enjoy themselves in the common walks of life, in comfortable competence. But if there be no higher aim in life than such enjoyment, it is not less a dream. It may be more likely, from its quietness, to continue a little longer, but it can no more carry away anything permanent. If a man has lived a selfish, godless life, it is as true of the comfortable citizen as of the mad conqueror—"When he dieth he shall carry nothing away; though, while he lived, he blessed his soul." That cannot, then, be real which is unable to stand the test of God's wide universe, which cannot pass beyond time into another world. It may have a large imaginary value given to it here and now, but it cannot be transferred—not the smallest part of it. It has the value of the things that are beneath the eyelids of a sleeping man—a dream.

(To be continued.)

TRUTHFULNESS.

In all our efforts to promote truthfulness we do well to begin with cultivating accuracy. We need not merely the moral aversion to a lie, but the practical habit of exactness in our words. Indeed, the latter, when once thoroughly acquired, will include the former, and much more. It will lead us to condemn and avoid many forms of untruth that are now palliated and excused. There are the supposed requirements of etiquette in expressing a pleasure that is not felt and a flattery that is not honest. It is averred that such things, with the other "white lies" of society, do not really deceive—that they are but polite nothings, which are taken for their worth, or rather for their worthlessness. If this be so, what object do they serve or what reason can there be for continuance? Are we not, by their repeated use, debasing the value of language and lessening the reverence for truth? It is not necessary to tell people that they bore us; that we are glad that the evening is over, or that the interview has come to an end, or in any other way rudely to hurt their feelings. A little of the tact which is so abundant in social circles will enable any one to avoid impoliteness without sacrificing truth, and the result would be a most wholesome return to sincerity, and to the real meaning of what we say. As it is, we have no means left to express our real admiration and our real enjoyment when they are honestly felt.

Then there is the common habit of exaggeration, so lightly censured, if at all. If accuracy were esteemed a duty, how would the frequent unbridled use of superlatives be treated? Certainly not with the indulgence which is now extended to them. There would be an instinctive displeasure at the random and overdrawn language so much in vogue, and a vigilant effort to utter the exact shade of meaning, by carefully selected words. Our English language is rich and full, amply providing abundant means for every gradation of thought, and every shade of feeling, for those who care to seek for it. To use it thus is not merely an intellectual accomplishment; it is also a moral obligation in the interests of truth, and should ever be so regarded.

There is no doubt that the earnest pursuit of knowledge in any direction contributes largely to the habit of accurate truthfulness. A desire and an effort to find out the truth will tend to make us careful in uttering it. To weigh and to consider the words of others will help us greatly to weigh and to consider our own. Ignorance is responsible for much of the present carelessness in speech; those who never study shades of meaning will not be likely to exercise much judgment in selecting them. The cultivation of the senses is also a valuable aid. To see keenly and clearly what we look at, and to hear acutely and correctly when we listen, are vast helps to the memory, and clear away many of the vagaries of the brain. In recounting these things, a confused and vague remembrance of them often tempts us to alter and embellish so as to hide our perplexity. Could we have the courage and honesty to repeat only that which we clearly remember, perhaps our mortification at its meagre amount would strengthen our power of attention in the future.

Like all habits, this one of accuracy is best laid in early years. It should indeed be a chief element in all education, both as a mental exercise and a moral obligation. Children brought up in an atmosphere of truth and sincerity and taught how to obtain clear ideas, and to express them simply and faithfully, will not be likely to violate the truth in their manhood, either in its letter or spirit.—Public Ledger.

RHEUMATISM is like sand in the bearings of machinery. Hood's Sarsaparilla is the great lubricator which cures the disease.

ELSEWHERE in this issue we publish the particulars of a remarkable cure that fairly outrivals the celebrated case of John Marshall, of Hamilton, which created such a sensation throughout the country. The particulars of this case are vouched for by the Albany Evening Journal, recognized as the leading newspaper at the New York State capital, and one of the leading papers of the United States. There is, therefore, no room to doubt that the particulars of the case are accurately and carefully set forth, in every respect true, and must therefore prove of the deepest interest to our readers. We therefore commend the article to their careful perusal.