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Mr. H. H. Rose

THE

GOOD NEWS.

A SEMI-MONTHLY PERIODICAL:

DEVOTED to the RELIGIOUS EDUCATION of the OLD AND YOUNG

PREACHING CHRIST.

BY THE REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

1 COR., II, 1-2.

The New Testament teaches, in the most unequivocal manner, that Christ Jesus is very God. He may therefore be conceived as dwelling in the majesty and supernal glory of heavenly government. Or, we may follow faintly in imagination all the rounds of creation, and conceive of his creative acts. For all things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that is made. Or, we may consider his administrative life, and reflect upon his renewing, sustaining, and enriching the natural world. We may conceive of Christ Jesus as the head of a government administered through natural laws, with special divine volitions and purposes which we call providential. And our conceptions will be profitable and ennobling; but they will benefit us just in proportion as we are advanced in moral culture, and have begun to be ourselves in some measure like God. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." But ah! how many, then, can see him? Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. But the whole world leth in wickedness; and how shall we arouse them, inspire hope in them, and bring them, imperfect, sinful, and guilty, to be influenced of God? The reply is already uttered in these words: "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

Those traits and attributes which lead him to pardon sin, and to heal sinners, are manifested in Christ Jesus; and it was this

pardoning aspect of Christ as God that the apostle so much dwelt upon and insists upon here. For he does not declare, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ." He might know him as Creator, and even as Administrator. He declares, "I determined not to know anything among you save Christ, and Him crucified." It is a crucified Saviour, and not merely the Saviour Christ as God, that the apostle was determined to know. And in the chapter preceding this, he says, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God." Not the presentation of Christ as God that is oftentimes made, but that peculiar presentation of Christ as God which the cross symbolizes, and must for ever signify—it is this, that the apostle declares to be the foundation of his ministry. The very reliance which he had for success was this: that he believed in such a Saviour, and was determined to draw from the consideration of such a Saviour all those influences by which he hoped to affect the renovation of men and of society.

This is the reason, then, why Paul so much emphasized the cross, the crucifixion, and the death of Christ. It was God under material conditions, suffering unto bodily death for sinful men, that furnished the most stimulating and subduing influences that can be brought to bear upon the human soul. Therefore, in going forth, he

relied upon the influences that there were in a crucified Saviour, and that revolutionized the human soul, and transformed the lie.

It is said that Christ crucified was unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. The Jew had a conception of his Saviour, his Messiah; but it was an intensely worldly conception. It was all sensuous, all physical. It consisted in empire; in earthly wealth; in political power; in palaces, and thrones, and armies, and dominions. When, therefore, a broken Jesus was presented to them, humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, to be lower than the lowest, and less than the least, he was indeed a stumbling-block to the Jews. He was foolishness to the Greeks. That is, to them there was nothing in him. There was no part of their nature that could understand the suffering of the Divine Being for the sake of his creatures. In all their mythology there was no record of any gods or godlings that had any trait or attribute which would lead them to suffer in behalf of inferior beings.

But Paul had felt the power on his own heart of a broken Christ. The presentation of such a Christ had done its work upon him. He knew what it had done for him. He had seen, too, what influence it had upon others. And it was the very power by which he hoped to change the world.

Let us consider, then, a little, that there is a great scale of motives which influence men, and which may, in their own rank and place, be addressed to men for the production of right conduct. For instance, we may attempt to dissuade men from evil by the intrinsic hatefulness of evil. We may attempt to persuade men to a course of holiness on account of the beauty of holiness. We may teach men to leave off things that are wrong because they are wrong, and to revolt from them. We may teach men to follow that which is good because goodness is attractive to every right-minded and noble nature. These things are true, and there is a certain amount of influence in them. We may appeal to the self-interest of men, and teach that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." There is a degree of power in that presentation to many minds.

These are motives that may in some measure touch every faculty of the soul. But in its nature the soul responds most, not to those collateral motives which are drawn from the things which exist around about us, but to that which brings upon us the influence of God's own personal presence. The sense of his being, of his eternity, and of the immortality that dwells around about him—this is that to which the soul responds most. The things that influence us more than any other are the considerations that bring the divine nature directly into contact with our own. It is true that men are oftentimes so shut out from these views that they are more powerfully influenced by worldly considerations; but the use of the mind is such that when you can fairly bring to bear upon it these higher motives, they are capable of producing in it greater changes than any sordid, secular motives whatsoever.

But when divine and infinite things are brought before the mind, some are more apt to stir up men than others. Those views which impress the mind with its own weakness, and want, and imperfection, and guilt, and dreadful danger, are very apt to be influential. And the impression of these things upon the mind is the result of preaching Christ crucified; of calling attention to the stupendousness of the offering that he made when he gave himself for the world; of pointing out all the steps accompanying his mission on earth, that were afterwards declared to be necessary on account of the sinfulness of every human creature, from which sinfulness, without the atonement, men could never have been saved. It is impossible, it seems to me, to produce a rational and realizing sense of man's sinfulness, unless you make sin consist in violations against a living person. When you preach to them that they have broken the law of God, they do not seem to be brought very near to the Divine Majesty; but when you hold up before them not only the justice of God, but his generosity as manifested through Christ, recounting to them the history of his suffering and the story of his love, you bring them to a sense of their offence against the Most High, which wakes up in the soul, if there is a spark of love in it, a generous sorrow. If you desire to bring to men a view that shall convict them of their sinful

ness, you must spread before them the sufferings and death, as well as the love and everlasting beneficence, of the Lord Jesus Christ. You may measure human conduct by law as much as you please, and represent the issues of conduct as wise or foolish; but after all, though there is a certain measure of truth in this direction, that which takes hold of men, and seizes the soul, and fills it with enthusiasm of emotion, is that which brings before the mind the character of Christ as the Saviour of sinners.

Those views which represent God as profoundly concerned for man, as attempting to rescue him, and as willing himself to bear the pains and penalties of sin, rather than that we should suffer, have in their very nature a remarkable power and tendency to rouse up and affect the whole human soul.

Those views which represent the attractive love of God, burning in his deep soul toward sinful beings, yet in sin, and working out endlessly in endeavours to build them up into beauty and holiness, are admirably adapted to influence the minds of men.

Those views which represent the intimate love of Christ for his disciples, and his familiarity with them, and the spiritual communion which is begun here to be consummated hereafter, disclose the whole economy of God's saving grace, as manifested in Christ Jesus. They have a constitutional, and I might almost say an everlasting relation to the feelings, to the will, to the understanding, to every part of the human soul.

This revelation of God in Christ is a power compared with which there is no other power. It is the wisdom of God. It is the power of God unto salvation. There is nothing else that has such a relation to the wants of men, or that stands so connected with the changing of men's feelings, as this presentation of God as manifested in the life and sufferings and death and love of Christ.

Therefore, when the apostle said, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," he avowed his faith in the statement that in the presentation of the divine nature as represented by Christ, there is more moral power upon the heart and the conscience

than in any other thing, and his determination to draw influences from that source in all the work that he did.

In view of this, I remark:

1. The first requisite for preaching effectually is Christ formed in us, the hope of glory. We may preach much *about* Christ, but no man will preach *Christ* except so far as Christ is in him. No man can set forth the need of Christ that there is in the soul, who has not felt that need in his own soul. No man can urgently plead the hope of salvation through Christ, who has not experienced that hope in his own case. It is not enough to have a knowledge of theology, though that is not to be despised. It is not enough to know the mind of man, though the philosophy of the human mind is not to be despised, and is, in its place, almost indispensable. The secret of success in the preaching of the Gospel is that the preacher himself shall have felt the power of that Gospel. There are many men that by natural gifts are qualified to stand eminent and pre-eminent above their fellows, who, though they have a certain kind of personal influence, exert but little religious influence. And, on the other hand, there are many men that are comparatively of slender stature and small endowments, whose life is like a rushing, mighty wind, in regard to the influence that they exert. The difference between these two classes is that those belonging to one are recipients of Christ in their own experience, and that Christ dwells in them perpetually. The presence of Christ in them is the secret of their power. And that is enough to arm a man. The poorest man, the most ignorant man, is mighty through God. If his soul is waked up and inspired by the hope and the faith and the love which are in Christ Jesus, he has a power that others cannot derive from learning, from wealth, or from any other source.

It is not mind-power, then, nor attainments, nor eloquence, nor flow of natural enthusiasm, but that stir and glow which a genuine experience of pardon in Christ gives, that makes a man an efficacious witness and teacher for the Lord Jesus Christ. And I do not mean merely in the pulpit. There is to be professional preaching; but every disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is in his way to be a preacher. Every parent is to be a preacher to his children. Every

schoolmaster or schoolmistress is to be a preacher to his or her pupils. Every man is to be a preacher to those that are subordinate to him. There is not a man that is a Christian who has not a parish in which he is bound to preach. And the way to preach Christ is to have him in your soul, the hope of glory. And where Christ is in the soul, where there is a palpitating love of things that are holy, where there is a zealous fear of offending God, where the soul yearns and longs for Christ Jesus, it is strange what a witching power there is given to a man.

2. A man's success in preaching will depend upon the power that he has of presenting before men Jesus Christ. I have said that the experience of Christ's presence in his own soul was the first requisite. This requisite being possessed, he will have most success in selecting topics for discourses who has power himself most effectually to present to the minds of his congregation the nature of God as set forth in Christ Jesus. There is a great deal of useful intellectual matter that every minister must give to his congregation. There is a great deal of doctrinal matter that he must introduce into his preaching. I do not inveigh against doctrine. It is only the despotisms of doctrine that I would discountenance. There is much that is doctrinal which every minister should preach. No one is fit to instruct his congregation who cannot present with some logical coherence the great truths of which he speaks. It is not wrong to teach doctrines. They have their place in preaching, though not the chiefest place. There is also much of fact and history and description that belongs to the ministerial desk. The Bible is full of material for these things. There is a large field in preaching for ethical instruction; that is, for the special development of duties in all the various relations of life. This is to occupy an important place in every minister's teaching of his congregation. The nature of the human mind; the way in which it acts; the analysis of character; men's occupations; all the sinuous channels in which our thoughts and feelings run—these are things that it is proper to take up and explain in the pulpit. Men are to be taught from the pulpit with reference to everything that pertains to their welfare.

But high above all these topics; high above propositions of truth; high above facts of history; high above all descriptions; high above all teachings of what is right and duty—high above them all, is the fountain of influence, Christ, a living person who gave himself a ransom for sinners and now ever lives to make intercession for them. You may preach every other truth and leave this out, and come short of the very work of the Gospel. Put this in, and you have it all, as it were, in brief. And the power of the ministry is in the presentation, not of great truths, but of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. In that will be the measure of its real and lasting influence.

3. Even when we introduce into the pulpit ethical matters, and discuss the whole field of human life, the way to do it is to derive the power and authority of ethics from Christ Jesus as a crucified Saviour. There has been a great deal of objection to preaching on what are called precepts and morals. On the one side men have run to an extreme in doctrinal preaching, in the preaching of what are called the doctrines of Christ; and on the other side men have not duly magnified these doctrines. And where there are those that go to one extreme, there will always be those that go to the opposite extreme. If you cheat the truth on one side, there will be a cheating of it on the other. When one party begins to teach what are called the doctrines of Christ almost exclusively, another party springs up and teaches moral truths, or doctrines of life. And on the one side you shall hear men say, "This shallow preaching about living and about morals will never do, you must give sound doctrine;" while on the other side you shall hear men say, "O, your mystical, metaphysical doctrines—nobody can understand them, and nobody is profited by them; you must give moral, instructive sermons, that treat of a man's daily life, and tell him how to feel and think and do." And so men are separated into two schools.

Now the fact is, every man ought to preach doctrinal sermons, to come at morals; and every man that wants to come at morals should know that the best way to do it is through high divine truths, or the doctrines of Christ. Both moral and doctrinal preaching are essential to complete instruction.

And the great mistake which men make in regard to the introduction into the pulpit on the Sabbath-day of what are called secular topics, is that they do not conceive that such topics are to be discussed in the light of higher truths, and are to derive their influence and authority from the considerations which flow from the nature of Christ, and his claims upon us. I have a right to speak upon agriculture here; not as agriculture alone, but in the connections which it sustains to the Lord Jesus Christ. Many men are in that calling, and it is that calling that is to have an influence upon their thoughts and feelings and acts, that is working all the time in one way or another upon their soul; and it is my business to draw from it lessons for their instruction and benefit. Are you called to be a mariner? Then there are a thousand lessons that it is my business to draw from the life of a mariner, because they touch you. Are you called to be a tradesman? Then there are multitudes of lessons that it is my business to draw from the vocations of a tradesman, because they are taking hold of your tastes and habits, and framing and fashioning something of your immortality. I am bound to discuss, more or less, banking; not for the sake of money, as a banker would discuss it, but because it has an influence upon the life and destiny of those whom it concerns. I have a right to introduce into my sermons all secular topics, as far as they stand connected with a man's moral character, and his hopes of immortality. If I discuss them in a secular way I desecrate the pulpit; but if I discuss them in the spirit of Christ, and for Christ's sake, that I may draw men out of their peculiar dangers, and lead them into a course of right living, then I give dignity and nobility to the pulpit.

4. All reformations of evil in society attempted in this world, all civil and social reformations, should spring from this vital centre. And here let me say that it seems to me to be a very dangerous thing to preach Christ so that your preaching shall not be a constant rebuke to all the evil in the community. That man who preaches Christ doctrinally, so that no one takes offense, so that no one trembles, so that no one feels rebuked, is not a legitimate and faithful preacher of Christ. And, on the other hand, it is a dangerous thing for a

man to attack evil in the hating of it only. The most malignant developments in the world are those in which men fight evils by malignant passions. The sublime wisdom of the New Testament is this: "Overcome evil with good." The fundamental rule for a reformer is that he shall not only hate evil, but cleave to that which is good. A man's love of that which is good should be more powerful, if possible, than his hatred of that which is evil. For if a man attempts to reform evil because he hates it, he brings himself into one of the most dangerous states of mind. And it is demoralizing to a community to have reforms spring from hatred of evil. But those reforms which spring from love of Christ are regulated, tempered, restrained. And that man only is truly a reformer who is a *Christian* reformer. Was Christ not a reformer? Did he not come to save the world? Did he not come to save the intemperate, the unjust, the dishonest? And when he lived did he not hate evil? Did he not abhor it? Was he not that God before whose sight no evil could be allowed? And yet with what wondrous pity, and with what sweetness of love, did he dwell in the midst of these things, so that the publicans — those men that were debauched and corrupted with handling public moneys, and learning every trick of iniquity in consequence of it—so that the publicans and the sinners (for that is the term by which those fallen creatures that even to this day swarm our streets are known in Scripture) took heart, became inspired with hope, and drew near to him in sacred faith and confidence, that there was pity for them in him. And so Christ reformed by love as well as by hatred of evil; and he drew men from their sin as well as drove them from it. And so in all reformations of society there must be the element of Christ. No reformations will be wholesome unless they have a vital connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. You never can have an effectual temperance reformation, so long as it stands merely in its economic aspects. Unless you can make it a religious movement, it will be of little account. And the peculiar power of Mr. [name] as a temperance lecturer, is owing to the fact that he treats the cause of temperance religiously. As you are aware, he is always accustomed to make the influence

of his appeal to depend upon men's religious nature. And those reformatations that adhere to religion will be wholesome and lasting, while those that leave religion out will not.

5. Hence all philanthropies are partial and imperfect that do not grow up out of this same root. As hatred of evil is dangerous that is not anticipated by the love of Christ; so philanthropy or the attempt to organize positive good in human life, is wanting, that does not spring from the same organizing centre, and that is not inspired by the same influence. But when it springs from this centre, and is inspired by this influence, it becomes, not a mere sentimentalism, but a vivid and veritable power in human society. There are no philanthropists, it seems to me, but those that take in man in his whole nature; that look upon him as a creature of God's just government, as a creature of immortality, as a creature of rewards and penalties; and that attempt to build up in him that which is good, according to the largest pattern of spiritual truth.

6. All public questions of justice, of liberty, of equity, of purity, of intelligence, should be vitalized by the whole force which is in Christ Jesus. There are other motives that may press these forward a certain way, but there is nothing that has such controlling power as the relation of Christ to such questions. When, therefore, in such a time as this, we are crowding along great subjects; or rather, when they are crowding us along, and we are being swept in the current of great national agitations, let us remember that there is but one way in which we can deal with all such subjects, and be deep, and at the same time certain and safe—namely, by making every one of them religious subjects, Christian subjects, and subjects vitalized by direct contact with the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we bring secular matters into this relation there is wholesomeness introduced into them, as well as into us in the management of them.

And now, my dear Christian friends, is not this in accordance with the repeated teaching of the whole New Testament Scriptures, that everything which belongs to human life must, in some way, be connected with this redemptive centre of life, Christ Jesus?

"Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

"Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

There is to be this vitalizing element in our whole life. In our personal character, in our enthusiasms, in our imaginations, in our enjoyments, in all the amenities of social life, there is to be the presence of this divine love in the Lord Jesus Christ. In all that we attempt to do to abate evil; in all that we attempt to do to establish good; in our sympathy and concurrence with the great movements of the age in which we live, we are not to stand aside from religion. It is to enter into our plans, and we are to enter into it with faith and hope and trust. The very power by which we are to do good in this world is Jesus Christ, the Saviour of men, the Lover of the soul.

If there be those, then, that are ambitious, and that have felt with reference to themselves substantially as the mother did respecting her two sons, of whom she said, "Lord, grant that they may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom;" if there are any that have been desirous of having influence, I would say to them, "Beware of the upswelling of natural pride; beware of the action of vanity; remember that the road to power is not the road to self-elevation and self-aggrandizement, but the road to humiliation. You are to come to power by the abasement of yourself; by putting on the Lord Jesus Christ; by having your life hid with Christ in God; by learning to look at all things in the light of eternity. Little by little as you become connected with God, you are to derive power, and come to coronation. But those that go hither and thither, seeking a great name, and place, and influence, seeking to do great things, and seeking their own good, and not another's, and still less God's glory—all those must needs come short of the highest power. The burying of self; the enthroning of Jesus; the living, not for the visible

and transient, but for the invisible and eternal; the might of God manifest in Christ, and made known to us through our own experience—that is the secret of power; and it is the secret of power, not alone in the individual, but in the ministry, and in the church, and in communities, and in the world. Whether we know it or not, God, blessed be his name, is overruling our ignorance, and guiding our very mistakes. He is pressing forward this wonderful power to its consummation. The day lingers, but shall not linger for ever, when he shall take to himself his great power, and come and reign in myriads of darkened hearts; in churches that now are Christian only in name; in institutions that, though they were established under the benign influences of Christianity, represent it not; in counsels; and in camps. And then the whole earth shall see the salvation of our God. Even so, Lord, come quickly.

And now, praying, weeping, pleading Christians that seem to have but a small sphere, remember that every single Christian experience that you have, every single vital and God-inspired Christian experience that is wrought out in you, no matter when or where, becomes a part of the riches of God in the world. Money is money, and though locked up in the deepest and darkest vault, every coin is one more coin of the world's wealth. Now the heart is God's mint, and every single evolution of true Christian feeling is an addition to the greatness of God's power in this world. Do not think that you must be in some public position. Where you are called, as you are in your circumstances, fulfil the will of Christ Jesus. Let the mind that was in Christ be more and more completely in you. Let the spirit of Christ dwell in you richly in all things. And thus you shall be preachers of Christ, and faithful witnesses; and ere long you shall hear that voice, then sweeter than all conceivable music, saying, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord."

The Precious Promises of Jesus.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."—Rev. xxi. 6.

There is always a majesty in what Jesus says. He still speaks as one having authority. He speaks as conscious of his own dignity and glory. He promises as one who has a right to do so, as one who promises to give his own. He says, "*I will give*;" and what he gives is always worth receiving. He gives as one who knows our wants, and his own resources.—What so suitable to the thirsty as water? To those who are dying for thirst, as living, or life-giving water? Reader, are you a thirsty soul? if so, Jesus speaks to you.—The promise is made expressly for you. Do you thirst for pardon? or peace? or holiness? or the Holy Spirit? The promise of Jesus includes the whole. But if you would have these blessings, you must go to Jesus for them and expect to receive them from him, as a free gift. He will not barter with you, taking your promises, or efforts, or feelings, and giving you these good things in return. No, he will give, and give freely. His terms are, "*NO MONEY—NO PRICE.*" Out of the love of his own heart he gives. To gratify the benevolence of his own nature he bestows. Come then to Jesus as guilty, and he will pardon you. Come as troubled, and he will give you peace. Come as sinful and polluted, and he will give you holiness.—Come as weak and feeble, as ignorant and out of the way, as miserable and unhappy, and he will give you the Holy Spirit.—Just as you are, come to Jesus: and come to Jesus for all you need. Come at once. Come as often as you will. Come *direct* to the Saviour, remind him of his own word, tell him that he has said that he will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. Tell him you are thirsty, that you come on purpose to receive, to prove the truth of his word, and that you will be very much disappointed if not supplied. Go to him in this way, and success is certain.

Precious Lord Jesus, a poor thirsty sinner is before thee; I come that, according to thy promise, I may drink and be satis-

fied—drink and bless thy name. Give me a sweet sense of the pardon of all my sins, and give it me now. Give me the enjoyment of thine own peace, even the peace that passeth all understanding. Give me holiness of heart and life, for I long to be like thee, and to live to thee, and for thee, on the earth. Give me the Holy Spirit, even as thou didst to the woman of Samaria: "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." O Jesus, how I long to enjoy the spirit of adoption in all grace and power, and as thou alone canst give me that blessing, I come to thee for it; send me not away without it; but breathe, oh breathe upon me, and say, "*Receive the Holy Ghost!*" My soul, I charge thee to come daily, yea hourly, to Jesus, and plead with him for the living water he has promised, until thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

"*It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*"—John xvi. 7.

The thoughts of Jesus are always full of his people; that at every opportunity he may do them good. Nor does he only desire their welfare, but their happiness also. He had been the Comforter of his people, but he must leave them, that he may go unto his Father, and intercede for them. Before he leaves them, he promises to send them another Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, who should abide with them for ever. That Comforter he has sent, and that Comforter is in the Church, not only in the Church, but also in every believer. Now he daily teaches us our need of Jesus, testifies of his love to us, and ability to save us, and leads us to Him for all we need. The presence and work of the Comforter always lays us in the dust, and places Christ on the throne. The more we have of the presence and power of the Spirit, the more we shall know of self-abasement and humiliation of soul, and the more we shall know of Jesus, in the efficacy of his blood, the glory of his righteousness, and the perfection of his salvation. The Holy Spirit comforts us by taking

the eye off self and fixing it on Christ; by leading us out of self to live upon Christ; and by teaching us to renounce self, and make Jesus all in all. On all the teaching of the Holy Spirit you may see legibly written, "Not self, but Christ. Not the creature, but the Saviour. Men nothing, Christ all in all."

O Jesus, I bless thee for the promise of the Comforter, and for all that the Comforter hath taught me. Never had I known my state by nature, never had I felt my need of thee, never had I tasted the sweetness of thy love, or proved the efficacy of thy precious blood, if thou hadst not sent the Comforter. As thou hast wrought salvation for me, so the Holy Spirit has wrought salvation in me. Thou art my Saviour, and the Holy Spirit is my Sanctifier. Thy blood and obedience have procured me a title to heaven, and the Holy Spirit will qualify and prepare me for its enjoyment. Blessed Jesus how much I owe thee! How deeply I am indebted to thee! But for thy sovereign grace where or what should I have been!

Holy Spirit, dwell in me as in thy temple, and fill me with thy life, light, power, and love! Sweetly rule and control all my mental powers, set me apart for Jesus, conform me to the likeness of Jesus, and devote me wholly to the glory of Jesus. Bear thy witness with my spirit that I belong to Jesus, seal me unto the day of redemption, and be in me the earnest of the inheritance. Teach me to pray, say Abba in my heart, and evermore help my infirmities. Shed abroad in me the love of the Father, sprinkle me with the blood of the Son, and indulge me with sweet communion with thyself. Oh sanctify me wholly, that I may not grieve thee, but may I daily realize that thou hast sealed me unto the day of redemption. O Saviour, I bless thy holy name, for having sent the Comforter, and especially for having sent him into my heart!

" *whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do; that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*"—John xiv. 13.

Precious promise of a more precious Saviour! Jesus know that the Father had given all things into his hands, and out of his tender love to his disciples, he removes from the n all ground of fear, and all cause

for care. He says to his beloved ones, "I have all things in my possession, and at my disposal. For all you want, come unto me. From all you fear, flee unto me. I shall be always near you, always attentive to you; and I give you my word that I will never fail you nor forsake you. I authorize you to come to me whenever you will, and for all you desire. Fear not that you can come too often, or that you can ask for too much. Make use of my name whenever you go to my Father; plead my love to you, plead what I have done for you; and plead, expecting that you shall receive.— Whatever you want, I can do. Whatever you ask, I will do. I only place one limit, and that limit flows from my love. I cannot give you anything that will injure you, or anything that would lead you to dishonour my Father. Within this limit, ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. But ask with confidence, for I will make good my word. I will gratify all the best desires of your heart. The more confidence you have in me the better. The more fervently you plead the better.— Never look upon my delays as denials, for I will withhold from you no good thing. It is my pleasure that you should be well supplied. I will rejoice over you to do you good. I will make all my goodness pass before you. I will never turn away from you."

Blessed Jesus, and may I come to thee when I will, and for all I want? Hast thou put a blank cheque into my hand, signed with thy name, that I may fill it up and present it unto thy Father? May I ask what I will, assured that thou wilt give me? Oh glorious privilege! Will giving glorify thy Father, even giving to one like me, when I go to him pleading thy name? What a sweet thought, that God's glory insures any supplies; for God will not only give me what I ask in the name of Jesus, but he will do so that he may be glorified in his Son. Here Jesus not only opens his own heart unto us, but the heart of his Father also; and tells us how we may do honour to his Father, even by coming to him, asking great things of him, and expecting great things from him.

My soul, look at this precious promise; consider it well; exercise faith in it; and then plead it with thy God. Go to the Father of Jesus as thy Father; tell him

what his beloved Son has said, and put his truth and faithfulness to the test. Remember that Jesus has said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." The promise, then, cannot be broken. The word of Jesus cannot fail. It still lies before him, and he waits to make it good. Therefore, as if to make assurance doubly sure, he adds, "IF YE SHALL ASK ANYTHING IN MY NAME, I WILL DO IT."

LIFE! LIFE! ONLY LIFE!

This was the almost dying exclamation of a voluptuous novelist. He died by piecemeal, dictating his wild stories to the last. Strange stories they were, indeed, for a dying man to write. The closing scene was striking and instructive. His feet and hands, his legs and arms, had for months become perfectly paralysed and motionless. At length he lost all sensation, though his fancy retained its power. Feeling no more pain, he said to his physician (thinking he was about to recover), "I feel no more pain—it will soon be over." "Yes," said the medical man, giving another and more impressively solemn meaning to his words, "it will soon be over." When made fully aware that he was dying, he called his wife to his bedside, and begging her to fold his motionless hands together, said, lifting his dying eyes to heaven, "We must then think of God also!" Shortly after, the expiring flame of life glared up again within him—and fancying he might still postpone intrusive thoughts of God and eternity, he said, "I shall be well enough in the evening to go on with the tale I have been inditing." He asked for the reading of the last sentence—and just as it was finished, expired. Thus passed to its solemn account a human soul richly gifted, but utterly faithless to the high trusts of its stewardship.

"We must then think of God also."

Ah! we must, indeed. A man may live in ignorance of this solemn and momentous truth, but not so will he die. During all his life, not one hour or moment may be given to this first and chief of all concerns, but at last he will lift his dying eyes to heaven, and confess God, and implore mercy. A great discovery did the dying novelist make, but it came too late

to avail him aught. Now, when the voice of passion was hushed—when reason ascended her tribunal, and the creature and the world retired from his thoughts, he was constrained to think of God, the high and holy and mighty One whom he had neglected. Oh, it was a sad place to find out, for the first time, *that we must think of God also!*

And yet multitudes never find it out till they are stretched on a dying bed. They never think, seriously and rationally, on the claims of God, on their lost estate and need of pardoning mercy, till the slighted and terrible One crowds himself upon their notice in the hour of their departure from this life—meets them, in frowns, as the God of retribution, as they cross the threshold of eternity. To think of God in such a moment, not as a father and friend and Saviour, but as an angry judge, an implacable enemy, an eternally forfeited good, must be a bitter and overwhelming experience.

Yes, every man must think of God sooner or later. The sinner may crowd him out of his *life*, but God will make a place to himself in the scene of *death!*—In that awful hour he will stand out before his mind in the light and impressiveness of a near and full revelation; he must see him in the reality and truthfulness of his being, and in all his dread attributes, and *think* of him as the once patient and long suffering God, but henceforth the un pitying and almighty avenger of guilt; he will think of him in *hell* for ever, and the thought will burn like fire in his soul, and be his everlasting shame and torment.

Reader, had you not better think of God now, and at once be reconciled to him, through Jesus Christ.

THE EFFECT OF PARDON.

In the garrison town of Woolwich, a few years ago, a soldier was about to be brought before the commanding officer of his regiment, for some misdemeanour. The officer entering the soldier's name said, "Here is — again, what *can* we do with him, he has gone through almost every ordeal?" The sergeant-major, M. B., apologized for intruding, and said, "There is one thing which has never been done with him yet, sir." "What is that, sergeant-major?" "Well, sir, he has never yet been *forgiven.*" "FORGIVEN!" said the

colonel; "Here is his case entered." "Yes, but the man is not before you, and you can cancel it." After the colonel had reflected for a few minutes, he ordered the man to be brought in, when he asked what he had to say relative to the charges brought against him. "Nothing, sir," was the reply, "only that I am sorry for what I have done." After making some suitable remarks, the colonel said, "Well, we have resolved to *forgive* you." The soldier was struck with astonishment, the tears started from his eyes—he wept. The colonel, with the adjutant, and others present, felt deeply, when they saw the man so humbled. The soldier thanked the colonel for his kindness, and retired. The narrator had the soldier under his notice for two years and a half after this, and never during that time was there a charge brought against him, or fault found with him. Mercy triumphed! Kindness conquered! The man was won!

This is just the method God adopts with us in the everlasting gospel. We are guilty. The charges are brought against us. The case is entered. But the Lord delighteth in mercy. He seeks to melt us by his love. He is ready to forgive: He sends to us, saying, "Only acknowledge thine iniquities." And then offers us a pardon—a pardon which cost Him the life of his only begotten Son. A pardon, not of one sin, but of all our sins. A pardon that will bring peace to the conscience on earth, and entitle us to eternal rest in heaven. The soldier, in the case before us, gladly accepted the pardon, was melted down by the kindness of his colonel, and wept as a child would weep. But sinners too often hear of God's forgiving love without emotion, and instead of humbly confessing their sins, and gladly embracing the pardon offered, they treat it with neglect or contempt. What can be the reason of this? The reason is, they do not realize their criminality, or the danger to which they are exposed—they do not believe in an eternal hell as the punishment which their sins deserve, and therefore they treat the gospel as if it were a fable, or a subject of no importance.

Reader, have you felt that you are guilty before God? Guilty of breaking his law, which is holy, just and good. Guilty, not of breaking the law once, but ten thousand times—not in one form but in a multitude of ways—so that if God were to punish you according to your desert, he must sentence you to hell for ever. Have you understood the gospel, which tells you that God is loath to punish you, that he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner; to prove which, he spared not his Son, but delivered him up, the just for the unjust; to bear our sins, to atone for our guilt; that so God may be just, and yet pardon and justify every sinner that believes on Him? Do you see

that God offers to pardon you, invites you to come to his throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy—and has long been, and is now, waiting to be gracious unto you. What would you have said if the soldier referred to had insulted his colonel, when he told him, that he had made up his mind to forgive him; and had told him he did not want his pardon, —but that he was a most hardened and ungrateful wretch? Yet if you refuse, or neglect, to humble yourself before God, and ask for the pardon promised in his word, you are acting just such a part before God. O, the folly, the consummate folly of the man, who trifles with eternal punishment—who rejects the Saviour of sinners—who refuses to come to God by Him, that He may be pardoned, sanctified, and saved!

Grace teaches good works. The pardoned soldier became a changed man—mercy did what punishment could not, for it thoroughly reformed him. So, if we believe the love that God has to us, if we receive the message of his mercy, the promise of his grace, and come to him for pardon and obtain it; we shall find that the grace of God, that bringeth salvation to us, will teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world. Nothing softens the heart like kindness, and therefore in the gospel, the kindness of God our Saviour, is set before us. Nothing inspires the soul with gratitude like love, nor will anything make us desire so to walk as to please God like gratitude; and therefore the gospel minister cries, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins!" If the grace that presents a free, full, and everlasting pardon of all sin, will not melt our hard hearts, and reform our vicious lives, nothing will. The law with its rigid requirements and terrible threatenings, only hardens the sinner's heart, and renders him obdurate and sullen; but the gospel with its sweet invitations, gracious provision, and glorious promises, melts, humbles, and re-models every heart that believes and receives it, and as it melts, humbles and re-models the heart, it consequently reforms, regulates, and consecrates the life to God's glory and praise. Once more, reader, that gospel speaks to you. Once more, the God of all grace addresses you. After living so long in sin, after hardening yourself against him so often, after treating him with such criminal contempt, he says, "Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." That is, they shall be blotted out, they shall be all forgiven, and you shall be white as the driven snow, and clean as the well-washed

wool. And even if my reader be a desperate sinner, one of the foulest transgressors, one of the basest of Adam's race; yea, if you are the vilest that ever breathed God's air, or blasphemed God's holy name, or injured your fellow-men, if you deserve the lowest and hottest hell, yet to you, to you at this moment, to you after all that you have done, God speaks, not in a voice of thunder—speaks not in wrath, but in mercy—speaks, as if he were not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance—and what, think you, are his words? "Wonder, O heavens! Be astonished, O earth!" God, the infinitely holy! God, the inflexibly righteous! God says to the vilest out of hell, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked," the desperately wicked, "forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;" the man of no character, the most depraved, "and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy," yea, he will have mercy, for he delights to do so, He will have mercy upon him; "and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Abundantly pardon! Yes, he will pardon like a God. Pardon all sin, pardon all sin completely. Pardon with his whole heart, and with his whole soul. Pardon so as to cover sin, so as to annihilate the charge of sin, so as to free from all the penal consequences of sin, and from the consequences of sin for ever. He will forgive all, not only forgive but forget. Hear his own precious words, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more." O, blessed assurance, that God will not only blot our sins out of his book, but out of his memory, so that they shall be remembered against us no more for ever.

PRAY AND WORK.

A lazy child, who never knew his lessons, one day asked a studious child, who knew them perfectly, how he was able to be always so well prepared.

The busy child, who did not trust in his own strength to keep from evil, replied:—"I pray to God to enable me to be diligent and to learn well."

"Oh, very well," said the lazy boy, "I will pray also."

The following day his lessons were no better learned than usual. He said to his companion:—"Why am I not as well prepared as you, since I said the same prayer?"

"Did you study as well as pray?" replied the other.

"No," said the lazy boy.

"Then you could not know your lesson," replied his busy companion. "It is necessary both to pray and to work." Work and prayer must ever go hand in hand.—[The Dial.]

THE FIRST AND THE LAST.

Jesus, Sun and Shield art Thou;
Sun and Shield for ever!
Never canst Thou cease to shine,
Cease to guard us never.
Cheer our steps as on we go,
Come between us and the foe.

Jesus, Bread and Wine art Thou,
Wine and Bread for ever!
Never canst Thou cease to feed
Or refresh us never.
Feed we still on bread divine,
Drink we still this heavenly wine!

Jesus, Love and Life art Thou,
Life and Love for ever!
Ne'er to quicken shalt Thou cease,
Or to Love us never.
All of life and love we need
Is in Thee, in Thee indeed.

Jesus, Peace and Joy art Thou,
Joy and Peace for ever!
Joy that fades not, changes not,
Peace that leaves us never.
Joy and peace we have in Thee,
Now and through eternity.

Jesus, Song and Strength art Thou,
Strength and Song for ever!
Strength that never can decay,
Song that ceaseth never.
Still to us this strength and song
Through eternal days prolong.

The Daily Prayer-Meeting.

A MAN IN EARNEST.

A young man, who was evidently in great spiritual trouble, went up to the upper lecture room, and wrote, in a handsome hand, a request for prayer. The writer was sitting at the same table. He pushed forward the written note, seeming desirous that it should be read. He was about thirty years of age. He signed his full name to the note, which contained a confession that he was a great sinner, and an earnest request that he might be made the subject of prayer. We entered into conversation.

"You say in your note that you are a great sinner. What do you mean by that?" we enquired.

"The words do not mean all I feel," said the man, looking very downcast and sad.

"What more would you have them mean?"

"A great deal more. I am a *very* great sinner, sir."

"Have you been an intemperate man?"

"Never, sir, with all my other sins I never gave myself up to drinking. I have always been a sober man."

He had the air of great intelligence and respectability.

"You have been well educated."

"Have had a good common education," he replied.

"Had you pious parents?" He dropped his head in a moment.

"Both pious; but they are dead; can't pray for me any more; gave my mother a great deal of trouble—poor dead mother," and he burst into sobbing like a child.

"What livelihood have you followed?"

"I have followed the sea."

"A common sailor, or an officer?"

"A common sailor; never aspired to be anything more than a first-rate seaman," he again answered.

He made great efforts to restrain his tears.

"What aroused your attention to the concern and anxiety you are in?"

"I suppose it was thinking."

"What made you think?" After much hesitation he said—

"Perhaps it was the good Spirit."

"Did your parents pray much for you?"

He was again greatly moved, as he spoke with great difficulty, "Oh! yes, very much—especially my mother."

"Did you ever think your mother's prayers would be answered?"

"I am afraid they will not be."

"Why not?"

"Because, I am so great a sinner. I do not hope it—dare not."

"Did you ever read or hear about great sinners being saved?"

"I have read of them."

"*Very* great sinners?"

"I think I have."

"Saved by Christ?"

"Yes."

"As great sinners as you are?"

"I should think so," he replied, looking up earnestly and wonderingly at the course of inquiries.

"Now, says Mr. H.," calling him by the name he had appended to the note, "do you believe that Jesus Christ can *save* you?"

He fixed his large blue eyes on the writer with the most intense gaze, until they

overflowed with tears, and his chin quivered as he answered with great solemnity—"No! no!" adding force to his answer by shaking his head.

"He says he can," we rejoined.

"How is that?" he quickly inquired.

"He says he can 'save to the uttermost,' and that must include you."

"Can you believe what Jesus says?"

"I cannot disbelieve Him."

"He says, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.' We repeated other invitations and promises, and assured him that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

An elder of a church was present also, and repeated 'many great and precious promises,' and closing the doors, we knelt in prayer—we three. At the close of our prayer, he still remained kneeling, which perceiving, we said to him, "Will you pray for yourself?"

After a few minutes hesitation, he burst forth with the prayer—"Oh! Lord Jesus! here I am a poor sinner; if you can do anything for such a wretch as me, I want you to do it."

He could say no more, and we arose from our knees.

Afterward in the prayer-meeting he rose and stated his case, and called attention to his request. He said he had made up his mind to seek salvation from God through faith in Jesus Christ until he obtained it.

We met him the next day at the prayer-meeting; his countenance greatly changed yet wearing a peculiar sad expression. Inquiring of him how he felt, he said, "Something better. This is all very strange," he continued, "I have been sick and longed for death many a time, and did not care what became of me. But it seems I was not to die till my poor mother's prayers could be answered. I feel now as if they would be. Oh! that I could tell her how I feel!"

"Tell Jesus just how you feel and just what you desire," we replied.

"I have told him," he answered, "I have made a clean breast of it—you may believe that. I told him that none but he could save such a sinner as I am. I never knew I was so wicked."

He afterward, on another occasion, arose in the prayer-meeting, and said he was just beginning to hope a little in the mercy of

God through Jesus Christ. He said he had always considered that he was quite a moral man, but he had found out that he had been a very wicked man, a great sinner. But oh! said he, the big tears falling fast, I begin to hope a little that my mother's God is my God. Here his voice became inaudible, and would not obey his bidding, though he made strenuous efforts to speak.

On a subsequent occasion, he said, "I hope I am a Christian, but you don't know how my sins plague me."

"Look to Jesus," we replied, "Look to Jesus and be saved—not in your sins but from your sins."

"Oh! yes," he answered, "Only Jesus can do me any good."—*N. Y. Observer.*

THE WRONG SIGNAL.

"What has happened?" said Mr. Hamilton to his son, who entered the room in haste and with the air of one who had some interesting news to communicate.

"A freight-train has run off the track and killed a man," said Joseph.

"How did that happen?" said Mr. H.

"The watchman gave the wrong signal. The engineer said that if he had given the right signal, the accident would not have occurred."

Making a wrong signal costs a man his life.—There is another sense in which wrong signals sometimes occasion the loss of life—of life spiritual. The preacher who fails to declare the way of salvation as it is laid down in God's Word, who teaches that all men shall be saved, or who teaches that men may secure their salvation by their own works, gives the wrong signal. In consequence, men take the wrong track, and go on to perdition.

The private Christian, whose reputable standing in the church and in society gives influence to his example, pursues a course of conduct utterly inconsistent with the injunction, "Be not conformed to this world." The young Christian is led to practice a similar course; by degrees he loses his spirituality, and becomes one of those who have a name to live, but are dead. The holding out of the wrong signal led to the disaster.

A professing Christian exposes himself to temptation. He has power to resist the temptation, and escapes unharmed. One of less power is led to follow his example, and falls into sin.—To him his predecessor had given the signal that there was no danger there. He gave the wrong signal.

We are constantly giving signals to our fellow-men—signals which will direct their course in their journey to eternity. How careful should we be at all times to avoid giving the wrong signal!—*Examiner.*

RECEIVING SINNERS.

"This man receiveth sinners."—LUKE xv. 2.

The ironical taunt of proud and censorious Pharisees formed the glory of him who came "not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Publicans and outcasts; those covered with a deeper than any bodily leprosy—laid bare their wounds to the "Great Physician;" and as conscious guilt and timid penitence crept abashed and imploring to his feet, they found nothing but a forgiving and a gracious welcome!

"His ways" were not as "man's ways!" The watchmen, in the Canticles, "smote" the disconsolate one seeking her lost Lord; they tore off her veil, mocking with chilling unkindness her anguished tears. Not so "the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls." "*This man receiveth sinners!*" See at Nicodemus, stealing under the shadows of night to elude observation—type of the thousand thousand who in every age have gone trembling in their night of sin and sorrow to this Heavenly Friend! Does Jesus punish his timidity shut His door against him, spurning him from his presence!—"He will not break the bruised reed, He will not quench the smoking flax!"

And he is still the same! He who arrested a persecutor in his blasphemies, and tuned the lips of an expiring felon with faith and love, is at this hour standing with all the garnered treasures of Redemption in his hand, proclaiming, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out!"

Are we from this to think lightly of sin? or by example and conduct to palliate and overlook its enormity? Not so: sin, as sin can never be sufficiently stamped with the brand of reprobation. But we must carefully distinguish between the offence and the offender. Nothing should be done on our part by word or deed to mock the penitential sighings of a guilty spirit, or send the trembling outcast away, with the despairing feeling of "*No hope.*" "*This man receiveth sinners,*" and shall not *we*? Does *He* suffer the veriest dregs of human depravity to crouch unbidden at His feet, and to gaze on His forgiving countenance with the uplifted eye of hope, and shall *we* dare to deal out harsh, and severe, and crushing verdicts on an offending (it may be a *deeply* offending) brother? Shall we

pronounce "*crimson*" and "*scarlet*" sins and sinners beyond the pale of mercy, when *Jesus* does not? Nay, rather, when wretchedness, and depravity, and backsliding cross our path, let it not be with the bitter taunt or the ironical retort that we bid them away. Let us bear,—endure,—remonstrate,—deal tenderly. *Jesus did so, Jesus does so!* Ah! if we had within us His unconquerable love of souls; His yearning desire for the everlasting happiness of sinners, we should be more frequently in earnest expostulation and affectionate appeal with those who have hitherto got no other than harsh thoughts and repulsive words. If this "*mind*" really were in us, "*which was also in Him,*" we should more frequently ask ourselves, "*Have I done all I might have done to pluck this brand from the burning?* Have I remembered what *grace has wrought, what grace can do?*"

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins!"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

MIND YOUR BUSINESS.

There is no better rule for a trader, or in fact for any person, whether male or female, than to mind their own business.—Success almost always attends absorption in the pursuit to which we have devoted our lives. That ill success which accompanies the vast majority of mankind and keeps them poor through life, is not attributable to "*bad luck,*" as most of them will have it. It arises simply from the fact that they do not mind their own business. What then does the maxim "*mind your business*" involve? It means, first, that a love for the avocation which we are engaged in should be cultivated until our profession or avocation takes precedence in our own minds to everything else. The man who endeavours to follow a pursuit for which he has no taste cannot expect to succeed in these days of sharp competition. Those who have natural tastes and proclivities for their callings will be sure to distance him. It is not enough that labour is not distasteful. It must be pleasurable in order to secure

success. So in just the proportion that a man's business is attractive will the man be inclined to devote his time to it, and when finally habit shall have turned work into amusement, he will have the necessary liking for it to make it profitable.

In one sense, people are unsuccessful through bad luck, but not the bad luck they talk about. Their bad luck is that they have not interest enough in their business to be thoroughly conversant with it, and to give their attention to it. They should either require this power of voluntary and complete absorption, or retire from the pursuit in which they are engaged and embrace some more congenial occupation. If a man enters one pursuit, and failing in that, turns immediately to a new avocation, in which he becomes successful, he may be considered fortunate, for the transition from one avocation to another necessarily involves a loss of time, not frequently of money, and quite often subjects a man to the disadvantage caused by inexperience.

But even in the matter of literary or artistic recreations his studies should never be paramount to his profession. When the two come into competition, his recreation, not his business, should give way. He should mind his business, whatever may be the result to collateral matters. He should recollect that, next to the duty of selecting a profession or avocation which bears an aptitude to his congenial or acquired proclivities, he owes it to the pursuit in which he is engaged to make himself as eminent as possible therein. He should never be contented with mediocrity. Let him bear in mind this, and be particular to mind his own business, and there can be but little doubt of success in his industrial concerns.—*Com. Review.*

WHAT IF IT BE TRUE AFTER ALL?

Some years ago, a young man was walking thoughtfully along a crowded thoroughfare in Manchester. For some time he had been a sceptic in religious matters. In the society of young men, of a similar class, he had been led first to doubt the truth of the Gospel, and then to reject it as a cunningly devised fable. But a change had recently come over his thoughts. Circum-

stances had altered with him for the worst, his prospects had become clouded, and the vaunted friendship of former companions had proved utterly hollow and worthless. Fair weather friends had forsaken him, while Christian friends evinced a deep sympathy in his trials, and a real anxiety both for his temporal and eternal welfare. By their advice he had accompanied them the previous evening to "the place where prayer was wont to be made." He did not believe that the prayers to which he listened could be heard and answered; but he was constrained to contrast the happiness of those around him with his own misery. It was on the following day that he was walking through the busy streets, thinking of what he had seen and heard the evening before, when, in midst of all the roar of traffic, something seemed to whisper in his ear, "What if it be true after all?" It did not seem as if the thought merely had been suggested to his mind, but as if a spirit had whispered, with thrilling earnestness, "What if it be true after all?" Staggered for a moment, the young man tried to re-assure himself. He mingled with the crowd, and endeavoured to forget the question, but in vain. He tried to laugh himself out of the impression it had made, but in vain; the words were indelibly fixed upon his mind. Wherever he went, whatever he did, the enquiry still seemed ringing in his ears, "What if it be true after all?" Soon he saw that, if true, eternal destruction awaited him. He was led to inquire, "What must I do to be saved?" and, after a severe conflict, was enabled to behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. Surely this was the work of the Holy Spirit. It was recorded thus by the subject, as well as the writer of this brief sketch, that his brethren may be encouraged to pray for those who are still in darkness, and never be weary in well-doing. And should it meet the eye of a single sceptic, may the question be divinely applied to his conscience also, "What if it be true after all!"—*From "Things New and Old."*

THE GOOD NEWS.

December 1st, 1861.

THE GAIN OF THE WORLD?

“What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world?” This assumes the possibility of an individual gaining the whole world. It assumes that an individual might attain to such a position, by dint of his industry, energy and enterprise, as not only to be monarch of all he surveyed, but monarch of all this globe. It would be no mean possession. Compared with it the broadest earldom of the richest peer would be but as an handbreadth; compared with it the largest kingdom of the mightiest monarch would be but a province. For its ascertained dimensions are eight thousand miles in diameter, and twenty five thousand in circumference. Within these extensive bounds it contains towering mountains, copious rivers, expansive oceans, and numerous isles. The trees of a thousand forests, the flowers of every hue, and the songsters of every note are to be found in it. In short, whatever is pleasant to the eye, that is congenial to the nature of man, and is calculated to contribute to his physical and mental enjoyment, may be found within its limits. But suppose a man had it for his inheritance, how small would its possession be compared with the rest of the universe, which he would not possess. That sun that gives its light from day to day is thirteen hundred thousand times larger than this earth, and so distant is it from the stars, that though light moves at the rate of one hundred and eighty thousand miles in a second of time, yet it will take five years for a ray of light to pass from our sun to the nearest star. But after all, what is this earth, and yonder sun, and these planets that sparkle in the night, to all the other suns, and worlds, and planets, which the telescope has spread out before the eye

of man? Only as the fringe on the garment of creation. For astronomers tell us that there are eighty millions of suns discovered, around which roll by estimation, two billions, four hundred millions of worlds, and these may be only the outskirts of some still mightier creation; and all this immense universe is in motion. Each sun, and world, and system, is rolling in its appointed orbit with a velocity that outstrips the whirlwind. And compared with all these, the world on which we stand is but as an atom of sand on the sea-shore, but as a leaf of the forest, but as a drop of the ocean; and if we should gain it by our efforts, if we could secure it at any price, it would be but a trifle compared with the rest of the universe that still remained.

“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.

HOW WAS IT BLOTTED OUT?

A letter read in one of the daily prayer-meetings in New York, contains the following:

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—You know that for many years I had been a follower of strange gods, and a lover of this world and its vanities. Although not what the world calls a bad man, I was self-righteous, and thought I had religion enough of my own that was better than the Bible. I did not believe in the devil or hell, I believed that as God had created man, He was bound to save him. I knew I did not serve Him, did not know Him, did not obey Him.—Prayer was forgotten, church was neglected, and worldly morality was the tree which brought forth its own deceptive fruit. As time rolled on, God blessed me with children. As my boy grew up, our mutual love for him made us anxious about his future welfare and career. From time to time, intelligence beamed from him. His

mind turned over the little he had learned of God, and his nightly prayers were taught him by us, from habit and superstition, more than any conscious feelings. His questions often puzzled me; and the sweet and earnest manner in which he enquired of his poor, sinful father, to know more about his heavenly Father, and that "happy land, far, far away," which his nurse had taught him, proved to me that God had given me a great blessing in him.

"A greater distrust of myself and a greater sense of my inability to assure my boy of the truth of the faith contained in the simple little prayers I had learned from my mother, gradually began to grow over me, and made me oftener think. Still, I never went to church; had not even a Bible in the house. What was I to teach my boy, Christ and Him crucified, or the doctrines I had tried to believe? Blessed be God, He, in His sovereign will, chose for me!"

"One of his little friends died, then another, then his uncle. All these made an impression on the boy. He rebelled against it; wanted to know 'Why God had done it? It was hard that God should just go and take his friends; he wished He would not do it.' I, of course, had to explain the best way I could.

"One evening he was lying on the bed, partly undressed; myself and my wife being seated by the fire. She had been telling me that J—— had not been a good boy that day. She had been telling what he had been doing, and had reproved him for it. All was quiet, when suddenly, he broke out in a loud crying and sobbing, which surprised us. I went to him and asked him what was the matter? 'I don't want it there, father; I don't want it there,' said the child. 'What, my child; what is it?' 'Why, father, I don't want the angels to write down in God's book all the bad things I have done to-day. I don't

want it there. I wish it could be wiped out.' And his distress increased. What could I do? I did not believe; but yet I had been taught the way, I had to console him, so I said, 'Well, you need not cry; you can have it all wiped out in a minute, if you want.' 'How, father, how?' 'Why, get down on your knees, and ask God for Christ's sake, to wipe it out, and he will do it.' I did not require to speak twice.— He jumped out of bed, saying, 'Father, won't you come and help me?' Now came the trial. The boy's distress was so great, and he pleaded so earnestly that the big man, who had never bowed down before God in spirit and in truth, got down on his knees alongside of that dear boy, and asked God to wipe away his sins; and, perhaps, though my lips did not speak it, my heart included my own sins too. We then got up, and he lay down on his bed again. In a few moments he said, 'Father, are you sure it is all wiped out.' Oh! how the acknowledgment grated through my unbelieving heart, as the words came to my mouth. "Why, yes, my son; the Bible says, if you ask God from your heart, for Christ's sake, to do it, and if you are really sorry for what you have done, it shall be blotted out."

"A smile of pleasure passed over his face, as he quietly asked, 'What did the angel blot it out with? With a sponge?' Again was my soul stirred within me, as I answered, 'No, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.'

"The fountains had at last burst forth. They could not be checked, and my cold heart was melted within me. I felt like a poor, guilty sinner, and turning away, said, "My dear wife, we must find God, if we want to shew him to our children. We cannot shew them the way, unless we know it ourselves."

"After a little, the boy, with almost

heaven looking out of his eye, came from his bed, and, leaning on my knee, turned up his face to mine, and said, 'Father, are you and mother sinners?' 'Why, yes, my son, we are.' 'Why,' said he, 'have you not a Saviour! Why are you sinners? God don't love sinners; why don't you love God?'

"I answered as best I could; and in the silent hours of the night I bent in prayer over that dear boy, and prayed, 'Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief.' My wife, too, united with me, and we prayed jointly for ourselves and for our child, and God heard our prayers, and received us, as He always does those who seek Him with a whole heart, for He has said unto such, they shall surely find me." W. S.

WHEN TO KEEP SILENCE.

It is a fact that very few of us know exactly when to hold our peace. In matters of speech we are far more easily moved by passion than by judgment. The tongue is an unruly member, and by no human philosophy can it be brought into submission to the dictates of prudence.—There are seasons however, when even this member may be to a great extent freed from restraint. In our own houses, by our own firesides, with our heart-friends around us, we may indeed speak freely. Our words should never on any occasion be like arrows dipped in gall.—They should never be edged with malice, or envenomed with slander. They should always be such as, if heard and understood by all the world, that none in all the world could shame us for them. My object in writing is not to tell the reader when he should refrain from saying wicked words, or rash and abusive words, or false or flattering words, for these should never be spoken by any of us at any time. But I mean to show when a man should say no words at all—when he should absolutely shut his mouth.

The Psalmist was undoubtedly a wise and prudent man. He says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.—I was dumb with silence, I

held my peace even from good." According to his opinion then, it is better to hold your peace even from good, than to break silence while the wicked is before you. A wicked and unscrupulous hearer will wrest your words. He will give them the worst possible construction. He will urge you vehemently to speak "many things," as the Jews did the Saviour, seeking to entrap you. He will invent, and throw in a little here and there, utterly to prevent your meaning. Before such an adversary, bridle your tongue, hold your peace, say not a word, for speech often stirreth up wrath, and it is generally the case, that he who can hold his tongue can also govern his temper. But when you can withhold no longer, like the Psalmist, give vent to speech in prayer. "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am." The Psalmist was often in the midst of enemies. Often does he bitterly complain of their slanderous tongues—their "all-devouring words," but he learned patience in the school of adversity, and discovered at last that the most effectual way of disarming his enemies, was by keeping silence before them. He thus afforded them no ground on which to base their libellous assaults. Let us learn and practice the same thing, for scandal cannot long feed on its own inventions, and it will soon die on the hands of its authors if barely let alone. But there is another case in which it is proper to keep silence.—The Psalmist says, "I was dumb; I opened not my mouth because thou didst it," and again he opens his mouth in prayer, saying: "Remove thy stroke away from me; I am consumed by the blow of thine hand. When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth."—Thus we see that silence becomes us in affliction. Who can reply against God, and "why should a living man complain."—Indeed, affliction's only antidote is submission to God. To the truly pious heart there is more solid comfort in the reflection, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good," than is to be found in the philosophy of the world, or in the tears of sympathizing friends. Nothing could have been more expressive than this silence of the Psalmist in the cases instanced

above. In the one case his silence indicated a total lack of confidence in the wicked. He would not trust himself to their tender mercies, nor give his honor to their keeping. In the other, his silence expressed his entire confidence in the heart-searching God. For the Lord had searched him, all his thoughts, emotions and resolves were known unto the Lord, and speech was therefore unnecessary.

THE RAIN-MAKERS AND THE SUN-SHINE-MAKERS.

On a certain day a man brought me some fish as a present. I asked him whence he obtained them? He said the people of another district had given them to him. I asked, "Why did they give them to you?" He said, "As a reward for my work." "What is your occupation?" "I am a rain-maker; did you not know that I am the source of the rain? I ask for it and it comes; if I ask it not it does not rain; because I asked for rain, it has been raining since yesterday to the present time. On this account the people are greatly delighted with me, because they wanted rain to make their plantations grow. I have given them rain, and they have brought me food and fish."

I then said, "Dear friend, do you really believe that what you have said is the truth, and that you really can exercise power over the rain?" "Certainly—the rain is with me, and I give it to whomsoever I will." Then I said, "All the men that make a god of you, who are just one of themselves, are a set of downright fools; and you yourself must be insane, to say that you have this power, that you are the source of rain. Listen, oh friend, to me:—To Jehovah, the God of heaven, all things belong, and we are also His. In His hand are all things—the waters above, and those beneath, and everything has its appointed season. Listen, O friend:—No man on earth hath such power, but God alone; and to prove this, I want you to perform that work at once, that I may see it done." He was silent, looked earnestly at me, pulling a very long face. I then asked, "Are you angry?" and he still would not speak. I again requested him to do his best to procure rain at once, that I might be his witness. He then answered, "I do not my work openly, but secretly, because the instruments I use are in the bush." I asked, "What kind of instruments are they?" He answered, "Dead men's bones; but not any body's but those of my own relatives." He would not attempt to perform his lying work.

Dear friend Buzacott, I will just tell you how they act. When the month of rain comes, then he performs his work. When he sees a heavy cloud arising, then he goes into the bush, and hastily performs his incantations. The people in a body are all waiting, and as soon as the rain begins to fall, they give a shout. The king then gives the command, "Take the net into the sea, and get some fish for the priest!" All the people immediately obey; and all the fish—no matter how much—is given to the priest. Thus they continue every rainy day; and the priest is greatly delighted with his fish, and the praises of the king and all the people.—[From a letter to a Missionary by a Native Teacher; Juv. Miss. Mag.]

A PRAYER.

Do Thou, O Lord, forbid
That this vain world, with its nice toys, from Thee
Should draw my mind; and that it should keep hid
Thy face from me.

Help me to meditate
How transitory's wealth; how mean's the happiness
Derived from fame,
Compared with that of his who lives to contemplate
The Saviour's name.

And may I be impressed
That I am but probationer of earth;
And that this world is, with eternal things compared,
Of little worth.

And grant that from my heart
May flee the love of trivial things of earth; may
all be laid
Upon the altar, and may I perform my part
With thy sweet aid.

And grant that I may see
How weak I am, and how perverse and darkened
is my mind;
And do thou show to me that I, without the aid of
light from thee,
Shall still be blind.

Then deign to reinstate
In me that perfect peace I once enjoyed,
Though I, to thy most precious Son, have been
ungrate,

And from him strayed.

Assist me so to spend
Th' important term of my probation here,
That I shall have, when all my trial here shall end,
No cause to fear.

M. S. ROBERTSON.

YOU ARE GOING THE WRONG WAY.—"You are going the wrong way," said a conductor of a train on the railroad, to a passenger, on receiving his ticket. That assertion fell very unpleasantly upon the ear of him who had made the mistake. Still it was not a very serious one. It could be corrected. He was advised to get out at the first stopping-place, and to take the opposite train on its arrival.

Going the wrong way. In another sense, this is affectingly true of thousands. It is true of the child who goes not in the way of parents' commands. It is true of the man who with hot haste is in pursuit of the riches, or honors, or pleasures of earth. It is true of every one whose course has not been changed, who is not running the Christian race. Says the Saviour, "Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereto; because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Oh, how many are now hurrying on toward eternal death, while they vainly are hoping to reach the end of their course, the new Jerusalem above. *They are going the wrong way.* The language of God to them is, "Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die?" Turn to-day. Soon it will be too late. Soon destruction will become inevitable.—*Watchman and Reflector.*

BIBLICAL NOTES.

THE AFRICAN PREACHER.

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.—1 Cor. i, 27.

We copy from the *Watchman of the South*, one of the religious newspapers in the United States, the following anecdotes respecting an aged African preacher, lately deceased. They may suggest reasonable hints to many who, unlike the venerable negro, "were never in bondage to any man."

"His method of dealing with persons interested on the subject of religion, but who had not made a public profession, is worthy of attention. With such he never failed to deal honestly, faithfully and judiciously.—He had no other standard by which to judge in such cases than God's unerring word. The Saviour's rule was his—'By their fruits ye shall know them.'

"On one occasion a lady of great respectability confessed to him that she believed herself to be a Christian, but at the same time avowed the purpose of not making a public profession of religion. At this he expressed great surprise, and said, 'Mistress, if you should suddenly get possession of a large sum of money, would you lock it up in your house, and try to keep it a great secret? It would do you very little good to take that course with it.'

"At another time one gave him a long account of a remarkable dream she had had, and desired his opinion on the subject. To this he replied, 'The Scriptures do tell us something about dreams, but nowhere, that I remember of, of any one converted by a dream, or converted when he was asleep. I can understand people a great deal better when they tell me of what they say and do when they are awake, and when they talk about a work of grace in their hearts.'

"There lived in his immediate vicinity a respectable man, who had become interested on the subject of religion, and who had begun with some earnestness to search the Scripture. He had read but a few chapters when he became greatly perplexed with some of those passages which an inspired apostle has declared to be 'hard to be understood.' In this state of mind he repaired to our preacher for instruction and help, and found him at noon, on a sultry day in summer, laboriously engaged hoeing his corn. As the man approached, the preacher, with patriarchal simplicity, leant upon the handle of his hoe, and listened to his story. 'Uncle Jack,' said he, 'I have discovered lately that I am a great sinner, and

I have commenced reading the Bible, that I may learn what I must do to be saved. But I have met with a passage here,' holding up his Bible, 'which I know not what to do with. It is this: "God will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." What does this mean?' A short pause intervened, and the old African replied as follows: 'Master, if I have been rightly informed, it has not been more than a day or two since you began to read the Bible; and, if I remember rightly, that passage you have mentioned is away yonder in Romans. Long before you get to that, at the very beginning of the gospel, it is said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Now, have you done that? The truth is, you read entirely too fast. You must begin again, and take things as God has been pleased to place them. When you have done all that you are told to do in Matthew, come, and we'll talk about Romans.'

CLEMENCY OF A NEW ZEALAND CHIEF.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Romans, xii. 21.

The Rev. R. Taylor of the Church Missionary Society, narrates a pleasing instance of elevated feeling on the part of a native chief under the influence of christian principles. When civilized nations, as they are termed, rise, as such, to the moral dignity displayed by this half naked savage, wars, the plague and disgrace of humanity, shall cease to the ends of the earth.

"I walked with Mr. Morgan to the Pa (native village) at Otumoetai, which is very populous. Mr. Wilson related an interesting anecdote of the late principal chief of this place. When the Ngapuhi came to attack his Pa, he one morning went out to reconnoitre their camp; and while in concealment among the fern, he perceived the principal chief of the enemy advancing toward him: he was coming with a similar intention. The enemy was well armed, but he had no weapon with him; yet, not deterred, he continued for some time in his place of concealment, until he observed the chief sit down on the shore at a little distance, with his back towards him; he then crept unperceived, and, springing suddenly upon him like a tiger, he in an instant turned him over, wrested his mery from his hand, deprived him of his double-barrelled gun, and, tying his arms behind, made him march before him to his Pa. When he had nearly reached it, he ordered his prisoner to stand: he did so, expecting it to be the signal for his death; instead of which, the conqueror unbound his arms and restored his weapons, bidding him to bind him and drive him in

the same way, as a prisoner, to his camp, which was accordingly done. When they entered it, the people set up a shout on beholding their chief leading in so distinguished a prisoner; and it was with difficulty that he could preserve him from being instantly put to death. When, however, the whole story was related, it not only raised a general feeling of admiration in favour of their prisoner, but was the means of an immediate peace being proclaimed."

HAPPY DEATHS OF MISSIONARY CONVERTS.

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. viii. 11.

A missionary writes:—"Two of the aged female members of the church have been removed to another, and I hope, better world. One was the widow of a sergeant, a meek and quiet Christian; she lived in communion with God, and in peace with all around her; and her end was peace. In her last illness she often expressed her confidence in Christ: 'I have committed my soul, and body, and all I have,' said she, 'into the hands of my Redeemer. Let Him do with me as He pleases; if He keep me here, I am willing to live; but if, by His grace, He has prepared me for heaven, I am willing to go.' The other sister was a very aged native woman, the widow of the first native Hindoo convert that put on Christ by baptism in Moughyr. His name was Hingan Misser; his death was the immediate occasion of his widow's conversion to Christianity.—Till that event she had continued among her heathen relations: but she then began to think seriously about what would become of her after death, and she came to the conclusion that there is no safety but in Christ.—Her decision was then fixed to become a Christian; she was soon after baptized, and joined the church. She was a sincere and consistent Christian herself, and appeared anxious that all her family should become Christians. A few years ago her eldest son died a heathen, and for some time she appeared almost inconsolable. Her reply to all who attempted to comfort her was,—'He is lost! he is lost! If he had died a Christian, I could have been comforted: but now there is no hope for him.' She was almost overwhelmed with grief at the thought of her son being for ever lost. A day or two before her death some one asked her whether she still put all her trust in Christ? She replied, with unusual animation, 'On whom besides can I trust? for Christ's sake I left my caste, my friends, my house, and my all in this world.

He has been my trust for thirty years; and to whom besides shall I now look? Christ is with me. He will never forsake. I shall shortly go to be with Him' Thus did this poor Hindoo woman finish her earthly course, in the lively hope of obtaining eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Another missionary writes:—A Brahman told me in the Pubnah zillah, whom we met quite accidentally, that his son was one of our disciples, but, tears rolling down his cheeks, he said: "He died last month." He said, moreover, "that he read our Bible day and night, and would not leave it till his death.—Ah! how he loved your shastras!" This is one of the many cases unknown to us, in which the word of God is read, though for years no missionary may visit them. This zillah is, I think, a most encouraging one for the gospel. I rejoice in hope that soon a fellow-labourer will announce to these immense multitudes the acceptable year of the Lord to set the captive free.

A RELIGIOUS FAMILY PAPER.

The importance of a religious paper in a religious family cannot be too highly estimated. No family is likely to feel a suitable interest in the cause of Christ which is not impressed from week to week with the stirring facts, arguments, and appeals which are usually found in a well-conducted religious journal. It instructs, restrains, stimulates, encourages, and improves all who come under its influence.—Yet how many professedly religious families take no such paper? They take a commercial paper, perhaps an agricultural, medical, or masonic, that they may keep posted up in those departments of exertion, but leave religion entirely to the chances of the day. What would the Lord Jesus say if he were to appear in such a family, and see every other interest represented but that for which he bled and died? Is it fair to treat the best cause in the universe in this way? How will parents who do this, and thus take away the keys of knowledge from their children and dependents, answer for it in the day of judgment?—How can they hope to die well when they have educated themselves and their families in everything but religion?—[N. Y. Christian Advocate.

OUR PRECIOUS GRAVES.

BY JAMES BOLTON.

Our precious graves!

Those islands midst the long grass-waves!
 Those mossy mounds kept moist by tears!
 Those white stones whispering names and years!

How dear the soil,
 Once dug by common labourers' toil,
 But now the hallowed beds, though hard,
 Of saintly forms which angels guard!

We laid them there,
 With bleeding hearts and tenderest care,
 With words of hope, and prayers of pain,
 Which spoke of meeting them again.

And though the clay
 Was heaped upon them on that day,
 Yet still they seem within our reach,
 Within our love, within our speech.

And oft we go,
 When summer sunsets flame and glow,
 Or when the snow upon them lies,
 Like glistening raiment from the skies,

And there we muse,
 Of what they were; and that glad news
 Which Jesus brought us, when he said,
 "I will restore your darling dead."

And then we smile,
 To think how, "in a little while,"
 That sod will heave, and from it burst
 A blossom fairer than the first.

So, precious graves,
 Faith your dark door with diamonds paves;
 Heaven through your grated bars we see,
 And Jesus holds and brings your key.

THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

In the autumnal months there is always a pause in the labours of earnest Christians, especially in London, not that they are weary of their work, but because they are weary in it. The exhaustion of past continuous effort, the heat of the weather, the oppressive din of the dusty and ever-busy metropolis, the absolute necessity of resting a while in order to recruit the mental and physical energies for another nine or ten months' campaign, all say (and the Master and Commander himself tenderly says) to the man and the woman who is the worker and the warrior in one—"Spare thyself." Thus it is that many have this autumn sought the refreshment of the pedestrian rural excursion over vale and meadow, the mountain side and the forest glade, by the silvery brook, by the thundering waterfall, or amid the ivy-clad ruins of old abbeyes, or of mediæval castles, or over battle-fields renowned in the history of "barons bold" and of a warlike past. Some also have been sojourning for weeks at the seaside, breasting the waves as strong swimmers, inhaling the pure breeze, and accepting the means of health thus vouchsafed with thankfulness and joy; and some also, yea

many of Christ's working servants, have this autumn crossed the British Channel and passed rapidly by France, or Belgium, and the Rhine, to Geneva, the famous city of Calvin, whence went forth a voice of power to all Europe, in connection with the glorious Reformation of the sixteenth century. The writer was privileged to wend his way thither in company with dear friends of various sections of the Church of Christ, to witness and share in the gladness of the high festival of love there held. The Evangelical Alliance, by its French branch, had issued invitations to a universal Christian Conference, to be held from the 2d to the 14th September inclusive, and the response given was indeed cheering. In addition to the many who were admitted to the meetings without tickets, cards were taken to the number of 1887 persons. From Russia, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Germany, France, and the various Swiss cantons, from sunny Italy, now yielding the first-fruits of a coming harvest, from the United States, and from the United Kingdom, from India, Canada, and the Cape of Good Hope, the brethren and sisters came, and all found it good to be there. Space forbids me to dwell on the hospitality so bountifully exercised by the higher and middle classes of Genevan Christians, or on the sweet songs of Zion chanted, now in the cathedral, now in the Chapel of the Oratoire, now in the "Salle de la Droite," by the assembled throng, all singing in various languages the one air, and yet the words uttered were the same in the ears of the Eternal King. Nor may I enlarge on the noble utterances given in papers specially prepared, or in discussions arising therefrom, by representative men of every land, on themes of momentous importance, as "The Christian Sabbath," "The Moral Condition of our Populations," (under which head statements were made by Dr. Guthrie on "Ragged Schools," and by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, who also preached in French with the heavens as his sounding-board), on "Open-air Preaching and Special Services in Halls and Theatres." Nor may I dwell on what was said and done as to such themes as "Doctrine and Life," "The Scepticism of France," "The Rationalism of German Switzerland," "Civil and Religious Liberty the Guarantee of the Order and Peace of Nations," "The Influence of Anglo-Saxon Colonization on Roman Catholicism," not forgetting "Israel and Jesus Christ," and the kindred and most memorable meeting of Jews converted, met specially to pray and plead for Israel unconverted. I can only mention D'Aubigne's noble and characteristic discourse on "The Genevan Reformation and its Reformer," on the special meetings for united prayer, and, above all, the Joint Communion Service, when pastors and people, from many lands, met on Sabbath afternoon, in holy concord, to celebrate the dying love of Emmanuel. In four

languages prayers were offered, and the words "This is my body," &c., and "This cup is the new testament in my blood," were offered and spoken by an Italian (Waldensian, German, French, and English minister respectively. That was a scene and a season never to be forgotten.

Nor can I do more than express my satisfaction that at this conference special prayer was offered for distracted America, and "all the children of God there," to use the words of the historian of the Reformation, and also for *Russia*, the appeal for which came at the closing meeting, from an eloquent and earnest Russian Gentleman.

The Spirit of God was assuredly present at the Geneva gathering in his power. Rationalism and Popery both received a rebuke; the one from the "basis" on which the conference met, namely, the "TRUTH in love," thus avowing boldly the great verities of the faith as contrasted with that traitorous and false "charity" which recognizes alike the deniers of Christ's supreme deity and its upholders; the other rebuked in its proud pretensions to a unity which is no better than that of the Arctic seas locked up in the eternal fetters of frost, by a *living, loving, visible* manifestation of a unity which shows evangelical Christianity to be as "distinct as the billows, but one as the sea."

The revival spirit of Europe, also, as found in active, energetic operation during the last three years in various countries, found practical expression, practical and earnest, at Geneva. Zeal, prayerfulness, a desire to work for Christ and for souls, all manifested themselves. Geneva itself, too, while welcoming and blessing others, was itself richly blessed. There is a noble band of Christian young men there, and a young men's association, whose members are most active and earnest. It was a pleasing sight to witness their friendly salutations to Christians from afar, on their arrival at the railway terminus at Geneva, and to find them ready to guide or direct them to the hospitable abodes prepared for them, or to suitable lodgings and hotels. Pleasant, too, was it to mark the Christian courtesies of the president of the conference, M. Naville, an eminent Christian philosopher who, with M. Eynardt, another wealthy Genevan gentleman, threw open his beautiful gardens at night for *re-unions* of Christians of all nations. Such meetings were alike impressive and refreshing. In the

crowded gardens hymns were sung, loving words spoken, and the fraternal grasp of true freemasonry exchanged where foreign tongues threw up, in many cases, an insurmountable obstacle to verbal, spoken intercourse. Thus it was that I found a fine old Nottingham farmer, a pious, warm-hearted Wesleyan, after coming away from one of these night-scenes, with eyes overflowing with joyful emotion, because of the affection which had bound all together at the gardens, and specially because of one stranger coming up to him and silently (unable to converse in English) seizing the hand of the British brother in both his hands and pressing it to his heart, with looks of indescribable affection, as much as to say, "We are one in Christ, and brothers for eternity."

The Rev. Denham Smith, of Kingston, during the period of the conference, delivered several revival addresses, which were translated into French as he went on, by Professor La Harpe. There is no doubt that solemn impressions were produced on some Swiss who were present; and I was also assured that the eldest son of the Hon. — (a fine youth of sixteen years of age, and the child of many prayers), had, through this instrumentality, been filled with joy and peace in believing, and been brought to full decision on the Lord's side.

I must not omit to add that many continental Christians, of humble rank and limited means, had for *months* been laying up in store small sums, in order to have sufficient to defray their expenses to and from the conference. Verily they came not in vain; and with hundreds of others they were made to feel that the name of the city, in connection with that holy convocation, might well be called "Jehovah Shammah," the Lord is there. The weather, also, was truly delightful. The scenery through which the visitors passed, in going and returning, was beautiful in its softness and richness, as along the vine-clad fields of Burgundy and the banks of the blue and arrowy Rhone, as well as of Lake Leman itself—anon grandly impressive and sublime, as the snow-clad and gigantic Mont Blanc, and the other Savoy mountains—really distant from Geneva, yet in that transparent atmosphere apparently close at hand—or that magnificent range of the Bernese Alps, which, when the traveller reaches Neuchâtel, bursts gloriously on his gaze. Let it not be forgotten it is the Christian only who can thoroughly enjoy the beautiful and the grand, for he alone has, with peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and a hope full of immortality; and so of "the mountains and the valleys it is his to say, with a propriety none else can feel," "MY FATHER MADE THEM ALL."—*British Messenger*.

Sabbath School Lessons.

December 15th.

JESUS AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.

MARK III. 7-19.

1. The disciple of Jesus has sufficient warrant, both from the precept and example of his Master, to use every means not forbidden in the Word of God, for self-preservation. To avoid the cruel combination of his enemies against him, our Saviour retired with his disciples to the sea; ver. 7. Thither he was followed by a great multitude from adjoining and distant regions. Having heard what great things he did, these people flocked about him, with the view of experiencing or at least witnessing, his benevolent actions, and of hearing the gracious doctrines which he taught. Though Christ was persecuted by many, just as his power and grace were glorified, yet there were others who gladly received him. And so is it still with his word: by some it is received as "a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation;" by others it is accounted "foolishness." Note.—When compelled by the persecution of the ungodly, or any other necessary cause, to seclude ourselves from the world, we should choose that place of retirement in which we hope to do the most good.

2. He caused a small ship to wait on him, from which he could address the multitude without being pressed by them; ver. 9. The servant of Christ should not suffer difficulties to deter him from his Master's work: love is fruitful in expedients.

3. "For he had healed many, insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues;" ver. 10. How very anxious men are to have their bodily infirmities healed, but how little concern do they manifest for the cure of their immortal souls. It is in vain, however, to crop off the weed while the root is still left in the soil. Sin is the cause of all our pains, and unless it is got rid of in time, we must suffer throughout eternity. But Jesus, the great Physician, is as able to heal the soul as the body. He has only to say the word, and the burden of our sins shall be forever removed (Mark ii. 5), and the work of sanctification shall be commenced within us. The word rendered "plagues" signifies scourges, and implies that our temporal ailments are inflicted upon us in consequence of our sins, and are graciously meant for our correction; and were we willing thus to receive and improve them, we should bless God as much for adversity as for prosperity.

4. "And unclean spirits when they saw him" &c.; ver. 11. They fell down before him—that is, those who were possessed with these evil spirits "fell down before him."

"They cried out, saying, Thou art the Son of God." How strange that man should be unwilling to confess him, whom the very devils acknowledge to be the Son of God.

5. Christ sought not popular applause in doing these great things, for he charged them whom he had healed not to make him known; ver. 12. He received not honor from men; John v. 41. And when we do good, not for the sake of human approbation, but because it is the will of our heavenly Father, then "the same mind is in us which was also in Christ Jesus."

Learn—1st. That it is our duty to use every means, not forbidden in the Word of God, for self-preservation.—Matt. x. 23.

2nd. That in retirement, as well as in the most public life, we should seek to do the work of the Lord.

3rd. That in doing good we should seek, not the praise of man, but the praise of God through Christ Jesus.—John v. 44.

December 22nd.

THE YOUNG DREAMER.—GENESIS, xxxvii. 1-11.

I. *And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan,* v. 1. He sojourned with his father Isaac, who was still alive. "They dwelt in the land of promise as in a strange country," Heb. xi. 9.

II. *These are the generations of Jacob,* v. 2. The generations of Esau are given in the preceding chapter. However important the descendants of Esau may have been in the estimation of the world, in the sight of God their lives were comparatively worthless.—Little is recorded of them but that they lived and died. But the sacred historian does not so pass over the descendants of Jacob. Here commences the most interesting and important history of Joseph. The narrative is instructive, whether we view it as illustrative of the tribulations through which the people of God must enter the kingdom of heaven, and the manner in which God overrules all events for the good of his people, or as Joseph affords us, in many respects, a lively type of our blessed Saviour.

III. *Joseph feeding his flock with his brethren, brought to their father their evil report.* His brethren when they were beyond the inspection of the paternal eye did those things which they would have been afraid or ashamed to do in their father's presence.—Whatever impropriety Joseph observed in the conduct of his brethren, he reported to his father, not as a tale-bearer to set his father and brethren at variance, but as a loving brother who felt it to be his painful duty to do.

NOTES FROM A COMMON-PLACE BOOK.

so. He hoped that the authoritative admonitions of his father would be an effectual restraint to the bad conduct of his brethren.

IV. "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age." Joseph was also the son of his beloved Rachel, and was probably more attentive to the wants of his father than the rest of his brethren. But on no account should partiality be shown by parents to any of their children; its evil effects are evident from this narrative. The hearts of his brethren were filled with malice towards Joseph, though it was through no fault of his that his father showed him favouritism. Like the persecutors of our Saviour, his brethren "hated him without a cause."

V. *Although Joseph was hated by his brethren yet was he beloved of God.* The Lord was pleased to hold communion with him, and by means of visions to shew him the events which were subsequently to take place. Joseph's two dreams like those of Pharaoh, Gen. xli. 25, were one, they both had the same interpretation. The obeisance of the eleven sheaves to his sheaf, and of the sun, moon, and eleven stars to him, clearly indicated his future exaltation above the rest of his family. On account of these dreams which they truly interpreted, his brethren hated him all the more. His father would also seem to have attributed Joseph's dreams to youthful ambition, for it is said that "His father rebuked him;" it may be, however, that his father blamed him to mitigate the feelings of his brethren towards him. At all events Jacob observed the saying, like Mary "he kept these sayings in his heart." These dreams of Joseph, viewed in connection with the subsequent events of his life, prove to us that the Lord knows the end from the beginning, that his all-wise Providence extends to all events. Joseph was made to see his future prosperity without being made acquainted with the dark events which were to intervene. Doubtless the bright prospect of a happy issue out of all his trials must have cheered him even in the dismal pit, and the gloomy Egyptian prison. So ought the prospect of eternal bliss to cheer the afflicted believer, and all the more when he reflects that the wisdom of his covenant God is overruling all things.

Learn 1st. That partiality in parents is an error.—2 Chron. xix. 7. Rom. ii. 11.

2. That it is common for the wicked to hate those whom God loves.—John xv. 19.

3. That the Lord overrules all events.—Matt. x. 29.

There is an hour coming, O sinner, in which the righteous, even those of them bound to you by the strongest ties, will be forced to say, "Between us and you there is a gulf fixed." But between them and you is no barrier. How soon there *may* be we know not.

On the eve of his departure from this world Dr. Payson said, "I seem to swim in a flood of glory which God pours down upon me. I know that my happiness is but begun. I cannot doubt it will last for ever. My young friends, were I master of the whole world what could it do for me like this? Nothing, nothing."

The only constant thing in this world is change, mutability being the unchangeable law of nature.

Time is given us to prepare for eternity, and eternity is not too long to regret misspent time.

"He that takes revenge is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over he is superior; for it is a prince's part to pardon." "It is the glory of a man to pass an offence."—*Bacon*.

"We should no more be angry with men for their ill-nature—a deformity of mind—than we should be for any deformity of body."—*Socrates*.

"A man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well."—*Bacon*.

"He that easily pardons and remits offences, shows that his mind is planted above injuries."—*idem*.

Religion is the fear of God; its demonstration is good works; and faith is the root of both.

The humble, the meek, the merciful, the just, the pious, and the devout, are everywhere of one religion, and when death has taken off the mask, they will know one another, though the diverse liveries they wear here make them strangers.

We sometimes measure the favours we grant by the necessities of those who solicit; not from the intrinsic value of what is granted. Pitiful advantage!

A death-bed flattery is the worst of treacheries. Ceremonies of mode and compliment are mightily out of season when life and salvation come to be at stake.

WHO SANK AND WHO SWAM:

A DREAM AND ITS INTERPRETATION.

I stood on the brink of a very great river. The current was rapid, and the bed was deep, and it was so broad, that by straining, I could but dimly see the other side. Although the farther bank was scarcely visible, I readily discovered where it lay by the sheen of royal palaces that stood upon it, and glittered in the morning sun.

That river flowed right athwart the path of the human race, between their time and their eternity; over it, accordingly, all must go. Men and women, old and young, rich and poor, were marching forward, in numbers so vast, that they constituted a stream almost as broad and continuous as the river into which they flowed. After I had gazed a while upon the passing throng, I began to perceive that though the variety of condition and character among them seemed all but infinite, they consisted, in the main, of two classes, and of two only. I soon saw that among all these multitudes, only two ways of crossing the stream were tried.

One portion of the travellers entered the river so heavily laden, that from the first it was evident that they had no chance of reaching the other side. The load, with some varieties in detail, generally consisted of provisions and clothing, and implements of labour, with the addition, in some cases, of a great quantity of toys, and in other cases of heavy bags of gold. Those who carried much gold, in addition to the burdens which were common to all, seemed sorely broken by its weight, as well as kept in constant alarm by the fear of letting it fall. They moved painfully and slowly in the stream; and none of them made any considerable progress. But I saw also that those who carried bundles of toys, although not so much crushed by dead weight, were equally impeded in their march. The toys, though light, occupied much room, and when their great but feeble bulk was caught by wind or water, they sometimes did as much as the bags of gold could do to make the bearer sink. But I observed that the load which did most to crush and hamper all this company, was a boat which every one of them carried on his head. It was damp and dripping, as if it had lain long in the water and besides its absolute weight,

it blinded the bearer's eyes, and cramped all his movements. Here and there one of the multitude might be seen tossing the boat off his shoulders into the stream; these walked easier afterwards than their neighbours, but none, either of those who threw it off or of those who kept it on, succeeded in reaching the other side. One by one, and at different stages of the passage, all without exception, dropped down, and were carried away by the stream.

In the other portion of this great company, I observed that every one carried burdens too, consisting for the most part of the very same articles. There were food and clothing and implements of labour, and in a few cases also considerable quantities of gold. If any toys were tied up with the other articles in the bundles, they must have been smaller in number and bulk, for I did not see their painted arms protruding. Strange to say, every one of this company had also a boat, of size and shape very like those which the other company carried; but here the likeness stops and the difference begins. Every one of this company as he approaches the river's brim lays his boat gently on its flood, steps into it himself, lays all his burdens down in it at his feet, and busies himself only in guiding the vessel across the stream. The grand difference between the two companies lay in this — those attempted to carry their boats across the river in addition to all their other burdens; these used their boats to bear over both their burdens and themselves, and accordingly got all safely over to the other side.

The voyage across that great river is the course of human life on earth. There is no standing still; all must enter the lip of the mighty tide and try. All bear burdens, some of them necessary and some of them not. The love of riches unnecessarily increases the burdens of some pilgrims, and the love of vain show increases the burdens of others. But the heaviest load that any traveller bears is his religion, as long as it is a load which he takes up and bears. Those who take it up and add it to their burdens, blindly miss its meaning, as much as those who carry their boat on their shoulders across the deep river. The boat was made for carrying you, and not for being carried by you. So, religion is intended, not to be borne by the man but

to bear him and his burden too. Happy is he who understands its design, and turns it to good account. If you take up your religion as a load it will crush you; if you throw it away, you may walk more lightly for the moment, but will sink as surely and as soon; if you lay yourself and your load on it, you will be borne sweetly over life's stream, and set down safely on the heavenly shore. "Thy faith hath saved thee."

One man tries his own righteousness.—He dreads the just God; he has no love of holiness; but he knows that holiness will be demanded in the judgment, and he strives hard to possess some. He prays, gives alms, attends worship. With no love to God, and no pardon, and no reconciliation, and no spirit of adoption, he strives in the spirit of a slave to fling as many performances at the judge, as may suffice to stop the sentence of condemnation in the great day.—He fails. His very righteousness becomes the load under which he sinks. The prodigal remaining among the swine tries to be fed, and cleansed, and clothed, so that he may be ready to stand with head erect if his father should suddenly come. But he grows more lean, more filthy, more naked, more frightened, until at last he dies despairing.

Another man, conscious that his heart is evil, and that all his righteousnesses are as filthy rags, from which he must be cleansed, lets go himself and all his own, and flees to Jesus. He trusts to the blood of the Lamb to take all his sins away, and leans on the righteousness of the Redeemer as his plea before the judge. He lays himself and all his burdens on Him who is able to save to the uttermost. In Christ as in the ark, he is borne safely through the flood, and set down in a new world where the righteous dwell. This prodigal, as worthless and as distant as the other at the first, knows and laments his distance and worthlessness.—Having nothing, and not able to amend his condition, he goes *as he is*—wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked—he goes as he is to God's covenant-mercy in Christ. He is accepted in the Beloved. He lives in faith, departs in peace, and joins the whole family of God in the many mansions of the Father's house.

Reader, beware lest you miss Christ's meaning. He does not lay a galling yoke upon your neck in this life, as the price which

you must pay for heaven. He rather invites the weary and heavy-laden to cast their burden on Himself. He has paid the price, and will bestow the pardon. He calls us unto liberty now, and gives us eternal life at length. A.

LITTLE WILLIE'S DEATH.

DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—Just last week a dear little girl came to me and said—

"Please, sir, I want to tell you about a little prayer-meeting we have got. Four or five of us have given our hearts to Jesus, and we love Him; and we have a prayer-meeting at five o'clock in the afternoon, in the corner of a field, where nobody can see us, and we ask Jesus to make us love Him more, and keep us from doing anything that would grieve Him." Now, these are little girls that know God hears their prayers, and loves to answer them.

There is love in the heart of Jesus even for little ones; for you remember He himself said, "Suffer *little* children to come unto me." He did not say, "Suffer *big* children, but suffer *little* children to come." And are not you a *little* one? then Jesus invites *you*, and He wants you now. "But what does Jesus want with *me*?" you ask. Jesus wants to give you pardon of all your sins, and a new heart, that you may be happy in His love here, and go to heaven when you die; for all the boys and girls that have gone to heaven had their sins washed away in Jesus' blood, and got new hearts from Him when they were on earth.

"But what is a new heart?" you ask. I could not tell you all that is meant by a new heart. A new heart is a happy heart, a loving heart, an obedient heart, an humble heart, a praying heart, a holy heart, and a great deal more, which you will know when you get it. Now, would it not be very precious if *you* had such a heart as this? And Jesus says, "A *new* heart will I give you."

I mean to tell you of a little boy that got this *new* heart from Jesus—this loving, happy, holy, praying heart—and is now in heaven.

About two weeks ago, as the train from Greenock to Glasgow stopped at Port-Glasgow, a little boy came into the carriage; he looked very sad, and sat very quietly down.

The gentleman sitting opposite the little

boy said to him, very coldly, "Your brother's dead."

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, and was silent.

"Did he suffer much pain?" said another.

"Oh yes, sir," was the only answer.

A friend of mine, a gentleman who loves little children, and was travelling in the same carriage, bent kindly forward, and said, "And is your dear brother dead?" and the kind tone of his voice touched the little mourner, who looked up with his eyes full of tears, and replied, "Yes, sir, dear Willie is dead."

"When did he die?"

Just as the clock was striking nine this morning, sir."

"Did he love Jesus?"

"Oh yes, sir, and he was very happy when he died."

"And do you love Jesus?"

"Once I did not, but I do now, sir."

"Then you think," said the gentleman, "your brother has gone to heaven."

"Yes, sir. I'm sure he is with Jesus now."

"Did you see him die?"

"Yes, sir, I was with him at the time."

"Then tell me about his death," said the kind gentleman. And the little boy began:

"Dear Willie had a great deal of pain, but he was very happy, and the pain was very bad just before he died, and I think the last thing he said to me was, 'Be sure and meet me in heaven.' After that he could not speak, and he had so much pain, that I said, 'You know, Willie, Jesus hears prayer, and though you can't speak or say a long prayer in your heart to ask Jesus to take you to Him-self—just lift up your hand, and beckon to Him to come, and He will understand that just as well.'"

"And what did he do?" said the gentleman, deeply interested in the touching story and the faith of the children.

"Well, sir," replied the boy, "he just lifted his thin arms and did that,"—(making the sign of a person beckoning with the hand.)

"And do you think Jesus answered him?"

"Yes; for I soon saw Willie was dying, and I said to him, 'O Willie, Jesus is answering your prayer; put your arms about me, and kiss me before you go; and he put his arms round my neck, and kissed me, and the angels came and took him away to be with Jesus.'"

Now, would you not like to meet little Willie in heaven? Then you must, like him, come to Jesus in faith for a new heart, and then, whenever you die, the angels will carry you, as they did little Willie, to the mansions of glory, to dwell with God for ever and ever.

J. T. C. G.

WOMAN.

As if to intimate that man should not take occasion from her part in the sad history of the Fall, to hold in light esteem the appointed companion of his life's journey, deeming her to be merely a

"Fair defect of nature,"

God has chosen to confer singular honours upon woman throughout the sacred Scriptures. They, who disparage her capacities, and pour contempt upon her understanding; they who contemn her faithfulness and distrust her truth; they who make her man's household drudge, or the mere instrument of his pleasures or convenience—have no warrant in Scripture for so doing. Although we may not overlook the sad part which woman took in the fall of our race, yet that terrible damage—which was not, after all, wholly her work—may be held to have been fairly and fully counterbalanced by the part she had in bringing salvation. It was not without some such significance that the illustrious "Seed of the woman" who took upon Him "to bruise the serpent's head," was "born of a woman," and nourished from her breast.

But let us look at the woman mentioned in Scripture, and observe how few of them are undistinguished by some useful quality or holy grace. Some are seen to have been endowed before men with supernatural knowledge, being favoured by the Spirit of God with the high gifts of prophecy—such were Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, and Anna. Others are noted for their sagacity and understanding, for which indeed they were proverbial—such as the wise woman of Tekoah, and she of Abel-Bethmaachah. Sarah lacked not strong capacities of faith, and strong was the faith of Rahab, of Samson's mother, and of that alien woman whose faith won from Christ a blessing which then belonged only to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Some have shown greater courage for the church, and manifested firmer resolution, than men have done. Did not Deborah encourage Barak to battle against the innumerable hosts and iron chariots of Jabin, and adventure her presence with him to the war, when, without her, he—the selected champion—was afraid to go? And who could be more resolved to

jeopardise her life for God's people than the beautiful Esther, when she uttered and acted upon the memorable words, "If I perish, I perish"? Others are famous or memorable for various things. For attention to God's word—as the Virgin Mary, and as Lydia.—For going far to seek knowledge—as the Queen of the south to hear the wisdom of Solomon. For works of charity—as Dorcas. For works of pious zeal—as the women whose busy hands in spinning and needle-work, helped forward the labours of the tabernacle. For fervency in prayer—as Hannah. For patient waiting on God in daily fasting and prayer—as Anna. For the cordial entertainment of God's messengers for his sake—as the Shunamite woman, as Lydia, and as one of the Gospel Marys. For the fear of God—as the midwives in Egypt. For courtesy to a mere stranger—as Rebekah. For humility and patience—as the aged Naomi; and for truthful and devoted affection—as the beloved Ruth. In Thessalonica, not only "devout Greeks," not only humble persons, but "chief women not a few," were among the first to receive the Gospel at the preaching of Paul and Silas; and among the learned of Athens, an Areopagite could not become a believer without a woman, Damaris, being joined with him. What is there, in fine, in which men have been renowned, wherein some women have not been remarkable? In wisdom, in faith, in charity, in love to the word, in regard for God's servants, in fervent affections, and in the desire of heavenly things—in all these there have been women who excelled. If men have suffered imprisonments, cruel persecutions, and bonds for Christ—women have done no less. When persecuting Saul made havoc of the church, not only men but women were torn from their homes and committed to prison; and his commission had equally injurious respect to the believers, "whether they were men or women." Acts viii. 3; ix. 2. And although we confine our illustrations chiefly to the Scripture itself, it is impossible in mentioning this, not to call to mind the numerous illustrious women who, in a later age, were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection, and who might say with Anne Askew in the prison house—

"I am not she that lyst
My anker to let fall
For every drysynge myst;
My shippe's substancyal."

Nay, more than this, have not the female worthies of the Scripture often, in many respects, surpassed the men of their own day and generation? Who entertained Christ so much, so devotedly, and so often, as Martha and Mary? Who are in any instance said to have contributed to our Lord's necessities, but

women? Who, of all the ordinary followers of Christ, took note of the place where he was buried, but women? Who went first to the sepulchre to anoint his body with sweet spices, but women? In Acts xvi. 13, we read of a congregation of women to whom Paul preached, being gathered together at the accustomed place of prayer. They put a value on social devotion, while the men were strangers to the feeling.

Some might count it tedious, were we to mention all the notable things reported concerning women in the Holy Scriptures, and the excellent graces that were bestowed upon them. Yet we may not pass without a thought, the knowledge which Priscilla shared with her husband, in the ministry of the Gospel, which qualified her no less than him to instruct even the eloquent Apollos; nor Lois and Eunice, by whom the well-beloved Timothy was trained up in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; nor Persis, "who laboured much in the Lord," as many other women did. Phil. iv. 3. But not to dwell further on particular instances, it may be well worth our while to note one great matter that deserves to be mentioned to their praise, and to be kept in everlasting remembrance. We have read of men once held in high esteem, who became apostates—Demas, Alexander, Philetus, and others; but never, by name, in all the New Testament, of a woman who had once been reckoned among the saints. This is great honour. But not only have women been thus honoured with extraordinary gifts; they have been otherwise favoured with special marks of attention from the Lord. To whom but unto women did Christ first appear after his resurrection? Of what act did He ever so speak as to render it everlastingly memorable, save that woman's who poured upon his feet her alabaster box of precious ointment, and to whom he promised that, wherever in the whole world, his Gospel should be preached there should her work of faith be held in remembrance?

Nor do the honours rendered to women in the Sacred Scriptures end here. One of the precious epistles of the beloved disciple is addressed to "the elect lady;" and in the Old Testament, two of the six unprophetic books that bear the name of individuals, present to us those of women—those of Ruth and Esther.

It is with the book of Ruth that we are now concerned. As this book appears to have been written for the purpose, principally, of tracing the genealogy of David to a source most honorable, and as it does contain a genealogy traced down to him, it must have been written during his reign, or soon after.

Although it is expressly stated that the incidents took place "in the days when the judge ruled," this beautiful history does, therefore, connect itself as much with the period upon which we enter as with that through which we have passed. In one point of view, it is an appendix to the book of Judges; in another, it is an introduction to the history of the kings. The simple and touching interest of the story—the beautiful and engaging rural scenery which it exhibits—the homely and honest manners which it describes—and the impressive and heartfelt piety which pervades the whole, render it the most remarkable picture of ancient life and usages extant, and give us a far more complete idea of the real features of Hebrew life, in the early ages of the settlement of that people in Canaan, than we could otherwise possess. The young and the old read it with equally absorbed interest; and we have known strong and rough voices break down with emotion in reading aloud some of the passages that occur in the progress of the narrative.—[Dr. Kitto.

WHAT IS AMBITION?

This question is well answered in a book that was the delight of the mothers and grandmothers of children of the present day.

Two little girls, Lucy and Emily, had been visiting a girl of their own age, who had many more indulgences than they possessed, and this visit had made them discontented. Their mother, who overheard their foolish murmuring, spoke seriously to them of the sin of ambition.

"I do not exactly understand, mamma," said Emily, "what ambition makes people do."

"Why, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "suppose that Betty were ambitious, she would be discontented at being a servant, and would want to be like her mistress; and if I were ambitious, I should strive to be like Lady Noble; and Lady Noble would want to be like a duchess; a duchess, if she were ambitious, would wish to be like the Queen."

"But the Queen could be no higher, so she could not be ambitious."

"My dear, you are much mistaken. When you are old enough to read history, you will find that when kings and queens are ambitious, it does more harm even than when little

people are so. When kings are ambitious, they desire to be greater than other kings, and then they fight with them, and take their kingdoms from them, and cause many cruel wars and dreadful miseries; and more than this, it has often happened that when kings have got all they could get in this world, they have been desirous to be thought more than men, and have caused themselves to be worshipped as God. So, my dear children, you see that there is no end to the mischief which ambition does. When Satan lived in heaven, and in all the glory of it, he was not content; but he wanted to be equal with God, and rebelled against God; in consequence of which he was cast down into hell with his angels. When Adam and Eve lived in the beautiful garden, and never knew sorrow, or pain, or sickness, this wicked desire of being great was the cause of their fall. Satan came to them, and told them that if they would eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was in the midst of the garden, they should be as gods, knowing good and evil; and they were ambitious, and wished to be like gods, and so they took the forbidden fruit, and brought sin and death upon themselves and their children. And so you see, my dear children, that whenever this desire to be great comes, it makes us unhappy, and in the end may ruin us."

"Indeed, mamma," said Lucy, "I think it is very true, for I have felt very unhappy ever since the thought came into my head about being as great as Miss Augusta."

"But you say, mamma," said Emily, "that this wish is in everybody's heart naturally; then how can we get rid of it?"

"In the same manner, my dear," said her mother, "that we master any other sinful inclination—through the help of our Lord Jesus Christ, who came into the world to destroy all sin and all the works of the devil. When you feel in your hearts, my dear children, those wicked desires arise—O that I were as great as such an one! or as clever as such an one! or as pretty as such an one!—then go into some retired place, if you can, and fall on your knees, and call upon the Lord Jesus Christ, that dear Saviour who died for you upon the cross, to take this great and dreadful sin of ambition out of your hearts, and to make you humble and contented with whatever things it may please God to give you in this world. 'Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee'" (Heb. xiii. 5).

Then Mrs. Fairchild showed to her children how much God loves people who do not wish to be great, and how he blesses people who are lowly and humble; and that he will take such people to heaven, as he hath promised. "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke xiv. 11).

The Christian's Anticipation of Future Happiness.

Have we not all felt that the *thought of anticipated happiness* may blend itself with the work of our busiest hours? The laborer's return, released from toil—the schoolboy's coming holiday, or the hard-wrought business man's approaching season of relaxation—the expected return of a long absent and much loved friend; is not the thought of these, or similar joyous events, one, which often intermingles without interrupting our common work? When a father goes forth to his "labour till the evening," perhaps often, very often, in the thick of his toils the thought of home may start up to cheer him. The smile that is to welcome him, as he crosses his lowly threshold when the work of the day is over, the glad faces and merry voices, and sweet caresses of little ones, as they shall gather round him in the quiet evening hours, the thought of all this may dwell, a latent joy, a hidden motive, deep down in the heart of hearts, may come rushing in a sweet solace at every pause of exertion, and act like a secret oil to smooth the wheels of labour. The heart has a secret treasury, where our hopes and joys are often garnered, too precious to be parted with, even for a moment.

And why may not the highest of all hopes and joys possess the same all-pervading influence? Have we, if our religion is real, no anticipation of happiness in the glorious future? Is there no "rest that remaineth for the people of God," no home and loving heart awaiting us when the toils of our hurried day of life are ended? What is earthly rest or relaxation, what the release from toil after which we so often sigh, but the faint shadow of the saint's everlasting rest—the rest of the soul in God? What visions of earthly bliss can ever, if our Christian faith be not a form, compare with "the glory soon to be revealed?" What glory of earthly reunion with the rapture of that hour when the heavens shall yield an absent Lord to our embrace, to be parted no more from us for ever? And if all this be most sober truth, what is there to except this joyful truth from the law to which in all other deep joys our minds are subject? Why may we not, in this case too, think often, amidst our worldly work, of the House to which we are going, of the true and loving Heart that beats for us, and of the sweet and joyous welcome that awaits us there? And even when we make them not, of set purpose, the subject of our thoughts, is there not enough of grandeur in the objects of a believer's hope to pervade his spirit at all times with a calm and reverential joy? Do not think all this strange, fanatical, impossible. If it do seem so, it can only be because your heart is in the earthly, but not in the higher and holier

hopes. No, my friends! the strange thing is, not that amidst the world's work we should be able to think of our House, but that we should be able ever to forget it; and the stranger, sadder still, that while the little day of life is passing—morning, noontide, evening—each stage more rapid than the last—while to many the shadows are already fast lengthening, and the declining sun warns them that "the night is at hand, wherein no man can work," there should be those amongst us whose whole thoughts are absorbed in the business of the world, and to whom the reflection never occurs, that soon they must go out into eternity, without a friend, without a home.—*Caird.*

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