

pecially the parchments." The *biblia*—the papyrus books—few, we may be sure, but old friends; perhaps he had bought them when he was a student in the school of Gamaliel at Jerusalem; or they may have been given him by his wealthier converts. The papyrus books, then, let Timothy bring, but especially the parchments—the velum rolls. What were these? Perhaps among them was the *diploma* of his Roman franchise; or were they precious rolls of Isaiah and the Psalms, and the lesser prophets, which father or mother had given him as a life-long treasure in the far-off happy days when, little dreaming of all that would befall him, he played, a happy boy, in the dear old Tarsian home? Dreary and long are the days—the evenings longer and drearier still—in that Roman dungeon; and it will be a deep joy to read once more how David and Isaiah, in their deep troubles learnt, as he had learnt, to suffer and be strong. A simple message, then, about an old cloak and some books, but very touching. They may add a little comfort, a little relief, to the long drawn tedium of these last dreary days. Perhaps he thinks he would like to give them, as his parting bequest, to Timothy himself, or to the modest and faithful Luke, that their true hearts may remember him when the sea of life flows smooth once more over the nameless grave. It would be like that sheepskin cloak which centuries afterwards, the hermit Anthony bequeathed to the Archbishop Athanasius—a small gift, but all he had. Poor inventory of a saint's possessions! Not worth a hundredth part of what a buffoon would get for one jest in Caesar's palace, or an acrobat for a feat in the amphitheatre; but would he have exchanged them for the jewels of the adventurer Agrippa or the purple of the unspeakable Nero? No, he is much more than content. His soul is joyful in God. If he has the cloak to keep him warm, and the books and parchments to teach and encourage him, and Mark to help him in various ways, and if, above all, Timothy will come himself, then life will have shed on him its last rays of sunshine; and in lesser things, as well as in all greater, he will wait with thankfulness, even with exultation, the pouring out in libation of those last few drops of his heart's blood, of which the rich full stream has for these long years been flowing forth upon God's altar in willing sacrifice.—*Farrar*.

#### CHARITY IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

"Behold Christ Himself," says Cyprian, "in your captive brethren, and redeem from captivity Him who has redeemed us from death. Snatch from the hands of the barbarians Him who has snatched us from the grasp of the demon, and purchase with money the liberation of Him who purchased us with his blood." To such appeals no Christian could continue insensible. The heroism of charity was sometimes carried so far that freemen offered themselves to serve instead of the captives. Such was the fervour of the love of the brethren; but charity must not confine itself within these limits, it must embrace all mankind, and seek the good of every fellow-creature. Thus when cruel epidemic ravaged Carthage and Alexandria, the Christians were ever foremost at the bedside of the dying, never asking whether those whom they thus tended had not been among their persecutors. While terror reigned in the desolated villages, as their inhabitants were stricken down in multitudes, and the unburied dead were spreading death in the air, the proscribed Christians were the only helpers. "If we shew kindness only to our own," says Cyprian to his brethren, "we shall be no better than the pagans and the publicans. We, as Christians, are called to return good for evil, and to pray for those who persecute us. Since we are the children of God, let us be like him in compassion." The Christians of Alexandria shewed themselves no less devoted during the plague which broke out in their city. Many of them paid with their life for the courage with which they braved the epidemic by the bedside of their worst enemies. When charity has reached this height of self-abnegation, so that it can rise above all private enmities and national distinctions, it is truly a reflection of the divine and perfect love. It embraces in its pity all who are embraced by the infinite compassion, and it is truly human, because truly divine. The old selfish, exclusive principle is utterly subdued. When Cyprian contrasted the parsimony of the Church with the largeness of the world to its prince, who had shed no blood for his subjects, nor won

heaven for them, he used a rhetorical license to move the Christians to greater liberality; but he knew that the so-called sacrifices of the pagan world were made to its own evil passions, and cost it very little, and he could not deny that in that city of Carthage, where his noble example has been so eagerly followed, charity had appeared as a heavenly vision upon an accursed earth.—*From De Presens's Early Years of Christianity*.

#### FAINT NOT, MY SOUL.

When God's strokes are on thee falling,  
And earth's sweetest joys are palling,  
Faint not, my soul.  
When thy sins are thee condemning,  
And thy conscience loudly blaming,  
And thou hearest Satan's claiming,  
Faint not, my soul.

One there is, who stands beside thee,  
Who, in evil days, will hide thee;  
Faint not, my soul;  
Life for thee is ever caring,  
And through Him comes daily sparing,  
For He died, transgression bearing;  
Faint not, my soul.

When distrust is thee beclouding,  
And thy future darkly shrouding,  
Faint not, my soul;  
When thy inmost heart is fearing,  
And no earthly friend is cheering,  
And no gleams of hope appealing,  
Faint not, my soul.

One there is within thee dwelling,  
Upwards, upwards, ever welling;  
Faint not, my soul;  
With fresh courage thee inspiring,  
With new hope thy faint heart firing,  
He will keep thee from all tiring,  
Faint not, my soul.

When the silver cord is breaking,  
And the world is thee forsaking,  
Faint not, my soul;  
When thine eyes the light is leaving,  
And thy friends around thee grieving,  
And thy heart is feebly heaving,  
Faint not, my soul.

A world there is, that knows no dying,  
No sorrow there, no sin, no sighing;  
Faint not, my soul;  
There, farewell is never spoken,  
There, fond hearts are never broken,  
There, they need no parting token;  
Faint not, my soul.

—M.

#### "HOW MUCH OWEST THOU?"

It was my lot to live for some years in one of those antiquated Welsh towns with an unpronounceable name (to a Saxon) of which a willingly incredulous stranger might say, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

Among the members of my class was an old Welsh lady, Mrs. O——.

Providence had once smiled upon her in temporal affairs, but the Father tried his child by taking away from her the light of her eyes, as "by a stroke," and children withered and died, one by one, so that she lived "alone, yet not alone."

"'Twas little she could do," for poverty, as is often the case, was accompanied by sickness—so that by the earnings of her needle she barely subsisted. Parish authorities added to it a weekly pittance, and this was all she had, save the kind gifts of friends.

I often visited her in her little room, and often found her confined to her bed.

When tickets were renewed, if she were not present, I hastened to take her ticket, knowing what pleasure it gave her to receive it.

Visiting her one day for this purpose, I found her in great weakness.

On handing her the ticket, the conversation ran thus:

"I have brought you your ticket Mrs. O——, but you need not give anything."

"Oh! but I must."

"No! no! I'll see that your name stands all right in the class book."

"Sir, if you will look in the little cup on the shelf you will find the Lord's money."

"But the Lord does not wish you to give to His cause what you absolutely need, I can't take it."

And then the "hot rain" fell down her aged cheek, as she said, "'Tis but little I can give to the Lord, but what did He give for me? He loved me and gave Himself for me. Take it, sir, I can't eat my morsel happily if you don't."

And so I took it, and murmured blessings on the head of her whose heart "the love of Christ" did so "constrain," and prayed evermore I might remember, "Ye are not your own." Reader, "how much owest thou unto the Lord?"—*Rev. Samuel Wilkes*.

#### THE POWER OF A HOLY LIFE.

It is the power of a consistent Christian example—the power of a holy life. As good old Matthew Henry says, "thanksgiving is better than thanksgiving," so we may say that pious living is better than pious talking, and a holy example than the best of verbal appeals; for the former may, possibly, come from the lips, while the latter is from the heart, and even where the former is from the heart it is virtually included in the latter.

"Under whose preaching were you converted?" "Under nobody's preaching," was the pleasant, smiling reply; "it was under Aunt Mary's practising." The life that her aunt led before her was the means of leading her to the Saviour. It was not what the aunt might have said, but it was what she did—her consistent example—which was the means of her niece's conversion.

And so a young man, who gave clear evidence of conversion, on being asked what had led to the great change in himself when he had before been so wild and thoughtless, whether it was through any sermon or book that he had been impressed, replied, "No; neither the one nor the other." "What, then, was it? Did some one speak to you particularly on the subject of religion?" And he still said, "No." "What was it, then, that first led you to think seriously on the subject?" "It was my living in the same boarding-house and eating at the same table with J. Y." "Well, did he ever talk to you on the subject of religion?" "No, never," until I sought an interview with him. But there was such a manifest principle, such a sweetness of disposition, such a heavenly-mindedness, in his whole life and demeanour as made me feel that he had a source of peace and happiness and comfort to which I was a stranger. The daily excellence and beauty of his life made me feel the defects of my own. I became more and more dissatisfied with myself everytime I saw him. And though, as I said, he never spoke to me on the subject of religion until I sought an interview and spoke to him, yet his whole life was a constant sermon to me, and gave me no rest until I became a Christian!—*Baptist Weekly*.

#### "LOOKING UNTO JESUS."

The early Christians lacked many privileges and advantages that we enjoy. They had no printed books. They worshipped God in dens and caves and upper chambers, had few and simple ecclesiastical garments, and often received the Lord's supper in vessels of wood, and not of silver or gold. They had little money, no church endowments, and no universities. Their creeds were short. Their theological definitions were scanty and few. But what they knew they knew well. They were men of one Book. They knew whom they believed. If they had wooden communion vessels, they had golden ministers and teachers. They "looked unto Jesus," and realized intensely the personality of Jesus. For Jesus they lived, and worked, and died. And what are we doing? And where are we in the nineteenth century? And what deliverance are we working on earth? With all our countless advantages, our grand old cathedrals, our splendid libraries, our accurate definitions, our elaborate liturgies, our civil liberty, our religious societies, our numerous facilities, we may well doubt whether we are making such a mark on the world as Clement and Justin Martyr and their companions made 1700 years ago.

I know we cannot put the clock back and return to the A B C of early Christianity. But one thing we can do: We can grasp more firmly the grand old primeval principle around which our modern Christianity has clustered and swelled, and grown to its present proportions. Such a principle is that laid down in our text, "Looking unto Jesus." Then let us covenant with ourselves that for the time to come we will try to run our race, fight our battles, fill our position, serve our generation, like men who are ever "Looking unto Jesus." So looking while we live, we shall see face to face when we die. We shall joyfully exchange faith for sight, see as we have been seen, and know as we have been known.—*Bishop Kyle, on Heb. xii. 2*.