

the Kirk ministers are all on the *qui vive* about the loaves and fishes. In Quebec, as well as in Kingston, meetings have been held, and the same ignoble, mean, and selfish crusade against public rights, and the peace of society, is being pursued. If Free Churchmen be true to themselves, and true to the cause of truth and freedom they will make common cause with the heretofore excluded denominations to have the whole funds at length devoted to education or some other general purpose, by which the whole people will be benefited. The miserable selfishness of the Kirk clergy in former years gave ascendancy and power to the high church faction; and Free Churchmen, if disposed to take the bait now, may also find that while sacrificing their allies they will also sacrifice themselves, and give power to the united forces of the English and Scotch establishments. One united moral movement, when the tug of war comes, may at length rid the province of a most noisome evil—the pensioning of a few rival sects for political purposes—and will give to truth, to moral worth, and to active and intelligent labour in the cause of depressed humanity, their legitimate and rightful ascendancy. The Synod of the Free Church has not yet come out with clean hands upon this question—we shall look anxiously for its determination at its next Session, and if the clergy shall prove false to the general welfare we shall look at least for fidelity on the part of the people at the general elections.

“THE CLERGY RESERVES.”—At a meeting of the members of the Congregation of St. Andrew’s Church, held on Monday last, in St. Andrew’s School, Andrew Patterson, Esq., in the chair, it was unanimously resolved to petition the three branches of the Imperial Legislature, to refuse to re-open the question of the Clergy Reserve Lands in the Province, as desired in an address of the House of Assembly, adopted during its last session.”—*Kingslon Argus*.

DISCRETION.

This is a nice perception of what is right and proper under the circumstances in which a person is called to act. It may be illustrated by the feelers of the cat, which are long hairs placed upon her nose, with which she readily measures the space between sticks and stones through which she desires to pass, and thus determines, by a delicate touch, whether it is sufficiently large to let her go through without being scratched. Thus discretion appreciates difficulties, dangers and obstructions around, and enables a person to decide upon the proper course of action.

There are many shining qualities in the mind of man; but there is none so useful as discretion. It is this which gives a value to all the rest, which sets them at work, and turns them to the advantage of the person who is possessed of them. Without it, learning is pedantry, and wit impertinence; nay, virtue itself often looks like weakness. Discretion not only shows itself in words, but in all the circumstances of action; and is like an agent of providence, to guide and direct us in the ordinary chances of life.—*Fireside Education*.

John Gaspard Lavater and the Poor Widow.

THE WORD OF GOD AS IT IS.

It was a practice with Lavater to read, every morning, several chapters of the Bible, and select from them one particular passage for frequent and special meditation during the day. One morning, after reading the fifth and sixth chapters of the gospel of Matthew, he exclaimed—“What a treasure of morality! how difficult to make a choice of any particular portion of it!” After a few moments’ consideration he threw himself upon his knees, and prayed for Divine guidance. When he joined his wife at dinner, she asked him what passage of scripture he had chosen for the day.

“Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away,” was the reply.

“And how is this to be understood?” asked his wife.

“Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away,” are the words of him to whom all and every thing belongs that I possess,” rejoined Lavater. “I am the steward, not the proprietor. The Proprietor desires me to give to him who asks of me; and not to refuse him that would borrow of me; or, in other words, if I had two coats, I must give one to him that has none; if I had food, I must share with him who is an hungry and in want. Thus I must do, without being asked. How much more then, when asked?”

This (continued Lavater in his diary) appeared to be so evidently and incontrovertibly the meaning of the verses in question, that I spoke with more than usual warmth. My wife made no further reply, than that she would take those things to heart. I had scarcely left the dining-room a few minutes, when an aged widow desired to speak with me, and she was shewn into my study.

“Forgive me, dear Sir,” she said; “excuse the liberty I am about to take. I am really ashamed, but my rent is due to-morrow, and I am short six dollars. I have been confined to my bed with sickness, and my poor child is nearly starving. Every penny that I could save I have laid aside to meet this demand, but six dollars are yet wanting, and to-morrow is term-day.” Here she opened a parcel which she held in her hand, and said, “This is a book, with a silver clasp, which my late husband gave me the day we were married. It is all I can spare of the few articles I possess, and sore it is to part with it. I am aware it is not enough, nor do I see how I could ever repay it. But, dear Sir, if you can, do assist me.”

“I am sorry, my good woman, that I cannot help you,” I said, and putting my hand into my pocket, I accidentally felt my purse, which contained about two dollars. These, said I to myself, cannot extricate her from her difficulty: she requires six; besides, even if they could, I have need of this money for some other purpose. Turning to the widow, I said, “Have you no friend, no relative, who could give you a trifle?”

“No, not a soul! I am ashamed to go from house to house; I would rather work day and night. My excuse for being here is, that people speak so much of your goodness; if, however, you cannot assist me, you at least will forgive my intusution, and God, who has never yet forsaken me, will not surely turn away from me in my sixty-sixth year.”

At this moment, the door of my apartment opened, and my wife entered. I was ashamed and vexed. Gladly would I have sent her away, for conscience whispered, “Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.” She came up to me, and said with much sweetness—

“This is a good old woman. She has certainly been ill of late. Assist her, if you can.”

Shame and Compassion struggled in my darkened soul. “I have but two dollars,” I said, in a whisper, “and she requires six. I will give her a trifle, and let her go.”

Laying her hand on my arm, and smiling in my face, my wife said aloud, what conscience had whispered before, “Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.”

I blushed, and replied with some little vexation, “Would you give your ring for the purpose?”

“With pleasure,” answered my wife, pulling off her ring.

The poor widow was either too simple or too modest to notice what was going on, and was preparing to retire, when my wife told her to wait in the lobby. When we were left alone, I asked my wife—

“Are you in earnest about the ring?”

“Certainly. How can you doubt it?” said she. “Do you think I would trade with charity? Remember what you said about half an hour ago. Oh! my dear husband, let us not make a show of the gospel. You are in general so kind, so sympathizing, how is it that you now find it so difficult to assist this poor woman? Why did you not, without hesitation, give to her what you had in your pocket? And did you not know there were yet six dollars in your desk, and that the quarter will be paid to us in less than eight days?” She then added, with much feeling, “Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Behold the fowls of the air: they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.”

I kissed my wife, whilst tears ran down my cheeks. “Thanks a thousand thanks, for this humiliation.”

I turned to my desk, and took from it six dollars, and opened the door to call in the poor widow. All darkened around me at the thought that I had been so forgetful of the omniscience of God as to say to her, “I cannot help you.” Oh, thou false tongue, thou false heart! If the Lord should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

“Here is what you need,” I said, addressing the widow. At first she seemed not to understand what I meant, and thought I was offering her a small contribution, for which she thanked me and pressed my hand; and when she perceived I had given her the whole sum, she could not find words to express her feelings. She cried—

“Dear Sir, I cannot repay it. All I possess is in the little book, and it is old.”

“Keep your book,” I said, “and the money too, and thank God, and not me; for I verily deserve no thanks, after having so long refused your entreaties. Go in peace, and forgive an erring brother.”

I returned to my wife with downcast looks, but she smiled and said—

“Do not take it so much to heart. You yielded to my first suggestion; but promise me so long as I wear a gold ring on my finger, (and you know I possess several besides,) you will never allow yourself to say to any poor person, ‘I cannot help you.’”

She kissed me and left the apartment. When I found myself alone, I sat down and wrote this account in my diary, in order to humble my deceitful heart—this heart which no longer than yesterday dictated these words:—

“Of the character of the world, there is none I would more anxiously avoid being than an hypocrite. To preach the whole moral law, and fulfil only the easy part of it, is hypocrisy. Merciful Father! how must I wait, and reflect, and struggle, ere I shall be able to rely on the perfect sincerity of my professions!”

I read over once more the chapter I had read this morning and with too little benefit, and felt more and more ashamed and convinced that there is no peace except where principle and practice are in perfect accordance. How peacefully and happily I might have ended this day, had I acted up, conscientiously, to the blessed doctrine I professed! Dear Saviour, send thy Holy Spirit into this benighted heart: cleanse it from secret sin, and teach me to employ that which thou hast committed to my charge to thy glory, a brother’s welfare, and my own salvation!—*Tract Magazine*.

BREAD CAST ON THE WATERS.

The following anecdote is furnished by the biographer of the late Mrs. Sarah Judson, of Burmah: “A middle-aged man, of sober aspect and respectable appearance, came to the pastor of the church (at Maulmain) to ask for baptism. He spoke the Burmese language imperfectly, and it was soon ascertained that he was a Peguan, from the vicinity of Bangkok, in Siam.