

forbid that I should not all the Old Testament ceremonial in it. But its significance are the hand, especially place in human life; I be to banish religion; a maiming of religion and its accustomed of blessing (Eccles. 10. 17.) of the Lord upon mind some people urged, at the last insertion of the ruse."

to the examination seems a terra incognita, who can't find a themselves.

hat place in general he beginning of the on of the Word, and ie plan and import od either could not, ad by a mere act of spirits, or even by the Blessed Trinity. incarnate, so taking us. Our faith is the womb of the " Art. II.; so that, ad of saying, "The right hand." Thus o the whole material g it for God, clean- Incarnation is the hee heresy in all its ly the false distinc- de between matter both, Christ is the oth are equally His, Christ has, by His

JOHN CARRY.

Lesson.

Sept. 28th, 1890

GROUND OF HOPE IN

with the petition liver us from evil." e Lord's Prayer, lom, &c.,—these ad Version of St. z to the original lled the *Doxology* In the Prayer used, sometimes k). It is supposed en by our Lord, prayer afterwards, of the Church.

belonging to God. 3 already prayed now we confess long to God, and 3. Just as if we hine is the king-

before spoken of all the different d for daily bread, aliverance, unless hese things. It is us day our daily s, &c. ay we have con- Him. We have ight be hallowed, gdom whose com- ingdom. So, too, 'ory is due to Him l, forgiveness, &c.

atechism puts at l this I trust, &c.) at the beginning e care of you— l, if he were good, rong. The king-

dom, the power, and the glory belong to God; and you can trust Him, for He is good, and kind, and merciful as well as Almighty. In repeating each part of the Lord's Prayer, it should be with the thought in our minds, "and this I trust He will do of His mercy and goodness."

III.—THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST.

But there is one great reason why we know God is merciful, and which makes us trust Him. The sending of Jesus Christ to teach us, to live and to die for us, is the greatest proof of His love. If He could do this much, surely we ought to trust Him in everything else. (Rom. viii. 32.) It is only through Jesus Christ, for His sake, that we can expect God to hear our prayers (St. John vi. 23, Acts iv. 12.) So nearly all our prayers conclude with "through Jesus Christ our Lord," or similar words.

IV.—AMEN.

The word means *verity or truly*. At the end of a prayer, it signifies that we mean what we say, that we are anxious to obtain what we ask for, "I wish it may be so"—"So be it." The calling upon God, the petitions for God's glory, the petitions for ourselves, and the final Doxology, are sealed, as it were, with the "Amen," and sent up to the throne of God.

Family Reading.

Devotional Notes on the Sermon on the Mount.

No. 35.—THE TWO WAYS.

S. Matt. vii. 13, 14: "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many be they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it."

There is no need to seek for any forced connexion between the closing sections of the Sermon on the Mount. They clearly carry out the thought of the two kinds of services which had been mentioned before. Our Lord had spoken of the Kingdom of God and its privileges and duties. He had spoken of its subjects and their obligations; and He had sought to point out the clear line by which they were separated; and the necessity men were under of choosing the one service or the other. In all these concluding verses He indicates the characteristics of the two classes and the manner in which they may be recognized. In the words before us He gives directions for taking the right course.

It has been debated whether the gate and the way here signify the same thing; and it is at any rate clear that both point to the same general truth. But there seems no reason for overlooking the specific distinction between the entrance and the course which is entered upon, the gate and the way. The gate through which we enter upon the way of life is a narrow one and difficult to pass through. The image is taken from a familiar feature in Eastern cities. Dr. Thomson says, in *The Land and the Book* (Chap. i.), "I have seen these strait gates and narrow ways, with here and there a traveller. They are in retired corners, and must be sought for, and are opened only to those who knock; and when the sun goes down, and the night comes on, they are shut and locked."

One can hardly help thinking here of what our Lord says about entering the Kingdom of Heaven. To do so, we must become as little children. The gate of repentance or renunciation of faith can be entered only by the lowly, and by those who will put away from them the encumbrances of the world. "God resisteth the proud." The lowly gate of the Kingdom will not be available for the stiff-necked who refuse to bend their heads that they may enter. And it is also narrow—so "straitened" that those who are laden with the things of earth, more especially those who refuse to part with the burdens of sense and sin, may not pass through it. But for all that, there is no other way into the path of life, into the Kingdom of God.

But there is another gate admitting to a differ-

ent kind of way, a wide gate and a broad way, the one easy of entrance, the other easy to traverse. The image is a very striking one and very appropriate. There can be little question of the easiness, at the beginning at least, of entering by the wide gate and walking along the broad way. There is no difficulty about going in there, and there are no obstacles to the pursuing of the journey.

Human experience entirely confirms this view. Man, in a natural state, finds no difficulty in sinning; but he must exercise self-denial in order to resist the assaults of temptation and to follow the suggestions of the Spirit of goodness. Man, by nature, is more inclined to evil than to good. His nature, left to itself, falls downwards by a kind of gravitation. To raise it upwards towards God and holiness and heaven needs effort and endeavour. If we are not conscious of taking up our cross daily, if we do not know that we are denying ourselves that we may follow Christ, we may well doubt whether we are following Him at all, and suspect that we are on the broad way.

But the mere narrowness or breadth of the way might not determine anything as to its course, tendency, end. But our Lord tells us about this also. The broad way leadeth to destruction; the narrow way leadeth unto life. In other words, there is no real good for man but in the Kingdom of God, and there is no real good for man but in complete surrender of himself to God. The imagined liberty which takes its own course and does its own will, which walks the broad way because no restraints are imposed, such liberty can end only in bondage and in death, because it places man's nature under the powers which disorganize and destroy.

The way of law, of self-restraint, of obedience, is the way of truth, of liberty, and of life; because it is the way of truth and harmony. "I will walk at liberty, because I keep Thy Commandments." This way leadeth unto life. It is walked in life. It is not merely that it leads to the land of life. This is true, and it is important truth; but it is not the whole truth, and it has been sometimes used to obscure the larger truth of which it forms a part. When we enter through the narrow gate, we are entering into the land of life, into the Kingdom of God, with personal fellowship with Christ, Who is our life. And in virtue of such fellowship and by the power of His life, we are enabled to tread the narrow way of self-abnegation and obedience. It is not so much that life is the reward of such walking, it is the condition in which the treading of the narrow way is made possible. Yet life is also the end, life forevermore.

What is the meaning of the statements that few find the narrow way and many go in at the wide gate. Does it mean that only few will finally be saved? It has often been said to mean this. Massillon's terrible sermon, the "Small number of the Elect" is based upon this conviction. This, however, is not the meaning of our Lord's words taken just as they stand. He declares a fact which is before their eyes. Few are going into the narrow gate, many are passing through the wide. As in the physical world, so it is in the spiritual. And so it might seem to be in all ages. Yet we cannot be sure. We know only the easiness with which we slide into the broad and downward course, and the arduousness of the narrow way of Christ; but how many shall, in the end, be declared to have taken the one course or the other—this we do not know; nor is it needful that we should. It is enough for us that a voice should tell us: This is the way, walk thou in it; and that we should hear it and obey.

The Last Class.

(Continued from last week.)

Then, passing from one thing to another, Monsieur Hamel began to talk to us about the French language, saying that it was the most beautiful language in the world, the most clear, the most solid; that we must preserve it among ourselves and never forget it, because when a people fall into bondage, as long as it preserves its language, it is as though it held the key of its prison.\* Then

\*If it keeps its language—it holds the one key which delivers it from its chains.—F. Mistral.

he took up a grammar and read our lesson to us. I was astonished to see how I understood it. Everything that he said seemed to me easy, easy. I think, too, that I had never listened so well before, and that he, too, had never shown so much patience in his explanations; one would have said that before going away, the poor man wished to impart the whole of his knowledge to us, to compel it to get into our heads at one stroke.

The lesson finished, we passed on to our writing. For this day, Monsieur Hamel had prepared quite new copies for us, on which were written in a large round hand, *France, Alsace, France, Alsace*. These looked like little banners which floated all round the schoolroom, hung on the rods of our desks; you should have seen how each one applied himself and what silence there was! Not a sound was to be heard but the scratching of the pens on the paper. At one moment some cock-chafers came in, but no one paid any attention to them, not even the quiet little ones who were giving their attention to making their straight strokes, with a heartiness, a conscientiousness, as if that too were still French. On the roof of the school some pigeons were making a low cooing, and I said to myself while listening to them:

"And are they not going to compel them to sing in German—these, too?"

From time to time, when I raised my eyes from my page, I saw Monsieur Hamel motionless in his desk, and steadily gazing at the objects round him, as if he desired to carry away in his eye the whole of the little school-house. Think! for forty years he had been there in the same place, with his court-yard in front of him and his school-room the same—only, the forms, the desks, had become polished, rubbed by use; the walnut trees in the court had grown, and the hop, which he had himself planted, now made a garland round the windows to the top of the roof. What a heart break it must have been for this poor man to leave all these things, and to hear his sister, who was coming and going in the room overhead, just about to close their trunks! for they were to go away on the morrow, to go away from their country for ever.

All the same, he had the courage to give us the lessons up to the end. After writing, we had the history lesson; then the little ones sang all together their *Ba, Be, Bi, Bo, Ba*. Down below, at the bottom of the hall, the aged Hauser had put on his glasses, and holding his spelling-book in his two hands, he spelt the letters with them. One could see that he, too, was applying himself; his voice trembled with emotion, and it was so droll to hear him that we all wanted both to laugh and to cry. Oh! I shall well remember this last school-day.

All at once the church clock struck twelve, then the Angelus rang. At the same moment the trumpets of the Prussians returning from their drill resounded under our windows.

Monsieur de Hamel rose, quite pale, in his teacher's desk. He had never appeared to me so tall.

"My friends," he said, "my friends, I—, I—" But something stifled him. He could not finish the sentence.

Then he turned towards the board, took up a piece of chalk, and leaning on it with all his strength, he wrote as large as he could: "VIVE LA FRANCE!"

He then remained there, his head leaning against the wall, and without speaking he made a sign to us with his hand:

"It is finished; go away."

Temptation.

One of the greatest dangers of temptation is its suddenness. It comes down upon us without warning, at a time and from a quarter least expected. Being utterly unprepared we are easily overcome, and are led captive at the will of the tempter. But how can we escape this danger, a danger to which we are all the time exposed? There is but one protection, and that is the presence of God. His grace and His grace alone can shield and save us in every peril. The soul that lives with God in constant communion and fellowship is always safe. It will never be surprised or overcome, either by the suddenness or the power of temptation.