

Pastor and People.

ABIDING WITH GOD

BY ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH.

Let every one, whate'er his calling be,
Therein abide with God. So wrote of old
Saint Paul to them at Corinth, and to me
With loving lips to-night that truth was told.
I had grown weary with my stripes and cares,
And murmured at the service of the day,
Wherein I had forgotten, unawares,
That thus I still might honor and obey.

Abide with God! Would I might ne'er forget
That evermore I may with Him abide!
What matters how or when the stamp is set,
Or what the furnace where the gold is tried,
So that the metal has the sterling ring,
So that the likeness of the King is shown—
God's courage still, that to the soul will bring
Such wealth as merchant princes have not known.

In market-places where the race is swift,
And competition on temptation waits;
In quiet homes where unseen currents drift
A thousand petty cares through open gates—
Let each and all, whate'er the calling be,
Therein abide with God; from break of day
Till set of sun they shall His purpose see,
And serve Him in His own appointed way.

So let me see and serve, and thus abide:
Not simply patient, or at best content;
Not with eye-service, wherein, love denied,
In rounds of duty solemn days are spent.
Give me, O Lord, a joy that is divine,
Touch Thou my lips with constant themes of
praise,
Since, having Thee, all things I need are mine,
Whate'er my lot, whate'er my length of days.

—New York Evangelist.

ONE MINUTE PAPERS.

REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D. PH.D., GALT, ONT.

SELF CONSULTATION—DO YOU EVER SERIOUSLY DO IT.

- 1st—I consulted with myself, Neh. v. 7.
- 2nd—What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? Ps. cxvi. 12.
- 3rd—For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Matt. xvi. 26.
- 4th—What must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts xvi. 30, 31.
- 5th—Peter seeing Him saith to Jesus, Lord, what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. Jno. xxi. 21, 22.
- 6th—What is man that thou shouldst magnify him? And that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him? And that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment? Job vii. 17, 18.
- 7th—If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. Ps. cxxx. 3, 4.
- 8th—What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. Ps. xxv. 12.

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A HIGHER CHRISTIAN LIFE.

REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D., PH.D., GALT, ONT.

There is a dead level to which professing Christians sink, on which they are little or no better than their unchristian neighbors, that is, the dead level of worldly conformity. And on this, they are willing to remain, as though it was their proper place, their right position, their true ground of safety and of peace. They even fortify themselves there. They look askance, and sometimes even angrily, at any one who ventures to disturb them by suggesting that they ought not to be there; that they ought to have soared rather than to have sunk; that they ought to be pressing on rather than to be sitting still; that they ought to be conquering rather than to be conquered. They cross the line, and pitch their tent as close to it as possible. They have evidently no thought of earnest, aggressive movement. They have heard the invitation to "come," but they do not listen to the command to "go!" They have passed into the realm of peace, but they do not yet see that that calls for progress. They have only got hold of a half truth, and that a very delusive and destructive half truth. But this condition is so general, this experience is so common, that it draws forth little comment. It may be

called an almost universal experience. The real, living, aggressive, obedient believer is the exception and not the rule. Very, very few are found who live up to their privileges and who enjoy all the sweets of a genuine religious life. This almost universal declension—Laodicean like loss of first love—has given rise to a call, even from apostolic times for a higher Christian life. The Galatians having begun in the spirit were seeking to be made perfect by the flesh. The Hebrews, when for the time they ought to have been teachers, had need that some one should teach them again the first principles of the oracles of God. The twelve tribes scattered abroad, required James to write his sharp yet epistle to let them understand distinctly that faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone. The seven churches in Asia were subject to the same ebb in the tide of their new life. And are not all, in greater or lesser degree? Few escape this reaction.

This can no doubt be explained on philosophical principles, such as, there is always a reaction after a season of great or excessive joy, high-tide must have a low ebb, reaction must succeed unusual experiences. And this is nothing in itself to cause uneasiness. It is the settling down to the lowest tide mark of the ebb, as being a proper condition, that is the evil; making that the line of a scriptural life of godliness, and resting there content for a long space. How long a space with many, who can tell? Many seem to get established there. And more, they get hardened there, so that they are impervious to all appeals, and exhortations, and invitations and warnings. They cannot be drawn, nor yet can they be driven. Their coat of mail turns the point of every arrow. This is a dangerous position to occupy. And that is the very reason why the New Testament is so rich in epistles dealing with Christian experience. Whose motto is, the cry of God to Moses at the Red Sea, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." What a pressure of divine love and earnest entreaty and fatherly grace comes upon the believer just here at this point, intensifying this word and making it glow with light, "go forward." Why do so many settle down on this dead level? One might give this answer as covering every reason, *misconceptions*. If there be a point in the career of a godly man where he specially needs guidance, it is just when he has accepted Christ, and got rest and peace through believing. Then he requires careful instruction. Then he may begin to trust in a past experience as all that he should have. Then he may try to live on doctrines, rather than by doctrines. Then he may seek to satisfy his soul with the husks of forms, rather than feed it with the kernels of truth which the spirit may open and apply to his heart. Then he may be very zealous about duties, while the spirit of love and communion from which they should flow is neglected. As water cannot rise higher than its source, neither can the works of a man. If they are of the earth they shall be earthy, if they are of heaven they shall be heavenly. But I repeat, to correct all misconceptions that spring up just here careful teaching is demanded.

Robert McCheyne wrote to Mr. Moody Stuart, of Edinburgh, these wise counsels. "Do not forget to carry on the work in hearts brought to a Saviour. I feel that was one of my faults in the ministry. Nourish babes, comfort down-cast believers, counsel those perplexed, perfect that which is lacking in their faith. Prepare them for sore trials. I fear most Christians are quite unready for days of darkness." Excellent advice that!

This note of the Duchess of Gordon's may shine into some heart, "Come to the Saviour as you are, yes, but come to be what you are not." There is cleansing from sin, there is the power of holiness, there is a new and Christlike life of beneficence and self-sacrifice to be enjoyed as a Christian. The sinner who trusts in Jesus becomes a new man having before him a new life, replete with new joys and comforts, and consolations. And he is called on to take pains to realize this new life, by reflection and by holy action. "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God and ye are not your own?" "If ye then be risen with Christ,

seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." "Stand fast in the Lord." "Walk in the Spirit." Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." "Beware lest ye being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The ordinary life of the Christian, as it is portrayed in these passages, needs no advance made on it—there is no higher Christian life than that. But there is a far higher Christian life than our ordinary, everyday Christian life, and because of this, those who strive to attain to the scriptural standard are regarded as saintly. Ah, we are, as believers, all saints, and our characters should accord with our title. We should remember what we are, whose we are, and whom we serve.

As William H. Hewitson so well puts it, "No awakened soul should stop short of a realization and experimental enjoyment of union with the Lord. No converted soul should rest satisfied, till it think every thought and speak every word in communion with Jesus." In other words we should live the life of God. As we yield ourselves to the flow of animal spirits, and laugh and sing and act joyously, so we should yield to the touch and to the monitions of the Holy Spirit and act in real accordance with his holy impulses. We are free in our physical life, why should we not be in our spiritual life?

Yielding ourselves to God in conformity with His will will give us a sense of our freedom and our power. Lately I heard an interesting story that may illustrate this point. An escaped slave came to Galt and took up his abode, but though he was in the land whose air makes the shackles fall, and the bondman stand forth free, he never could realize his freedom. An election of a representative to the Legislature was at hand, and the poor colored man went about telling everyone that he was going to vote in the election. When the day came he went to the polls, recorded his vote, and as soon as that was done, he danced about wildly, threw up his arms and cried, "Me's a man; me's free, me's free."

The joy, the assurance, the sense of freedom and citizenship that came to the heart of the poor negro, would come also to every one who has fled to Christ if he would but do what Christ enjoins, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Obedience to the truth brings us into the experience of all the blessing of which it speaks. Obedience brings us into a higher Christian life. What we want to correct misconceptions, to impart true spiritual knowledge, to secure steady growth, to bring us home to glory, is what Paul calls, "the obedience of faith."

REMEDY FOR HUMAN DEPRIVITY.

To meet the terrible exigencies of a lapsed creation, and to meet them in such a way as to accord, on the one hand, with the honor of the blessed God as the sole moral governor of the universe, and on the other with the freedom of the rational, though erring, subject was, to speak with reverence, the great problem to be solved. To construct and to push into actual and sublime motion an agency which should be transcendently suited to work out the mighty restorative process, was a theme eminently worthy of Him whose understanding it is impossible to search. To unite, in indissoluble harmony, physical causes with their corresponding results; to cover the multiform mechanism of things beneath a veil of exquisite and endless beauty; to stretch the north over the empty place, and to hang the earth upon nothing; to endure the sentient creatures with varied capabilities of happiness, and to commission the elements to minister to their joy; to kindle the quenchless light of reason, and to bid it flame towards its ineffable source, were the function of a power "wise in council and wonderful in working." But to discern a scheme which should embrace within its plastic influence the elements of rebellion, of guilt and of pollution, so to

control, subdue, and obliterate them; and that not by legislative but by moral acts, not by force but by persuasion, not by retracing previous footsteps but by surpassing them, was to draw back the face of His throne, and to unfold, in unprecedented lustre, the qualities as well as the attributes of a God. To achieve this conquest over evil, Christianity alights among us, with its rich and sovereign grace, with its incarnate mystery, with its substitutional sacrifice, with its dying love, with its exceeding great and precious promises, with its descending Spirit and its Father's house. Simple, modest, gentle, it does not "break one bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." Earnest, steadfast, invincible, the powers of darkness recede as it advances, disturbed and confounded by the accents which fall from its lips, "Behold I make all things new."—Rev. J. P. Mursell, Leicester, England.

SILENT INFLUENCE.

"I have no influence," said Elsie Lee to her old friend, Miss Tomasin. "Why, I am so timid when in company with others that I hardly dare raise my eyes or open my lips."

"That may be," replied the old lady, "and yet you are always exerting your influence wherever you go. You cannot help yourself. An hour ago I bought a little bunch of violets from a German flower girl, and I set them on yonder shelf, beside my dear mother's picture. It is a very tiny bunch, and a person entering the room would very likely not see them, for they do not challenge attention. But every nook and corner of the apartment feels their presence, for their fragrance is pervading the atmosphere. So it is with you, my dear, You love your Saviour, and you try to serve Him. You think you cannot speak for Him, but if you live for Him, and with Him, in gentleness, patience and self-denial, that is better than talking. It does more good. The other evening young Halcomb, who is thoughtless and giddy, made a jest of a verse of Scripture in your hearing. You wished, I saw, to protest against his act, and tried to do so but the words would not come. Yet your pained look, your quick blush, your instinctive indignant gesture, spoke for you, and the young man turned and said: 'I beg your pardon, Miss Elsie.' Was not this a proof that, he saw and felt your condemnation?"

Silent influence is stronger than we sometimes think, for good and for evil. Let us not underestimate it. The light of day, the warmth of spring, the nightly dew, and the snow, enshiding tree and flower, are all voiceless; yet have their influence—the influence of loving deeds.

THE SUCCESSFUL SABBATH SCHOOL

Always begins on time,
Has a live superintendent,
Has a weekly teachers' meeting,
Does systematic visiting,
Has a normal class,
Has an attractive programme,
Has good ventilation,
Urges temperance work,
Will not hold its sessions too long,
Has an excellent primary teacher,
Keeps school every Sunday in the year,
Follows the scholar during his vacation,
Keeps the lesson help out of the school,
Has each scholar own and bring his Bible,
Has teachers who practice self-denial,
Keeps the school-room tidy and comfortable,
Adds good books regularly to the library,
Pays attention to the reading of the scholars,
Distributes an abundance of good literature,
Makes special efforts to secure offerings for missions,
Recognizes that the primary department is a feeder for the school—Kentucky Sabbath School Union.

The essential difference between a good and a bad education is this, that the former draws on the child to learn by making it sweet to him; the latter drives the child to learn by making it sour for him if he does not.—Charles Burton.