

Pastor and People.

ANTICIPATIONS.

Oh! it is strange to feel
That one day, bye and bye, the sun will rise
And chase away the gloom of midnight skies;
The birds will warble forth sweet notes of praise,
And the wide world fresh songs of triumph raise;
But no response from my heart will rise
In joyous sympathy, or glad surprise.

Nature will still rejoice,
The fields will blossom 'neath the sunbeam's
smile,

While zephyrs whisper thro' each leafy aisle;
The foaming sea will dash along the shore,
Flinging its crested waves just as before;
But my once hopeful heart, and restless brain,
Will never joy in these fair scenes again!

The buoyant sons of toil
Will hurry forth, as now, with eager feet
The well known ways of each familiar street;
The merry sound of laughter, and of song
Will still be heard amid life's busy throng;
But, with the chilly sod beneath my head,
I shall be slumbering with the quiet dead.

The dear familiar friends
Whom I have met around the hearthstone here
To interchange affection's words of cheer
Will gaze upon my cold and lifeless clay,
Mourning another spirit passed away;
But no soft throb of love will thrill my breast
For those who linger here 'mid life's unrest.

Yet it is sweet to feel
That when Death's shadows lengthen o'er my
way,

While this world's radiant visions fade away,
I shall but leave Earth's rippling streams of love
For the pure Fountain-head of joy above,
Where kindred spirits dwell and loved ones roam,
And Jesus waits to bid me "Welcome Home."
—*Carrie Light.*

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.

BY REV. D. MILLAR.

The antagonists in this encounter in the wilderness were champion representatives of the two great spiritual forces, good and evil. Satan was no mean foe, though he was incapable of measuring the strength of his opponent. He misjudged the nature of Christ. He knew he need not attack His divinity; therefore he encountered Him as a man. Christ, however, was invulnerable in every part of His nature, both divine and human. Satan sought in vain for a weak spot in His character. He was proof against the assaults of the Evil One. Had there been but one vulnerable part in His person, as in the case of Achilles, depend upon it the devil would have found it out, and sped with unerring aim the arrow of death. But as He "was without sin," He could not be successfully assailed. He was certain of the ultimate issue; and yet it is impossible for us even to conceive the feelings of the Saviour when led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Though He was entirely submissive, yet He was the Son of God. The Spirit's attestation at His baptism was: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He was likewise man; not a man, but man—representative man, humanity's embodiment. Adam represented a decayed, dead, sinful humanity; Christ represents a living, progressive, sinless humanity. He "was without sin," yet He was a sentient creature, and possessed a high-strung sensitive nature. The temptation to Christ must therefore have been a horrible ordeal, more bitter than the agonies of the cross. A hateful person is repulsive even when out of sight; and sensitive hearts recoil from the near approach of such an one; but when necessity compels a more or less innocent nature for a time to endure the company of the vicious, how utterly abhorrent does the situation become—it can only be truly measured by the degree of sensitiveness and innocence of the respective parties. If this feeling is so marked when men of unlike natures are forced into each other's company, what must have been the feelings of the sinless Saviour when compelled to spend a season in the company of the arch-enemy of souls?

The extremes in heaven and hell were brought together in the temptation. In it Christ suffered as our Exemplar and Saviour. He "was led by the Spirit into

the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." May not this repulsive contact with the Evil One have led the Saviour to desire that His children should not be subjected to a like ordeal? The Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted. Jesus advises men to petition God through Himself that the Holy Spirit may not thus lead them into temptation—"After this manner pray ye:" "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name," . . . "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," i. e., the Evil One. So subtle were the assaults of Satan—too subtle for mere flesh and blood—that Christ saw the necessity of man guarding against Satanic influence. God tempts no man; but the Spirit may lead a man, for sharpening or strengthening purposes, into the wilderness. He led Job; Satan did the work of temptation. Few can stand the trial; few can say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." But Jesus knew that amongst men there were comparatively few giants in faith; hence when He uttered the petition in the Lord's Prayer—"and lead us not into temptation," He did so in the interest of weak humanity as a whole. Temptations in the sense of trials appointed by God, reveal man's sins and weaknesses, and are meant to deepen humility. Applied to Christ such temptation had no force. He had no sin; and He needed no humiliation, because He knew nothing of pride. Nevertheless Satan was not deterred from exercising his malignant spirit upon the Saviour. To our eternal welfare his attempts were unavailing.

It is not the Spirit's customary occupation to lead us into temptation, but rather to deliver us from the Evil One. He is the Christian's leader. Christ says: "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come." Again, in the temptation—in the Saviour's submission for a time to the obnoxious company of the devil—we have a very strong manifestation of our Lord's great love for sinners. "It behoved him thus to suffer." Men may seek the company of the vicious, not coveting their company, but in order to find an opportunity of preaching Christ. Indeed we find Jesus Himself in the company of the fallen and degraded; and He thus justified Himself when questioned: "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." But no redeeming feature could make pleasant His association with the Evil One. Not one trait of goodness was in his nature, he was wholly bad, and his purposes were entirely malignant. The heart of the malefactor upon the cross was melted as He looked upon the Saviour suffering for sinners. He asked and obtained Christ's forgiveness; and his salvation at the eleventh hour would help to alleviate the bitter pangs the Saviour was then suffering. Jesus in the wilderness might conquer—He would conquer the Evil One—but he would die hard, unmoved by the gracious office of the Saviour, for he was impervious to either divine or human influence. We are accustomed to dwell upon Gethsemane's passion, and we try to fathom the Saviour's agony which led Him to pray, "If it be possible let this cup pass from Me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Or we may dwell upon that heartrending prayer which escaped His lips as He hung upon the cross. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me!" We look upon these experiences of our Lord as the climax of His endurance for sinners. But Christ conquered in the wilderness: then was the hour of His greatest triumph; then, insulted by the Evil One, submitting, for our sakes, to the biting sarcasm of the tempter, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread!" "If Thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down!" "All these will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me!" His sinless soul was pierced to the quick, and His noble nature received such a shock through contact with the devil, that His subsequent sufferings

dwindle into insignificance. True manhood, true womanhood, suffer most when the spiritual nature is wounded and insulted. Many Christian men and women have died a martyr's death rather than abjure religious principle. The temptation in the wilderness was an insult to Christ's divine person, imposed by the meanest and most subtle of all adversaries. Peter's denial, the betrayal of Judas and Christ's crucifixion by the Jews, were less keenly felt by Him. While we then adore Christ hanging upon the cross, and bless the Saviour for a completed redemption, let us never forget that Jesus paved the way to this final issue when He triumphed over Satan in the wilderness.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR PLEDGE AND MISSIONS.

At a recent meeting of our Endeavor Society, this question was asked: "Can the members of our Society be faithful to their pledge and not be interested in missions?" For a few moments let us consider this question. To do this we must look at our pledge and see clearly, first, to whom we are pledged; second, for what we are pledged.

Every Christian has in some way acknowledged his allegiance to Jesus, the King of kings. The members of the Christian Endeavor Society have taken their oath of allegiance in the form of their pledge. Then let us read the pledge in this way: "Trusting in my King, the Lord Jesus Christ, for strength, I promise Him." For have we not said unto Him the Lord is our King?

When our Queen would send one of her subjects as an ambassador to another country, does she not choose the man who promises to obey her will, who promises to strive to do whatever she would like to have him do? In our pledge to Christ, from beginning to end, we promise no more than the Queen's subject must promise her. We first promise to strive to please Him, then to pray every day, and so must the Queen's ambassador hold communication with his sovereign telling what he has accomplished, and receive the needed advice. The wise statesman will study well the books and documents relating to the laws and government of his country; in like manner we promise to read the Bible, our statute-book.

We promise to support our own Church and attend all her services. The Queen's ambassador would require a good excuse for absenting himself from any state function, or interview with his sovereign. And on, throughout the whole pledge, might the analogy be carried, but this is the important point, we are ambassadors for Christ. If the loyal subject of the earthly sovereign will obey his Queen's command, at any cost, will gladly and proudly defend her honor, even with his life, what of the subjects of the heavenly King? Are we ready to obey His commands, ready to honor and glorify His name either by our life or our death? Supposing we are ready, then, what are His commands? We have given Him our pledge that we will do what He would like to have us do. To learn His will we must hear His voice, to know His commands we must read them in His Word. Many of His commands will we find given in the early part of His ministry before He had suffered, before He had given His life for the world's redemption. But His great command and His last solemn charge come to us, not from Jesus Christ in His humiliation, but from the mighty Conqueror of sin and death, from the glorious and exalted King, who, just before He left for that far country to receive His Kingdom, called His servants and said unto them: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Go and teach them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you." This command comes down the ages to us, losing none of its imperative force. If we take His promises and believe they are for us, we must also take His commands: "If ye love Me keep My commandments." This is Christ's test act.

This command, then, is to all who love Him, to all who acknowledge Him as their King. What now of the question: "Can the members of our Society be faithful to their pledge and not be interested in missions." Is such a thing possible? Christ made no exceptions when He said, "Go ye." But let us not look at this only in the light of duty. Should not the love of Christ constrain us to go? Go into your home and work there for Him; go into other homes and bring sunshine and happiness; go to the sick and the sorrowful; go to the hungry and thirsty; go to the stranger and take him in; go into any and every part of the world and do kind deeds and speak loving words for Christ's sake. He wants you to have that missionary spirit, that readiness to go though He may never call you to leave your home. Christ may want someone in India or China, some in our Africa or South America, some in our own North-west fields. But he expects us all to be ready to go wherever He wants us, ready to follow at the King's command; ready, for the King's business requires haste.

In the parable of the Great Sinner, the King said to his servants, "Go out quickly." Do you doubt the need of this haste? Lift up your eyes and look on the fields for they are white already to harvest.

"The restless millions wait
That Light, whose dawning
Maketh all things new."

Christ also waits, but men are slow and late. Let each one ask: "Have I done what I could?" Yes, the King's business requires haste. And, as when on earth, His meat and drink was to do His Father's will, so when He left, He gave to His followers the work of carrying out His Father's will, and the Father's will is, that all men should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. "As the Father hath sent Me into the world, even so send I you." It is for us to rise to our great responsibility, to our glorious and exalted privilege, as the Ambassadors of Christ. And when we pray: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we should understand that on each rests obligations for the fulfilment of that prayer.

"If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them. Strive to do what He would like to have you do, then shall the King say unto you at that day, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world.'"

M.

UNIVERSAL LAW IN NATURE.

Everything that occurs in Nature is the result of some law instituted to bring it to pass. No phenomena are in opposition to the laws of Nature, nor are the laws of Nature ever set aside in order to bring about conditions or circumstances that would be more conducive to men's welfare, than the operation of the original laws themselves. Even "miracles" are, no doubt, in strict conformity with the primitive and immutable scheme of Divine government, which has maintained the universe in its integrity and sublime order ever since the time of that sweet aurora, when the "morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy;" we call them "supernatural," simply because they are effected, not by suspending the laws, but by exhibiting the unaccustomed powers of Nature. For there is a spiritual law within, and thus above, every natural law, which, being necessarily in perfect harmony with it, may dignify and expand its operation, but can never contradict it. If we feel disposed to regard miracles as works requiring the suspension of the laws of Nature, it is again simply because we do not understand—and in this, our present life, probably cannot so understand—the immensity and fulness of the laws of Nature, nor see how occurrences, apparently quite at variance one with another, may yet be in harmony and be quite compatible when viewed by the light of some grand and omnipotent principle which originates and includes both.—*L. H. Grindon.*