

much greater death than that of the body; and, in this confidence, they knew that to live was Christ, to die was gain; and that in all that could befall them, they were more than conquerors through him who loved them.

The Lord's hand was not shortened; they continued to pass unharmed all that day, through the icebergs, thus resembling the church, the company of the faithful people, against whom the gates of hell shall not prevail, and whose enemies are continually driven back when just prepared to swallow them up. Resembling also the individual believer, who, in the strength of the Lord, and relying solely upon him, yet diligently and warily works his own way through the legions of spiritual foes that overhang his path, and steadily proceeds towards the one object he has in view, the haven of rest. It is yet invisible to his sight, but he knows where it lies, and by the compass of God's word he can easily satisfy himself that he is steering thitherward.

When night came on, the hearts of the poor mariners could not but droop. It was summer; but the air was rendered cold by so much ice, and the icebergs becoming less numerous, had room to dash about more freely. Providentially, the weather was very calm; they committed themselves to the special guardianship of Him to whom the night is as clear as the day, and sung as they were accustomed, a hymn of praise.

Morning came, and most welcome it was: for under the cheerful ray they beheld a long line of coast stretching before them, crowned with groves and smiling in all the beauty of rich vegetation. How refreshing to the eye, how invigorating to the spirits of the exhausted mariner. Very little ice remained in sight; just enough to remind them that they were not quite safe until they could gain the land, and to induce them more eagerly under a full press of the canvass, that they now hoisted, to enter the clear harbour that opened before their view; where they arrived, without having sustained the slightest injury to their persons or health, and found every want liberally supplied by the compassionate hospitality of the inhabitants.—*Chr. Guardian*.

DIRECTIONS FOR VISITING THE SICK.

1. In your arrangements for visiting and relieving cases of sickness among the poor, be always on your guard against imposture. Go forward freely and openly to the relief of suffering wherever you find it, but be constantly awake to the probability that you may in any case be deceived. Nothing surpasses the readiness with which the vicious poor resort to a feigning of sickness and suffering in order to procure undeserved charity, unless it be the adroitness with which they carry their wicked schemes into effect. Sometimes the disease is entirely a fabrication, and sometimes a little reality is made the basis of long continued indications of suffering. In fact, we often, by our own indiscreet and profuse benefactions to a sick family, actually produce such a state of things, that recovery would be a calamity. We place them under a strong temptation to dissemble, and the lesson once learned is not soon forgotten.

2. Be still and delicate and gentle in all your intercourse with the sick. In fact, the same principle, in this respect, applies to moral and physical treatment. That attendant will do most towards promoting recovery, who can carry the required measures into the most regular and complete effect, and yet in the easiest and gentlest manner,—the one who can open and shut the door most quietly, and arrange so as to have occasion most seldom to do it at all; the one who can replenish the fire so as least to attract the patient's attention, and give the fewest directions in his hearing, and have the medicine or the drink at his lips at the proper time with the least bustle of preparation; the one who walks softly, whose tones are gentle, whose touch is delicate, and whose countenance exhibits an expression of cheerful repose:—such an one is most successful in soothing and quieting the sensitive susceptibilities of acute disease, and facilitating the sanative influences which medical skill, conjoined with the spontaneous efforts of nature, have diffused through the frame.

3. Be frank and open with the sick. Gentleness

and delicacy must never be allowed to degenerate into indirectness and artifice. Be open, and frank, and honest, in all you do. This is the only safe principle, in fact, in all modes of religious influence. If you want to pursue a course which shall do the least good, and give the greatest offence, your wisest way is to adopt a system of manoeuvring hints, and innuendos. When we attempt to convey secret reproof or instruction by the language of indirectness or insinuation, in order to save offence, we lose our labour if we are not understood, and we give offence in the most awkward and unpleasant manner possible, if we are.

4. While we are plain and direct in dealing with the sick, we must remember their weakness, and not exhaust them by such a course as shall force them to active effort in our intercourse with them. So far as intercourse with us is concerned, the more passive we leave them, the better. Every exertion, mental or bodily, fatigues them. Forming a mental conclusion on the most simple point is often a burden.

5. We must remember that it is not alarm or agitation, or the giving up of theological errors, or perceiving new theological truth, which can prepare the soul for death;—but a change of heart. This alarm or agitation, or this change of theological opinion, may often be, especially in cases of health, the antecedent step; and the labours of the preacher may often be directed to the production of them. But they are only means to an end, and there are some peculiar reasons why, in sickness, the attempt to produce them should be avoided. In sickness, the enemy is as it were, disarmed. He lies defenceless and helpless in the hands of God, and our policy is to come to him in the gentlest manner possible, out of regard to his physical feebleness, and just lay before him the bread of life, in hopes that the Holy Spirit will dispose him to eat of it and live.

I need scarcely say, that the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, is the main truth to be thus presented to the mind of the sick or dying sinner. The need of a Saviour is felt then, though it may have been denied and disbelieved before. The soul distressed, burdened, struggling in vain to escape its load by mere confession, finds a refuge in a Mediator, which it cannot elsewhere find. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,"—comes home like cold water to the thirsty soul. There is no substitute for it. Nothing else will soothe and calm the troubled spirit under the anguish of bitter recollections of the past, and dark forebodings for the future.

6. Do not try to ascertain the effect of your instructions to the sick. Do what you can, but leave the result to be unfolded at a future day. The reasons for this direction are two. First, you cannot ascertain if you try; and secondly, you will generally do injury by the attempt.

First, you cannot ascertain if you try. The indications of piety and also of impenitence upon a sickbed, are both exceedingly delusive. So much depends upon character, temperament, constitution, habits of expression, &c., that the most dissimilar appearances may be exhibited in cases where the spiritual state is substantially the same. In one case, the heart is really changed, but the subject of the change dares not believe it, and still less dares he express any hope of it; and his darkness and despondency would be mistaken, almost universally, for continued impenitence and unsubmission. Another deceived by the illusions which we have already explained, finds a false peace which, the more baseless it is, the more confidently he expresses it; and Christians very rarely question the sincerity of professions, unless they are compelled to do it by gross inconsistency of conduct.

These difficulties exist, it is true, in other cases besides those of sickness, and they should teach us to be less eager to ascertain the immediate results of our efforts, than we usually are; and less credulous in trusting to them. But they apply with tenfold force to sickness, whether it be in the sufferings of acute disease, or in the slow lingerings of decline. The world is shut out, and the ordinary test—the only safe one,—the fruit, is here excluded.

Then, secondly, we do injury by endeavouring to ascertain. We harass and fatigue the patient, by

pressing him to give us an answer to the claims which we present to him. If we lay truth and duty before him, and as it were leave it there, his health will suffer far less than if we follow it with a sort of insinuation into its effects. To bear an examination is very hard work when the subject is strong and well; it is exhausting and irritating to the last degree in sickness, especially when the patient would hardly know how to express his feelings, even if they were distinctly developed and matured; and he is, in fact, only beginning to experience new states of mind, which he scarcely understands himself, and certainly cannot describe.

It is far better, both for ourselves, and for the person who we wish to benefit, that we should make much effort to remove the veil which hangs over his future condition. We shall go on with our work in a more humble manner, and in a better spirit, if we feel that the duty only is ours; and the result of it God's; and the sinner who has postponed repentance till summoned to his sick chamber, will be most sure of being safe at last, if he does not think himself safe too soon.—*Ibid*.

To be concluded in our next number.

CHURCH SOCIETIES.

To the Editors of the Colonial Churchman. Gentlemen,

The signature which will be appended to this communication may perhaps remind you of a former letter in which I attempted to advocate the cause of Domestic Missionary Society. Although the Church Societies now in progress are not precisely similar to the one there contemplated, yet I am so sincerely a well-wisher to our Zion, that I hail every attempt to promote her welfare with unfeigned satisfaction, and most happy am I to congratulate her members upon the prospects of advantage to be derived from their establishment. Only let us not faint, nor our zeal become cold; and if we proceed with prayer and a proper spirit, we shall inevitably perceive this germ of our infant exertions take root downwards and bear fruit upwards. May I suggest to all who worship at our altar, the necessity and the duty of enrolling themselves in these Societies.

It hath pleased the Almighty Ruler of the Universe in his inscrutable wisdom, to permit that our church should become dependant (humanly speaking) on the exertions of her members; and we cannot doubt that many and wise purposes are thereby proposed. Shall they be frustrated by our lukewarmness, or indifference, or our selfishness? May we not imagine that one purpose is to search us and to try us, know whether it be in our hearts to spare of what He hath given us for His service; and if we do thus, will He not bless us in proportion to our readiness—bless us above all in things spiritual, but also even in things temporal. Yet let me urge upon you that the amount of individual subscription is not the test of our readiness: it is true that the rich should give liberally, for, saith the inspired writer, by "liberal things shall he stand"; but it is the number who give their mite that I allude to. The conditions of membership are such that every one, the very humblest, may come forward, and let it be their boast to do so. It is no vain thing to assert that if they would thus act, they would experience a large increase of happiness and prosperity even in this life, and what is far better, a cordial in the hour of death. These considerations might arouse the coldest, but with your permission I will go further and assert that more, much more, is required than mere contribution. Money simply considered can never advance the cause of Christianity, although with God's blessing upon its prudent use it may become a powerful agent: but it is not this alone, it is the spirit of truth, unity, and concord, that is required; and those who contribute would hallow their offering by prayer for its efficacy, endeavouring at the same time to render their lives the pattern of holiness and justice, we might indeed expect the spread of vital religion and sound doctrine to be proportionally great. There is a contrary conduct, for we are told that "there is that withholdeth more than it meet, but" saith the wisest man that ever existed "it tendeth to poverty."