

A Look into Christ's Orchard.

BY REV. T. L. CUTLER, D. D.

The orchards of our country have just been "paring their dividends" into the farmer's apple bins. The wormy and the worthless fruit was left to the swine; only the sound apples were carted home for the market. Every church is a spiritual orchard; here also the tree is known by its fruit.

Some people try to pass for Christians without any Christ in their hearts; but these are the genuine "fruits of the Spirit" can no more be expected, than a farmer might expect a grove of New Jersey pines to yield a crop of Pippins and Spitzenbergs. Bible religion is a growth, but it requires a soil; that soil is the union of the inner soul with Christ Jesus. From that root flows up the vital sap into the believer's life.

The Bible catalogues the fruits that are expected from the good trees in the church's orchard. "The fruits of the Holy Spirit are these—love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance." Love comes first; for the very essence of religion is to love our God with all the heart and soul, and our neighbor as ourselves.

Love is another fruit of the Spirit. A very different thing is this from mere politeness or civility of spirit. A selfish joy is as different from spiritual joy, as lurid lightning is from clear, steady sunshine. A genuine Christian's joy comes from having Christ in the soul; it is "My Joy." It is not the mere prey of circumstances. Can you be contented and happy when the tempest of trial blows, and when the purse runs low, and when the house aches with pain?

Patience is another fruit of the Spirit that is much talked about in these days—more discussed, we fear, than practiced. It means control of appetite for our own sakes, and self-denial for the good of others. If the glass has a "viper" in it, and damps my fellow-mortals' soul, why should I have anything to do with it? When all the Church of Christ yields this fruit abundantly, the world will taste the blessings of a solid and enduring temperance reform.

We have no time to enumerate in detail all the fruits of the Spirit that prove the genuine Christian, and give beauty and power to the Christian character. A fruit-bearing religion is the crying want of the day. A religion that suns itself on the warm side of a fashionable church, that "enjoys" fine preaching, fine music, and a ride to heaven in a parlor-car, is common enough, and as worthless too. But the religion that would rather be poor than such a dishonest dollar, that would rather go through a Sunday's storm to its mission-school than to lie on its easy lounge, that would sooner have a rag carpet on the floor than to cheat healthful souls out of a gospel of salvation, a religion that serves Christ for the sheer love of serving Him—this is the kind of tree whose fruit tastes of the divine life within it. And now after this glance through the church orchard, let each one of us ask himself and herself the question, Do I bear the genuine fruits of the Holy Spirit?—Evangelist.

A Lesson from the Olive-Tree.

This faithful tree seems to bear the mark of suffering. I have called it a lignous agony, a death-throe in wood; some of them are twisted and gnarled in such anguish that one would think that they had heard the groans of Gethsemane. Well does the olive embody the agony of the cross. The peace that rests the harp's heart in the garden have often been brought before me when resting among these trees. If you will observe them, not so much the younger ones as those of venerable age, you will compare them to the agonies of the strange trials and agonies. Some of them are split to the very heart and broken from the root upward as with an axe. One wonders how they live, but, indeed, they are full of life. I am told that even the old roots which are brought to us in baskets for the fire, would grow if they were buried in the ground. If that be so, it would be very hard work to extinguish that olive tree. It has so much life in it that if it is buried in the soil it will

An Old Photograph.

BY FLORENCE B. HALLOWELL.

"How long's Miss Baker goin' to stay?" asked John Pelton, coming out of the pantry with an empty milk pail in each hand, and pausing by the stove, over which his wife was bending, stirring something in a black skillet. "I don't know," answered Sarah Pelton with a faint sigh. "I wouldn't 'a' had her now bein' it's so near Christmas 'an' all, but she couldn't come no other time, folks are so set to get her, 'n' you really need to get along no longer 'thout it."

"I don't know as it matters much 'bout it's bein' Christmas time," said John Pelton. "One time's same as another to me; but Miss Baker's too fond of hearing herself talk. She's never satisfied 'less she's puttin' in her ear, 'n' does seem to—"

"Hush, there she comes now," interrupted his wife, as footsteps were heard on the brick walk outside the kitchen door. "She's a madder hand to get to work. She never satisfied 'less she's puttin' in her ear, 'n' does seem to—"

"I don't know; it won't make no difference, I guess," rejoined Mrs. Pelton, hesitatingly. "Christmas don't count for much with John 'n' me now-a-days," and she sighed heavily, her face turned away from him, as the little seamstress' keen black eyes.

For a few moments there was silence in the kitchen save for the ringing of the kettle on the fire, and the clinking of the big eight-day clock, and then the seamstress' keen black eyes.

At a dinner at the Astor House, when Daniel Webster, Secretary of State under President Fillmore, after a period of silence which fell upon the company of some twenty gentlemen who were present, one of the guests said:

"Mr. Webster, you will tell me what was the most important thought that ever occupied your mind?" Mr. Webster slowly passed his hand over his forehead, and in a low tone inquired of one near him:

"Is there any one here who does not know me?" "No; all are your friends." "The most important thought that ever occupied my mind," said Mr. Webster, "was that of my individual responsibility to God." And after speaking on this subject in the most solemn strain for some twenty minutes, he silently rose from the table and retired to his room.

Somebody's Prayers.

BY FLORENCE B. HALLOWELL.

Annie Edwards never heard a prayer in her own home. Her father and mother did not go to church, and although they had a large Bible on a stand in the parlor it was never opened. Mr. and Mrs. Edwards did not believe in trusting their children in Bible doctrines; they said when they were left to understand them, they could be left to make their own choice of denominations and beliefs.

When Annie was twelve years old she had a strong desire to be a Christian. She did not tell her father and mother her wish, and their religious views made her very unhappy. She thought it must be a great comfort to children to have praying fathers and mothers. She had talked with some of her companions at school whose mothers took a great interest in their education, and they had prayed to their Father in heaven.

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