

HEAR THOU ME ON.

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom
Lead thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,

A PLEA FOR THE NEGLECTED RICH.

BY REV. JOHN HALL, D.D., NEW YORK.

The proportion of ungodly rich persons does not differ very materially from that of ungodly poor persons. But there are many causes in operation tending to the production of good impressions on the poor,

A rich person, unless made repulsive by some exceptional peculiarity, acquires some consideration from the known possession of wealth. This is greatly increased if some family respectability, culture, and fair character accompany large means.

On the other hand, a poor, weak, good-for-nothing cannot well live twenty-four hours without being reminded of his moral condition. He begs and sometimes gets help, sometimes not; but he rarely fails to get a moral lecture.

The sharp providences that drive many men to God and religion are often blunted to the rich. Sickness brings to them the best medical skill, the most watchful solicitude, the widest sympathy.

On the other hand, the poor constantly have reminders that they need the Lord. They may disregard them; but they come. Living often on the very edge of their income, a little enforced illness brings want very near to them.

There is no machinery for reaching the wealthy, as there is for reaching the poor. No city mission contemplates millionaires. No Bible-woman looks up the "queens of society," and invites them to a mothers' meeting.

How different is the condition of the poor, one does not need to say. The daily visitor drops in; the Sabbath school

teacher, on his rounds, invites the children to school. The minister hardly needs to apologize for calling when visiting next door, and inviting them to church.

And, not to carry this contrast into tediousness, a little religion is held to go far with rich people. A chance word spoken, an unexpected bit of tenderness, a common act—uncommon in the career of a rich man—is held to be "a great thing for one like him."

On the other hand, the poor are put on probation, formally or otherwise. Allowance is made for complicated motives. Their peccadilloes are remembered, and there is not much delicacy in allusion to them.

Ministers might address themselves as ministers to the outlying rich. If we believe in our commission, and in ourselves as holding it, we may go very far without offending or doing any harm in beseeching men to be reconciled to God.

THE JOY OF SAVING THE LOST.

In Mr. George Kennan's fascinating "Tent Life in Siberia" is a very thrilling account of a search made by the author for a party of his lost countrymen on the Anadyr river.

Reading the above thrilling scene in my friend Kennan's book, I found the tears stealing down my cheeks in sympathy with the brave fellows who had perished their lives in order to rescue their lost friends from death by cold and starvation.

With this vivid scene of the Siberian search fresh in my mind, I read this exquisite parable with a new delight. I seemed to see our Divine Shepherd starting off after the lost sheep.

Say what we may about free agency or about the activity of the souls in regeneration, it is equally true that not a solitary sheep would ever have entered the fold of God if the Divine Shepherd had not come to seek and to save the lost.

It has often been made a cavil by students of astronomy, that if this globe of ours is only a mere speck in the starry universe, amid millions of suns and planets, why should the Son of God single out this diminutive globe as the theatre of his incarnation?

There is one stroke in the parable which we must not lose sight of. It is that which depicts the exquisite joy of the Rescuer. When the shepherd "findeth the sheep, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing."

It was a sweet thought, too, that Jesus would have missed me if I had never been sought and brought back. As the shepherd in the story left the ninety and nine to hunt for the single straggler, so I may gladly hope that Jesus wanted me in heaven, or else he would not have come so far and endured so much to save me.

Nothing about the delight of the sheep in being found; it only depicts the exceeding joy of the shepherd in finding the wanderer. He calls his neighbors together to share his gladness.

The transcendent joy in heaven over a saved soul is not confined to the angel bands. It is only witnessed by them and partially shared by them.

O beloved Saviour! When we behold thee on thy throne, the Shepherd amid his numbered flock—thy victories complete—the last wandering sheep brought home—the last recovered Jew glittering in thy crown—then we will confess that the triumph was worthy of the toil, and the ransom of thy glorified Church was worthy of all the bitter agonies of Him who came to seek and to save the lost!

THE RELIGIOUS PAPER.

- 1. A good religious paper makes Christians more intelligent.
2. It makes them more useful.
3. It secures better pay for the pastor.
4. It secures better teachers for the Sunday school.
5. It secures better attendance at the prayer-meeting.
6. It leads to a better understanding of the Scriptures.
7. It increases interest in the spread of the Gospel.
8. It helps to settle many difficulties.
9. It gives unity of faith and practice in the denomination.
10. It exposes error.
11. It places weapons in the hands of all to defend the truth.
12. It affords a channel of communication between brethren.
13. It gives the news from churches.
14. It brings out the talent of the denomination, and makes it useful on a wider scale.
15. It throws light upon obscure questions of practical interest.
16. It gives light on obscure passages of the Bible.
17. It cultivates a taste for reading.
18. It makes the children more intelligent.
19. It makes better parents.
20. It makes better children.
21. It awakens interest for the salvation of souls.
22. It gives general religious news.
23. It gives the more important current news of general interest.

What is our spiritual joy but the result of the consciousness of Christ's saving presence?
A failure in a good cause is better than a triumph in a bad one.

GENESIS.

For the next six months the attention of the Church will, through the international series of the Sabbath school lessons, be concentrated in a remarkable degree upon the first book of the Holy Scriptures. Its great historical lessons will be studied by teachers and scholars, and will doubtless also suggest many pastoral sermons.

The fiercest attacks of modern infidelity, both rationalistic and scientific, have been made upon the integrity, the credibility, the authenticity, the inspiration of this book. It has triumphantly resisted them all; and, calmly assuming its divine character, it is well for our teachers and scholars to seek the rich historical instruction and practical good which are stored up in it.

It was, in all its parts, inspired by God. Interwoven with chronicles of human events are revelations of supernatural truths which none but Jehovah could have known. The written record of both, in their mutual relation, was made under the special influence of the Holy Spirit, which prevented all error of facts and words.

The book is, from the first word to the last, historical. And a unity runs through, and binds together, its sketches, which cannot be equalled by any work that has ever been penned by a single author as the narrative of one great theme.

The book of Genesis, it is true, nowhere claims to have been composed originally by him. In the other divisions of the Pentateuch, he is express and repeated in the mention of his own name as the writer; but never in this division.

The facts which are narrated in the book all occurred long before the birth of Moses. They run through a period of over two thousand years, the close of which was more than half a century in advance of his appearance. God could have revealed all those facts directly to him.

The notion that Moses composed the book from oral traditions of the facts, should not be readily entertained. It is true, such traditions, even of the earliest period, could have been preserved; and, with the long lives of the antediluvians, the accounts of the creation and the fall could have come down very directly to Moses.

It is also out of harmony with the whole spirit of the Bible, to suppose that Moses used documents or detached records, the originals of which have been lost, and from them constructed his unified history.

Still less can we entertain the idea that the book consists of a number of unimpaired independent fragmentary writings which were simply strung together by Moses.

It is, however, expressly asserted in the New Testament, that a part of the book at least was written in the patriarchal age. Paul declares in Gal. iii. 8 that "the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."

Examining the book itself particularly, we find in it several sharply-defined sections, with introductory titles, each giving a history complete in itself, while organically connected in the one continuous and growing history. They are not divided from each other by the chapters into which our common version is broken up.

The first of these sections, or subordinate books, consists of the first chapter and the first three verses of the second chapter. It gives the general account of the creation.

The second commences with the fourth verse of the second chapter, and extends through the fourth chapter. It is introduced by the title, "These the generations of the Heaven and the earth when they were created." It gives the particular history of man's creation, fall, and development, in the two lines of the messianic race and the race of the serpent until the birth of Enos the grandson of Adam.

The third consists of the fifth chapter and the first eight verses of the sixth chapter. It is headed "The book of the generations of Adam;" and it is the chronological history of the heads of the race in the messianic line down to the flood.

The fourth commences with the ninth verse of the sixth chapter. Its title is, "These the generations of Noah." It gives the history of the flood and of Noah, and closes with the last verse of the ninth chapter.

The fifth is a compact, universal history after the flood and down to the dispersion of Noah's descendants consequent upon the folly of Babel. It is "the generations of

the sons of Noah;" and embraces the tenth and nine verses of the eleventh, or the eleventh, chapter.

The sixth confines itself to the messianic race, and, in a chronological table, gives the descent of Abraham from Shem. Its title is, "These the generations of Shem." It extends only from the tenth to the twenty-sixth verses of the eleventh chapter.

The seventh is the history of Abraham. It commences in verse twenty-seventh of the eleventh chapter, with the title, "These the generations of Terah;" and closes with the eleventh verse of the twenty-fifth chapter.

The eighth is a brief genealogical table of Ishmael's descendants, chap. xxv., verses 12-18, "The generations of Ishmael."

The ninth is the history of Isaac, from chapter twenty-fifth, verse nineteenth, "These the generations of Isaac," to the close of the thirty-fifth chapter.

The tenth, in the thirty-sixth chapter, is the genealogical history of Esau's descendants.

The last, from the beginning of the thirty-seventh chapter to the close of the book, is the history of Jacob and his family.

Genesis would thus appear to exhibit, on a small scale, what certainly exists on a larger one in the whole Bible. The Bible is composed of a large number of books written, at different times and by different men, under the inspiring influence of God, and gathered into the one authoritative canon under the same influence. Genesis, too, may have been made up by the inspired lawgiver of a number of smaller books, written by inspired men who were connected, the strong presumption is, with the events which they narrate, and received the revelations which they record. In different places the narratives overlap each other, and open and close in such an interlocking way as to show that they were not independent documents or fragments, but an organic growth, under one overruling guidance. The first and second contained at once the germ of the gospel, and explicitly enunciated the great fundamental facts of our religion. They composed the inspired Bible of the earliest people of God.

This view of the book was unfolded and admirably advocated, in the Princeton Review of January, 1861, by the Rev. Dr. Moffat, Professor of Church History in Princeton Seminary. We have simply condensed his statements in our own order and words. The scheme cannot be infallibly demonstrated; nor may it be insisted upon as authoritative. But it is Scriptural in its spirit. Strong analogical arguments can be adduced in support of it. It is beautiful and captivating. And it clothes the whole history with an older and a personal interest. We are willing to believe that God deposited with his church, in its earliest ages, a revelation of the truth in an inspired and written form, and from time to time added other portions to it as a part of his great development of Church history.

The substantial facts of most of those early books must have been first put on record by contemporaries. In the light of human documents, this would place them within the first Canon which Rawlinson lays down in his "Historical Evidences," as "possessing the first or highest degree of historical credibility." We suspect, too, that this would solve many of the difficulties which are raised by the interests of the documentary, fragmentary, Elohistic and Jehovistic hypotheses. The only section which is not a simple account of facts observable by men, is the first, and we can see no reason why the revelation of it must be supposed to have been delayed until the time of Moses, when it was of as much value, and as comprehensible to the first man as to him, and pertains not to the interests of Hebrews alone, but of the whole human race. Adam, or Seth, or Enoch, were much more likely to be the recipients of that revelation. And it will hardly be claimed, that, coming from them, it would be less worthy of confidence.

This maintains the Mosaic authority of the book in all its parts, to which we should unwaveringly cling whether this analysis be received or not.—Philadelphia Presbyterian.

A HAPPY TEXT.

It has long been the custom among the Presbyterians in Scotland that when a young minister has been ordained pastor of a church, he shall be introduced to his congregation on the following Sabbath, by some older minister of name and experience preaching a sermon and commending him to the confidence and affections of his people. In a little mountain village in Midlothian, about a century ago, a promising young pastor was to be introduced to his future charge. On the Saturday a snow-storm commenced, and on the following morning it continued to rage with little diminution in its violence; but the aged father had not arrived. Still he might only be delayed, and might appear at the eleventh hour. The anxious young pastor was in great straits, for two services had been promised, and he had only prepared to preach at the second meeting; besides there was an awkwardness in having no one to take him by the hand on such an occasion, and with devout and loving solemnity to bid him God-speed. There was much eager listening for the sound of an approaching vehicle, and much peering through the drifting snow, in search of the much longed-for presbyter appearing on horseback; but the hour for assembling had come, and there was no sign. The necessity brought out unexpected power and fertility of resource in that young minister, for modesty and propriety, he introduced himself, preaching with great eloquence and acceptance from those words in 2 Cor. ii., 12, "Furthermore when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother."—Sunday Magazine.

God never lays any more upon any one of his children than he will enable them to bear, and if thy strength be increased proportionally, it is all one for thee to lift a pound weight, or to lift a hundred pound weight.—Elias Pledger.

Very near together are hearts that have no guile.—Confucius.