

needs statement or principle. A discourse may be very solemn and impressive—kindling strong emotions and exciting deep apprehensions in intelligent congregations—and because the people are affected, it may be supposed that the preacher is faithful.—Because the former perceive nothing positively wrong, and hear and feel much that is decidedly good, they not unfrequently regard it as unquestionable evidence of the gospel character of the instruction to which they listened. And yet without any strained supposition, it may be destitute of some or all of the great distinguishing features of the Gospel; if it contain them, may almost entirely conceal them, under the cumbersome frame-work in which they are set; and though it speak often of Christ, and pathetically describe his agony and death, may be so meagre and confused, so general and feeble as to all those vital doctrines which lead to Him and spring from Him, and depend on Him, which lay the foundation and bind together the whole structure of Christian faith, as to be wholly unworthy the name of the preaching of Christ. Suppose the minister select such subjects as the uncertainty of life, the trial of death, the terrors of judgment, the everlasting retribution of the ungodly. Let him depict the unity of the world—the excellence of religion—the bliss of heaven. Give him the persecution of Christ, and the various scenes in the tragedy of the crucifixion. These are subjects on which a lively and intelligent imagination, without any spirituality of mind or acquaintance with the operations of grace on the heart, may be strong and impressive; and how many imagine that to preach these forcibly is to preach the Gospel! How often is preaching about Christ, confounded with preaching Christ—preaching from the imagination, with preaching from the heart! The minister may thus deceive himself, and the great majority of his people may be so deceived; while some obscure unlettered disciples, whose draughts of truth have been taken undisturbed from the wells of salvation, will be sensible of some painful deficiency; and the anxious inquirer, thirsting for the Gospel, will listen and wait in vain to be taught what he must do to be saved. Let us remember the wide difference between being able to preach forcibly on the importance of religion, on the one hand; and on the other, to shew clearly in what spiritual, saving religion consists. It is one thing to prove that there is no salvation but in Christ, and to urge another to direct a soul panting for mercy, and to say he is to “win Christ and be found in him.”—It is quite another to direct a soul panting for mercy, and to say he is to “win Christ and be found in him.”—Such a text as “One thing is needful,” almost any intelligent and serious mind might preach without mistake or manifest deficiency. It requires much more preparation than mere intelligence and seriousness to preach well, with truth and clearness of fulness, upon such a text as—“If any man be baptized, he is a new creature.” &c.

To be concluded in our next number.

From the Sunday School Visitor.

OLD HUMPHREY'S ADDRESS TO A NEW-MARRIED COUPLE. I have a message for you, a high and holy message, coming from a high and a holy source; one that concerns your comfort, your enjoyment, and your peace. An attention to it will shield you from many sorrows; a neglect of it will burden you with many calamities. Now mind that you receive it in a friendly and hearted way. The Psalmist cried out, ‘Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!’ And if it be goodly and pleasant for brethren to do this, surely it must be still more so for husbands and wives. Receive, then, the message with affection, “Bear ye one another's burdens.” Did you ever find your hearts fill with joy when you beheld a married couple surrounded with comforts, animated with the same hope, journeying on together toward the same heaven, affectionately loving and highly honoring each other; in addition to all this, bearing each other's burdens? Oh it is a lovely thing in this world of affliction, to find hearts knit together in sorrows and in joy, sharing with equal willingness sunshine and the shade! And have you never looked with pain upon an ill-matched pair, reminding you of dogs chained together, barking different ways? Have you seen the eye inflamed with wrath, whilst the tongue was renowned with

bitterness and discomfort, clamour, and confusion, reign- ed around?

Oh it is a bitter and an evil thing for those who are in wedded life to dwell in hatred, not in love, increasing, instead of bearing each other's burdens.

I know not how it may have been with you, but the experience of Old Humphrey has taught him that trouble will come without being sought after, and that there are thorns and briars enough in the world without our gathering them and planting them in each other's bosoms.

You have just entered on a new life, and God of his mercy grant that it may be a happy one! but as it was of olden times, so it is now, weeds spring up in the fairest gardens. Such is the evil of our nature, that the cockle will grow with the wheat, and the thistle with the barley, and so long as the human heart is not wholly sanctified with God's grace, so long will its infirmities ever and anon get the upper hand, setting at variance those whose heart-strings should be twined together; bear, then, with a few remarks from Old Humphrey.

Perhaps you have known each other from the days of youth, and succeeding years may have strengthened your affection. You were perhaps so well acquainted with each other's dispositions and qualities, that marriage has not made manifest a single infirmity that you did not know before. If so, happy are ye.

But if, on the contrary, when you entered into wedded life, you were but half acquainted with each other; if circumstances were not favorable to that thorough knowledge which beings eating of the same bread, and drinking of the same cup, and sharing the sweets and bitter that fall to the lot of humanity, ought to possess, why, then, make an ends for this disadvantage, as far as you can, by bearing each other's burdens.

It is an easy thing to love what is lovely in each other, to smile when the sun shines, and to be kind and good tempered when your partner is kind and good tempered too; but this is no proof of real affection.

Can you put up with each other's infirmities, bear with each other's waywardness, and forgive each other's errors? This is proving your affection; this is, indeed, bearing one another's burdens. Old Humphrey is in the habit of putting some searching questions: questions that at times go right to his own heart, while he means them to go to the hearts of others; he feels his infirmities, and smarts under his own correction; so much as to be half disposed to blot out observations he has made; but he will be faithful in spite of his infirmities; he will speak plain truths, ask plain questions, and make plain remarks, whosoever may be affected by them.

It is a clear case, that “two cannot walk together unless they are agreed;” but if they are agreed, they get on wonderful well. The one may be stronger or weaker, bolder or more timid than the other, but that will not signify. The one may be a good walker, and the other a very bad one; there may be some lameness or weakness in the one, and not in the other; but still they will so accommodate themselves to each other's infirmities, that they will go forward in comfort and peace; and if this be true of any people in the world, it is particularly so of married people.

The path may be stony, the hill may be steep, the hedge thick and thorny, the stream strong and deep; but all will be overcome by helping each other along, by encouraging each other, and by bearing each other's burdens.

I trust that you have not built your hope of earthly happiness on the mere attraction of each other's persons. A handsome face and an agreeable way of behaviour are but a poor stock of comforts to begin house-keeping with. You have something better than these, but have a care how you begin; for a good beginning is the best preparation for a good ending. You are now at ease; but as the fairest summer has its thunder-cloud, so surely will the smoothest life have its cares. Are you ready to meet with disappointments and anxiety? Are you ready to bear each other's burdens?

Your wants appear to be well supplied. In Scripture language, your heads appear anointed with oil

and your cups run over; but it may not always be so, for gold and silver make to themselves wings and fly away. What if want should take the place of plenty? Will you then look kindly on each other? Will you then bear each other's burdens?

You are in health, but you cannot reasonably expect to remain so long; the toothache, the headache, and a hundred other ails are known by others, and are likely enough to be felt by you, and they may try you sorely; and if care, want, and sickness, should meet together in your habitation, you will have need of all your affection, and of God's grace, to enable you to remain kindly affectionate one to another, and to bear one another's burdens.

If you cannot travel together with affection, you will find hatred and unkindness but sorry companions. It helping each other will not do, hounding one another will do worse. If bearing another's burdens will not enable you to trudge along tolerably comfortable, you will make but a sad business of it, by adding to each other's load. Therefore, “Bear ye one another's burdens.”

If you have made your calculation for fine weather only, go and bespeak an umbrella, for be sure you will have need of it. If you think to look at each other always with the same fond and affectionate regard that you have yet done, Old Humphrey tells you in spite of your fairy dreams of unabated love, that if you go through the first year of your married life without a single heart-burning, you will deserve to have your pictures framed and glazed, and hung up in the market-hall for universal admiration. No! no! Old Humphrey will tell you the truth; however you try to flatter and deceive one another, you are a pair of poor, weak, of erring, sinful creatures, requiring divine aid every moment of your lives, to keep you from inattention, from wanderings of heart; from selfishness, from bitterness, and from hatred.

If you really wish to love one another, always, you must love God always: for none but God can preserve your affection, and enable you to bear each other's burdens.

And, mark me, when the time comes, as come it will, when you feel yourselves to be overtaken in a fault, when you have been angry one with another, be faithful in questioning your own hearts. Say to yourselves in private, ‘Am I sure the fault is not mine? Have I not been thoughtless, unreasonable, selfish, hasty, or bitter? If in the wrong, have I made acknowledgment of it, and am I anxious to avoid my error in future? And if in the right, am I desirous to manifest more forbearance to my erring partner?’ These are questions most of us are shy in putting to ourselves, but they are precious medicine, and if taken with a dependence on God's blessing will do us great good. It will render us more humble, cautious, and forbearing; it will increase our affection and it will do much toward influencing us to bear each other's burdens. Why cannot we always dwell in affection and bear each other's burdens? Why should an aggravating or an angry feeling ever rise in our bosoms? It is because we have an enemy in the camp; a deceitful heart in our bosoms influencing us to believe that we are always right, and that others are always wrong; teaching us to call things by wrong names, and persuading us that aggravation is merely thoughtlessness; selfishness nothing more than prudence; and bitterness of heart, virtuous indignation.

In short, Old Humphrey's opinion is this, that we are all so bad that God alone can mend us; and that the only way to dwell in continual affection, bearing each other's burdens, is to live continually dependent on God, seeking the influence of the Holy Spirit continually, taking the blessed Gospel of His beloved Son our Saviour for our guide, and seeking fervently at the throne of mercy for those heavenly supplies that our earthly infirmities require.

Old Humphrey, had his object been to please you, might have spoken more pleasantly; but he wishes to do you good, even though it be against your will. Let not your affections, then, be a flower that opens and shuts in a day, but a tree whose deep-stuck roots will bear the racking of the winter storm. You do not half love one another if you wish not to love each other through eternity; and if you wish to love each other through eternity, you will desire through time to dwell in affection, and to bear each other's burdens.