

Practical Papers.

CHRISTMAS.

BY REV. HUGH JOHNSTON, M.A.



WITH the close of this month comes one of the most noted of Christian solemnities—the festival of Christmas. The twenty-fifth day of December, is celebrated throughout nearly all Christendom as the anniversary of the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Around the earth, like a jubilant wave, rolls the glad refrain—"Christ is born!" The white-robed choirs of stately Cathedrals, the worshippers in village Churches, and little children of happy Christian households, take up the message of the angel, "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all people*. For unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

We need scarcely say that the observance of this festival is not of New Testament origin.

It is impossible for us to ascertain from the Gospels, or from any other source, the precise day of Christ's birth; and it was not until the fourth century that the theologians of the East and the West, after long investigation, agreed upon the 25th of December as the day of our Saviour's nativity. The Eastern Church adopted the Christmas festival from the Western, about the year of our Lord, 380: but the first observance of the Nativity is attributed by the decretal letters to Pope Telesphorus, early in the second century. Some trace the origin of this festival to the Feast of Dedication celebrated by the Jews; other writers believe it to have been called into existence by the heathen Saturnalia, a Bacchanalian winter festival. Doubtless the institution arose at a time when the tendency of the Church was to multiply festivals in honor of Christ, and as many other events in the Saviour's history were being marked by a distinct celebration, it seemed proper that his birth should have the same honorable distinction.

In Roman Catholic Churches, Christmas-day is ushered in by the performance of three masses. One at midnight, the traditionary hour of Christ's birth; one at day-break, and one in the morning. There are also scenic repre-

sentations of the manger: an infant in the cradle, surrounded by Mary and Joseph, by cherubs, and Eastern Magi.

In most of the Protestant Churches, the day is observed in thanksgiving to the Father for his infinite love in the gift of his only-begotten Son.

Among English people, the festival is strongly interwoven with the whole texture of popular and family life. It has been regarded not only as a religious, but a domestic and merry-making time. Hear how the day was celebrated in Merrie Old England :

“ On Christmas eve the bells were rung ;
 On Christmas eve the mass was sung ;
 That only night in all the year,
 Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
 Then opened wide the baron’s hall,
 To vassal, tenant, serf, and all ;
 J’ower laid its rod of rule aside,
 And ceremony doffed his pride.
 The heir, with roses in his shoes,
 That night might village partner choose.
 All hailed with uncontrolled delight
 And general voice, the happy night
 That to the cottage or the crown
 Brought tidings of salvation down.
 England was merry England when
 Old Christmas brought his sports again.
 ’Twas Christmas broach’d the mightiest ale ;
 ’Twas Christmas told the merriest tale ;
 A Christmas gambol oft would cheer
 A poor man’s heart through half the year.”

We wish to call the attention of our readers for a little while to the *erent* with which the day is occupied. Aside from our family gatherings and re-unions of friends, what living meaning has this festival-day to us, amid the cares and struggles and disappointments of life ?

The event which we commemorate is the *Incarnation*, the mystery of mysteries, the wonder of heaven and earth. We can conceive one of the grandly gifted of our race seeking his home and dwelling-place among the poor and lowly, or the monarch of millions abdicating his throne voluntarily to assume poverty and share the bread of destitution. Still further, we can rise to the conception of a mighty Angel, the presiding minister over a population of superior beings, laying aside his splendors, and finding his way to this little corner of the universe to meditate our welfare and dwell among us for a time. Yet the very thought of it is overwhelming, and stirs our nature to its profoundest depths. But when we think of the Most High,—the ever-living, ever-present God, the Creator and Upholder of all things, the Brightness of the Father’s Glory, the express image of his person,—leaving the radiant spheres above to dwell upon this rebellious earth, taking the form of a servant and the likeness of sinful flesh, that he might lift us and all our race into His own light and glory—I confess that we well may stand aghast and stagger, as we seek to grasp the stupendous conception. The Incarnation of God ! How it transcends our weak capacity ! The *fact* of

it seems too great to be true ! The *manner* of it also fills us with amazement ! To have come in what seems to us befitting the dignity of the Godhead, we would have clothed him in the lightning of the skies, and made him speak in its thunder. We would have him move amid men in the state equipage of the King of kings, distributing his favors with the sovereignty of a God. But such pomps could not attract him, who was familiar with all the splendors of the universe : and looking to see what form was worthiest his assumption, he was pleased to come even as others, to take upon him the form of a servant, and lay in the arms of his loving mother. And if there is any time when we should make especial acknowledgment of the Deity of Christ, it should be at Christmas time, for then the weakness and dependence of infancy are relieved by no attendant glory. No creature when young is so helpless as man, yet our Saviour accepts the feebleness of infancy. More human than the first Adam, who came forth from his Maker's hands a fully developed man, and had not to struggle through the risks and weaknesses of childhood, was Jesus, the second Adam, who does not begin with us in mid-life, but goes through the humiliation of infancy, and despises not the shame of being born in a manger. The Godhead of Jesus,—his divinity—this is the fact that underlies and illumines the Christmas story ; and while his human nature moves our sympathy, we rejoice to acknowledge the marvellous condescension of God, and we worship the Babe of Bethlehem as our Redeeming Saviour and Lord.

Again, let us realize the blessedness of that birth. Christmas morn flings a gladness over our spirits. We hail its dawn ! A ray of sunshine touches every heart and brightens every home. There is a warmth and cheer in every household that names the name of Christ. The little child feels an interest in the childhood of Jesus. The mother's love is ennobled by the love of the Mother of Jesus. The friend finds in friendship the food of solid joy, and the day is marked by the interchange of gifts and tokens of affection. The infinite generosity of God, in the unspeakable gift of his own Son, finds a response in our own presentations to each other. But if we would enter into the true secret of Christmas,—if we would have our earthly cheerfulness raised into a heavenly joy,—we must each have a Christmas within ourselves. Let Christ be born in us, and each heart becomes a Bethlehem, and the star which led the Magi, sheds down a radiance which grows and brightens into the risen Sun of Righteousness.

To all the readers of *EARNEST CHRISTIANITY* we wish, in the highest, truest, best sense, "A Merry Christmas."

POWER OF CHRIST.—Pompey boasted that with one stamp of his foot he could rouse all Italy to arms. But God, by one word, can summon the inhabitants of heaven, earth and undiscovered worlds to his aid, and call into being new creatures to do his will.

HEART CIRCUMCISION.

BY REV. A. SUTHERLAND.



N the Old Testament Scriptures we meet with precepts and promises of a two-fold kind :—those which were addressed to the Jews, *as Jews*, and those which were addressed to them as representing the universal Church of God. That the latter belong to all Christians is manifest ; for when Christ came he not only abolished what was ceremonial and typical in the Jewish economy, but he abolished the distinction between Jew and Gentile, so that the Gentiles became “fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel.” Thus the “middle wall of partition” was “broken down,” and the glorious franchise proclaimed to the world,—“If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs *according to the promise.*”

This is an important fact. It greatly extends the horizon of the believer’s privileges. It is a kind of spiritual telescope, bringing into the field of vision many a bright star of promise, “unseen by reason’s glimmering ray.” One of these—a star of the first magnitude—we discover in Deut. xxx. 6 : “The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.” These are strong words. What do they imply ?

The result sought by this “circumcision” is to enable us to love the Lord with all our heart. By nature we do not love God at all ; hence it is evident a great change is contemplated, and this change implies, in the first place, deliverance from guilt. Where there is guilt there will be fear—tormenting fear—as “he that feareth is not made perfect in love.” Therefore, as a preliminary step to the enjoyment of perfect love—as the first step in the process of heart circumcision—there must be a conscious deliverance from guilt. Circumcision signifies the putting away of the filth of the flesh ; so here, first of all, there must be the putting away of the sins that are past. Let this be understood : the forgiveness of sins, clearly ascertained by the witness of the Spirit, is indispensable as a starting point for the higher Christian life.

It also implies the regeneration of our moral powers. Why ? Because “the carnal mind is enmity against God,” and enmity and love are opposites ; they never can harmonize. Never can we feel one solitary emotion of love towards God until His love is “shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us.” Our moral powers are depraved, and, so far as any holy effort is concerned, utterly paralyzed. And if, by extraneous influences, they are sometimes incited to momentary action, it is, after all, only like the motions of a galvanized corpse,—a hideous *mimicry* of life. To restore the true life of the soul requires a new creation, and this can be accomplished only by Divine power. Many can train or modify, God alone can create. 1

When this mighty change takes place—when the soul is emancipated from its thralldom,—when “old things are passed away,” and “all things have become new,”—then, and not till then, do we experience the first emotion of real love to God. But who shall tell the blessedness of that hour when the “love” which “the Father hath bestowed upon us,” becomes a felt reality? when in the light of the cross we read the wondrous story—“God so loved the world!” when in place of those corroding fears and gloomy apprehensions that have so long distracted the soul, there comes a “peace which passeth understanding,” and a “joy that is unspeakable and full of glory;” when, instead of Sinai’s hoarse thunders proclaiming—“the soul that sinneth it shall die,” there comes “a still, small voice” whispering of a dying Saviour, and a pardoning God; of sins forgiven, and a sinful nature renewed; of grace to sustain through life, and a home in heaven when the trials of life are ended. Language is too poor to tell the story. We can only cry as we bow in rapture at the Cross—

“God only knows the love of God!”

In this renewal of our moral nature there is given a complete victory over sin, so that “sin shall have no more dominion over” us. It is to be feared that on this point, not a few make a sad mistake. They suppose that, in a merely justified state, many things are allowable which would be altogether inconsistent in one professing entire sanctification. Let us beware lest in this we unconsciously “plead for Baal.” Be not deceived. “He that committeth sin is of the devil;” but “he that is born of God doth not commit sin.” Let it be regarded as a fixed principle that *no degree of sin is consistent with a profession of faith in Christ*. I do not say that in a justified state sin is utterly destroyed; but it is so subdued by Divine grace that it has “no more dominion over us.”

In the circumcision of the heart there is also implied the purification of our affections. Not only have we placed our affections upon wrong objects,—“loving the creature more than the Creator;”—but our hearts are impure. Both by original bias, and by long contact with evil, they have become “earthly, sensual, devilish.” They need to be not only renewed, but purified, and for this provision is made in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. In His blood we have “the forgiveness of sins,” and the same blood “cleanseth from all sin.” In completing the circumcision of the heart He cleanseth it “from all the filth of self and pride,” expelling everything that is not in harmony with His righteous will, and filling the soul with that perfect love which casteth out fear. The highest form of love is that wherein God is loved *for His own sake*. This may be perceived by noting the successive states of one’s religious experience. When a man is converted to God, he at once feels love to the Saviour springing up within him. Ask him why he loves God? and he will tell you—“because He first loved me.” As he grows in grace, he obtains a more comprehensive view of God’s mercy in Christ; he proves the Divine goodness in ways before unthought of; he sees the love of God flowing in upon him through a thousand channels. Ask him why he loves God? He will answer—“Because of what He has done for me. He gave His Son to die for

me; when I was running in the way of iniquity He called me from darkness to light; He freely pardoned all my sins, and renewed my heart; He has followed me since then with ten thousand mercies, and has promised me a home in glory. Surely I love Him for what He has done." But, after all, is there not an element of selfishness in a love like this? Is it not merely a love of gratitude for benefits received? There is a higher, purer, more perfect love than this, and it shall be ours when God hath fully circumcised our hearts. Ask of one who has reached this point in his religious history, why he loves God? and he will tell you—"Because He is infinitely glorious, and I cannot choose but love Him. He is to me 'the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely.' None have I in heaven but Him, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Him. He is the only and all-sufficient Portion of my soul." This is the highest form of love: God loved for Himself alone; loved for what He *is*, not merely for what He *has done*. And this is the result which He seeks: "that thou mayest love the Lord thy God with ALL thine heart, and with ALL thy soul."

THE HAPPINESS OF HOLINESS.

BY REV. GREGORY A. PAGE.



"F I were more holy, I believe I should be more happy." This is a remark so often made by Christians, that it may be regarded as an axiom in religious experience. No one questions its truth. It is one of that class of utterances which "commends itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." These are a pair which God has so joined together that no power, human or satanic, can put them asunder. In the physical world no effect follows its cause with more unfailing certainty than happiness succeeds to holiness; and the more largely we partake of the one, the more will the other abound. Their connection with each other is essential; happiness lies embodied in the very nature of holiness. As sure as the spirit of holiness is breathed into a child of God, so sure will he look heavenward, and say, "My Father is holy, essentially, immutably, and perfectly holy; and therefore essentially, immutably, and perfectly happy. And so far as I grow like Him, and live in fellowship with Him, I find my soul approaching towards perfect bliss."

And the happiness of holiness differs in some measure from that of the newly-pardoned sinner. The chief element in his happiness results from a sense of reconciling mercy, a sweet consciousness that all his guilt is cancelled; his soul thrills with delight because he hears the voice of his pardoning God. At the same time he feels the throbbing of a new life, the blessedness of a new nature. But the chief element in the happiness of a mature Christian springs from his resemblance to God, and his fellowship with Him. The stream of delight which rolls through his soul is deeper and purer, and, like Siloam's waters, flows softly.

“The bliss of those that fully dwell,
Fully in Christ believe,
’Tis more than angel-tongues can tell,
Or angel-minds conceive.”

Why, then, are we not more intent upon entire holiness? We certainly desire to be happy, and if we refuse to make a full surrender, and render to Christ only a half-and-half service, and allow some portion of “the town of Man-soul” to be occupied by the troops of the enemy, can we expect anything else than a half-and-half happiness? Will not our religious enjoyments be very mixed and uncertain? On the other hand, entire holiness and full devotion will yield perfect and uninterrupted peace. Then—

“While we do His blessed will,
We bear our heaven about us still.”

God imparts so much grace and strength, that His service becomes our reward. Having ascended the highway of holiness, we find no lion there, no ravenous beast going up thereon. There the redeemed calmly, peacefully, contentedly walk, with heaven in the soul. Now, whatever foes may attempt to molest, we are more than a match for them. To him who thus dwells under the shadow of the Almighty, what is the fnger of scorn? what are the sneers of the world? what are the cold looks of the half-hearted? A fulness of love in the heart makes us proof against all these. And now the very duties of religion, even the most onerous, are felt to be pleasing modes of showing our devotion to the Saviour. Every means of grace is a well of salvation, whence we draw water with joy, and every cross is borne in the spirit of holy and cheerful submission. These Canaanitish neighbors, whom we allowed too long to live in dangerous proximity to us, have all disappeared. What a happy release to be freed from those thorns in our sides! How sweet! How unutterably sweet!

“A rest where pure enjoyment reigns.
And God is loved alone.”

Heart condemnation is gone, and with what boldness we now enter the holy of holies! There will be no presumptuous approach to God. We shall rather incline to put the shoes from off our feet; the brightness of the Divine glory will prostrate us as in the dust before the Lord. But we shall feel Him putting forth the hand of His mercy, and bidding us arise and enter the most holy place; and there, full of faith, we shall plead the promise and the blood. Doubt will no longer cause us to halt at the door of entrance, but, passing through, we shall go and bend over the mercy-seat, and say—

“That blood I take, that blood alone,
And make the covenant peace my own.”

Let us, then, enter into the bond of this holy covenant. By the help of Christ let us engage to give all to Him, and then He will be all in all to us. That will not fail to bring a heaven of peace and love into the soul.

“When God is mine, and I am His,
Of Paradise possess,
I taste unutterable bliss,
And everlasting rest.”

It is then that we live in the enjoyment of the happiness of holiness.

A HOLY MINISTRY.



HOLY ministry is the Church's greatest need. That need was never so pressing as now, for there never was a time when men looked so much at ministers out of the pulpit, to know what they mean when they are in it. There are tokens that the priestly pretensions of many of the clergy are producing a violent reaction. There is less reverence for the ministerial office than formerly, and a growing disposition to estimate men at their intrinsic worth. And while there is danger that this disposition will run into the extreme of censoriousness and cynicism, a minister who in his daily walk bears the fruit of a fully consecrated life has nothing to lose from it, but everything to gain. His holy life will give a power to his pulpit utterance that other men, however great their natural gifts, can never acquire. An eloquent sermon from the lips of a self-indulgent, company-loving preacher, may be useful to strangers, but will be positively injurious to those who know him. The wider the contrast between the preacher and the man—the official and the natural manner—the greater will be the revulsion of feeling against his teaching and exhortation. The questions asked by the Rev. Luke H. Wiseman in his late ordination charge at the Wesleyan Conference, are both asked and answered by thousands in our congregations. "Is it not a scandal and an offence if the pastor of the flock is only a babe in Christ? The believers in Corinth were complimented upon their knowledge, yet were plainly told that they were in Christ only as babes. They were 'carnal and walked as men;' for envy and strife and jealousy were among them. Let us beware lest in such things we be self-deceived, mistaking gifts for grace, and official sanctity for practical godliness. Who in all the congregation should be freest from envy? Whose tongue should be the most effectually bridled? Whose conversation should present the most perfect rebuke to impurity? Whose disposition should be the most generous and forgiving in regard to affronts and injuries? Whose temperance should be the most free from possible suspicion of excess? Whose spirit should be the most unworldly, the most free from that love of money which is the root of all evil?"

And there is another reason why the condition of the Church in this day demands a holy ministry. One of the most remarkable signs of the times is the spirit of inquiry amongst Christians everywhere with regard to "the higher Christian life." They are waking up to the conviction that there is something better for them than this weary and often unsuccessful conflict with inbred sin. They see, as they read the New Testament, that it is the will of Christ to be more to them than he has ever yet been; and now and then they read or hear the testimony of some child of God who has found the blessing which they are feeling after, but respecting which they require more light. To whom shall they go for instruction and counsel but to their minister? But do they not too often discover that he is out of sympathy with them, or at best that his advice is vague and unsatisfactory? Others, who-

have not courage to seek a personal interview, wait to hear something upon the subject from the pulpit, and wait in vain. And it is no uncommon thing to hear the complaint from those who have sat many years under a ministry that professes to believe in entire holiness, that they have scarcely heard a sermon treating expressly upon it, and have never heard it spoken of as a blessing to be received *now*.

We can sympathise with earnest preachers who are themselves anxiously seeking holiness of heart, but who shrink from preaching a truth of which they have no experimental knowledge; though we cannot but think that a frank and open confession of their state would be better, both for themselves and others, than silence. If all the leaders in Israel who are in this condition would say to the people, as Caleb said of Canaan to the twelve tribes, "Let us go up and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it," thousands would respond to the appeal with glad hearts, and soon preachers and people would enter into rest together. "I preached this full consecration for ten years," said an earnest London pastor at the recent Oxford Conference, "and never heard one believer confess its enjoyment; but when I got the blessing myself, they sought and found it by scores."

How mighty would be the influence of such Churches upon the world! One of the most serious problems of the day is how to reach the masses of our countrymen who habitually forget God, and never attend His house. Ministers cannot do it. The faithful discharge of duty to congregations already under their care demands all their time and energy; and the districts in which these masses are found are just those in which the energies of ministers are already taxed most heavily. City missionaries cannot do it. In many cases their labours scarcely extend beyond visits to the sick and dying. Those who expect large populations to be evangelized by a handful of such missionaries will be disappointed. It will never be done until *all* the Lord's people are zealous workers in His cause, telling the story of His love to their neighbours and friends, distributing religious tracts, talking and praying with the poor in their own homes, inducing them by personal invitation to attend the ministry of the Word. Here and there may be found a preacher whose natural endowments enable him to attract crowds to his ministry, and win them for Christ. But there are others who, though equally earnest, lack these popular gifts. If, however, they are successful in quickening the spiritual life of the Church, leading its members on to full salvation, sending them forth at the beginning of every week baptised afresh with the spirit of power, and burning with love for the unsaved, who will say that they are less useful than those whose labours are more directly evangelistic? A shrewd and devoted minister of former times used to say that one believer entirely sanctified was equal to ten sinners converted, and there is a sense in which the assertion is true. A faithful ambassador will never be without success in turning men from darkness to light; but if, in addition to this, he teaches believers to abide in Christ as a full and constant Saviour, he lays the foundation of steady and lasting prosperity, and will do much to prevent these disastrous declensions which so often follow a spring-tide of blessing. Dr. Adam Clarke has well said that it is

a great work to lead men into the fold of Christ, but a greater to keep them there.

It is not a good sign when a preacher is content to close his Sabbath's labours without visible fruit; and pitiable indeed is his condition who can close many such Sabbaths in succession without an aching heart. But, on the other hand, is there not danger lest he should be anxious respecting this kind of fruit only? There is another subject in connection with which he incurs grave responsibility and which ought ever to give him serious concern; and that is, the *indirect influence* of his preaching on the ungodly world. If he has been careless about the preparation of his heart; if through neglect of secret devotion, there is distance between his soul and God; if he has been influenced by a man-pleasing spirit, and more anxious to preach a "good sermon" than to bless his hearers; if through any reserve in his consecration to Christ, he has not been filled with the Spirit of Christ—then he can hardly escape the humiliating conviction that some who have heard him are returning to their week-day employment with cold hearts, who might have gone forth as flames of fire; some who would have spoken loving earnest words to their unsaved friends, will all the week remain silent; some who might have led a prodigal home to his Father's house, will leave him to perish in his sins; some who would have been bold as lions in confessing Christ, will be timid and cowardly; some who would have besieged the throne of grace with "effectual, fervent prayer," will scarcely get beyond an occasional confession of their own sins and a prayer for pardon. If he be honest he will, with a sad heart, confess to himself and to God that he has lost a precious opportunity of usefulness and cannot redeem it; that much good which might have been done must for ever remain undone.

We are sure the man of God was right when he said that every believer sanctified was equal to ten sinners converted. Do not tell us that the scenes which followed so rapidly upon the day of Pentecost were exceptional, and are never to be looked for again. Let us hear of a company of believers that they are "all filled with the Holy Ghost," and no prophet's gift is needed to predict that "multitudes both of men and women" will soon be "added to the Lord."

But a holy Church is the fruit of a holy ministry. David said of the Good Shepherd, "He *leadeth* me into green pastures." And the under-shepherd must imitate his Master. He must say to the sheep, "Come!" not "Go!" With Paul he must be able to cry, "I beseech you, be ye followers of me." Until he can do this, his exhortations will have little effect.

If then a holy ministry be one of the Church's greatest needs, why are there so many in the ministry who, by their own confession, are failing to supply the need? We believe there are not a few whose difficulty is an intellectual one. Of the doctrine of entire sanctification, almost more than of any other, it may be truly said that it has been hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. Plain, illiterate men and women, whose only text-book is the Bible, receive it; while divinity students remain in embarrassing perplexity, from inability to make it fit into their systems of theology. "Growth in grace" they can understand, as who cannot? But the idea of a distinct bless-

ing to be received *now* by a Christian believer staggers them. They can find no place for it in the articles of their belief. The suggestion we venture to make is that at present it is not necessary that they should. We have an accumulating mass of credible testimony to the fact that there is such a blessing; that it is obtained by those who seek it in a spirit of self-surrender and faith, bringing with it a clearer and fuller perception of Christ as a personal and constant Saviour, a deeper and more abiding peace, a new spiritual power. And the more excellent way is to seek it as others have done, and as the word of God, we submit, teaches us to do. Doctrinal problems can well afford to wait for their solution until after it has been found; nor will the solution be at all so difficult as is imagined.

Dr. Mahan, after giving an interesting account of the way in which he was led to receive Christ as his sanctification, goes on to tell that, six months afterwards, when in conversation with others who had learnt the same lesson, and who, like himself, were ministers of the Presbyterian Church, some one proposed the question, "Is this Christian perfection?" it was as if a thunderbolt had fallen in their midst. Had the grace, at the time he was seeking it, been identified in the remotest degree with "Christian perfection," or had he resolved to stay his search until he had adjusted his creed, it is not unlikely that he would have been groping in the dark until to-day. "*Obedience*," says the late F. W. Robertson, "is the organ of spiritual knowledge." And does not Jesus Christ say the same:—

"IF ANY MAN WILL DO HIS WILL, HE SHALL KNOW OF THE DOCTRINE WHETHER IT BE OF GOD."—*King's Highway*.

A REVIVAL OF RELIGION: ITS RELATION TO THE WORK OF THE CHURCH.



OST Evangelical Nonconformists, when they speak of a Revival of Religion, think first of all of a wonderful manifestation of the power of God among those who are outside the Church. They are oppressed with a sense of the guilt and the peril of those who are present every Sunday at religious worship but who have never yet repented of sin, or received the supernatural life; they think, almost with despair, of the crime, the sensuality, the drunkenness, and the profanity of our great cities; they confess that in the presence of the desolate heathenism of millions of the English people who live in the open and habitual neglect of religious duty, the ordinary agencies of the Church are powerless; and when they pray for a Revival of Religion they are chiefly anxious for the restoration to God of those who have never seen His face, and who are in danger of eternal death. The magnificent triumphs of the love and power of God over the irreligion and unbelief of the last century have filled the imagination and produced a

profound impression on the hearts of devout and earnest Christian men, and if they could only witness such triumphs as these again, their largest desires would be satisfied.

But there is very much in the life of the Church itself which should lead us to pray God to grant us a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire; and if He answers our prayer, the first revelation of the "exceeding greatness of His power" may be among those who already believe. And yet, if the religious earnestness of the Church were deepened, if Christian men, generally, entered into the conscious possession of the blessedness which is their inheritance in Christ, if they lived in the light of God, if in the strength of a more vigorous faith they overcame the world, and if from an intenser spiritual life there sprang a more vivid sense of brotherhood among all Christian people, it is practically certain that vast numbers of men who are now indifferent or hostile to the Christian Faith would be moved to penitence, and would confess the authority of Christ.

But if a Revival of Religion came it would make our religious activity more intensely religious.

One of its first effects would be to inspire us in all our evangelistic work with a fervent zeal for the glory of God. We are not troubled as we should be by the sins of men against God. Our own loyalty to Him who is the Prince as well as the Saviour of men, is not so hearty that we are agitated, wounded, and pained by the resistance which is offered to His authority. He claims the obedience and the homage of all mankind—He could not surrender this claim without violating that eternal law of righteousness which constitutes Him the ruler of our race. To recover their obedience and homage He laid aside His glory, and endured all the temptations and troubles of this mortal life, and the mysterious and awful death in which He atoned for the sins of the world. Ever since His ascension to the right hand of God, He has been striving to secure the triumph of that Divine kingdom which He has established among men, and to secure the doing of God's will on earth as it is done in heaven. The struggle has lasted for centuries—the struggle between Divine authority and human disobedience. The resistance to the power of Christ assumes many forms: sometimes it appears in open hostility to the Christian faith, and an unqualified denial of the right of Christ to the submission and obedience of men; sometimes in the flagrant violation of those moral laws which He is resolved to avenge with all the resources of His omnipotence, if He cannot constrain us to obey them by His love; sometimes in a cold indifference to His claims on human trust, affection, gratitude and reverence; but on every side we see that men are refusing to acknowledge Christ as their true King. He has been enthroned, but vast provinces of His empire defy His power and habitually break His laws.

If a Revival of Religion came, we should be moved to indignation by this foul revolt. We should feel the enormous ingratitude of those who refuse to submit to Him. Their refusal would seem to us the supreme crime of which men can be guilty. We should be deeply and intensely in earnest in our endeavour to assert the claims of Christ to the obedience and honour

of the human race. The Spirit of God, if He came to us with power, would kindle throughout the Church a fervent loyalty to the throne of Christ, and we should vehemently long for His final victory over the sins of men, and the secure and universal establishment of His kingdom.

The Church would also be eager that men should be redeemed from sin and from eternal death, in order that the power and glory of God might be manifested in their redemption. There is no revelation of God known to us so bright or so wonderful as that which is seen in the restoration of sinful men to holiness and blessedness. The majesty and beauty of the material universe, the splendid gifts which God confers upon men of genius, even the unstained purity of the angels of heaven, do not so fully reveal the Divine glory at the rescue of human nature from the chaotic confusion, the darkness and the sorrow into which it has sunk in this world, from the more appalling terrors which threaten in the world to come, and its elevation to the sanctity, power, and everlasting honour and joy which are possible to it in Christ. What a fair and noble poem is to a poet, what a great picture is to an artist what a nation rescued from internal disorder and from foreign enemies, is to a statesman,—*that* a redeemed and regenerated soul is to God; it is the triumph of His love, His wisdom, and His power. A Revival of Religion would make us long, and long passionately, for the revelation of the Divine Glory in the salvation of all mankind.

It would also inspire us with a deeper compassion and more brotherly love for those who are as yet unsaved. The very pity of Christ for the human race would become ours. It was not the iron hand of duty which forced Him down from His throne to achieve the redemption of men; He came to us under the inspiration of an infinite love. He could not endure to see our shame, our misery, our peril. Even in heaven His love for us made our sorrows His own; and the dark shadows of our awful destiny fell across the glory in which He dwelt with the Father. He was "moved to compassion" by our sad estate, and He longed to deliver us from it. If the Spirit of God came to us with power, we should be inspired with the same compassion for our race. How great a change would instantly pass upon very much of our Christian work if we were possessed and penetrated with these transcendent spiritual forces. Now, very much of our preaching and teaching is very formal and mechanical. There is little heart in it and no enthusiasm. We are often animated, even in religious work, by no higher aim than to do something by the influence of Christian truth, to sustain natural virtue with the strength that comes from supernatural motives, to lessen the temporal sorrows of mankind, and to alleviate, by the brightness of Christian hope, the sufferings which are the inalienable inheritance of our race. We are inspired by philanthropy rather than by earnest Christian zeal. If a genuine Revival of Religion came, all our religious work would become really religious, and we might anticipate from it larger religious results.

With the increase of spiritual earnestness in the Church there would be an increase in the number of those engaged in religious work. To be appointed to a class in a Sunday-school, to be sent into a tract district, to be

entrusted with the charge of a cottage service, would be coveted as a distinction. Men would not have to be driven to evangelistic work by appeals to conscience; they would long for it, and would never weary of it. The spirit of St. Paul would return to the Church, the spirit which moved him to say, "To me is this *grace* given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Nor is this all; there would be conferred upon Christian people those divine "gifts" which are necessary for effective Christian work. Zeal itself is a great spiritual force. But with intenser zeal we might expect that men who have now neither a vivid apprehension of spiritual truth nor the faculty of speaking to others about what God has already revealed to them, would receive from the Holy Ghost both "knowledge" and "utterance." Those who have but a dim and cloudy vision of the glory of Christ, would receive sight, and the dumb would begin to speak.

The work which is done already would become more spiritual, more earnest, and more effective; and many who are at present either unwilling or unable to do anything, would have both the disposition and the power to work.

A Revival of Religion would bring with it a great increase of earnest prayer for the salvation of men.

We may not understand the reasons which underlie the great law of the Kingdom of God, that the deliverance of those who are in danger of eternal death should in any way depend upon the intercession of those who are already redeemed. It is not necessary that we should understand. Perhaps this is only one of the forms in which a still deeper law is revealed—the law which made it necessary that God Himself should become man and offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the race before our redemption was possible. But to Christian men the authority of the law is beyond dispute. In the Divine household "the elder Son," who had never "transgressed at any time" the Father's "commandment" intercedes for His brethren who are in the "far country," and "who have wasted their substance in riotous living," before it is possible for them to come home again; and only as those who have returned and been "set" once more "among princes" prolong the intercession of Christ on behalf of their brethren who are still in misery and want, are their brethren restored to honour and joy. It is not enough that we should work for the salvation of men; we have to pray for it too.

There may also be some who are unable to understand how it should be possible that with a fuller revelation to the heart of God's love for all men and His great desire to pardon their sin and to give them eternal life, prayer for the salvation of men should become more importunate. It looks paradoxical. The more we know of God's infinite compassion for the human race, the more vehemently we entreat Him to pity and to save. I do not care to attempt a solution of the paradox. Every Christian man knows that as the love of God for all men is more gloriously revealed to him, he prays more earnestly that all men may be saved. With a Revival of Religion we should receive such a revelation of the Divine love as would fill our hearts with infinite joy, and give new energy and faith to all our intercessions.

We should also feel that God was very near to us. With too many of us prayer is an appeal to God, who is "afar off." We cry to Him out of the depths of a great darkness. Our cry is the cry of despair rather than of trust. He listens even to this. But if He came to us as He comes to the Church when it is filled with the Holy Ghost, we should speak to Him with a freedom, with a joy, and with a confidence, which as yet, perhaps, many of us have never known.

Above all, a Revival of Religion would create throughout the Church that sense of absolute dependence on the power and grace of God which is the indispensable condition both of earnest prayer and of effective spiritual work. It is in this, as it seems to me, that we are chiefly defective. The very machinery which we have created for the evangelisation of the world comes between us and the living God. A physician, if he knows his profession, will treat his patients successfully whether he has a devout trust in God or not. The builder can rely on the known properties of stone and iron and wood. It is not necessary to pray in order to secure the action of the law of gravitation. Natural forces are uniform in their operation. Fire always burns; friction always creates heat; cold always freezes. But in those provinces in which the Church has to work we have to deal not with natural, but with supernatural forces; not with unvarying laws, but with Divine volitions. The regeneration of every individual soul is of the nature of a miracle. It is not the natural effect of the presentation or apprehension of Truth. The direct action of the Spirit of God is indispensable. It is only as the promise of Christ, "Lo, I am with you always," is fulfilled that any words of ours can produce any spiritual effect. In a time of Religious Revival, the Church has a vivid sense of the supernatural character of all spiritual work, and assumes naturally and habitually that relationship of dependence upon God in the absence of which it would seem to be contrary to a law of the divine kingdom that the Divine presence and power should be revealed. As the true life of the Church is a "life of faith," its work, to be effective, must be a "work of faith." It may be that of late years Christ has been unable to do any "mighty works" among us "because of our unbelief."

But if faith in Him returned—and it would return if the Spirit of God were poured out upon us—we should see once more that the Gospel is still the very power of God unto salvation, and instead of the doubtful struggle which for forty or fifty years we have been maintaining with the sin and irreligion of the country, thousands and tens of thousands would be "pricked to the heart," would cry out "What must we do to be saved?" and, acknowledging Christ as Prince and Saviour, would receive from Him the pardon of sin and the gift of eternal life.—*The Congregationalist.*

ONE BY ONE.

BY A. A. PROCTOR.



ONE by one the sands are flowing,
 One by one the moments fall ;
 Some are coming, some are going,—
 Do not strive to grasp them all.

One by one thy duties wait thee,
 Let thy whole strength go to each ;
 Let no future dreams elate thee,
 Learn thou first what these can teach.

One by one bright gifts from Heaven,
 Joys are sent thee here below ;
 Take them readily when given,
 Ready, too, to let them go.

One by one thy griefs shall meet thee :
 Do not fear an armed band ;
 One will fade as others reach thee,
 Shadows passing through the land.

Do not look at life's long sorrow,
 See how small each moment's pain ;
 God will help thee for to-morrow,
 Every day begin again.

Every hour that fleets so slowly
 Has its task to do, or bear ;
 Luminous the crown, and holy,
 If thou set each gem with care.

Do not linger with regretting,
 Or for passing hours despond ;
 Nor, the daily toil forgetting,
 Look too eagerly beyond.

Hours are golden links, God's token
 Reaching Heaven ; but one by one
 Take them, lest the chain be broken
 Ere the pilgrimage be done.

THE CONTRAST.

 BY W. E. BOARDMAN.

“Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?
I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”



HERE are Christians of two classes in the world, not to mention others at present, both fond of the apostolic saying placed as a motto above, but very different in experience and position. They of the one class repeat only the first part of the text—the question—leaving off the answer to it. That gives the key to their experience. They of the other class repeat both question and answer, with intelligent zest. Those of the first class have come to the full and painful understanding of sin dwelling in them as a body of death—chained to them as a Roman soldier was chained for years to the Apostle Paul, and as dead bodies have been chained to living men. They have come to feel the bondage of sin, but they have not yet come to know the joys of deliverance and the sweet liberty of the children of God.

Not that they are not Christians—not that they have never been converted to God. They have been truly converted, or the name Christian would be a misnomer for them; but they have learned only that their sins are forgiven through faith in the atonement of Jesus. They have not yet learned that Jesus, through faith in his name, is the deliverer from the power of sin as well as from its penalty. They believe in the blood of Jesus as their sacrifice for sin, but they are struggling by *resolution*—with Jesus to aid it, it may be—to free them from the bondage of sin.

Perhaps they have come along so far as to see and feel that resolution, even in the strength of Christ, is a poor deliverer—that it fails ever and anon; and yet they see nothing better, and so they cry out, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

And there they stop—there their experience stops. So far they have come, but no further; while they of the second class referred to ask the question, indeed, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” but answer it in the same breath by finishing the quotation, in the apostle’s exulting words—“I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

They have learned that there is deliverance now here in this life through faith in Jesus, while the others sigh and groan in their bondage, as if there was no deliverance this side the grave. They have learned experimentally, they know, that Jesus Christ our Lord, through faith in his name, does actually deliver the trusting soul from the cruel bondage of its chains under sin now in this present time; while the others have learned, not that Jesus does

deliver, but that their own resolutions, in Jesus' name, do not deliver them, and not knowing that Jesus can do it, they turn with a sigh toward death as their deliverer from the power of this death, as if death was the sanctifier or the sanctification of the children of God.

They of the one class, if asked for the truest and most graphic delineation of the Christian's condition in life here in this world of temptation and sin, will point to the seventh chapter of Romans, and say, "There you have it. That, of all others, describes our state and our struggles here below—a law in our members warring with the law in our minds. We see the right, but do the wrong. We would do good, but evil is present with us. We resolve, but soon, alas! sin overcomes us. Then we resolve, no more in our own strength, but now in the strength of the Lord. And yet, notwithstanding this fortifying of resolution by acknowledging its weakness and looking to Christ for aid to keep it from breaking—alas! it is soon broken, all the same as before."

They of the other class, if asked for the inspired symbol of their condition, would point us to the eighth chapter of Romans, and say, "There you have it. Once, indeed, we were in the seventh, but thanks be to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us deliverance from the body of death, we have now found our way out of the bondage of the seventh, into the sweet liberty of the eighth. The chain is broken by the power of Christ. We are free from the dead body of sin. We are now linked by the threefold cords of faith, hope, and love, to the living Saviour as our deliverer from present corruption, and from all the power of sin."

The dead body is dropped. The living Jesus, sweet Jesus, precious Jesus, gracious Saviour, constant Friend, mighty Deliverer, has taken its place—ever with us.

Once, indeed, we were in the seventh, but then we were at best only as servants in our own Father's house; but now we have,—through faith in Christ,—received the spirit of adoption, and have become, in the fullest and happiest sense, sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. Then we feared before him as servants in the presence of a Master, but now we dwell in love with him as children with an affectionate Father, and as the bride with a loving bridegroom.

Our bondage is gone—freedom has come. Our sighs have given place to joys—our fears to hopes—our vain struggles to a sweet confidence in the strong arm and loving heart of Jesus.

Now, how shall this contrast be made more striking?

The grand difference between the two classes is, that the one has and the other has not found Jesus, as a present Saviour from the present power of sin. The one still sighs in the bondage of the sad and sorrowful problem, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

While the other now exults in its blessed solution, giving thanks to God for triumphant deliverance wrought, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

This—but this also involves another grand difference which must not be overlooked in the contr. st.

They of the one class have a Saviour in Jesus, it is true—but he is a Saviour afar off—up in heaven, as they think of him, and not with them now here upon earth. While they of the other class have Jesus ever with them—a very present help in every time of need—a friend which sticketh closer than a brother.

THE CRIPPLE.

A poor youth came to the shores of America from Old England, a few years ago, bringing with him only the prayers of a devoted mother whom he left in the home of his birth.

His faith stood then only in the teachings of his mother. The living faith which is the vital union between Jesus and the soul, he had not.

Falling in company with Universalists on his way westward from New York, his traditional faith was soon shaken from its sandy foundation, and then the legitimate fruits of his new notions about universal salvation were quick to ripen, and most abundant in fruitage, though, alas! their fruits were not very fair to the eye nor very sweet to the taste.

Bitterly did he rue it afterwards.

He fell into loose habits and loose company. The Sabbath was turned into a play day, or a work day, as best suited to his pleasure or his purse, and vice ceased to be contraband even. His feet were on slippery steeps, and swiftly sliding, when suddenly the Lord arrested him by a casualty from which he was saved alive by a singular—miracle, shall I say? Almost a miracle it certainly was.

At work on a frame, then in course of erection, his foot slipped—he tottered—reeled—fell. He was at work on the second storey—and falling, he was caught by a joist below. He fell backwards and the small of his back came upon the timber. He was taken up alive, but with little hope of his living a single hour.

His agony was awful, and as he recovered from the first stunning effects of his fall, his returning sensibilities seemed more and more alive to suffering every moment.

Nothing relieved him. The severity of his pain constantly grew greater for many hours. At last in the madness of despair, he sent for a quantity of whiskey, and drank enough, as he hoped, to drown his suffering, and let him die in insensibility—but it failed to intoxicate. Strangely enough, it gave the relief which all the physician's medicines and skill had failed to give, and he began to recover.

With the thought of recovery came also a review of his past life. Remembrances of his home and his mother came upon him, and now his life of dissipation, with the opiate of Universalism, which had lulled his fears of God and eternity, was to him like a dream when one awaketh. He felt it to be all wrong, all false. He saw his delusion, and most bitterly lamented his folly and sin.

Weary nights and days he prayed and struggled for peace and pardon. Sleep seldom visited his eyes. Fears were his daily food. His cries

prevented the dawn of the morning. His sins grew heavy—a load too great to be borne.

At last, one night, overborne with weariness, he fell into a troubled sleep, and in his sleep he dreamed.

He thought he had fallen into a ditch, not very deep. It seemed to him at first easy to make his escape, but when he attempted it, he sunk down deeper and deeper with each successive struggle, until at last he found himself sinking in the mire over his head, and just about to be drowned in the filthy waters of that horrible place.

Just then, lifting up his eyes, he saw stooping over him, the bending form of a strong man, with his hand outstretched to save.

“Oh that he would save me!” thought the young man, and he ceased to struggle to save himself. Then the hand of the rescuer grasped him firmly, and lifted him easily out of the mire, and placed him upon the bank of the ditch, and in a moment he had stripped him, washed him, and clothed him anew—and just then the troubled dreamer awoke from his sleep.

“Ah!” said he to himself, “I see. I see. I can never save myself—all my struggles are in vain, and worse than in vain. I do but sink deeper and deeper. Jesus must save, or I must perish.”

And Jesus did save. His feet were taken from the horrible pit and the miry clay. He was washed and clothed, and made happy in a sense of sin forgiven,—and the hope of heaven.

His spirits rose, and his health returned—that is to say, the health of his body, from the waist upward. From the small of his back downward he was paralysed and shrivelled away. From his waist upward he grew fat and fair.

He applied himself to sewing for employment and for a living, and soon acquired skill to earn a fair maintenance, with something to give to the poor, and to the treasury of the Lord.

He was happy until, by and by, thoughts of his desolation began to grow upon him. Others, God had set in families; to him this was denied. None would ever love him as he longed to be loved. He should never have wife or children bound to him by the tender bond of matrimonial or filial affection. His heart yearned for the endearments which he felt in his soul he was created to enjoy. And as the certainty pressed upon him that he could never enjoy them his heart sunk within him and seemed to be withering away like his limbs.

“Alas!” he thought, “must it be so? Yes, it must indeed. None can ever love me as the bride loves her husband. I can never have one to love and cherish, as the bridegroom loves and cherishes the chosen companion of his life.”

Again he became intensely wretched. His troubled soul denied him the embrace of even “tired nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep,” until at last, in sheer exhaustion, he fell into wakeful slumbers, and dreamed again as before. In his dream he seemed to be entangled in logs and trees, lying criss-cross over the ground in utter confusion, as they are sometimes found in our forests,

where the hurricane has done its work, and made what is called a windfall—no tree left standing, but all blown down, one over the other, in all conceivable positions.

In the distance, he saw Jesus standing, and at once began struggling to make his way over the logs to the Master, but could not. He was foiled in every attempt, and at last gave up in despair; and then, looking up, there was Jesus standing with outstretched arms, before him. And oh, so lovely and so loving! The Saviour clasped him in his arms, and spoke words of endearment, assuring him that he would be ever with him; would never forsake him, but love him freely, as the bridegroom loves the bride, and cherish him as his beloved for ever.

He awoke, and, behold it was a dream, and yet not all a dream. Thenceforth the longing of his soul for one to love him, and be beloved, was satisfied. Evermore Jesus was with him, the bridegroom of his heart.

THE INQUIRER AND HER WISH.

There came to a little meeting of those who had already learned the secret of living in the faith of an ever-present Saviour, and of those who were desirous of hearing about it, a very lovely woman, a wife and a mother; a Christian for many years, and yet by no means satisfied with her state and condition.

But let her tell her own story. The opportunity was given; it was in the parlor of one of their number, and ladies only were present. She spoke with a pathos that touched every heart:—"I have been many years a Christian; I would not give up my hope of heaven for a world. It is founded upon the precious blood of the Son of God. I have committed my soul to him, and I believe he will not forsake me in the hour of death, or condemn me at the judgment. And sometimes I feel him very near to me, and then I am very happy. No tongue can tell how sweet my peace is at such times. It passes all understanding. But then again my heart wanders from him, and I try to get back to him. I pray, and repent of my wanderings, and resolve to keep my heart more diligently, and promise the Lord if he will only restore me I will never wander again; but, alas for me! too often all my resolutions and promises, and cries and struggles, are vain, and I am forced to give up and live on, conscious that I am left by the Saviour, so that I could repeat, with some sense of its bitterness, the agonised cry of the dying Redeemer himself, in the hour of his darkness, "Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabacthani! My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!"

Now, I have come here to learn from you, dear friends, if you will teach me, how to live so as to have my Saviour ever with me.

I am like a wife who tenderly loves her husband, and longs for his society and would fain make his home so agreeable to him that he would never leave it for the club or the theatre, or the opera or a party, or any other place, however fascinating; but who, for want of wisdom or skill, so fails as ever and anon to be forsaken by him for a time, and for times that seem wearisome and long to her; and who is utterly at a loss how to change her own course so as to win and secure the constant presence of her husband at home.

Once I had a father—noble man—he is now reaping in heaven the reward in glory of a life of singular devotion to Jesus upon earth. He was a wonder to me. He seemed to have the presence of Jesus from morning till night, and from year's end to year's end, always from my earliest recollections. I do not remember ever to have heard him make the complaint made by so many, and, alas ! made so often by me, of the absence of Jesus. His face kindled up in a moment at the mention of Jesus, and all his prayers and all his words and ways shewed that he was full in the faith of that assurance, "Lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world."

My case was so different that I often wondered at it.

One day, shortly before he took his triumphant departure to heaven—I was then about eighteen—I asked him, saying, "Father, how is it I frequently wander away from my Saviour, and find it hard to return ? You seem always to have him present with you. Do you never get away from him ?"

"Never, my dear child, *never* ; never so but what I can get back in one minute."

I shall never forget his words or his looks ; and I have come now to meet you here, and learn, if I may, how to live always in the faith of the presence of Jesus, as my beloved father did ?

This secret of living in the faith of an ever-present Saviour—loving, tender, watchful, faithful—is the secret learned by those of the eighth chapter class, and this is the secret of their zest in repeating the triumphant answer to the sad question, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?" "*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

And this is the secret which they of the class of the seventh chapter have not learned, and therefore it is that they still sigh in their bondage, and groan under the weight of the body of death.

It is quite remarkable, however, that while these last point to the seventh of Romans as the exposition of their state and condition, they always clip this graphic chapter at both ends to make it suit their experience. It opens with the beautiful representation of the matrimonial relation as that between Christ and his followers, and closes with the exultant note of deliverance from the very state of bondage to which these sighing ones point as their own.

A moment's thought should make them see that they are not honouring the Bridegroom Deliverer when they point to this hopeless bondage ; this struggling, sighing, groaning condition ; this slavery to sin ; this wedded state with a Body of Death as the Bridegroom—as the state and condition to which he has introduced them. A poor Bridegroom, surely, he must be, who holds his bride as a slave, sighing and groaning for liberty, and crying out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?"

And a poor bride must she be, whose heart goes abroad for its pleasures away from the embraces of her groom ; so fascinated by the contraband delights of the world, that even when she would be true to her home and her spouse, she is always haunted by thoughts and desires after others !

Miscellany.

SELECTIONS.

THE GOLDEN PROMISE.

A MILESTONE FOR 1875.

BY ANNA SHIPTON.

"Lo ! I am always with you, even unto the end of the world."—MATT. XXVIII. 20.

Halt ! another milestone
Marks the road we travel ;
Dark the desert pathway
Still before us lies ;
He who bade us follow
Strength and light bestoweth,
For that homeward journey,
Hidden from our eyes.
"I will never leave thee,"
Echoes o'er the mountain ;
"I will ne'er forsake thee,"
Trust the word He saith,
"For this God is our God for ever and ever :
He shall be our Guide, even unto death."

Stricken and bewildered
In my cruel bondage,
ONE I never heeded
Was watching by my side ;
'Twas the Man of Sorrows
Listening to my anguish,
And the Hand that freed me,
Christ's the Crucified !
All on earth hath failed me,
He will fail me never ;
Trust Him fully, trust Him,
And the word He saith,
"For this God is our God for ever and ever :
He shall be our Guide, even unto death."

Facing, faint and fearful,
Through the mighty waters ;
He who ruled the nations
Dried each falling tear :
"I am with thee always,"
Woke my heart to gladness.
Christ Himself is with me,
Then wherefore doubt or fear ?
"I am with thee always"—
I believe the promise ;
I will trust my Father,
And every word He saith,
"For this God is our God for ever and ever :
He shall be our Guide, even unto death."

Past the pathless river
Deserts lay before me ;
Cloud and fiery pillar
Led me on alone,
Fountains fresh and manna
Tell Who goes before me ;
Lims wait my weariness
When my journey's done.
Christ Himself is smiling
On each faint endeavour.
Forward through the desert !
On from faith to faith !
"For this God is our God for ever and ever
He shall be our Guide, even unto death."

Thorns and briars may wound me ;
He is near to heal me—
Near to fight my battle—
Near to quench my foe—
Near to cleanse my garments
If I careless wander—
Near to sweeten Marah
All the way I go !
Trust Him, only trust Him !
Who the bond can sever ?
Feebly may I follow,
But follow still in faith.

“For this God is our God for ever and ever :
He shall be our Guide, even unto death.”

Halt ! Anoint the milestone
With the oil of gladness ;
Rest awhile, and ponder
On the unseen way.
Praise shall bring our blessings
Down the golden ladder,
And the golden promise
Turn our night to day.
“Speak, Thy servant heareth ;”
Henceforth let me follow—
Let me trust the living God,
And ev’ry word He saith !

“For this God is our God for ever and ever :
He shall be our Guide, even unto death.”

THE OLD AND THE NEW YEAR.

I MUSED as the midnight hour drew nigh,
and methought the old year stood before
me. Weary and wayworn he seemed,
and in his hand was an hour-glass, from
whence the last sands were fleeing.

As I looked upon his wretched fore-
head, memories both pleasant and mourn-
ful came over me. Fain would I have
constrained his longer stay, and spake
earnestly to him :

“Many blessings hast thou brought
me, for which I give thee thanks. New
have they been every morning, and
fresh every moment.

“Thou hast, indeed, from my heart’s
garden, uprooted some hopes that I
planted there, With their clustering
buds they fell, and were never quickened
again.”

Then he said, “Praise God, both for
what I gave, and what I took away.
And lay up treasures in heaven, that thy
heart may be there also. What thou
hast called blighted hopes, are oft times
changed into the fruits of righteousness.”

But I answered; “Thou hast also hid-
den from my sight the loved and the re-
vered. Clods are strewn upon their
faces: they reply to my call no more.
To the homes that they made so fair they
return not, and the places that once knew
them, know them no more forever.”

Still he said, “Give praise to God.
Trouble not thyself about those that are
with him. Rather make thine own sal-
vation sure, that thou mayest go unto
them, and parted be no more.”

Then, in a faint voice, he murmured,
“My mission unto man is done. For
me, the stone is rolled away from the
sepulchre. I shall enter in, and slumber
with the years beyond the flood, till the
last trumpet soundeth.”

I gazed upon his wan brow, and to me
it was beautiful. Fain would I have
swept away the snows that gathered
around his hoary temples, but he suffered
me not, and stretched himself out to die.

By his side I knelt, and said. “O de-
parting Year! I behold a small scroll
beneath thy mantle. What witness shall
it bear of me at the judgment?”

Low and solemn were his last tones,
“Ask me not. Thou shalt know when
the books are opened, and the dead,
small and great, stand before God.”

The midnight clock struck. And I
covered my face, and mourned for his
death who had been to me as a friend. I
remembered with pain how oft I had
slighted his warnings and the oppor-
tunities he had given me of doing good,
and had cast away the wealth of time,
that priceless boon from the Eternal.

Methought from the dying lips came
a feeble sigh, “Farewell—farewell.”
Then a passion of weeping fell upon me.
And when again I lifted up my head, lo,
the New Year stood in the place of the
departed.

Smiling, he greeted me with good
wishes and words of cheer, while around
me lay many bright tokens of friendship
and love. But I was afraid. For to me
he was a stranger; and when I would
have returned his welcome, my lips
trembled and were silent.

Then he said, “Fear not. I come
unto thee from the Giver of every good
and perfect gift.”

“New Year, whither wilt thou lead
me?” Art thou appointed to bring me
joy or sorrow, life or death?”

He replied, “I know not. Neither
does the angel nearest the throne know.
Only Him who sitteth thereon. Give me
thy hand, and question not. Enough
for thee, that I accomplish His will.
Make that will thine own, and thou shalt
wear an angel’s smile, even here below.

“I promise thee nothing. Be content
to follow me. Take, with a prayer for
wisdom, this winged moment. The next
may not be mine to give. Yet, if we walk
together, forget not that thou art a pilgrim
for eternity.

"If I bring thee the cup of joy, be thankful, and pitiful to those who mourn; and let all men be unto thee as brethren. If the dregs of bitterness cleave unto thy lip, be not too eager to receive comfort, lest thou betray the weakness of thy faith. God's perfected discipline giveth wisdom. Therefore count them happy who endure.

"When morn breaketh in the east, gird thyself for thy duties with a song of thanksgiving. For God is near to those who trust Him, and rejoice in His ways. And when night putteth on her coronet of stars, kneel and ask that the day's sins may be forgiven thee.

"So, when I have no longer any days or nights to give thee, and must myself die, thou shalt bless me as a friend, and a helper on the road to heaven."

IDOLS.

WHAT is your idol, my brother? my sister? I will tell you. It is that thing which you do not like to have any one speak of; it makes you feel a little unpleasant, and uncomfortable. The mention of it, in any way, to call your attention to it as an evil, always agitates you somewhat; and though you may perhaps endeavor to justify it, you get a little excited when you do so. Whenever a hand is laid on it, you are conscious that a sore spot has been touched, and you had rather it would not be done. It is that thing that you stoutly declare, "is not an idol;" you "do not make an idol of it." Yet, when you are told that you had better dispense with it, you are by no means willing to do so. It is that which you say you "care nothing about;" you regard it as a thing of "no importance whatever;" but when it is suggested that you had better give it up, you somehow discover that there is a great importance attaches to it, for you will by no means renounce it. It is that thing that comes up before you when you are praying; when you are giving your testimony, and want to make the best presentation that you can to God and your brethren; and if you are a professor of perfect love (for some of them are not fully cleansed from their idols), it is that which presents itself when you

are endeavoring to testify to full salvation, and makes your testimony inexplicit and ambiguous. You cannot unequivocally declare that you are saved from all sin, when you are not quite certain that you have renounced every thing that is sinful. You certainly did this when you attained this great blessing, as far as you knew; but there was something that you did not apprehend as evil at the time, hence it was not then in your way; but you have discovered it since, have become enlightened upon the subject, and instead of giving it up at once as the Spirit prompted you to do, you engaged in the hopeless task of trying to retain your experience in its richness and fulness, and the idol likewise. It is that thing which involves the soul in endless questionings with regard to its propriety,—whether it is really sinful or not; and you labor to convince yourself that it is not sinful, and for the time you seem to succeed; but you cannot remain convinced. The question comes up again and again, and has again to be disposed of by the same forced process. The Spirit, true to his work, gives you no rest until you hearken to his gentle voice, or else, by resisting his light, your eyes become blinded, and your heart becomes hardened, and he lets you alone.

The idols of Christians are many and various. I conceive that those who are working the greatest amount of evil at the present time, are not those of the greatest magnitude. They are the little things that are now doing the most mischief to God's heritage. They are the most injurious, from the fact that they are the hardest to reach. They are Satan's greatest stronghold; behind their insignificance he has intrenched himself, and is determined to hold his ground.

The greatest want of Christians, who are waked up to a sense of these evils, is moral courage. They really desire to be cleansed from all their idols, but do not like to be *first* to renounce them; they dread being called fanatical. May God give them grace to be willing to bear reproach for Christ, in order that they may keep *all* his commandments, even the least of them, and thus show their love for him. These idols *must* be given up. "From all your idols I will cleanse you."

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

FOR A CHILD.

BY CLARA J. LOOMIS.

Far away to the eastward,
 In the beautiful Orient land,
 The land that is rich in tradition
 And legends, so old and so grand—
 Far back in the long past ages,
 One luminous, starry morn,
 In this land of historic glory
 The Prince I serve was born.

Not in a lordly castle—
 Not in a palace fine—
 Not in a home ancestral,
 Was born this Prince of mine ;—
 Not on a monarch's pillow
 They laid His royal head ;
 Not on a couch of costly down—
 But—in a manger-bed.

And kingly robes he wore not,
 Nor ever a jewelled crown ;
 Nor bore He sceptre or signet,
 This Prince of strange renown.
 Yet kingdoms, strong and ancient,
 And the whole Earth's throned powers,
 Shook, to their mighty centres,
 For this mightier Prince of ours.

So, ever through all the ages
 We celebrate His birth,
 Who, though he slept in a manger,
 Was Lord of all heaven and earth.
 And ever under His banner
 We'll fight against every sin,
 Till into our dear Lord's kingdom
 He gathers His children in.

LOVE-SONGS TO JESUS.

BY THE REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

AT our prayer-meeting to-night we sang
 with full hearts and voices that simple
 heart-song of love,

"Jesus paid it all,
 All to Him I owe ;
 Sin had left a crimson stain,
 He washed it white as snow."

This is the chorus to a hymn that has
 more of passionate devotion to Christ in
 it than it has of æsthetic poetry. It was

composed for Sunday-schools, and is set
 to a sweet stirring tune of the best old
 Methodist stamp. It always rouses our
 people, and brings back revival joys, and
 the taste of the fruits when we sat in the
 King's garden, and His banner was
 over us.

There is a wonderful power in a
 glowing ecstatic love-song to Jesus. The
 language may not be very artistic; it
 may savour of extravagance to the scepti-
 cal critic. But the warmer and the
 stronger it is, the better to a genuine
 child of Jesus. When a soul is on fire
 and melting it don't want elaborate
 poetry or artificial tunes. It longs for
 simplicity, fervour, and ecstatic glow.
 It craves endearing epithets. There are
 moods of mind when a blood-bought be-
 liever revels in the love of the Saviour,
 and only wants to sit beside the mouth
 of the well, and drink and sing, and sing
 and drink, until the soul overflows with
 grateful joy.

It was in such moods of rapturous
 communion that the holy Rutherford
 broke out into these passionate words of
 endearment which rival the Song of
 Solomon. "O fair Lord Jesus!" he ex-
 claims, "let me wrap my poor withered
 arms around Thy great broad love! How
 little of the sea can a child carry in its
 hand; as little am I able to carry away
 of my boundless and running over Christ
 Jesus. All lovers blush, when ye stand
 beside Christ; shame for evermore be
 upon all but Christ's glory! Would to
 God that all this kingdom knew what
 there is betwixt Christ and me in this
 prison—what kisses, embracements, and
 love-communions! I would not exchange
 Jesus for heaven. Nay, I think that a
 soul could live eternally blessed on
 Christ's love, and feed upon no other
 thing; yea, when Christ in love giveth
 a *blow*, it doeth a soul *good*; and there is
 a kind of comfort and joy to it to get a
 cuff with the sweet, soft hand of Jesus."

Of this holy literature of love the
 Church ought to read more; and in our
 devotional meetings we ought to sing
 more of these love-songs in praise of the
 Redeemer, who bought us with His blood.
 This element of *Christliness* is wanting
 too often in the pulpit and in the prayer-
 meeting. For fear of being thought ex-
 travagant or enthusiasts, we tame down
 our language, and stiffen our counten-
 ances, until we freeze up the best impulses.

of the soul. We sacrifice our devotions to our dignity.

But the more the love of Jesus abounds and glows within us, the more shall we burst out in those hymns and into those utterances in prayer which are the best foretastes of Heaven. The most delightful feature in a true Christian service is when all hearts break out in some strong rapturous love-chant to our Redeemer. Wesley struck this note when he wrote his incomparable "Jesus, lover of my soul." We ought to have more of such melodies of Calvary in our prayer-meetings, and sing them with open mouths, and eyes brimming with tears.

I confess to a great liking for the godly old negro "Uncle Johnson," who used to say "Massa, you knows *de flesh be weak*; and when dey begins in *de meetin'* to talk and sing about Jesus, I begins to *fill up*, and putty soon I has to holler, and den dey say, 'Carry dat ole man out; he 'sturbs *de meetin'*.'" Would to God that all our church prayer-meetings had a few more such blessed disturbances!

THE BEGGAR BOY.

The following story beautifully illustrates the power of kindness.

"Go away from there, you old beggar boy! You've no right to be looking at our flowers," shouted a little fellow from the garden where he was standing.

The poor boy, who was pale, dirty, and ragged, was leaning against the fence, admiring the splendid show of roses and tulips within. His face reddened with anger at the rude language, and he was about to answer defiantly, when a little girl sprang out from an arbor near, and looking at both, said to her brother—

"How could you speak so, Herbert! I'm sure his looking at the flowers don't hurt us." And then, to soothe the wounded feelings of the stranger, she added: "Little boy, I'll pick you some flowers if you'll wait a moment," and she immediately gathered a pretty bouquet, and handed it through the fence.

His face brightened with surprise and pleasure, and he earnestly thanked her.

Twelve years after this occurrence, the girl had grown to a woman. One bright afternoon she was walking with her husband in the garden, when she observed a

young man in workman's dress, leaning over the fence, and looking attentively at her, and at the flowers. Turning to her husband, she said—

"It does me good to see people admiring the garden; I'll give that young man some of the flowers;" and approaching him, she said, "Are you fond of flowers, sir? it will give me great pleasure to gather you some."

The young workman looked a moment into her fair face, and then said, in a voice tremulous with feeling: "Twelve years ago I stood here, a ragged little beggar boy, and you showed me the same kindness. The bright flowers and your pleasant words made a new boy of me; ay, and they made a man of me too. Your face, madam, has been a light to me in many dark hours of life, and now, thank God, though that boy is still a humble, hard-working man, he is an honest and a grateful one."

Tears stood in the eyes of the lady as, turning to her husband, she said, "God put it into my young heart to do that little act of kindness, and see how great a reward it has brought."

A FAMILY WITH SHORT MEMORIES.

"Sir," said a man, addressing a minister going home from church one Sabbath afternoon, "Did you meet a boy on the road driving a cart, with rakes and pitchforks in it?"

"I think I did," answered the minister, "a boy with a short memory, wasn't he?"

"What made you think he had a short memory, sir?" asked the man, looking surprised.

"I think he had," answered the minister, "and I think he must belong to a family that have short memories."

"What in the world makes you think so?" asked the man, greatly surprised.

"Because," said the minister, in a serious tone, "the great God has proclaimed from Mount Sima, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,' and that boy has forgotten all about it."

"WITHHOLD not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it."

LOVEFEAST.

THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT.

BY R. PEARSALL SMITH.

HAVING always known that upon conversion the believer received the Holy Spirit, and that His guidance and power would be known, when needed, in unfolding the treasures of Scripture, in service or in trials, I had not looked for any other manifestations of His presence. And yet there was a large class of passages in the Old and in the New Testament, the conditions of which were not fully met by any consciousness of my own, full as had been the knowledge of pardon, adoption, and standing in Christ; nor yet by a later experience, which came to me ten years after my conversion, of the wonderful inward cleansing of the blood "from all sin."

I had read, "Whosoever 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." This was not true in my experience, in the full meaning evidently intended by the words. There did not always, from my heart, "*flow* rivers of living water" freely and spontaneously. Too often the force-pump, rather than the fountain, would have represented my condition. As I gazed in the mirror of the Word, upon the glorious person of my Lord, my soul was often bowed in adoring love, but I had never come to "*know*" (John xiv. 17) the Comforter in such a fullness that I could realize His indwelling presence as even better than that of the visible person of Jesus.

I had read that as men were "possessed" by an evil spirit, and led to do things far beyond their natural powers, so those "filled with the Spirit," seemed to be carried out of and beyond themselves. I had read the charge against the Apostles, of being "drunken," and that afterward Paul brought the same thought of the elevation of wine, as the illustration of being "filled with the Spirit." This seemed to be an ordained condition, since God's commands are always promises, just as His promises are commands; the promises being always larger

even than the commands. As yet I had never known, in my own consciousness a being thus "filled with the Spirit," or the meaning of John the Baptist's declaration, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

So ignorant was I, even in the matters of the greatest importance to my spiritual interests, that, in finding the inward cleansing and the outward "victory" over sin,—that "faith which overcometh" the world,—I did not press beyond my educational habits of thought to recognize that a far more glorious manifestation of God was yet to be known by the Spirit. I then scarcely noticed that it was *after* our Lord had breathed on His disciples with the words, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," they had yet to wait ten days at one time in prayerful expectation for the more full baptism of the Spirit; nor that it was sometime *after* this event, that "When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." I was not, indeed, in the condition of the "disciples, who has yet had "not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost;" and yet I had formed no conception of what the promised *baptism* "with the Holy Ghost and with fire" could be.

Deeply thankful for the privileges of "sanctification through faith," realized in an unexpected fullness a few months before, I one day joined in the woods a few Christians who had met to wait before God for the baptism of the Spirit. Except a few low hymns or brief prayers, the half hour was spent in solemn silence. At length "there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the [place] where they were sitting:"—no uninspired words could so describe my impressions. And yet no leaf above nor blade of grass below was moved,—all nature was still. It was to our souls, not to our senses, that the Lord revealed Himself by the Spirit. My whole being seemed unutterably full of the God upon whom I had long believed. The perceptions of my senses could bring no such consciousness as was now mine. I understood the super-sensual visions of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Paul. No created thing was now so real to my soul as the Creator Himself. It was awful, yet without terror. I lost no part of my senses, and yet they were

all wrapped up in the sublime manifestation. A question put to me was answered as briefly as possible that my soul might lose nothing of the heavenly presence enwrapping and filling my being. I do not remember to have then told any one of it, but days afterward, when I rejoined my wife, she burst into tears as we met, before we had spoken a word, so great was the change in my appearance. "Songs in the night season," the living waters welling up from my heart, came with the consciousness of waking. An awe, sweet but not burdensome, shadowed my spirit, as every moment was filled with the presence of God; nor did it leave me in the midst of the most engrossing occupations. Life became a psalm of praise.

This elevation of feeling necessarily subsided after a season, but it left me with an inner *consciousness of God* which is expressed by the words: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them." "We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." The scene upon the Cross of Calvary became often more real than the senses could make it. Without the materiality of bodily sight, the holy countenance of Jesus, in its tender, suffering humanity, lightened by the glory of divinity, seems now to me to look down from the Cross upon assemblies, as I tell of redemption for sinners. It is painful to endeavor to speak of these things. My poor words seem rather to cover than to reveal them. Would that the glorious reality could be conveyed to other hearts!

After walking with little variation for five years in this privilege of an inward consciousness of the presence of God, and with comparatively little exception a *conscience* void of offence, I became, by the ever-increasing light, aware of forms of selfishness, self-consciousness, self-dependence, and self-seeking not before recognized. I was as an Israelite in whose home was a defiling bone, before the sun had fully risen. By the grey morning light he had cleansed his dwelling, and was without condemnation of conscience, but when the noon-tide sun poured in his rays, the evil thing was discovered—to be now put away.

At once the prayer of faith came, "Cleanse me from this also, O my Saviour!" with full confidence that it would be done. Soon afterward, as I

kneeled in a large meeting of Christians waiting patiently upon God in silent prayer, I seemed to see Jesus sitting above me as a "Refiner" with fire. Then there passed through my soul as it had been flame, consuming the very evils concerning which I had been praying. I cannot find words so exact to describe it as the Scripture, "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." To my surprise, I did not appear to shrink from the fire, but gladly welcomed it, as I seemed to look in the vividly revealed and compassionately tender countenance of my Saviour. I then understood in a far deeper sense than ever before, the words, "Sanctify you *wholly*," for all that I could myself see of my dross seemed to me to be burned up.

This was without much emotion, but wonderfully real to my soul. It was followed by some of the most severe sorrows and temptations which I had known for a long time, but in them all I was enabled to get inward deliverance by faith in Christ as my Refiner with fire.

About this time a few Christians, from five different denominations, among them six ministers, gathered together in some evening meetings with the special object of finding out, through prayer, the full meaning of "the promise of the Father," the being "baptized with fire," the being "filled with the Spirit." They were walking in close communion with the Lord, and in the paths of "sanctification through faith," and yet they knew that there was a fullness of blessing in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which they had not yet experienced. Feeling their liability to interpret the Scripture by their educational prepossessions, they resorted to continued prayer, and waiting upon God, to teach them *Himself* the meaning of His Word and promise.

The first evening, while a Presbyterian minister was in prayer, a preacher, well known on both sides of the Atlantic, of calm, intellectual habits of feeling, who had been praying for this baptism for two months, was, without losing consciousness, so overwhelmed by the manifested presence of Jesus, as to lie, with clasped hands and a look of heavenly joy, speechless for several hours. "I seemed mer-

cifully shut out from intercourse with the world for a time, that I might enjoy the presence of Jesus. After several hours I was just able to whisper, 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple, the rest I cannot tell.' Then, after a time, 'It is the refiner's fire and the fuller's soap. I always used to think it would be so dreadful, but it is so sweet.' I remained thus to noon the next day, shut up alone with God, occasionally telling a little of the sweetness and the glory of the revelation of Christ's love, but too anxious not to miss a word of what he had to tell me to speak much. I seemed to be introduced into the very presence of the Lord, as though I saw Him face to face, and actually heard His voice. How I rejoiced to have that refining fire burn and burn until it seemed to consume all the dross away. I could almost see the fan in his hand, thoroughly purging His floor, and separating the chaff from the wheat. 'Oh, how I shall love to preach for Him now!' I exclaimed. 'I always loved it, but now it will be so different and so sweet.' I now loved every one, even those whom it had before seemed impossible to love. It was all love, love!

"It was hard to come back to the burden of common life again, but I felt that it was needful. I had to part with the vividness of these manifestations, as they would make the duties of ordinary life impossible."

All this, coming to a person so intellectual, so calm and so reserved; one, too, whose life of devotedness had been so long and so remarkable, and who had manifested so much of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost in service, seemed an unmistakable answer to our prayers for enlightenment, as to whether it is the privilege of every believer in the Lord Jesus to receive at some time during their Christian career, the *conscious, definite* baptism of the Holy Ghost, similar to that on the day of Pentecost, and afterwards during the Apostles' ministry, as recorded in the Scriptures. We all felt that the answer was, "Yes," and that the responsibility now rested with each one to "tarry at Jerusalem," until thus baptised in a manner different from the usual degree of the Spirit's power and presence, which most Christians realise—the full possession and thorough transformation, consciously and manifestly, of

the whole being. "For the promise" that "ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," "is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

An instance of the permanent endowment of this powerful Baptism of the Spirit, when followed by a full obedience, is found in the history of a widely-known physician. About twenty-four years ago he had placed under his care a married woman, in advanced consumption, who felt a direct call of God to leave her home and go to his hospital. She was fully given over to die by her doctors, and was even taken with bleeding at the lungs for twenty consecutive days. She could not speak above a whisper, and her death was expected hourly. She, however, one day spoke of having faith to be healed, and asked the physician to pray for her. Thinking her too weak to bear vocal prayer, he retired to his room, and was able to ask in faith that six years more of life should be given her. After fainting twice in efforts to move her in the bed, she was almost instantly restored to her strength, so as in a few days to be able to travel by stage in bitter cold weather alone to her own home. She lived the six years claimed by faith—years of wonderful gospel power and blessing in Christian work, and then died in triumph and hope.

During her illness she had presented to her young physician the subject of sanctification by faith, the perpetual abiding in Christ, as his immediate privilege. He heard at first with intense prejudice, but finally was led to give to God one cherished idol after another in detail, and after four weeks of struggle and yielding, on one occasion, toward daylight, he resigned to Christ the very last of all that he had been conscious of holding as his own. Then it was as though the heavens were opened upon his soul in a sense of the glory of God; but instead of resting on him, it soon seemed to vanish. He cried, "Why, Lord?" and an answer came, "You are stubborn and wilful." "Wherein, Lord?" he asked, "You will not," was the reply, "confess and testify before men to the truth of sanctification by faith." He then yielded this point also, and was at once filled with the presence of God by a wonderful baptism of the

Spirit. He says that he has not had an unhappy day since, nor one day without the solemn, inward consciousness of God which is expressed by the words, "Christ formed within," "Christ in you," "Ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost."

Immediately his life-work took form in the continual cry of his soul, "Thy will be done." His heart and will became a perpetual "Yes" to every call of God. He always realises that, even in the small details of life, God has a will for His children, some way that is better than any other, and that He will communicate this to the waiting soul; that when the many voices of self-will, prejudice, and enthusiasm are stilled within, and the outward calls held in abeyance, "a still small voice" comes with satisfying certainty to the soul, saying, "This is the way; walk thou in it." In it are the highest possible results of inward peace and outward success. Twenty-three years of close attention to this sacred teaching, with implicit, instantaneous obedience, have made his senses to "grow by reason of use," and imparted a wonderful, indescribable gentleness, sweetness, and power to his very appearance and voice, joined to a resistless authority. I have never witnessed the character of the head of a private family more impressed upon the faces and motions of a household, than is that of this man of faith upon every worker, down to the humblest servant. I never saw an ungentle expression, or heard an ungentle word in the house. The very atmosphere of the place is filled with the pervading, sensible presence of the love of God. There is a simplicity, a quiet restfulness, a hidden power in the religious exercises of his household, which, with the whole atmosphere of the household, has brought a continuous revival since the opening of this House of Faith, twenty-three years ago. Thousands upon thousands, probably, have been converted, or lifted into higher experience of the love of God, in this holy, beautiful home. Weary souls find the soothing influences so sweet and pervading, that, like the Lotus-eaters, they scarcely can force themselves away. Chance travellers stopping for a night often are chained, and leave only to seek the first opportunity of return. These statements may seem strong to strangers, but they will not be so to those who have

shared the privileges of this household of faith.

The baptism of the Spirit has not been a transient joy, but an abiding grace through near a quarter of a century, bearing fruitage to God such as it has been the lot of few of God's children to witness.

It is not unusual for this wonderful baptism of the Holy Spirit, of which we write, to accompany the commencement of "walking in the light," but in the larger number of instances coming under my own observation, an entrance upon a life of perfect trust has been by simple faith alone, without immediate strong emotion, or the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Concerning its reality and certainty, hundreds, if not thousands, whom I have personally met, are witnesses of its suddenness, and of its permanent results in their character and labors. If a man born blind and reared without ever seeing the light, were cured, and then promised a sight of the sun, we can conceive that when he saw a candle, he might ask, "Is this it?" Or again, when he saw the moon, "Is this it?" But when he should see the sun, he would ask no questions, but exclaim, "This is it?" Thus I can conceive of questioning as to having received this grace among those yet without this remarkable and apostolic baptism, so often renewed to the saints in all ages; but those who have once experienced it in its fulness say, as the restored blind man to the sun, "This is it!"

For this, my reader, pray. For this, trust the promises of God. For this, wait in holy expectation, if need be, as long as did the first disciples. Having received it with its inefficable results in your life, ask that it be renewed on every occasion of need. Have faith to be always "filled with the Spirit," whether in its mighty, rushing power for service, or in its gentle, dew-like coming, to possess and mould the heart for Christ.

It is a comfort to Christians apart to think their prayers meet before a throne of grace; and their persons shall meet before a throne of glory.

THE breath of prayer comes from the life of faith.

PASS ME NOT.

WORDS BY FANNY CROSBY.

MUSIC BY C. W. COATES.

Lamentando.

1. Pass me not, O lov - ing Sav - iour, Hear my hum - ble

cry; While on o - thers Thou art call - ing, Do not pass me by.

Je - - sus, Sav - - iour, Hear my hum - ble cry;

While on o - thers Thou art call - ing, Do not pass me by.

2 Let me at a throne of mercy
Find a sweet relief;
Kneeling there in deep contrition,
Help my unbelief.
Jesus, Saviour, &c.

3 Trusting only in Thy merit,
Would I seek Thy face;
Heal my wounded, broken spirit,
Save me by Thy grace.
Jesus, Saviour, &c.

4 Thou, the spring of all my comfort.
More than life to me;
Whom have I on earth beside Thee?
(Thom in heaven but Thee?)
Jesus, Saviour, &c.